

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

1 November 2022 to 31 October 2023

www.bethel-llantwit.org.uk



bethel.llantwit@gmail.com

Registered Charity 1193745

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TRUSTEES AND OFFICERS FOR 2023-24

Trustees who served during the year to 31 October 2023 and remained in office at that date:

Ex officio Trustee
Revd Phil Hibbert

Trustees to serve until the Annual General Meeting 2024:

Sheila Welford - Resigned 23 May 2024
Shelley Tandy- Resigned 23 May 2024
Joshua Harding-Jones - Resigned 23 May 2024

Trustees to serve until the Annual General Meeting 2025:

Ian Beresford
Rebecca Elliott

Trustees to serve until the Annual General Meeting 2026:

Lynnette Thorne

Trustees to serve until the Annual General Meeting 2027:

Louise Rogers - Appointed 23 May 2024

Officers:

Secretary – Lynnette Thorne

Treasurer – Ian Beresford

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REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2022 – OCTOBER 2023

OVERVIEW OF 2023

During the period of this report, we began an exciting new phase. In May 2023, we employed a Children's and Youth Worker for the first time. With this in mind most of our planning, strategy and delivery of events had a children and youth focus.

We have seen an increase in both the work we do with children and young people and in the numbers attending these groups and events. It has to be said that the congregation took ownership of this vision and have supported the work extremely well.

Wellbeing has been an area that has received much attention and press in the years through and since the Covid Pandemic. The Renew Wellbeing Café that we started in June 2022 developed throughout the year and has become an important part of our outreach and pastoral care.

Our plans for the future have been driven by these two areas, and so we have begun to refurbish and redevelop our premises to cater better for their needs.

In summary, children and youth work and wellbeing outreach have an impact on all areas of church life in a positive way, for which we are grateful to our Lord Jesus Christ.

PEOPLE ASSOCIATED WITH OUR CHURCH

Children (Under 11)	9
Young People (11 to 18)	2
Young Adults (18-30)	0
Other Adults (30 to 65)	34
Seniors (Over 65)	39

A snapshot was taken of the people associated with our church.

Attendance at Sunday worship:

People associated with our church:

Church Members	68
Children (Under 11)	11
Young People (11-18)	4
Believers Baptisms	0

The average number of participants at Communion was 60. No new people were added to our membership this year.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The structure, governance and management of Bethel Baptist Church, Llantwit Major is defined in our constitution which was enacted on 10 March 2021. This is the date on which Bethel Baptist Church, Llantwit Major was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), with the Registered Charity Number: 1193745.

The Church Meetings seek the mind of Christ in matters relating to mission, policy, budget, and strategy. We are delighted that Church Meetings are inclusive of all those associated with the Church, although only Church Members can take decisions on the above matters.

Deacons (all Deacons are Trustees) are appointed at an Annual General Meeting for a maximum of two three-year terms, after which they are required to take a sabbatical. The Officers (who must be Trustees) are appointed annually at the Annual General Meeting. At the AGM in May 2023 one new Deacon was elected, and therefore the number of Trustees was 7 in addition to Revd. Phil Hibbert.

The Church employs Revd. Phil Hibbert as full-time minister, Jodie Davies as full-time Children and Youth Minister, and a part-time Administrative Support Worker, Mrs. Helen Berrill. There is a contract for cleaning the premises.

In addition, many members of the Church family devote a large amount of time working to fulfil the priorities of the Church, the day-to-day functioning of the Church and the maintenance of the premises.

The Trustees are very appreciative of all those involved, in whatever capacity they serve.

TRUSTEES' MEETINGS

The Trustees meet monthly (these meetings are minuted), have a WhatsApp group, and also make extensive use of email. They also meet every Friday

morning to pray together.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Trustees have reviewed a range of risks associated with the work of the Church in the last few years; this is an ongoing process. The Trustees confirm that they know of no serious incidents relating to the Church which require formal reporting.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The Trustees have ensured the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations have been met. The Trustees regard the Church's database as confidential and information held is for the sole use of the Church in pursuit of its purposes. Names and addresses and other information on the database will not be revealed to third parties.

OUR MISSION, PURPOSE AND ACTIVITIES

The mission statement of the Church is:

Seeking to know Jesus and serving to make Him known.

In our Constitution:

The principal purpose of the Church is: the advancement of the Christian faith according to the principles of the Baptist denomination. The Church may also advance education and carry out other charitable purposes in the United Kingdom and/or other parts of the World.

Our activities may include, but are not restricted to:

Regular public worship, prayer, Bible study, preaching and teaching;

Baptism, as defined in the Baptist Union's Declaration of Principle;

The Communion of the Lord's Supper, which shall normally be observed at least once a month;

Evangelism and mission, locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally;

The teaching, encouragement, welcome and inclusion of young people;

Nurture and growth of Christian disciples;

Education and training for Christian and community service;

Giving and encouraging pastoral care;

Supporting and encouraging charitable social action in the United Kingdom and abroad;

Encouraging relationships with and supporting Baptists and other Christians.

The Trustees have ensured that the Church has operated only in accord with its purpose and activities as identified in the Constitution.

VISION 2022 AND BEYOND

As a result of the extensive research initiated by the Leadership Team, the following Vision for 2022 and beyond was agreed by Church members in November 2021.

‘Bethel is a church that aims to grow, loving the community of Jesus-followers who live and share His message. We believe that Jesus shows the clearest picture of who God is and what He is like. He shows us God’s love, enables us to be reconciled and shows how best to live with purpose as part of a community.

Community – We aim to be a loving family of Jesus-followers that create a sense of belonging and is passionate about the Gospel. We want to share the message of

God’s love and rescue of humanity in Jesus’ life, death and resurrection, and display the ongoing good news of God’s kingdom by how we live.

Purpose – We are each called to live intentional, purpose filled everyday lives in step with God’s Spirit. All that we do together as an all-age diverse community is aimed at helping everyone to follow Jesus’ example, and thereby live our ordinary lives in extraordinary ways.’

The four outcomes from the Vision which are the focus of this report are:

To live with purpose.

To have a sense of belonging.

To be passionate about the Gospel (sharing the message of God’s love and how we live)

To be in step with God’s Spirit.

Although these outcomes are distinct they are interconnected; therefore, the following commentary on them will reflect this. It is important to stress that we are not emphasising our human achievements; we wish to recognise that we are open to the marginal and unexpected blessings arising from our reliance on God. We hope that there will be sufficient evaluation of not only what we do but also how we do it – with focus on the way we are together, the quality of our being and our relating – how we are church.

PROGRESS TOWARD THE PRIORITIES

The Leadership Team regularly reviews the mission outcomes and activities of the church and has explored a range of administrative and mission matters to ensure the smooth running of the Church. These matters can be divided broadly into strategic and analytical, and monitoring and evaluation.

The strategic and analytical have included:

1. Renovation, maintenance and development of the premises and ensuring

- its safety for users;
- 2. Preparing and implementing an annual budget; and identifying any longer term financial commitments or liabilities;
- 3. Making changes to our bankers to ensure a more effective service;
- 4. Pastoral matters and establishing connect groups;
- 5. Internal and external communications;
- 6. Transfer of membership from East Glamorgan to the South Wales Baptist Association;
- 7. Identifying and purchasing new AV equipment;
- 8. Undertaking a quinquennial review of the condition of the premises;
- 9. Assessing and approving, as appropriate, outreach initiatives;
- 10. Our approach to mission beyond Llantwit Major;
- 11. Considering how further support might be provided to Ukrainian refugees in Llantwit Major;
- 12. Becoming a Fairtrade church;
- 13. Partnership working with other organisations in Llantwit Major, especially in the context of the cost of living crisis.

Monitoring and evaluation have included:

- 1. Monitoring the annual budget
- 2. Reviewing pastoral support
- 3. Review of the church cleaning contract
- 4. Overseeing revisions to the membership roll
- 5. Overseeing revision to the GDPR paperwork and the information held.
- 6. Reviewing the maintenance arrangements of the premises;
- 7. Reviewing our risk assessment;
- 8. Identifying the need for safeguarding, first aid and food hygiene training;
- 9. Reviewing the programme of events associated with the major events in the Christian calendar such as Christmas and Easter, and other activities with which the Church is formally involved, to identify improvements for the future.

In planning our activities, the Trustees have applied the guidance on public benefit issued by the Charity Commission.

Groups and Activities

The following people as representatives of the various church groups/ activities have contributed to the annual report for 2022-23:

Group	Correspondent
Sunday Worship	Phil Hibbert

Ministry	Phil Hibbert
Prayer Meetings	Joanna Beresford
Ladies Bible Study	Meryl Merritt
Sunday Club	Jodie Davies
Friday Club	Jodie Davies
Youth Sunday	Jodie Davies
Children & Youth Outreach to include Schools Work	Jodie Davies
FoodBank	John Durrant
Men's Activities	Ian Beresford
Outreach	Phil Hibbert
Mission Beyond Llantwit	Shelley Tandy
Repair Cafe	Tim Bunce
Discipleship	Phil Hibbert
Pastoral Team and Connect Groups	Sheila Welford and Sue Sanders
Renew Wellbeing	John Durrant
Language Support for Ukrainian Refugees	Shelley Tandy
Health and Safety	Owen Davies
Premises	Tim Bunce
Administrative Support	Helen Berrill
Leadership Team	Full Leadership Team

Sunday Worship

Sunday is the main worship gathering of the church. It is the opportunity for the congregation to worship all together in one place. The aim of Sundays at Bethel is to provide and a safe, worshipful experience for everyone, where the Gospel is preached and lived.

This year has been a year of experimenting with different ways of engaging with everyone of all ages. It has been extremely helpful to have Jodie around to help plan and chat through ideas for children and young people. We have also had conversations among the worship leaders on how we can facilitate Spirit-led worship that is engaging for young and old.

With the minister taking extended time off for health reasons, the Leadership Team, children's and youth worship and worship leaders, have had to take a little more lead on the planning of services. This has been well received.

We continue to look to ways to engage more with all ages and make the service as accessible to families as possible. This has led to us doing away with the presentation of the inessential side of the services, such as notices, which we now do in a different way.

Ministry, Outreach and Discipleship

These are all functions within the church that generally are most effective when individuals within church life take them on.

Much of our ministry & Outreach last year was linked to the vision and employment of Jodie, our Children & Youth Worker. The focus has been on allowing her to directly launch the work that she does. This has meant that we have had a lot of voluntary help with many things and also growth in ministries like Friday Club.

Discipleship is a focus this coming year. We have some amazing groups meeting together every week. It would however be great to see a new house group launch this year and also to build a discipleship structure that makes sense to every church member but which is also sustainable.

Prayer Meetings

We meet as a prayer group on a Thursday morning at 11.00am. Over the years we have met at different times and on different days. We have been meeting on a Thursday for quite some time now, and we get a good number that can attend.

We usually start with each of us sharing anything that we feel needs prayer, such as those of our church family who are sick and any world or local events and current affairs that are troubling us.

We tend to number about 12-16 and occasionally have reached 20, which is very encouraging.

We are aware that not everyone can attend every week and some folk not at all, which is why we also hold a monthly prayer meeting on the first Saturday of the month to include those people.

Our prayer meeting really is a vital meeting in the Church's calendar.

I feel it a privilege to be able to attend prayer meeting on a regular basis and am greatly encouraged by it.

Monthly prayer meeting runs on the first Saturday of every month. The focus has been on allowing those who attend to experience prayer in different ways.

As an example, outside the timeframe of this report, in November, Shelley Tandy stepped in to oversee monthly Saturday morning prayer while Phil Hibbert was unwell. November's session used Christian Aid's guided prayer and worship response to the Hamas attacks, murders, kidnappings and the response by the modern state of Israel. Subsequent sessions have focused on Bethel's missionaries, especially those working in countries where Christians are persecuted. Eleri Jeffs and Shelley Tandy now oversee one Saturday prayer session in three and focus on praying for, and communicating with Christian representatives/mission workers in sensitive parts of the world in those sessions. Phil is now running two sessions in every three. Numbers have ranged from zero to 11.

Ladies Bible Study

We continue to meet on Wednesday mornings where our numbers vary from about 12 to 20. We miss those dear sisters who went home to Glory in the past months and also those dear ones who are now too frail to attend church services. Several of our ladies have also undergone major surgery and we thank God for their healing. We were delighted to have 2 sisters from Ukraine join with us over several months. Yulia and Maria have now moved away but it was indeed a joy to have them share with us, also Andrea became very much a part of our group while she was staying with Phil, Monique and Emily. This is very exciting as it shows it is indeed an open meeting where all are very welcome, some folk are just passing through but others are newly arriving into the area.

Coffee and much chat begin our time together, opening prayer is then followed by a serious hour of study where all are encouraged to participate by sharing their thoughts. Each morning is closed with a time of prayer. The subject for study is always discussed and agreed upon. The book of Isaiah took up many of our weeks through the Autumn and Winter 22 and Spring 23. A 9 week study in Thessalonians closed Summer 23 with a study in James opening up Autumn 23.

How amazing that we are able to openly study God's Holy Word together in this free and easy manner.....We are always mindful as we study that we are not seeking knowledge for knowledge's sake but to hear what God is saying to us, to enable us to know Him better, love Him more dearly and to serve Him

more faithfully.
Praise His Holy Name indeed !!

Foodbank

The Llantwit Major centre of the Vale Foodbank, under the umbrella of the Trussell Trust, is a beacon of cooperation between the churches in the town and individuals and community groups. 2023 saw the Llantwit Major centre celebrate its ninth year of faithful service to the community in the Western Vale. The centre staff, now numbering 23, based in the Bethel premises provide assistance to people with significant needs, especially in response to the cost of living crisis.

A generosity of spirit has continued amongst our donors to meet the well-documented financial hardship experienced by vulnerable members of the community, including more recently several refugees.

The provision of food for a few days and household essentials is a lifeline to our clients; prayer is offered to receptive clients. We are committed to a holistic approach to meeting the needs of our clients and to this end we are privileged to have the advice and support of the Citizens' Advice Bureau and the Hafod Support Service.

There is some evidence of a reduction in the level of regular donations to the Foodbank, however, regular donations via local shops, churches and individuals is complemented by organised collections from local supermarkets. We recognise the emotional stress that clients experience in coming into the Foodbank to seek support; our empathy for the clients is demonstrated in the weekly prayers of our volunteers in our preparation meetings. Each client is expected to attend with a voucher completed by a recognised agency; there were 273 vouchers fulfilled during the year.

The ages and numbers of those supported were:

190 children (age 0-11)
59 teenagers (age 12-16)
179 adults (age 17-34)
148 adults (age 35-54)
30 adults (age 55-64)
41 adults (age 65+)

The total number of people supported was 647.

Without exception, clients have expressed their appreciation of the support that is available.

Men's activities

There continues to be a number of ongoing activities amongst the men in Bethel, some of which follow a more formal pattern of engagement and some which are more ad hoc.

We continue to meet every other Tuesday evening in the Church Hall to discuss a passage of the bible and to have a time of sharing and prayer. This group, which is coordinated by Charlie Cooper, generally sees between 10-15 men gathering on a regular basis. All those who attend say that they value the time of fellowship and mutual support, which has developed within the group.

Once a month, a number of men meet for an informal breakfast at the Coast Cafe in Llantwit Major. This gathering is open to all, on a 'come if you can' basis. Numbers vary month-on-month, but generally 6-8 men meet on a regular basis for a time of unstructured fellowship over breakfast. These breakfast gatherings were initiated by Tim Bunce and Peter Rogers and remain open to anyone who would want to attend.

We have been encouraged by the number of one-to-one get togethers which occur naturally amongst our men, who meet for coffee or go for a walk in an unstructured, but mutually supportive way.

Finally, a year or so ago we held a Men's Weekend in the Brecon Beacons, all who attended said how much they enjoyed the weekend and this is something we are planning again in the near future.

Mission Beyond Llantwit Major

This year, Bethel has supported and continues to support BMS world mission global workers, Open Doors, Missional Links, Pioneers, Tearfund and Operation Agri . We have doubled our giving to our BMS link missionaries, both of whom either work or supervise work in highly sensitive parts of the world. Once every three months the Saturday prayer meeting focuses on the work of such workers and the persecuted church in general. Confidential information can be made available to folk who would like to pray for such workers in private. For more information please ask Eleri or Shelley.

Repair Café

Repair Cafe operates to fix household items for the community once a month, with a mission that is partly environmental and partly educational. It gives the opportunity for plenty of 1:1 interaction on our premises, since items are normally fixed and/or diagnosed in front of the customer. It continues to be run as a self financing non Bethel activity, as a Repair Cafe Wales member according to their rules and constitution, and under their insurance. It is however an activity including Bethel Church members and run according to Bethel's mission statement i.e. 'Seeking to know Jesus and serving to make him known'.

This year we have processed about 190 items at a success rate of around 60-75%. We have continued to see substantial increases in interest, volunteer fixer numbers and skills acquired. The customers come from the broad social demographic including many in Bethel's important age 25-40 range with children. We continue to get great customer feedback.

In 2023 we participated in the opening of a new repair cafe in Barry. Many of our fixers operate in 2 or more Repair Cafes which leverages our activity and enables Bethel members to influence a much larger pool of customers in the Vale.

'Outside Repair Cafe venues Bethel volunteer 'fixers' also assisted at ReStore in Barry before it was closed, but now assist in Enfys and British Red Cross charity shop operations on a regular basis...there is some element of outreach in both. We have also run a repair day at St Illtyds primary school for fabric repair.'

In 2024 we are expecting numbers of items fixed to grow to 250 or more, and we are also planning to attract a younger social demographic via different social media platforms. Thanks to all those that have helped!

Language Support for Ukrainian Refugees

Over the last 12 months, Ukrainian English Café has run once every school/college holiday, and has offered childcare with a bible story, in the same room as the teaching. Attendance has been between 2 and 5 adults who have brought their children with them.

Although numbers have remained low, solid, trusting relationships have been established with three local Ukrainian mums. Three of their children have attended holiday club and one attends kids club and brings his mum with him. The mums and children have also come to Bethel's community days.

The mums are now working part-time, looking for work and attending English classes at Barry and Bridgend Colleges and so English Café will no longer run, but the mums and a pre-school age child have been invited to Toddlers.

It has been a privilege to get alongside this group of mums and to show God's love and our love to them in their sadness.

Pastoral Team

This group is continuing to develop as we learn "what works best" for individuals in our fellowship.

The intention is to provide a point of contact so our fellowship can access Pastoral Care for themselves or others. We interpret Pastoral Care as Spiritual Emotional and Social support.

We're available for home visits or, if preferred, a companionable walk, or a trip to a coffee shop. An enjoyable addition is reading to individuals who can no longer read books but have always loved doing so. It's part of our goal to offer something flexible and individualised but always keeping God at the centre of these interventions.

We were meeting together on a monthly basis, to have the opportunity to review our interventions towards making adjustments should these become apparent. However due to a pretty full range of trials and tribulations amongst our team, meeting together hasn't been possible so we have kept in touch in various ways.

One of the secondary purposes of this group is to provide support and encouragement to individuals who are already deeply engaged in providing Pastoral Care.

We are very aware that our fellowship has a wealth of members who are providing an active range of support to groups and individuals already, within and beyond Connection Groups, friendship family and fellowship groups, we ask whether we can prayerfully support and encourage.

A further aim is people shouldn't fall through the net, God wants us to take care of each other and this Pastoral Group has this as a constant aim.

Renew Wellbeing

This is the second year of our Renew Wellbeing Café which provides a quiet space for those people with mild mental health difficulties and/or those people who are lonely.

It is a place where it is OK to be not OK.

A diverse range of activities is available including crafts, board games and jigsaws, quizzes, conversation, presentations and importantly a time for prayer and reflection. The Café has also been registered as a Warm Space as a response to the cost of living crisis.

There are eight regular hosts who have undertaken training and serve on a rota; these are complemented by three other volunteers. About 20 friends attend each week; there are over 40 friends who have attended at least once. Friends have been encouraged to participate in activities and have made short presentations, played the piano and have joined in musical sessions. New friendships have been established and others have blossomed. We are committed to a continuing review of our activities and organisation and seek to engage our friends in the development of the provision that is made.

We value our membership of the Wales family of Renew Wellbeing Cafés where we are able to participate in retreats, prayer sessions and exchanging ideas. We also provide some outreach to the Ukelele Group which meets on Tuesday afternoons.

Comments from friends have included: I look forward to coming on Tuesday afternoons; I value the friendship as I meet and talk with other people; there is a warm atmosphere; we enjoy a good chat and share experiences; we enjoy the refreshments; I find the reflections and prayer helpful.

It is important to record that the hosts have also been encouraged as they have participated in the activities, conversations and the opportunities for reflection; indeed Renew provides a time and space for the hosts to maintain their own wellbeing.

Health and Safety

Much of the day-to-day management of health and safety of the church premises has been undertaken and overseen by the current maintenance team managed by Tim Bunce.

Issues raised:

Water quality in manse - this was raised following the reports of the drinking water tasting unusual. It was confirmed that the water is mains fed rather than a tank as previously thought. As an interim measure all taps should be flushed for 2 minutes at least three times a week. This will prevent water sitting in the pipes becoming stagnant. Other measures will be considered if the water quality remains unchanged.
To be reviewed in 3 months.

Fire - A comprehensive fire risk assessment of the buildings has been undertaken by an independent consultancy. Tim Bunce has completed many of the recommendations regarding signage, emergency lighting etc. Some of the recommendations were felt to be unnecessary, for example the full fire alarm replacement. Our current arrangements are more than satisfactory but this will be regularly reviewed to ensure compliancy.
To be reviewed in 12 months.

Woodworm present in the chapel, notably in the upstairs handrails and balustrades. This is managed and monitored by keeping humidity levels low (15% R/H) through use of the dehumidifier. The affected areas of woodwork are checked by Linda Jelinek annually.
Nothing further to report.

Mezzanine in the garage has been deemed unsafe. A working party will be put in place to remove and replace with safe usable alternative but in the interim it will remain unused.
No timescale set.

Risk assessments for children work- Friday Club, Sunday Club, Sunday Youth are currently under one risk assessment. These need to be replaced by individual risk assessments for each activity. This will need to be tailored for the user group and will need to include the risk of children leaving the premises during activities or behaviours that put others at risk.
To be completed within 3 months.

Lone worker arrangements - we have members of church staff alone in the buildings on a regular basis so a lone worker risk assessment will be undertaken and any control actions will be implemented.
To be completed within 3 months.

Looking ahead:

With Tim now stepping down from this role, responsibility for health and safety between the new maintenance team and named health and safety person will be streamlined to make it an integral part of all maintenance activities. There will also need to be closer co-operation with the leadership team to ensure that the wider church activities are adequately supported in a health & safety context.

The current Health & Safety Policy will require reviewing this year. This will initially be undertaken by Owen Davies but will be passed to the Leadership Team for discussion and approval.

The upcoming building projects in the hall will need to be managed to ensure health and safety risks to members of the church and staff are mitigated.

As new activities start, risk assessments need to be put in place. Owen Davies will liaise with the relevant activity leader to ensure this happens. Our current accident book is designed for staff rather than members of the public fellowship. An additional version will be required for members of the public and others who are injured on our premises.

Premises

The premises group has sought to keep the premises looking in good shape and in a good/safe state of repair. Premises Maintenance is not an outreach activity, or immediately linked to the Bethel Vision, but is essential to facilitate use of the premises for its program of activities and for external group use.

The majority of the maintenance recently has been focused on the chapel, including the installation of new AV equipment and a new boiler/radiators which has been headed up by Ian Beresford.

The Chapel has been continually monitored for damp, and results are recorded in the H&S file in the Office.

As of March 2024, Tim Bunce has stepped down from the Maintenance team and we thank him for his many years of service to Bethel. Tim has done a wonderful job maintaining our premises and has passed the baton to Mike Thorne to continue in this vain.

Administrative Support

Helen, our Administrative Support Worker, is a key person in ensuring the ministry and mission of the church works smoothly. She fulfils an important role in supporting our minister and the Leadership Team to ensure the church functions efficiently. Helen oversees general correspondence, emails, phone calls and setting up appointments. Good communications are important in keeping the church updated with various weekly activities and news of the congregation; these are achieved through the preparation and publication of notice sheets, maintaining rotas and ensuring resources are available when required. The role has been extended to include corresponding with and booking guest speakers and also maintaining the payroll.

Children and Youth Update

Background/ Context

I have been in the role of Children and Youth Worker at Bethel Baptist Church, Llantwit Major for just under a year. As this is a new role within the church, a three year working plan outlining the priorities for Children and Youth work in and from Bethel was developed with the leadership team and shared with the fellowship at the Ordinary Church Meeting last November.

Children's and Youth work encompasses both our work with children and young people within the fellowship, and outreach activities for children and young people in our community. Children and Youth work within Bethel currently includes Sunday Youth, Sunday Club, Crèche and Vale Youth. Our outreach activities currently include Friday Club, Old Friends and regular work in schools (assemblies and clubs).

This report gives an overview of what has been happening in the last 12 months in line with the priority outcomes identified by the leadership team, some of the exciting ways God has been at work and has provided direction for this part of the work of our church. It also outlines the plans going into the next 12 months.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the fellowship for their support and prayers for children and youth work over the last 12 months. I am excited to be a part of this and even more excited to see where God is taking us!

Sunday Morning Teaching

We have between 8-10 children aged 4-11 attending Sunday Club each week, around 5 young people, ages 12-16, regularly in our Sunday Youth sessions, and 3 babies and toddlers in our crèche each week. The teaching in these groups is complemented by our monthly 4Every1 services and All Age part of Sunday Services.

The Sunday Club and Sunday Youth teams have trialed and implemented a new curriculum. Bible Project, developed by Lifeway, provides a comprehensive bible teaching program which is engaging and differentiated to suit different ages and stages across both Sunday Club and Sunday Youth. This means that all our children and young people are having teaching based on the same bible passages each week. Each week, the teaching includes a Christ Connection, showing children how all of scripture points to Jesus.

The way these materials are taught has also been something we have reviewed and refined over the last year in both Sunday Club and Sunday Youth. As teams we have looked at what is working well and areas for improvement.

In Sunday Club, we identified that many children weren't able to navigate the bible and we have ensured that all sessions include an opportunity to look up bible references as part of our activities. We also felt that there should be more emphasis on learning memory verses and children now learn key verses through songs and actions. We identified that while Sunday Club should be fun and enjoyable, it was important that this was seen predominantly as a teaching time.

In Sunday Youth we have focused on developing a consistent approach to sessions so that our young people know what to expect each session. The teaching focus has been in encouraging our young people to approach bible reading by asking 'What is the context of this passage? What does this teach me about God? What does this teach me about people? How does this change the way I think/ approach others / live my life?'

As teams, we have discussed and prayed about the way we prepare for sessions. One of the Sunday Club team commented that our preparation for teaching the children should carry the same importance as sermon preparation. With this in mind, Sunday Club leaders have access to leader bible studies and bible commentaries from which to prepare themselves for teaching. Materials and resources are provided within the curriculum which free our team to pray and prepare themselves spiritually rather than spending time preparing craft resources.

In both Sunday Club and Sunday Youth teams, we felt it was important that children and young people have the opportunity to continue and apply learning through the week. Sunday Club children have a Take Home sheet with family worship, family 17discussion question, activities and bible reading prompts. Sunday Youth have Daily Devotionals booklets to work through in the weeks following their sessions.

We have also considered how we can ensure that children and young people who are not able to attend every Sunday can still be involved. We have developed the Sunday Club and Sunday Youth pages on the website and these are updated to include the content, videos and songs from our latest sessions.

In the last months we have reintroduced a crèche. There is already a need to increase the size of our team as the number of babies and toddlers attending has grown and in anticipation of further growth following restarting Bethel Tots.

As is the national picture, we have also noticed an increase in specific needs in our groups. The wide range of ages and abilities also presents a unique challenge. Our team has experimented with a range of teaching styles and approaches over the last year and we will continue to develop and adapt as needed to best suit the children in our groups. Going forwards, we are looking for training opportunities to increase the confidence and capacity across our teaching team so that we can continue to provide the best for our children and young people.

The teams use a Whatsapp group to communicate and to meet to pray. There are plans to set up a small group who will meet regularly to pray for our children and young people, God's guidance in our sessions and for our teaching teams.

We are so blessed to have a growing Sunday Club and creche, and to have young people as part of our fellowship. It has been a joy to see them learn and grow this year. Please continue to pray for our children and young people, and our wonderfully dedicated teams.

Opportunities for our Young People (11-16)

As with many churches, we currently have a relatively small number of young people within the fellowship. It is important for these young people to have opportunities to enjoy fellowship with other young people. We have continued to meet with other youth groups within the Vale Partnership of Churches on a monthly basis for social events, teaching and worship. These evenings have taken many forms and this year we have attended and hosted

several games nights, Message Wales worship evenings, bowling and the Message Bus.

In addition to our evenings, we are looking forward to a youth camping weekend away in July to attend SPREE Wales. Nearly all of our young people are attending, as well as a few young people who currently don't attend on a Sunday morning. The weekend will be an opportunity for lots of fun, socialising, strengthening existing friendships, making new friends, worship and teaching.

Work With Children and Young People in Our Community

Old Friends

The Old Friends team welcomes children from St Illtyd's Primary School to the church hall on a fortnightly basis. We are currently working with 3 different classes and each of our 'Old Friends' works with a small group of around 5 children. This has enabled great relationships to develop over the last year and it is so lovely to see this. In each session we share a bible story, enjoy a craft activity and play games. This has developed in the last year and sessions are now planned by us. We are so thankful to God that the school are so incredibly receptive in allowing us to share bible teaching and the gospel message with the children. The team is amazing and 18 there have been a number of incredible conversations that have happened over the last year.

Please continue to pray for our wonderful team, for the relationship with the school and for God to water the seeds that have been sown this year.

Friday Club

Friday Club has grown significantly in the last year. From around 6 children a week, we are now regularly welcoming 20 children a week. There is a notable link between Old Friends and Friday Club, with the vast majority of new children having first been introduced to Bethel through time spent in Old Friends and then choosing to come back on a Friday evening.

There have been some changes within our team, but we now have a really strong, committed team. We also have two young people helping on the team who are working towards Duke of Edinburgh awards. We have developed good relationships with families and having a dedicated 'welcome' person each week has been invaluable as this has enabled conversations with parents and families to take place while the rest of the team works with the children. An increasing number of parents have chosen

to stay with their children and we have started providing tea and coffee and a space for parents to chat.

Friday Club sessions have developed over the last year to suit the needs of the children attending. We offer a variety of 'free choice' activities including crafts, team games, construction activities, board games etc. Children's worship music helps create a welcoming, warm environment. We end each session with a bible story video. Initially, we found that children weren't engaging with this and have experimented with a variety of ways to make this more accessible. There has been a noticeable increase in children's engagement with bible stories and discussions. Comments like "God loves us" and "Jesus can do anything" have become increasingly common from non-church children.

As with all of our groups, there are a number of children with specific needs and there has been a need to significantly tighten up our risk assessments and risk management practices due to several incidences of challenging behaviour.

The Friday Club Team is incredible. There is a strong sense of team and recognition that the work is God's. We routinely pray before sessions, but more recently, we have been meeting earlier for team time, tea and cake, and to pray as a team for each other and for the session. Please continue to pray for this outreach, for the children and families who attend, and for the team.

Schools work

Assembly visits take place in both Llantwit Major primary schools fortnightly (Ysgol y Ddraig and St Illtyds primary school) and have also worked alongside Mentor Ysgolion to deliver Y Cam Nesaf materials to year 6 in Ysgol Dewi Sant.

We provide a weekly extracurricular Games Club in Ysgol y Ddraig. There are seasonal opportunities which are planned for the coming year including Christmas, Easter and work with Y6 children moving to secondary school.

Work with young people in Llantwit Major school has continued through a number of assemblies. There has also been involvement in PSHE days which involved teaching across year 7 and 8. We are looking into working with the RE department to start a lunchtime club. We are also in the early stages of working with an organisation called Kintsugi Hope in order to offer provision of wellbeing support for young people within the school.

In addition to the regular work in schools, in July last year the Missional Links Texan Team visited and we worked in Llantwit Major school for a full week as well as sessions in primary schools. The team is visiting this year from 29th June - 5th July. We are currently organising school bookings for this week. Please pray for openings in schools for the team.

In addition to the work in schools during the week, we are planning an evening event on Thursday 4th July for upper primary and secondary school age young people involving working with the Message Wales and bringing the Message Bus to Llantwit. This event is intended to advertise and launch our outreach Youth Group, which we plan to start in September.

Stay and Play

Following the information days for families with children with additional learning needs, we have been working in partnership with Action for Children to provide Stay and Play sessions for these families and children. This has grown slowly over time but we now have some local families attending regularly. Sadly, Action for Children have lost their funding to continue this, and the neurodiversity team at St David's Hospital have been in touch to see if we would continue to run these in school holidays. It would be great to continue to provide this much needed space for children and families but there is a need for a team to enable this to happen. Please pray that the right people would feel called to support this outreach work.

Bethel Tots Refresh

We have a team in place to restart Bethel Tots Refresh, however illness within the team has prevented us meeting, and we have postponed meeting until after Easter. Bethel Tot's will run on Friday Mornings with a start date to be confirmed once the team meets.

We are planning to follow the Refresh model which focuses on the adults who bring the children while providing a safe, stimulating environment for children to play.

The sessions aim to be:

Physically refreshing: coffee, tea, croissants, comfortable, safe, relaxing space

Emotionally refreshing: warm welcome, friendly faces, supportive environment.

Spiritually refreshing: Pause for thought with short bible based talk each session, take home bible verse postcard. Prayer available from the team.

We may also be partnering with Flying Start who support families in areas of need as Llantwit has recently been identified as having increased numbers of families needing support. Please pray for our team. The potential partnership with Flying Start and for the families who will attend.

Safeguarding

With an increase in the number of children attending and new team members, there has been a need to review and implement a number of safeguarding practices. Level 1 training was offered and undertaken by most of the children and youth teams last summer and we have level 2 training booked for September.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OVERVIEW

We are thankful to God for the faithfulness and generosity of the congregation throughout this period. A full set of Annual Accounts for the Financial Year: 1 November 2023 to 31 October 2024, have been prepared and independently examined and are available as Annex A to this document.

RESERVES POLICY

The Trustees regard the balance of £60,000 carried forward in the General Fund as adequate and ensure that the church maintains a minimum reserve of £60,000 at all times. This is a greater amount than is specified in our Reserves Policy, but at a time of ever increasing operating costs, the Trustees felt it to be a prudent measure, until a formal review of our Reserves Policy could be undertaken.

EXAMINATION OF ACCOUNTS

The Church Accounts for the period of November 2022 to October 2023 are to be prepared and examined by Stewardship, in line with the Church's requirement to have its accounts independently examined.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES

Charity law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each accounting year which record the receipts and payments of the charity for the year.

We are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose, with reasonable accuracy and at any time, the financial position of the charity and enable us to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011.

We also have a responsibility to safeguard the assets of the charity and to take reasonable steps to prevent fraud or any other irregularities.

Approval

This report was approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Ian Beresford

Ian Beresford (Aug 21, 2024 08:53 GMT+1)

Ian Michael Beresford

Treasurer/Trustee
Bethel Baptist Church
Llantwit Major

Date: Aug 21, 2024

Annex:

A. Bethel Baptist Church - Report & Accounts - Year Ended 31 October 2023

Bethel Baptist Church, Llantwit Major

Annex A: Independent Examiner's Report
and Accounts

Year ended 31 October 2023

Stewardship 
Active generosity

1 Lamb's Passage, London EC1Y 8AB
www.stewardship.org.uk

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO THE TRUSTEES OF
Bethel Baptist Church, Llantwit Major

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Bethel Baptist Church Llantwit Major ('the charity') for the year ended 31 October 2023 on pages 29 to 31 following.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Sarah Crispin
Sarah Crispin (Aug 22, 2024 10:24 GMT+1)

Sarah Crispin ACA
Stewardship
1 Lamb's Passage
LONDON
EC1Y 8AB

Date: Aug 22, 2024

Bethel Baptist Church, Llantwit Major

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2023

		Unrestricted Funds			
		General Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	
Notes		£	£	£	2023 £
					2022 £
Income receipts					
Offerings		90,572	-	-	90,572
Gifts to the church		240	-	-	240
Gifts for Mission Beyond Llantwit		-	-	615	615
Gifts for local outreach		-	-	-	-
Income tax recovered on gifts		23,004	-	-	23,004
Refunds		129	-	-	129
Interest from deposit accounts		4,079	-	-	4,079
Sundries		65	-	-	65
		<u>118,089</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>615</u>	<u>118,704</u>
		<u>118,089</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>615</u>	<u>118,704</u>
Total receipts					
		<u>118,089</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>615</u>	<u>118,704</u>
Payments					
Payments in relation to charitable activities undertaken directly	2	101,947	2,030	615	104,592
		<u>101,947</u>	<u>2,030</u>	<u>615</u>	<u>104,592</u>
Total payments					
		<u>101,947</u>	<u>2,030</u>	<u>615</u>	<u>104,592</u>
Net of receipts / (payments) before		16,142	(2,030)	-	14,112
Transfers between funds	3	-	-	-	-
		<u>16,142</u>	<u>(2,030)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>14,112</u>
Net movement in funds					
		<u>16,142</u>	<u>(2,030)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>14,112</u>
Cash funds as at last year end		136,889	4,687	38,289	179,865
Cash funds at this year end	A	<u>153,031</u>	<u>2,657</u>	<u>38,289</u>	<u>193,977</u>

The notes on page 31 form part of these accounts.

Bethel Baptist Church, Llantwit Major
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted funds	2023	2022
		General funds	Designated funds			
		£	£	£	£	£
A Cash funds						
Cash at bank with immediate access		1,618	-	-	1,618	88,521
Notice deposits		151,413	2,657	38,289	192,359	91,344
		<u>153,031</u>	<u>2,657</u>	<u>38,289</u>	<u>193,977</u>	<u>179,865</u>
B Other monetary assets						
Gift aid due to charity		21,200	-	-	21,200	23,004
		<u>21,200</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>21,200</u>	<u>23,004</u>
C Liabilities						
Falling due within one year						
Taxes due		953	-	-	953	503
Fee for Independent Examination		1,230	-	-	1,230	-
		<u>2,183</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,183</u>	<u>503</u>
D Assets retained for charity's own use						
					Current value	
					£	
Chapel building, church hall, and land in centre of Llantwit Major					2,000,000	
Music and PA equipment					300	
Computers and IT					2,000	
Furniture					-	
Motor vehicles (give brief details)					-	
					<u>2,002,300</u>	

Land & building value reflects the insurance value. Other assets and valued based on an estimate by trustees

E Guarantees and secured debts

The charity has not given any guarantees and has not provided its assets as security for any liabilities.

The accounts were approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Ian Beresford
Ian Beresford (Aug 21, 2024 08:53 GMT+1)
 Ian Michael Beresford

Date: Aug 21, 2024

The notes on page 31 form part of these accounts.

Bethel Baptist Church, Llantwit Major

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2023

1 Accounting policies

The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis and comprise a statement that shows the charity's receipts and payments, a statement that summarises the charity's assets and liabilities and related notes. The accountancy profession have determined that only accounts prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards present a 'true and fair' view and, as these receipts and payments accounts have not (and cannot) be prepared in accordance with accounting standards, these accounts do not present (and are not intended to present) a 'true and fair' view of the charity's financial activities and state of affairs.

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity. Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes. Restricted funds are donations which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors; they include donations received from appeals for specific activities or projects.

	<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>		Restricted Funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
	General funds	Designated funds			
	£	£	£	£	£
2 Payments in relation to charitable activities undertaken directly					
Employment costs (see note 3)	64,698	-	-	64,698	51,470
Worship activities	1,652	-	-	1,652	6,486
Mission beyond Llantwit	11,075	-	615	11,690	12,302
Local outreach	3,190	2,030	-	5,220	3,015
Property maintenance/ refurbishment	6,462	-	-	6,462	2,885
Utilities	5,426	-	-	5,426	5,154
Cleaning	2,980	-	-	2,980	2,700
Insurance	1,202	-	-	1,202	1,139
Office costs	5,262	-	-	5,262	3,322
	<u>101,947</u>	<u>2,030</u>	<u>615</u>	<u>104,592</u>	<u>88,473</u>

3 Transactions with related parties

Phil Hibbert served as church leader and was paid £28,271 (2022: £20,755) for serving in that capacity, not for serving as trustee; these payments are permitted by the charity's governing document.

In addition the charity incurred expenditure totalling £17,462 (2022: £17,332) in respect of the provision of accommodation (which is customary for ministers) to Phil Hibbert, who is a trustee so that they could better perform their duties.

4 Movement of funds

	Opening balance	Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Closing balance
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	136,889	118,089	(101,947)	-	153,031
Designated funds					
Benevolent Fund	4,687	-	(2,030)	-	2,657
	<u>4,687</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(2,030)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,657</u>
Restricted funds					
Building Fund	38,289	-	-	-	38,289
Mission Fund	-	615	(615)	-	-
	<u>38,289</u>	<u>615</u>	<u>(615)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>38,289</u>
Total funds	<u>179,865</u>	<u>118,704</u>	<u>(104,592)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>193,977</u>

The Benevolent Fund is a designated fund administered and used at the discretion of the trustees to assist church members in need.
The Building Fund is a restricted fund for building projects associated with the existing buildings.