

THE OLIVE TREE CHURCH

England & Wales · Charity number 1196158

Details

Status Registered

Legal form Other

Registered 2021-10-14

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

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Blenheim Crescent
Luton
LU3 1HB

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Activities

Objects: THE PURPOSE OF THE CHARITY IS TO ADVANCE THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IN THE AREA OF BENEFIT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OF THE PARTICIPATING CHURCHES. IN ACHIEVING ITS PURPOSE, THE CHARITY WILL ENGAGE IN A RANGE OF ACTIVITIES, EITHER ON ITS OWN OR WITH OTHERS, INCLUDING (BUT NOT RESTRICTED TO):A) THE CELEBRATION OF PUBLIC WORSHIP; B) THE TEACHING OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH; C) MISSION AND EVANGELISM; D) PASTORAL WORK, INCLUDING VISITING THE SICK AND THE BEREAVED; E) THE PROVISION OF FACILITIES WITH A CHRISTIAN ETHOS FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, INCLUDING (BUT NOT RESTRICTED TO) THE ELDERLY, THE YOUNG AND OTHER GROUPS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS; AND F) THE SUPPORT OF OTHER CHARITIES IN THE UK AND OVERSEAS.

Activities: The Olive Tree Church is a Christian faith in the Area of Benefit in accordance with the principles and practices of the Participating Churches. In achieving its purpose, the Olive Tree Church will engage in a range of activities, either on its own or with others, including (but not restricted to):a. the celebration of public worship; b. the teaching of the Christian faith; c. mission and

Classification

- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space
- **What:** Religious Activities
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Luton

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-08-31	£111,200	£122,571	-	-
2024-08-31	£114,394	£144,494	-	-
2023-08-31	£130,360	£108,461	-	-
2022-08-31	£114,993	£133,574	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Dr Louise Newport		2019-05-01
Helen Owen		2019-05-01
Madit Grant		2019-05-01
Peace Okyere		2019-05-01

THE OLIVE TREE CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1196158

Accounts



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Trustees' annual report (including Directors' report) for the period

From: September 1st, 2024, To: August 31st 2025.

Charity name: The Olive Tree Church

Charity registration number: 1196158

Company number: N A

Objectives and activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	The Olive Tree Church is a Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership formed from Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church and St Margaret's Methodist Church, in Luton, Bedfordshire. <i>'Baptists and Methodists United in Christ serving our community'</i>. The partnership was formed in 2016 and formally constituted in 2021, with the adoption of its Constitution on 21 March 2021. The purpose of the Charity is to advance the Christian faith in the Area of Benefit in accordance with the principles and practices of the Participating Churches. In achieving its purpose, the Charity engages in a range of activities, either on its own or with others, including (but not restricted to): - the celebration of public worship; - the teaching of the Christian faith; - mission and evangelism; - pastoral work, including visiting the sick and the bereaved; - the provision of facilities with a Christian ethos for the local community, including (but not restricted to) the elderly, the young and other groups with special needs; and - the support of other charities in the UK and overseas. Luton is acknowledged to be an area of high deprivation, and with its numerous cross-cultural issues, we find that there is tremendous benefit in the work of this church. Members of The Olive Tree believe that it is the core of our mission to serve the community in this situation. The church vision statement includes, <i>'We believe we are called to be a Christian presence and witness in our multicultural area, sharing the good news of God's love and forgiveness with all'</i> and <i>'We aim to be good Christian neighbours and develop deeper relationships with other faiths represented in our neighbourhood'</i>. The Olive Tree Church continues to thrive and serve through the grace of God.

Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	It is a privilege to introduce our fourth annual report, which documents the many and varied ways in which The Olive Tree Church lives out its mission to be an inclusive, evangelistic, growing, justice-seeking church. The calling of The Olive Tree Church is to wholeheartedly embrace the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, expressing this commitment through a life marked by love, fellowship, and dedicated discipleship. Our mission is to reflect the love of Christ in all that we do - 'Knowing Jesus and making Jesus known' - through worship, pastoral care, evangelism, and community outreach. This second year with our Baptist minister Rev. Michael Anokye we have remained steadfast in our vision to transform lives and bring hope to our community. A particular highlight of the year was to hold a Baptism service for four church members and to receive others into membership. We have continued with our local neighbourhood focus, supporting this deprived area of Luton, and although our focus has inevitably shifted without a community worker to help run and support activities, we have continued to be active in many areas, with a regular Baby and Toddler group, NHS Childrens' Clinic, a monthly Messy Church for local families and a fortnightly Thursday Drop-in Cafe. We have also held regular Foodbank collections, supported a Home Group, and continue to build a growing Youth Group. Social activities such as a Barbecue and Cream Tea and Fun Day have been held outside, benefiting from the good weather and the grass area at the side of the Olive Tree church. We have also held a Quiz Night with Ploughman's supper at the Olive Branch. Sunday school outings and Fundraising events have also been well attended. Harvest Supper combined lovely food, table games and opportunities to strengthen relationships, with donations to Luton Food Bank. Christmas encouraged further community engagement with a Christingle, Nativity Service and Carol Service well attended and we were also joined by Father Luke and friends from St Andrews.
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		Various community groups continued to use our premises, (both the 'Tree' site, previously Blenheim Baptist, and the 'Branch' site, previously St Margaret's Methodist), including a regular Scouts, Guides and Brownies groups, Karate club and three different Christian churches. The Scouts, Guides and Brownies groups provide a range of activities and excursions (such as visiting Wrest Park, Bletchley Park and Luton Town Hall, including attending Committee meetings), Unit Meeting Activities, working towards various badges, raising funds for charities and benefiting the community. We remained committed supporters of both Baptist and Methodist work through BMS World Mission and All We Can - the Methodist Relief and Development Charity; Action for children and also donated to other charities such as Christian Aid and Azalea. These monies are passed on to the charities directly.
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	The Trustees of the Olive Tree Church have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit, such that all of the activities, projects and services provided by the Olive Tree Church are all regarded to be of public benefit in service to the community.

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	- N/A
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	- N/A
Contribution made by volunteers	Para 1.38	- N/A
Other		- N/A

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.	Para 1.20	The Olive Tree Church continues to provide benefit to: - Church members, both old and young, with opportunities to encourage and increase their faith and Christian witness, receiving regular fellowship, home groups and activities, and prayerful support with a Thursday night prayer meeting. Support continues to be provided in many different forms where needed, such as hospital and care home, and home visits to those experiencing illness, bereavement or personal struggles, lifts to medical appointments, pastoral care and financial help. This year we offered counselling, prayer and companionship to individuals coping with job loss, loneliness or difficult family situations and established an intercessory prayer team to uplift those in need, whether in person after church services, over the phone or in absentia. This ministry has been a lifeline for many, reinforcing our commitment to being a compassionate and prayerful community. - Children through our Sunday School, which now has up to 17 children from one year old twins to 14 yr olds. The children benefit from supporting each other, learning life lessons from Bible stories and skills from crafts and games. They also led two All Age Services and the Nativity service, growing in confidence through reading and presenting. Two of our young people were also baptised. - Our youth group as it continues to grow, teaching our teenagers to cook with various challenges such as making and tasting different types of soup, cooking and tossing pancakes, making scones and smoothies. We explored different social activities including bowling trips and walking in the countryside, as well as helping those in Eastern European countries by packing up 9 Christmas shoeboxes. Physical and mental benefits continued with various types of games, quizzes and fun activities, teaching the teenagers to play table tennis, table football and badminton. This group also developed their reading and presentation skills through increased participation in church services and have also started to support the multimedia and sound desk, which can hopefully help to further build their confidence. - Members of the community, where people feel valued, heard and encouraged, with a variety of activities to join and support where needed such as the parent and toddler group, NHS Baby clinic, drop in cafe, Youth Group activities, uniformed groups such as Scouts, Brownies and Guides, and Messy Church family activities with on average 40-55 each time from a wide mixture of backgrounds, culture and understanding of church. Messy Church follows a theme each month with a bible story, crafts, games,
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		food and discussion. Social events have included fireworks night and a Messy Funday in July. - Individuals, for example those attending the Thursday Drop-In Cafe have received a warm and welcoming space for fellowship and support, with food, conversation and prayer to create a tangible demonstration of Christ's love. As well as receiving food and clothing, people have also been helped to pay for transport, household bills and rent. Our previous community worker was also supported in her book launch in February 2025, with an event for the community including refreshments for all those she has helped over the years. - Local churches and community groups, by providing our buildings to rent, meet in and use, such as Luton-based 'Oasis', and the Karate Club. This year we also installed a new heating system at the Tree and improvements to our entrance way and paths. - Luton Foodbank recipients, from regular church collections, including at Harvest Festivals. - Various local Luton and UK charities by regular donations, raising awareness of their work, and supporting where needed. - We continue to use a range of digital and media tools and approaches to advertise services and events including Facebook, the Church website, noticeboards and Instagram. Regular updates and photographs are shared in our church newsletter with good use of email and WhatsApp, as well as weekly announcements in church services, to share messages and updates with the church congregation and the wider community, using a range of printed materials for the digitally excluded. - We continue to update all our safeguarding and Health and Safety policies to meet current legal requirements. We attend a range of Safeguarding and advanced Safeguarding training using experts and processes from the Methodist Church Circuit. We also have regular governance discussions at the Leadership Team meetings to ensure we remain compliant and safe.

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Achievements against objectives set	Para 1.41	- N/A
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	- N/A
Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	- N/A
Other		- N/A

Financial review

review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	The unrestricted income for the year ended 31 August 2025 was £107,993 (Last Year: £114,500). Due to the cost of living, it is likely that utility bills will continue to increase. Unrestricted expenses for the year amounted to £118,760 (LY:144,225). This (<i>reduction</i>) in expenditure was mainly because of (<i>reduced re air and maintenance costs</i>).
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Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	The reserves policy for the Olive Tree Church is modelled on that recommended by the Methodist Church, which is in accordance with the Charity Commission's Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP). The Olive Tree Church receives its income from donations by church members (including Gift Aid), by letting the buildings (and renting the Manse, when vacant). Having considered our mission plans for the future, we employ a Baptist Minister, holding funds to cover at least 3 years of salary and associated costs, in addition to the cost of meeting a reduced Circuit Assessment and covering our normal expenditure and routine repair and maintenance costs for the buildings. At present, The Olive Tree Church holds the (<i>higher</i>) level of reserves and these will be maintained by regular donations from the congregation. If required, funding towards specific aims will be requested, and there will be careful monitoring of expenditure.
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	As at the end of the financial year (31 August 2025), the reserves were: Unrestricted Funds (£113,231) Restricted Funds (£-490)
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	N/A
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	N/A
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	The Olive Tree Church continues to consolidate progress with our Baptist minister, shaping the church and enabling us to meet the challenges of the future in a very distinctive mission field. We have new members and a thriving junior church. As such we have no concerns for this charity continuing as an ongoing concern.

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	- N/A
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	- N/A
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	- N/A
Other		- N/A

Structure, governance and management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document: for example, trust deed, memorandum and articles of association etc	Para 1.25	The Olive Tree Church is a Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership which was approved by the Baptist and Methodist Church Denominational authorities and the Sponsoring Body: Churches Together in Bedfordshire on 18th April 2018, having been first brought together in 2016. The Governing Document for the Olive Tree Church is its Constitution, which was finally adopted by the Leadership Team and church members on 21st March 2021.
How is the charity constituted? for example limited company, unincorporated association, CIO	Para 1.25	The Olive Tree Church is constituted as a Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership between Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church and St Margaret's Methodist Church, with allegiance to the Baptist Union of Great Britain and The Methodist Church to serve the Area of Luton.

trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	The Constitution states that the Olive Tree Church is administered and managed by a body of Trustees consisting of A) ex officio Trustees, being the ministers of the LEP, B) Four elected Trustees, elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting and, C) Not more than three co-opted Trustees, appointed by the Trustees. Elected Trustees shall hold office from the end of the Annual Congregational Meeting at which they are selected until the end of the third such meeting after their appointment but shall be eligible for re-election at that meeting. No person may be elected as an Elected Trustee or appointed as a Co-opted Trustee unless he or she: A) is a member; B) Is aged 18 or above; C) Is not disqualified from acting as a Trustee by virtue of section 72 Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision); and D) Has indicated his or her willingness to serve as a Trustee. Co-opted Trustees serve until the end of the next Annual Congregational Meeting following their appointment.
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	Para 1.51	- N/A
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	- N/A

Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	- N/A
Other		- N/A

Reference and administrative details

Charity name	THE OLIVE TREE CHURCH
Other name the charity uses	
Registered charity number	1196158
Charity's principal address	42-46 Blenheim Crescent Luton Bedfordshire LU3 1HB

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Rev Michael Anokye	LEP Minister (Baptist) - Chair		The Baptist Church
2	Madit Grant	Treasurer		Annual Congregational Meeting
3	Helen Owen	Communications		Annual Congregational Meeting
4	Dr Louise Newport	Youth Leader		Annual Congregational Meeting
5	Peace Okyere	Safeguarding		Annual Congregational Meeting
6	Ramon Akib	(Co-opted)		Annual Congregational Meeting

7	Claire McGluckin	(Co-opted)	1st Sept 2024 to 31st August 2025	Annual Congregational Meeting
8				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

Director name	
- N/A	

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year
The Baptist Union Corporation Ltd	
The Methodist Church	

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	- N/A
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	- N/A
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	- N/A

Additional information (optional)

Names and addresses of advisers (optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
- N/A		

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (optional information)

- N/A

Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

- N/A

Other optional information

- N/A

Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report (including directors' report) above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees directors

Signature(s)

Madit Grant

Full name(s)

Mrs Madit Grant

Position (for example
Secretary, Chair, etc)

Church Trustee

Date

01 June 2026



Olive Tree Church

Reports

2024-5

Minister's Report

The Olive Tree Church: Reflecting on 2024

The calling of The Olive Tree Church is to wholeheartedly embrace the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, expressing this commitment through a life marked by love, fellowship, and dedicated discipleship. Our mission is to reflect the love of Christ in all that we do—through worship, pastoral care, evangelism, and community outreach. As we enter 2025, we remain steadfast in our vision to transform lives and bring hope to our community.

Our Commitment in 2024

In fulfilling our calling, we dedicated our resources and energy in 2024 to:

- Deepening awareness of God's ever-present love and celebrating the profound depth of His grace and mercy.
- Encouraging spiritual growth and discipleship through mutual support, learning, and pastoral care.
- Extending our hands as good neighbours, providing practical assistance and challenging injustice.
- Expanding our evangelistic mission, sharing the love of Christ and welcoming new people into the faith community.

Key Achievements in 2024:

Community Outreach

At The Olive Tree, we believe that sharing the Good News is about forging relationships and demonstrating the love of Christ in action. Our community outreach efforts in 2024 focused on:

- Encouraging members to prepare themselves for:
 - Ø Engaging in street evangelism and personal outreach, inviting people to explore faith in a welcoming environment.
 - Ø Partnering with local organisations to serve those in need, showing God's love through acts of kindness.
 - Ø Organising special community events to share testimonies, preach the Gospel, and create meaningful conversations about faith.

These efforts have strengthened our church's presence in Luton and will allow us to touch many lives with Christ's message of hope and redemption.

Pastoral Care: Supporting and Encouraging Those in Need

Our pastoral care team has been a pillar of comfort and encouragement, offering vital emotional and spiritual support to those facing challenges. In 2024, we:

- Provided home and hospital visits to those experiencing illness, bereavement, or personal struggles.

- Offered counselling, prayer, and companionship to individuals coping with job loss, loneliness, or difficult family situations.
- Established an intercessory prayer team to uplift needy individuals—whether in person, over the phone, or absentia.

This ministry has been a lifeline for many, reinforcing our commitment to being a compassionate and prayerful community.

Thursday Free Drop-in Café: A Hub for Community Outreach

This year we have started a Thursday Free Drop-in Café, where we opened our doors to all, providing a warm, welcoming space for fellowship and support. We hope and pray the this initiative will:

- Foster community spirit, offering a safe place to connect, share stories, and find encouragement.
- Serve as a bridge for those seeking faith or struggling with isolation, allowing us to minister to them in a non-intimidating setting.
- Provide food, conversation, and prayer, creating a tangible demonstration of Christ's love.

We pray that the café will be instrumental in strengthening our bond with the wider community and offering a beacon of hope to many.

Thursday Evening Prayer: Seeking God for Spiritual Renewal

Recognising the power of prayer, our Thursday Evening Prayer sessions became a cornerstone of our spiritual life in 2024. These gatherings have:

- Created a sacred space where individuals seek God's guidance, healing, and restoration.
- Strengthened our church's unity and commitment to interceding for our community.
- Encouraged deeper faith and reliance on God, inspiring personal and collective transformation.

This initiative has not only deepened our congregation's spiritual journey but also provided an opportunity for the wider community to experience God's presence in a profound way.

The Impact of Our Ministry on The Olive Tree Church and the Community

Through our various ministries and initiatives in 2024, The Olive Tree Church has witnessed incredible transformation. The positive impact includes:

- Stronger faith and discipleship as individuals have grown in their knowledge and love of Christ.
- A more connected and supported community where people feel valued, heard, and encouraged.
- A greater sense of purpose as we extend God's love to those around us.

As we enter 2025, we are more committed than ever to our mission. With renewed energy and faith, we will continue to be a beacon of light, sharing Christ's love and serving those in need.

Looking Ahead

With unwavering faith, we expand our ministries and deepen our outreach efforts. We invite every member of our congregation and the wider community to journey with us in faith, service, and love.

May God continue to bless The Olive Tree Church as we embrace the opportunities and challenges of 2025, standing firm in His calling and purpose for us all.

In Christ's love and service,
On behalf of The Olive Tree Church Leadership Team

Rev Michael Anokye

Senior Steward's Report

This year has passed rapidly. The past few months have been particularly busy for both me and the team; their support has been invaluable, making the tasks at hand significantly more manageable.

East year we put together schedule of events. Over the past year we have had several enjoyable events.

Mary Huffman's book launch Saturday 24th February. Coffee morning with cakes. Invitations were sent out to the wider community families to join us.

On 17th March the children of the Olive Tree Church invited all church members and friends to lunch straight after the service to enjoy some time together and to share food and drink prepared by them.

Quiz Night Saturday 18th May at the Tree. The quiz night is a regular feature in our social calendar, and we usually do it by selling a table of 6 tickets and the person brings their friends and family to be in their team. We do it differently each year, but I would say it is easy to manage this way and easier to sell tickets. All donations received go to charity.

In May we celebrated a Baptismal service when Jack, Jacob, Brittani and Ben were baptised.

The Church Barbecue and Cream Tea event took place on Saturday, 3rd August at the Tree. Strawberries and cream were served with some music on the church lawn. There were family games and activities. The barbecue was well-attended, and many people participated in the event.

Harvest Supper 28th September - buffet with a range of foods and desserts. With games for the family and some music. This year the Harvest gifts were donated to the Luton Foodbank.

In November we were pleased to welcome Peace, Marvellous, Mariam, Hannah and Vincent into church membership.

Toy and Nativity Service – 15th December. Gifts of toys went to the Salvation Army Christmas toy appeal as in previous years. We also collected to buy gifts for the ladies supported by Azalea.

A Christmas Carol Service by candlelight took place on 22nd December it was a joint Carol Service with St. Andrew's Church.

We have been pleased to welcome new people coming to Sunday services, but we also have to record those of our fellowship who have died during the year – Beryl Fulcher, Arthur Fielding, Kathleen Snoxell and Ron Wright. They have all served the Olive Tree in different ways and we are grateful for their contributions to the life of the church and give thanks to God for their service.

Our weekly worship services have been led by our minister Rev Michael Anokye and visiting preachers from both Baptist and Methodist churches.

Madit Grant

Trustees Report

The Olive Tree Church is a local ecumenical partnership of Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church and St Margaret's Methodist Church, in Luton. The partnership was formed in 2016 and formally constituted in 2021.

It is a privilege to introduce this annual report, which documents the many and varied ways in which The Olive Tree Church has faced the challenges of the times and lives out its mission to be an inclusive, evangelistic, growing, justice-seeking church.

The calling of The Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission. Most of the work of the Church occurs within or is associated with local community within Luton.

Luton is acknowledged to be an area of high deprivation, and with its numerous cross-cultural issues, we find that there is tremendous benefit in this work. Members of The Olive Tree believe that it is the core of our mission to serve the community in this situation. The church vision statement includes, 'We believe we are called to be a Christian presence and witness in our multicultural area, sharing the good news of God's love and forgiveness with all.' and 'We aim to be good Christian neighbours and develop deeper relationships with other faiths represented in our neighbourhood.'

As well as our local neighbourhood focus, we are committed supporters of Baptist work through BMS World Mission and Methodist work and charities such as All We Can - the Methodist Relief and Development charity; Action for children and others.

While the church has achieved notable successes, it also faces challenges that must be addressed thoughtfully and collectively. Key issues impacting the church's growth and sustainability and proposes actionable steps in alignment with its mission and purpose.

In conclusion, the challenges facing The Olive Tree Church—financial, operational, or spiritual—must be addressed with prayerful discernment and a commitment to unity. By fostering open dialogue, ensuring financial sustainability, and embracing the diversity of worship styles, the church can overcome these challenges and thrive as a Local Ecumenical Partnership.

Let us remember:

"How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!" (Psalm 133:1)

CAMEO report

The Olive Tree Church Youth Group - 'CAMEO' ('Come and Meet Each Other') is led by Mark and Louise Newport and usually meets on the last Sunday each month from 5.30 to 7.30pm at the Tree site in Blenheim Crescent. We are grateful for the help of Peace and Marvellous Akib as well as the dedication of parents who support their children to come and take part.

Activities for this year have included cooking challenges - making and tasting different types of soup, cooking and tossing pancakes, making scones and smoothies, also going bowling in Dunstable, walking on 'Pegsdon Heights near Hitchin, packing up 9 Christmas shoeboxes for 'Samaritan's Purse' and of course quizzes and playing various games together, including giant 'pick up sticks', 'dipsticks', 'What do you meme?', table tennis, table football and badminton.

This year our young people have also taken part in church services, developing their reading and presentation skills, which we hope to do more of. We will also start to explore the different ways that people help around the church, to see where our young people can shadow others and begin to help out, for example with refreshments and multi-media, learning new skills and experience as they do, which can hopefully build their confidence.

We regularly have a core group of 6-8 children ranging from 9-14 years old from our church families and it's been great to see them growing in confidence and getting to know each other better. Other children joining us from time to time include families from Messy Church and Scouts. Whilst we are in touch with St Andrews, they do not yet have young people to join us. We are also connected to Youthscape, sharing details of activities that our young ones can join in with.

As ever we would welcome your prayers, both for our young people and leaders, and we are always interested in hearing new ideas for activities.

Finally, if you know anyone who is interested in joining us, please call Louise on 07976 743767. Thank you!

Sunday School

2024 has been a really busy year in our Sunday School, where we now have up to 17 children from 14 years to one year old twins regularly joining us. Louise looks after the older children whilst Christina, Loess and I lead the under 10's with great help from Helen, Elaine and Peace. The children get on well together and the older ones have been great at supporting our younger ones.

Every Sunday we follow a programme called Roots from Scripture Union and in our sessions have a mixture of bible story telling, craft, games and thought appropriate to their ages. This year the children successfully led two All Age Services and the Nativity service. They are growing in confidence in reading and presenting and we are very proud of them.

This year Jack and Jacob got baptised and it was great to see them growing in their faith and also joining in our church activities. We lost Brittani and David and their family when they moved to Peterborough. We have recently welcomed Dion to our Sunday school.

We enjoyed going to McDonald's and Smyths Toy shop in December before joining the Carol Service. 14 of us had a fab afternoon.

In 2025 we want to continue to get our young people/ children more engaged in the life of the church and will be leading some more all age services. It is lovely to have such a growing and vibrant Sunday school - a real success in the life of our church.

A big thanks to all our Sunday school helpers and for those who support us looking after the very young children. We are always looking for more helpers so do consider volunteering if you can.

Messy Church

Messy Church meets on the second Saturday-of each month and we encourage our church families and those of the wider community to come along. We average 40-55 each time from a wide mixture of backgrounds, culture and understanding of church.

We follow a theme each month with a bible story, crafts, games, food and discussion. During 2024 we have done Messy Fathers, Messy Love, Harvest, Christingle and Messy Palm Sunday to name a few. We have also had some social events like our fireworks Night and our Messy Funday in July.

Messy church always finishes with refreshments including much pizza and cake which the children love. Do try and come along one month and see it in action.

Our Messy Church has now been running over 10 years and a big, big thanks to all our helpers who support it every month. It's a great outreach activity for the Olive Tree.

Claire

Thursday Prayer Meeting

Our Thursday Prayer Meeting is open to the whole of the Olive Tree Church Family. To join for a powerful time of prayer, fellowship, and sharing testimonies of God's goodness. This is a time to come together, lift each other up, and be reminded of how God is moving in our lives. We ask members to come with an open heart and the expectation of experiencing God's presence and healing. To let each other stand together in faith, celebrate their victories, and lift up any burdens we must bring before the Lord.

Our stories may be the spark that ignites hope and faith in someone else's life. Never underestimate the power of sharing what God has done!

It is good to hear them and to receive whatever messages God speaks through them. We eagerly await God's presence and anticipate God's miraculous work!

We sometime celebrate Holy Communion as part of prayer meeting. This sacred time of remembrance and unity allows us to reflect on God's love and grace.

We meet each Thursday at 7:30 the meeting ends at 8:30pm. And afterwards we have some food and drinks to enjoy together.

As part of our Thursday prayer meeting, each of us is called to be a witness to Jesus Christ. We are all evangelists of the gospel. Jesus said, "You will be my witnesses in

Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8). But we are going to step up to create an Evangelism Team.

The Evangelism Team is for those willing to encourage people to become more vital, vibrant witnesses to the love of God and to make Jesus Christ known in Luton and worldwide.

Madit

Treasurer Report

Whilst the Olive Tree Church operates as an LEP the two churches still exist in their own right. St Margarets is still a member of the South Beds District Circuit and as such is still required to contribute to the running costs of the circuit.

When the Olive Tree Church ministry is being undertaken by a Baptist minister the calculation of how much is needed by way of assessment is calculated after leaving the cost of Methodist ministers out of the total circuit costs.

The financial sustainability of The Olive Tree Church requires attention. While paying the minister's salary and related costs is vital, several issues undermine the current financial model:

1. Ministerial Funding Clarity:

- There is insufficient clarity on the funding responsibilities for ministers from different denominations (e.g., Methodist vs. Baptist). This could lead to inequities or financial strain.

2. Disproportionate Financial Contributions:

- The church currently pays a Baptist minister while covering the Methodist Church assessment.

3. Heavy Reliance on Rentals:

- The church depends heavily on rental income to offset its expenses. Any decline in rental revenue could jeopardise its financial stability.

To address these concerns, the following steps have been proposed:

1. Develop Diversified Income Streams:

- Encourage tithing, offerings, and other fundraising efforts to reduce dependency on rentals.

2. Introduce a Financial Sustainability Plan:

- Establish clear guidelines for equitable financial contributions from the Baptist and Methodist churches, ensuring transparency and fairness.

The challenges facing The Olive Tree Church—financial, must be addressed with prayerful discernment and a commitment to unity.

Wednesday House Group

There are 8 members in the Wednesday evening house group, and we have met monthly during the last year, on Zoom during the winter months and at the Branch when the evenings were lighter. We have shared leadership and discussed a variety of themes, using material from Michael's Lent readings and from the Women's World Day of Prayer, as well as other Bible readings chosen by whoever was leading the meeting. As well as reading and discussing the Bible we always spend some time praying for each other and people among our families and friends or within the fellowship who need our prayers. This is an important part of our group as we support and encourage each other. We also met for two social events, a barbecue in Madit and Roy's garden in the summer and a Christmas party at the Branch in December.

Kate Silwood

Social Activities

At the Olive Tree we have a Social Activity calendar to have regular events and activities both for our church members and our wider linked community. We have a small number of us who plan and organise the events. A big thanks to Jess, Rebecca, Madit and Roy, Elaine and Helen and Louise and Loess - and all others who have helped.

In 2024 we have had another Quiz Night with Ploughman's supper at the Branch. It was great to see so many attend and Jess gave them a challenging but fun quiz to work through. We will be repeating this in 2025.

In the Summer we had a Barbecue and Cream Tea in August at the side of the church. It was also lovely to have music played by Roger and Martin. The weather was good and we were able to have it outside. We had games and activities for the children.

In September we had our Harvest Supper where we had some lovely food, some table games and a chance to catch up with people.

Christmas gave us a great opportunity to encourage our community in to our building and to celebrate together. Our Christingle, Nativity Service and Carol Service all were great social and networking opportunities as well as an opportunity to workshop together. It was lovely to have Father Luke and the St Andrews friends join us for the carol service.

Claire

22nd LUTON BROWNIES

In March 2024 we celebrated Mother's Day by making cards and paper cones which we filled with chocolates for the Mums.

For St. Patrick's Day we had members of an Irish Dancing group come to teach us some Irish dancing. It was quite difficult but we had some soda bread to keep us going.

After Easter we continued with our celebrations theme with Eid and St. George's Day in April.

Then we started working on the Reflect Skills Builder badge learning about feelings, our local community and celebrations.

At the end of April we visited Wrest Park to splatter paint Artemis, the hare bought by Bedfordshire Girlguiding to go in the Short Tail Trail for Keech Hospice. She was on display in The Mall for all to see and is now visiting lots of units throughout the County.

We visited Woodcroft, our Guide Activity Centre in Bramingham, at the end of May but it was so wet we did our activities inside instead!

We made cards for Father's Day and gave each Dad a bar of their favourite chocolate.

In June we went to Woodcroft to learn how to throw tomahawks. The Brownies actually used smaller ones called "angels" and had to throw them into targets. I am pleased to say that a good time was had by all and everyone came home with all limbs intact.

The Brownies then worked on their Charities badge – each group choosing a charity to raise money for. The ones chosen were The Alzheimer's Society; Keech Hospice; Noah and Street Soccer. Some of the girls came to the Woodcroft table top sale at the end of June to sell their wares. However, we had a big fundraising evening on 9th July when they sold drinks, cakes and other things they had made. They raised £40 each for Keech Hospice, Noah and Street Soccer and £50 for the Alzheimer's Society (as they had a £10 donation).

In July we also visited Bletchley Park as part of a trip organised by Bedfordshire Girlguiding. We did craft activities, learnt a bit of 1940s dancing, code breaking and had time to explore the house and sheds where the code breaking was done. It was really interesting – so much so that the Leaders returned in September for another visit (without the girls!).

We ended our summer term with a funfair evening, doing lots of games like Hook a duck, shove ha'penny and hoopla. Ice cream was also on the menu and enjoyed by all.

In September we started work on the Skills For Your Future Skills Builder badge. We focussed a lot on the money aspect of this – having found the girls had difficulty working out what to pay in the souvenir shop at Bletchley Park. We also learnt about tools and what they are used for, made slime and learnt how best to cut up vegetables and grate cheese to make fajitas. We also invited some parents along to talk about their jobs. We had a teacher, an optician and someone who works in a laboratory testing vaccines.

We went on an indoor holiday at Woodcroft In October. Our theme was Woodland Adventures and we had a lady from Harlington who looks after hedgehogs come to talk to us. The Brownies brought in kitten food for the lady to take to feed her hedgehogs.

In November we had a Firework Party – including apple bobbing and culminating with sparklers in the car park. It was quite a sight when they were all lit and being twirled around.

Three Brownies proudly carried and escorted our flag in the Remembrance Day parade in Marsh Road, when a poppy wreath from Luton North Division Girlguiding was laid at the memorial in Memorial Road. A special badge was designed by Girlguiding for this event, and the girls who attended were given this badge.

For Parliament week we sent Rachel Hopkins, our local MP, some questions for her to answer, as she was unable to come to our meeting in person. She replied via a video link and was very impressed with the questions asked. We also learnt a little bit about how Parliament works.

At the beginning of December some of the girls went to the cinema for a showing of Moana 2. This was arranged by Luton North Division and around 100 Rainbows, Brownies and Guides attended a private showing on a Sunday morning. It was brilliant and the girls thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

To celebrate Christmas we made paper plate advent calendars with a snowman's nose moving around the plate to the different days in December. We also dipped chocolate biscuits in white chocolate to make Christmas puddings. On the last evening we decorated chocolate swiss rolls to make yule logs – with a dusting of icing sugar for snow!

After Christmas we had our New Year's Party to celebrate 2025 with games, pizza and glow sticks to make us all glow in the dark.

On Saturday 18th January we went to the panto at Stevenage to see Peter Pan. It was brilliant and again we have to thank Jenny Woodham for organising this for us. Next year it is Dick Whittington and his cat – so roll on next year!

We are now working on the Communicate Skills Builder badge and learning different ways to communicate – through pictures and music, listening better and speaking clearly.

Luton North Division again organised a disco at Woodcroft on 31st January and most of the girls went to this. Glow sticks are obviously the rage at the moment and the girls used them to make chains and large hoops to dance with. It was very noisy but brilliant!

Thinking Day is on 22nd February, when we celebrate the birthdays of Lord and Lady Baden Powell and think about all other guiding members throughout the world. This year our Division celebration is on Sunday 2nd March at Parklea Primary School but our unit celebration will be on 25th February.

We have 13 Brownies at present with Kirsty and myself as the Brownie Leaders. However, we now have another Leader, Debbie, whose unit in Slip End closed. As she lives near the Church she decided to come and join us – which has been lovely. We also have Zoha who has recently joined us as a Young Leader. She is really enthusiastic and hopefully will stay for a little while.

Without them we would not be able to do all the activities we do and go on trips, so a big thank you goes out to them for their continued support. Also I must not forget Jenny as she helps us by being our

Home Contact when we go on trips and will come to meetings if we need her.
Anne Gibbons 13.2.25

Guides

Our numbers are currently 10 Guides.

Within the 6 themes we have worked on various Skills Builders, Interest Badges and Unit Meeting Activities (UMAs) including:

Know Myself :- Skills Builder Network

Interest Badge Guiding History

UMAs – Lava, The 2 match challenge, I'm good thanks, House of guiding

Express myself :- Skills builder Innovate

Interest Badge Confectioner

UMAs – Build a beast, Make your mark, Prepare to be amazed,

Be well :-

Interest Badge Mixology

UMAs – Message Mayhem, What a rush!, Games maker, No Doubt, Surfs up, Know my strengths,

Have Adventures :-

Interest Badge Backwoods cooking

UMAs – Blackhole breakout, Keep warm in the wild, Sneaky s'mores, Survive the wild,

Take Action :-

Interest Badge Craftivism

UMAs – One small step, A game of no noise, Toads on the road, Awful Adverts,

Skills for my Future :- Skills builder Lead

Interest Badge Investigator

UMAs – Run the Risk, Pets rock,

By completing a Skills builder, and an Interest badge, and 240 minutes of UMAs in the same theme a Guide can achieve a Theme award.

Ameena, Emma, Fatimah, Inaya, and Sajjal all completed their Be Well Theme Award. Emma, and Sajjal both completed their Have Adventures Theme Award.

On achieving two theme awards both Emma and Sajjal have been awarded their Guide Bronze Award.

In October we took the Guides and the Brownies on an Indoor holiday weekend at Woodcroft with a theme of "Woodland Adventures".

We also:

Had a go at throwing tomahawks

Went on a trip to Bletchley Park

Had a fundraising evening and donated the £140 raised to Cancer Research and RSPCA

Attended remembrance day

Went to the cinema to see "Moana 2"

Went to the panto to see Peter Pan

Celebrated Chinese new year

Had fun at a Division Disco

Celebrated Thinking day

Annual Report for Blenheim Scout Troop 2024

The troop have had a busy time during the year covering problem solving and teamwork activities.

We made leather bookmarks and wrist bands and painted T shirts.

The World faith badge was completed and as part of this we had a visit to the Sikh Temple in Cardigan Street. The scouts found out about the history of the faith, the beliefs and rituals and heard a passage read from the sacred book.

They were also taken to see the bedroom at the top of the building where the Holy book is put to bed each evening, the double bed is richly covered. The scouts were also served refreshments and told about the number meals that are served from the kitchen.

Another visit the following week took the troop to the Town Hall where we were shown around by the Mayor, the silver room, a committee room, down the stairs to the front entrance area, we were allowed to go and sit at the back to see a committee meeting in progress. We were allowed to go out on the balcony the scouts enjoyed waving to people walking along George Street. Our final stop was the Mayors Parlour where we were shown his robes and two scouts were invested.

At Easter Paul Oakley finished working with the troop after several years, to take a break from scouting.

Returning after the break the scouts spent 4-5 weeks working on the electronics badge with help from Brendan, Nick Jarman and Richard Spragg all members of the team who organise Jamboree On The Air/Internet for Luton.

We made plastic from milk and Ian Explorer Leader with Griffen unit made candles with the scouts. Tent pitching was practised in preparation for camp.

Knots and lashings were worked on and each patrol made a Sedan chair which was raced, Ian came along again to support with this evening and was back the following week with Jack one of the assistant Explorer leaders when we made A frame walkers and then competed to see which one lasted the longest.

A parent Sara has joined the team to help at meetings, her scout name is Olive.

The group took part in District camp at Paccar in June and the members got to do lots of activities. A Friday evening was spent at Woodcroft Guide centre where shelters were built in the woods and we played wide games.

A ready steady cook evening saw the scouts making up sauces to go with pasta from a selection of ingredients. A hike from Inspire to Lilley and back with the Beavers and Cubs on a warm evening was followed by the final meeting of the term fire lighting and toasting marshmallows. The scouts had now completed the Outdoors in 24 challenge for which they all got a badge.

The summer break was extended and scout meetings did not resume until the start of October and most evenings have been spent working on clauses for challenge badges to try to enable some of the older scouts to complete Chief Scout Gold award before they leave. This has included healthy habits, learning code breaking to become spies completing a mission and performing an entertainment.

Griffen Explorers leaders helped out again by covering two weeks looking at map reading and using a compass as part of the Navigation badge and they have offered to organise an orienteering activity in the Spring probably at Dunstable Downs to complete the badge.

Thanks to the parents who help out on a rota and Sara, to John (Beech) for taking on extra with planning and preparation and special thanks to Ian, Jack and Stuart from Griffen explorers for supporting with activities to enable the troop to continue to stay open as the volunteers that had said they would be able to help in the Autumn did not materialise. The troop is desperately in need of a team of people to step up and take on scouting roles to enable it to continue until the summer and beyond, please see if you can think of people we could approach and if so contact either Brendan or myself.

Janet Owen (Cedar)

CHURCH

**RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS
ACCOUNTS**

**THE METHODIST CHURCH
STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS**

The Olive Tree Church (LEP Baptist and Methodist Churches)

Church

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 August 2025

SOUTH BEDFORDSHIRE

Circuit

Circuit no.

34/04

Registered Charity - Charity Registration number

1196158

**If not a registered charity His Majesty's Revenue and
Customs Gift Aid number**

(The HMRC number is equivalent to a registered charity number in terms of evidence of charitable status and may be used to give to donors or grant funders wishing to see evidence of the organisation's charitable status. Methodist charities in England and Wales that are not registered charities are excepted from registration under Statutory Instrument 2014 No.242)

Minister:

Rev Michael Anokye

LEP Trustees

Mrs Madit Grant

Mrs Louise Newport

Ms Peace Okyere

Mrs Helen Owen

Treasurer:

Mrs Madit Grant

UNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

**The Olive Tree
Church (LEP Baptist
and Methodist
Churches)**

Church

SECTION A		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
		£	£	£	£
a1	RECEIPTS				
a2	Offerings and Tax recovered	54,288	3,207	57,495	54,599
a3	Bank and CFB Interest and Investment income	2,207		2,207	3,090
a4	Lettings	50,080		50,080	51,955
a5	Other receipts	1,418		1,418	4,856
a6	TOTAL RECEIPTS	107,993	3,207	111,200 (a7)	114,500

SECTION B					
b1	PAYMENTS				
b2	Circuit Assessment or Share	13,405		13,405	13,853
b3	Donations	6,600		6,600	6,895
b4	Repairs and Maintenance	8,988		8,988	38,585
b5	Utilities (Insurances, water charges, heating & lighting)	36,340		36,340	34,609
b6	Property employment costs	8,557		8,557	6,165
b7	Other payments	44,870	3,811	48,681	44,118
b8	TOTAL PAYMENTS	118,760	3,811	122,571 (b9)	144,225

SECTION C					
c1	NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR	(a6-b8)	(10,767)	(604)	(11,371)
c2	Total funds brought forward from last year		123,998	114	124,112 (c6)
c3	Sub total	(c1+c2)	113,231	(490)	112,741
c4	Transfers and adjustments				(c7)
c5	TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR	(c3+c4)	113,231	(490)	112,741 (c8)

SECTION D			
FOR INFORMATION ONLY: MONEY RECEIVED AND PASSED ON TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS			
d	(these amounts are not to be included in total receipts/payments figures above)	£	£
d1	Balance brought forward from last year	311	475
d2	Offerings/Gifts - received for external organisations	489	1,119
d3	Offerings/Gifts - passed to external organisations	800	1,283
d4	BALANCE STILL TO BE PAID	(d1+d2-d3)	311

The Olive Tree Church (Baptist and Methodist LEP)

Declarations and Scrutiny

I confirm that these Receipt and Payment based accounts for the year to 31 August 2025 have been prepared from the records of the Church and that they include all funds under the control of the Church trustees.

Signature of treasurer *[Signature]* Date *26.10.25*

Name and address of treasurer *MADIT GRANT*
38 MONTROSS AVENUE, LUTON Post Code *LU3 1HR*

Presentation to the Church trustees

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2025 were/will be* presented to the meeting of the Church trustees held on 25 January 2026.....

Signature of the Chair of the meeting *[Signature]*
Name of the Chair of the meeting *MICHAEL ANDRKE* Date *26/10/2025*

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

The Olive Tree Church

Charity Number . 1196158

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Olive Tree Church for the year ended 31 August 2025 set out on pages 1 to 3 As the Church's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Church's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 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 Act.

* delete or circle as appropriate

The Olive Tree Church (Baptist and Methodist LEP)

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 (~~other than that disclosed below~~) which give me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- 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 this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

I ~~have~~/have not* obtained independent verification of all investments with the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes or held in other trusts, bank balances and funds at the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church which are individually in excess of £10,000 (ten thousand pounds) at the balance sheet date.

Signature of independent examiner J. W. Crane

Name of independent examiner JOHN WILKINSON CRANE

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner RETIRED QUALIFIED ACCOUNTANT

Name of firm (where appropriate) N/A

Address 22 DAWLISH ROAD, LITON, BEDS

Post Code L44 9SD

Date 12/11/2025

* delete or circle as appropriate

THE OLIVE TREE CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1196158

Accounts



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Trustees' annual report (including Directors' report) for the period

From: September 1st 2023 To: August 31st 2024.

Charity name: The Olive Tree Church

Charity registration number: 1196158

Company number: N/A

Objectives and activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	The Olive Tree Church is a Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership formed from Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church and St Margaret's Methodist Church, in Luton, Bedfordshire. <i>'Baptists and Methodists United in Christ serving our community'</i>. The partnership was formed in 2016 and formally constituted in 2021, with the adoption of its Constitution on 21 March 2021. The purpose of the Charity is to advance the Christian faith in the Area of Benefit in accordance with the principles and practices of the Participating Churches. In achieving its purpose, the Charity engages in a range of activities, either on its own or with others, including (but not restricted to): - the celebration of public worship; - the teaching of the Christian faith; - mission and evangelism; - pastoral work, including visiting the sick and the bereaved; - the provision of facilities with a Christian ethos for the local community, including (but not restricted to) the elderly, the young and other groups with special needs; and - the support of other charities in the UK and overseas. Luton is acknowledged to be an area of high deprivation, and with its numerous cross-cultural issues, we find that there is tremendous benefit in the work of this church. Members of The Olive Tree believe that it is the core of our mission to serve the community in this situation. The church vision statement includes, <i>'We believe we are called to be a Christian presence and witness in our multicultural area, sharing the good news of God's love and forgiveness with all'</i> and <i>'We aim to be good Christian neighbours and develop deeper relationships with other faiths represented in our neighbourhood'</i>. The Olive Tree Church continues to thrive and serve through the grace of God.

Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	It is a privilege to introduce our third annual report, which documents the many and varied ways in which The Olive Tree Church lives out its mission to be an inclusive, evangelistic, growing, justice-seeking church. The calling of The Olive Tree Church is to wholeheartedly embrace the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, expressing this commitment through a life marked by love, fellowship, and dedicated discipleship. Our mission is to reflect the love of Christ in all we do - through worship, pastoral care, evangelism, and community outreach. This year we started a new season under our newly-appointed Baptist minister Rev. Michael Anokye (from October 2023) and supported our community worker's training towards a new venture as an author, sharing her life in 'God's Fingerprints', although very sad to see her leave in the Autumn. (September 2023) We have continued with our local neighbourhood focus, supporting this deprived area of Luton, and although our focus has inevitably shifted without a community worker to help run and support activities, we have continued to be active in many areas, with a regular Baby and Toddler group, NHS Childrens Clinic, a monthly Messy Church for local families and a monthly Thursday Christian Aid lunch club. We have also held regular Foodbank collections, supported Home Groups, Bible Study Groups, and build a steadily growing Youth Group. Social activities such as a Barbecue and Cream Tea, Fun Day, Quiz and Ploughman's, Sunday school outings and Fundraising events have also been well attended. Various community groups continued to use our premises, (both the 'Tree' site, previously Blenheim Baptist, and the 'Branch' site, previously St Margaret's Methodist), including a regular Scouts, Brownies and Guides groups, Karate club and three different Christian churches. We successfully installed two accessible toilets on the Branch site, much needed by our wheelchair users so they could be equally involved in activities held there, as well as when at our Tree site. We remained committed supporters of both Baptist and Methodist work and also donated to other charities such as Youthscape. Collections have been made on behalf of other Charities – Christian
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		Aid (at monthly lunches) and Azalea. These monies are passed on to the charities directly.
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Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	The Trustees of the Olive Tree Church have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit, such that all of the activities, projects and services provided by the Olive Tree Church are all regarded to be of public benefit in service to the community.
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	- N/A
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	- N/A
Contribution made by volunteers	Para 1.38	- N/A
Other		- N/A

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.	Para 1.20	The Olive Tree Church has provided benefit to: - Church members, both old and young, with opportunities to encourage and increase their faith and Christian witness, receiving regular fellowship, home groups, Bible studies, lunch clubs and activities, and prayerful support with a new Thursday night prayer meeting. Support has also been provided in many different forms where needed, such as hospital and care home visits, lifts to medical appointments, pastoral care and financial help. This year we particularly held a 'Friendship First' course, to better understand our Muslim neighbours. Our youth group has continued to grow, with cooking challenges, bowling trips, countryside walks and various types of games and activities. - Members of the community, with a variety of activities to join and support where needed such as parent and toddler group, NHS Baby clinic, lunch clubs, Youth Group activities, uniformed groups such as Scouts, Brownies and Guides, and Messy Church family activities. - Individuals, for example with food and clothing, or help to pay for transport, or the bills and rent. - Local churches and community groups, by providing our buildings to rent, meet in and use, such as Luton-based 'Oasis', and the Karate Club. - Luton Foodbank recipients, from regular church collections, including at Harvest Festivals. - Various Luton, UK charities by regular donations, raising awareness of their work, and supporting where needed.
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Achievements against objectives set	Para 1.41	- N/A
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	- N/A

Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	- N/A
Other		- N/A

Financial review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	The unrestricted income for the year ended 31 August 2024 was £114,500 (Last Year: £123,523). Due to the cost of living, it is likely that utility bills will continue to increase. Unrestricted expenses for the year amounted to £142,611 (LY: £94,821). This (<i>reduction</i>) in expenditure was mainly because of (<i>reduced repair and maintenance costs</i>).
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Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	The reserves policy for the Olive Tree Church is modelled on that recommended by the Methodist Church, which is in accordance with the Charity Commission's Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP). The Olive Tree Church receives its income from donations by church members (including Gift Aid), by letting the buildings and renting the Manse, when vacant. Having considered our mission plans for the future, we now employ a Baptist Minister, holding funds to cover at least 3 years of salary and associated costs, in addition to the cost of employing a Community Worker at the start of the year, meet a reduced Circuit Assessment and cover our normal expenditure and routine repair and maintenance costs for the buildings, including the completion of two accessible toilets. Due to the cost of living, utility bills have considerably increased, although we have now completely paid off the loan to the Methodist Circuit, which previously supported the installation of new boilers at the Branch site. We therefore agree that at this current time it is appropriate that we hold a (<i>higher</i>) reserve of (£114,500) than that typically expected of 6 months expenditure expected, which on the 24/25 budget was roughly (£60,000). At present, The Olive Tree Church holds the (<i>higher</i>) level of reserves and these will be maintained by regular donations from the congregation. If required, funding towards specific aims will be requested, and there will be careful monitoring of expenditure.
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	As at the end of the financial year (31 August 2024), the reserves were: Unrestricted Funds (£114,500) Restricted Funds (£0)
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	N/A
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	N/A

Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	The Olive Tree Church continues to steadily consolidate progress with our new Baptist minister, shaping the church and enabling us to meet the challenges of the future in a very distinctive mission field. We have new members and a thriving junior church. As such we have no concerns for this charity continuing as an ongoing concern.
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	- N/A
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	- N/A
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	- N/A
Other		- N/A

Structure, governance and management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document: for example, trust deed, memorandum and articles of association etc	Para 1.25	The Olive Tree Church is a Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership which was approved by the Baptist and Methodist Church Denominational authorities and the Sponsoring Body: Churches Together in Bedfordshire on 18th April 2018. The Governing Document for the Olive Tree Church is its Constitution, which was finally adopted by the Leadership Team and church members on 21st March 2021.
How is the charity constituted? for example limited company, unincorporated association, CIO	Para 1.25	The Olive Tree Church is constituted as a Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership between Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church and St Margaret's Methodist Church, with allegiance to the Baptist Union of Great Britain and The Methodist Church to serve the Area of Luton.

trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	The Constitution states that the Olive Tree Church is administered and managed by a body of Trustees consisting of A) ex officio Trustees, being the ministers of the LEP, B) Four elected Trustees, elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting and, C) Not more than three co-opted Trustees, appointed by the Trustees. Elected Trustees shall hold office from the end of the Annual Congregational Meeting at which they are selected until the end of the third such meeting after their appointment, but shall be eligible for re-election at that meeting. No person may be elected as an Elected Trustee or appointed as a Co-opted Trustee unless he or she: A) is a Member; B) Is aged 18 or above; C) Is not disqualified from acting as a Trustee by virtue of section 72 Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision); and D) Has indicated his or her willingness to serve as a Trustee. Co-opted Trustees serve until the end of the next Annual Congregational Meeting following their appointment.
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	Para 1.51	- N/A
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	- N/A

Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	- N/A
Other		- N/A

Reference and administrative details

Charity name	THE OLIVE TREE CHURCH
Other name the charity uses	
Registered charity number	1196158
Charity's principal address	42-46 Blenheim Crescent Luton Bedfordshire LU3 1HB

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Rev Michael Anokye	LEP Minister (Baptist) - Chair	From 1 October 2023	The Baptist Church
2	Madit Grant	Treasurer		Annual Congregational Meeting
3	Helen Owen	Communications		Annual Congregational Meeting
4	Dr Louise Newport			Annual Congregational Meeting

5	Peace Okyere	Safeguarding		Annual Congregational Meeting
6	Ramon Akib	(Co-opted)		Annual Congregational Meeting
7	Mary Huffman	Community Worker (Co-opted)	(Until XXXX) (Madi - can you fill in when Mary left please)	Annual Congregational Meeting
8				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

Director name	
- N/A	

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year
The Baptist Union Corporation Ltd	
The Methodist Church	

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	- N/A
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	- N/A
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	- N/A

Additional information (optional)

Names and addresses of advisers (optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
- N/A		

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (optional information)

- N/A

Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

- N/A

Other optional information

- N/A

Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report (including directors' report) above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees/directors

Signature(s)	Madit Grant	
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Full name(s)	Mrs Madit Grant	
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Position (for example Secretary, Chair, etc)	Church Trustee	
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Date 25th June 2024



Olive Tree Church
Reports
2024 - 5

Minister's Report

The Olive Tree Church: Reflecting on 2024

The calling of The Olive Tree Church is to wholeheartedly embrace the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, expressing this commitment through a life marked by love, fellowship, and dedicated discipleship. Our mission is to reflect the love of Christ in all that we do—through worship, pastoral care, evangelism, and community outreach. As we enter 2025, we remain steadfast in our vision to transform lives and bring hope to our community.

Our Commitment in 2024

In fulfilling our calling, we dedicated our resources and energy in 2024 to:

- Deepening awareness of God's ever-present love and celebrating the profound depth of His grace and mercy.
- Encouraging spiritual growth and discipleship through mutual support, learning, and pastoral care.
- Extending our hands as good neighbours, providing practical assistance and challenging injustice.
- Expanding our evangelistic mission, sharing the love of Christ and welcoming new people into the faith community.

Key Achievements in 2024:

Community Outreach

At The Olive Tree, we believe that sharing the Good News is about forging relationships and demonstrating the love of Christ in action. Our community outreach efforts in 2024 focused on:

- Encouraging members to prepare themselves for:
 - Ø Engaging in street evangelism and personal outreach, inviting people to explore faith in a welcoming environment.
 - Ø Partnering with local organisations to serve those in need, showing God's love through acts of kindness.
 - Ø Organising special community events to share testimonies, preach the Gospel, and create meaningful conversations about faith.

These efforts have strengthened our church's presence in Luton and will allow us to touch many lives with Christ's message of hope and redemption.

Pastoral Care: Supporting and Encouraging Those in Need

Our pastoral care team has been a pillar of comfort and encouragement, offering vital emotional and spiritual support to those facing challenges. In 2024, we:

- Provided home and hospital visits to those experiencing illness, bereavement, or personal struggles.

- Offered counselling, prayer, and companionship to individuals coping with job loss, loneliness, or difficult family situations.
- Established an intercessory prayer team to uplift needy individuals—whether in person, over the phone, or absentia.

This ministry has been a lifeline for many, reinforcing our commitment to being a compassionate and prayerful community.

Thursday Free Drop-in Café: A Hub for Community Outreach

This year we have started a Thursday Free Drop-in Café, where we opened our doors to all, providing a warm, welcoming space for fellowship and support. We hope and pray the this initiative will:

- Foster community spirit, offering a safe place to connect, share stories, and find encouragement.
- Serve as a bridge for those seeking faith or struggling with isolation, allowing us to minister to them in a non-intimidating setting.
- Provide food, conversation, and prayer, creating a tangible demonstration of Christ's love.

We pray that the café will be instrumental in strengthening our bond with the wider community and offering a beacon of hope to many.

Thursday Evening Prayer: Seeking God for Spiritual Renewal

Recognising the power of prayer, our Thursday Evening Prayer sessions became a cornerstone of our spiritual life in 2024. These gatherings have:

- Created a sacred space where individuals seek God's guidance, healing, and restoration.
- Strengthened our church's unity and commitment to interceding for our community.
- Encouraged deeper faith and reliance on God, inspiring personal and collective transformation.

This initiative has not only deepened our congregation's spiritual journey but also provided an opportunity for the wider community to experience God's presence in a profound way.

The Impact of Our Ministry on The Olive Tree Church and the Community

Through our various ministries and initiatives in 2024, The Olive Tree Church has witnessed incredible transformation. The positive impact includes:

- Stronger faith and discipleship as individuals have grown in their knowledge and love of Christ.
- A more connected and supported community where people feel valued, heard, and encouraged.

- A greater sense of purpose as we extend God's love to those around us.

As we enter 2025, we are more committed than ever to our mission. With renewed energy and faith, we will continue to be a beacon of light, sharing Christ's love and serving those in need.

Looking Ahead

With unwavering faith, we expand our ministries and deepen our outreach efforts. We invite every member of our congregation and the wider community to journey with us in faith, service, and love.

May God continue to bless The Olive Tree Church as we embrace the opportunities and challenges of 2025, standing firm in His calling and purpose for us all.

In Christ's love and service,
On behalf of The Olive Tree Church Leadership Team

Rev Michael Anokye

Senior Steward's Report

This year has passed rapidly. The past few months have been particularly busy for both me and the team; their support has been invaluable, making the tasks at hand significantly more manageable.

East year we put together schedule of events. Over the past year we have had several enjoyable events.

Mary Huffman's book launch Saturday 24th February. Coffee morning with cakes. Invitations were sent out to the wider community families to join us.

On 17th March the children of the Olive Tree Church invited all church members and friends to lunch straight after the service to enjoy some time together and to share food and drink prepared by them.

Quiz Night Saturday 18th May at the Tree. The quiz night is a regular feature in our social calendar, and we usually do it by selling a table of 6 tickets and the person brings their friends and family to be in their team. We do it differently each year, but I would say it is easy to manage this way and easier to sell tickets. All donations received go to charity.

In May we celebrated a Baptismal service when Jack, Jacob, Brittani and Ben were baptised.

The Church Barbecue and Cream Tea event took place on Saturday, 3rd August at the Tree. Strawberries and cream were served with some music on the church lawn. There were family games and activities. The barbecue was well-attended, and many people participated in the event.

Harvest Supper 28th September - buffet with a range of foods and desserts. With games for the family and some music. This year the Harvest gifts were donated to the Luton Foodbank.

In November we were pleased to welcome Peace, Marvellous, Mariam, Hannah and Vincent into church membership.

Toy and Nativity Service – 15th December. Gifts of toys went to the Salvation Army Christmas toy appeal as in previous years. We also collected to buy gifts for the ladies supported by Azalea.

A Christmas Carol Service by candlelight took place on 22nd December it was a joint Carol Service with St. Andrew's Church.

We have been pleased to welcome new people coming to Sunday services, but we also have to record those of our fellowship who have died during the year – Beryl Fulcher, Arthur Fielding, Kathleen Snoxell and Ron Wright. They have all served the Olive Tree in different ways and we are grateful for their contributions to the life of the church and give thanks to God for their service.

Our weekly worship services have been led by our minister Rev Michael Anokye and visiting preachers from both Baptist and Methodist churches.

Madit Grant

Trustees Report

The Olive Tree Church is a local ecumenical partnership of Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church and St Margaret's Methodist Church, in Luton. The partnership was formed in 2016 and formally constituted in 2021.

It is a privilege to introduce this annual report, which documents the many and varied ways in which The Olive Tree Church has faced the challenges of the times and lives out its mission to be an inclusive, evangelistic, growing, justice-seeking church.

The calling of The Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission. Most of the work of the Church occurs within or is associated with local community within Luton.

Luton is acknowledged to be an area of high deprivation, and with its numerous cross-cultural issues, we find that there is tremendous benefit in this work. Members of The Olive Tree believe that it is the core of our mission to serve the community in this situation. The church vision statement includes, 'We believe we are called to be a Christian presence and witness in our multicultural area, sharing the good news of God's love and forgiveness with all.' and 'We aim to be good Christian neighbours and develop deeper relationships with other faiths represented in our neighbourhood.

As well as our local neighbourhood focus, we are committed supporters of Baptist work through BMS World Mission and Methodist work and charities such as All We

Can - the Methodist Relief and Development charity; Action for children and others.

While the church has achieved notable successes, it also faces challenges that must be addressed thoughtfully and collectively. Key issues impacting the church's growth and sustainability and proposes actionable steps in alignment with its mission and purpose.

In conclusion, the challenges facing The Olive Tree Church—financial, operational, or spiritual—must be addressed with prayerful discernment and a commitment to unity. By fostering open dialogue, ensuring financial sustainability, and embracing the diversity of worship styles, the church can overcome these challenges and thrive as a Local Ecumenical Partnership.

Let us remember:

"How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!" (Psalm 133:1)

CAMEO report

The Olive Tree Church Youth Group - 'CAMEO' ('Come and Meet Each Other') is led by Mark and Louise Newport and usually meets on the last Sunday each month from 5.30 to 7.30pm at the Tree site in Blenheim Crescent. We are grateful for the help of Peace and Marvellous Akib as well as the dedication of parents who support their children to come and take part.

Activities for this year have included cooking challenges - making and tasting different types of soup, cooking and tossing pancakes, making scones and smoothies, also going bowling in Dunstable, walking on 'Pegsdon Heights near Hitchin, packing up 9 Christmas shoeboxes for 'Samaritan's Purse' and of course quizzes and playing various games together, including giant 'pick up sticks', 'dipsticks', 'What do you meme?', table tennis, table football and badminton.

This year our young people have also taken part in church services, developing their reading and presentation skills, which we hope to do more of. We will also start to explore the different ways that people help around the church, to see where our young people can shadow others and begin to help out, for example with refreshments and multi-media, learning new skills and experience as they do, which can hopefully build their confidence.

We regularly have a core group of 6-8 children ranging from 9-14 years old from our church families and it's been great to see them growing in confidence and getting to know each other better. Other children joining us from time to time include families from Messy Church and Scouts. Whilst we are in touch with St Andrews, they do not yet have young people to join us. We are also connected to Youthscape, sharing details of activities that our young ones can join in with.

As ever we would welcome your prayers, both for our young people and leaders, and we are always interested in hearing new ideas for activities.

Finally, if you know anyone who is interested in joining us, please call Louise on 07976 743767. Thank you!

Sunday School

2024 has been a really busy year in our Sunday School, where we now have up to 17 children from 14 years to one year old twins regularly joining us. Louise looks after the older children whilst Christina, Loess and I lead the under 10's with great help from Helen, Elaine and Peace. The children get on well together and the older ones have been great at supporting our younger ones.

Every Sunday we follow a programme called Roots from Scripture Union and in our sessions have a mixture of bible story telling, craft, games and thought appropriate to their ages. This year the children successfully led two All Age Services and the Nativity service. They are growing in confidence in reading and presenting and we are very proud of them.

This year Jack and Jacob got baptised and it was great to see them growing in their faith and also joining in our church activities. We lost Brittani and David and their family when they moved to Peterborough. We have recently welcomed Dion to our Sunday school.

We enjoyed going to McDonald's and Smyths Toy shop in December before joining the Carol Service. 14 of us had a fab afternoon.

In 2025 we want to continue to get our young people/ children more engaged in the life of the church and will be leading some more all age services. It is lovely to have such a growing and vibrant Sunday school - a real success in the life of our church.

A big thanks to all our Sunday school helpers and for those who support us looking after the very young children. We are always looking for more helpers so do consider volunteering if you can.

Messy Church

Messy Church meets on the second Saturday-of each month and we encourage our church families and those of the wider community to come along. We average 40-55 each time from a wide mixture of backgrounds, culture and understanding of church.

We follow a theme each month with a bible story, crafts, games, food and discussion. During 2024 we have done Messy Fathers, Messy Love, Harvest, Christingle and Messy Palm Sunday to name a few. We have also had some social events like our fireworks Night and our Messy Funday in July.

Messy church always finishes with refreshments including much pizza and cake which the children love. Do try and come along one month and see it in action.

Our Messy Church has now been running over 10 years and a big, big thanks to all our helpers who support it every month. It's a great outreach activity for the Olive Tree.

Claire

Thursday Prayer Meeting

Our Thursday Prayer Meeting is open to the whole of the Olive Tree Church Family. To join for a powerful time of prayer, fellowship, and sharing testimonies of God's goodness. This is a time to come together, lift each other up, and be reminded of how God is moving in our lives. We ask members to come with an open heart and the expectation of experiencing God's presence and healing. To let each other stand together in faith, celebrate their victories, and lift up any burdens we must bring before the Lord.

Our stories may be the spark that ignites hope and faith in someone else's life. Never underestimate the power of sharing what God has done!

It is good to hear them and to receive whatever messages God speaks through them. We eagerly await God's presence and anticipate God's miraculous work!

We sometime celebrate Holy Communion as part of prayer meeting. This sacred time of remembrance and unity allows us to reflect on God's love and grace.

We meet each Thursday at 7:30 the meeting ends at 8:30pm. And afterwards we have some food and drinks to enjoy together.

As part of our Thursday prayer meeting, each of us is called to be a witness to Jesus Christ. We are all evangelists of the gospel. Jesus said, "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8). But we are going to step up to create an Evangelism Team.

The Evangelism Team is for those willing to encourage people to become more vital, vibrant witnesses to the love of God and to make Jesus Christ known in Luton and worldwide.

Madit

Treasurer Report

Whilst the Olive Tree Church operates as an LEP the two churches still exist in their own right. St Margarets is still a member of the South Beds District Circuit and as such is still required to contribute to the running costs of the circuit.

When the Olive Tree Church ministry is being undertaken by a Baptist minister the calculation of how much is needed by way of assessment is calculated after leaving the cost of Methodist ministers out of the total circuit costs.

The financial sustainability of The Olive Tree Church requires attention. While paying the minister's salary and related costs is vital, several issues undermine the current financial model:

1. Ministerial Funding Clarity:

- There is insufficient clarity on the funding responsibilities for ministers from different denominations (e.g., Methodist vs. Baptist). This could lead to inequities or financial strain.

2. Disproportionate Financial Contributions:

- The church currently pays a Baptist minister while covering the Methodist Church assessment.

3. Heavy Reliance on Rentals:

- The church depends heavily on rental income to offset its expenses. Any decline in rental revenue could jeopardise its financial stability.

To address these concerns, the following steps have been proposed:

1. Develop Diversified Income Streams:

- Encourage tithing, offerings, and other fundraising efforts to reduce dependency on rentals.

2. Introduce a Financial Sustainability Plan:

- Establish clear guidelines for equitable financial contributions from the Baptist and Methodist churches, ensuring transparency and fairness.

The challenges facing The Olive Tree Church—financial, must be addressed with prayerful discernment and a commitment to unity.

Wednesday House Group

There are 8 members in the Wednesday evening house group, and we have met monthly during the last year, on Zoom during the winter months and at the Branch when the evenings were lighter. We have shared leadership and discussed a variety of themes, using material from Michael's Lent readings and from the Women's World Day of Prayer, as well as other Bible readings chosen by whoever was leading the meeting. As well as reading and discussing the Bible we always spend some time praying for each other and people among our families and friends or within the fellowship who need our prayers. This is an important part of our group as we support and encourage each other. We also met for two social events, a barbecue in Madit and Roy's garden in the summer and a Christmas party at the Branch in December.

Kate Silwood

Social Activities

At the Olive Tree we have a Social Activity calendar to have regular events and activities both for our church members and our wider linked community. We have a small number of us who plan and organise the events. A big thanks to Jess, Rebecca, Madit and Roy, Elaine and Helen and Louise and Loess - and all others who have helped.

In 2024 we have had another Quiz Night with Ploughman's supper at the Branch. It was great to see so many attend and Jess gave them a challenging but fun quiz to work through. We will be repeating this in 2025.

In the Summer we had a Barbecue and Cream Tea in August at the side of the church. It was also lovely to have music played by Roger and Martin. The weather was good and we were able to have it outside. We had games and activities for the children.

In September we had our Harvest Supper where we had some lovely food, some table games and a chance to catch up with people.

Christmas gave us a a great opportunity to encourage our community in to our building and to celebrate together. Our Christingle, Nativity Service and CarolService all were great social and networking opportunities as well as an opportunity to workshop together. It was lovely to have Father Luke and the St Andrews friends join us for the carol service.

Claire

22nd LUTON BROWNIES

In March 2024 we celebrated Mother's Day by making cards and paper cones which we filled with chocolates for the Mums.

For St. Patrick's Day we had members of an Irish Dancing group come to teach us some Irish dancing. It was quite difficult but we had some soda bread to keep us going.

After Easter we continued with our celebrations theme with Eid and St. George's Day in April.

Then we started working on the Reflect Skills Builder badge learning about feelings, our local community and celebrations.

At the end of April we visited Wrest Park to splatter paint Artemis, the hare bought by Bedfordshire Girlguiding to go in the Short Tail Trail for Keech Hospice. She was on display in The Mall for all to see and is now visiting lots of units throughout the County.

We visited Woodcroft, our Guide Activity Centre in Bramingham, at the end of May but it was so wet we did our activities inside instead!

We made cards for Father's Day and gave each Dad a bar of their favourite chocolate.

In June we went to Woodcroft to learn how to throw tomahawks. The Brownies actually used smaller ones called "angels" and had to throw them into targets. I am pleased to say that a good time was had by all and everyone came home with all limbs intact.

The Brownies then worked on their Charities badge – each group choosing a charity to raise money for. The ones chosen were The Alzheimer's Society; Keech Hospice; Noah and Street Soccer. Some of the girls came to the Woodcroft table top sale at the end of June to sell their wares. However, we had a big fundraising evening on 9th July when they sold drinks, cakes and other things they had made. They raised £40 each for Keech Hospice, Noah and Street Soccer and £50 for the Alzheimer's Society (as they had a £10 donation).

In July we also visited Bletchley Park as part of a trip organised by Bedfordshire Girlguiding. We did craft activities, learnt a bit of 1940s dancing, code breaking and had time to explore the house and sheds where the code breaking was done. It was really interesting – so much so that the Leaders returned in September for another visit (without the girls!).

We ended our summer term with a funfair evening, doing lots of games like Hook a duck, shove ha'penny and hoopla. Ice cream was also on the menu and enjoyed by all.

In September we started work on the Skills For Your Future Skills Builder badge. We focussed a lot on the money aspect of this – having found the girls had difficulty working out what to pay in the souvenir shop at Bletchley Park. We also learnt about tools and

what they are used for. made slime and learnt how best to cut up vegetables and grate cheese to make fajitas. We also invited some parents along to talk about their jobs. We had a teacher, an optician and someone who works in a laboratory testing vaccines.

We went on an indoor holiday at Woodcroft In October. Our theme was Woodland Adventures and we had a lady from Harlington who looks after hedgehogs come to talk to us. The Brownies brought in kitten food for the lady to take to feed her hedgehogs.

In November we had a Firework Party – including apple bobbing and culminating with sparklers in the car park. It was quite a sight when they were all lit and being twirled around.

Three Brownies proudly carried and escorted our flag in the Remembrance Day parade in Marsh Road, when a poppy wreath from Luton North Division Girlguiding was laid at the memorial in Memorial Road. A special badge was designed by Girlguiding for this event, and the girls who attended were given this badge.

For Parliament week we sent Rachel Hopkins, our local MP, some questions for her to answer, as she was unable to come to our meeting in person. She replied via a video link and was very impressed with the questions asked. We also learnt a little bit about how Parliament works.

At the beginning of December some of the girls went to the cinema for a showing of Moana 2. This was arranged by Luton North Division and around 100 Rainbows, Brownies and Guides attended a private showing on a Sunday morning. It was brilliant and the girls thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

To celebrate Christmas we made paper plate advent calendars with a snowman's nose moving around the plate to the different days in December. We also dipped chocolate biscuits in white chocolate to make Christmas puddings. On the last evening we decorated chocolate swiss rolls to make yule logs – with a dusting of icing sugar for snow!

After Christmas we had our New Year's Party to celebrate 2025 with games, pizza and glow sticks to make us all glow in the dark.

On Saturday 18th January we went to the panto at Stevenage to see Peter Pan. It was brilliant and again we have to thank Jenny Woodham for organising this for us. Next year it is Dick Whittington and his cat – so roll on next year!

We are now working on the Communicate Skills Builder badge and learning different ways to communicate – through pictures and music, listening better and speaking clearly.

Luton North Division again organised a disco at Woodcroft on 31st January and most of the girls went to this. Glow sticks are obviously the rage at the moment and the girls used them to make chains and large hoops to dance with. It was very noisy but brilliant!

Thinking Day is on 22nd February, when we celebrate the birthdays of Lord and Lady Baden Powell and think about all other guiding members throughout the world. This year our Division celebration is on Sunday 2nd March at Parklea Primary School but our unit celebration will be on 25th February.

We have 13 Brownies at present with Kirsty and myself as the Brownie Leaders. However, we now have another Leader, Debbie, whose unit in Slip End closed. As she lives near the Church she decided to come and join us – which has been lovely. We also have Zoha who has recently joined us as a Young Leader. She is really enthusiastic and hopefully will stay for a little while.

Without them we would not be able to do all the activities we do and go on trips, so a big thank you goes out to them for their continued support. Also I must not forget Jenny as she helps us by being our Home Contact when we go on trips and will come to meetings if we need her.

Anne Gibbons 13.2.25

Guides

Our numbers are currently 10 Guides.

Within the 6 themes we have worked on various Skills Builders, Interest Badges and Unit Meeting Activities (UMAs) including:

Know Myself :- Skills Builder Network

Interest Badge Guiding History

UMAs – Lava, The 2 match challenge, I'm good thanks, House of guiding

Express myself :- Skills builder Innovate

Interest Badge Confectioner

UMAs – Build a beast, Make your mark, Prepare to be amazed,

Be well :-

Interest Badge Mixology

UMAs – Message Mayhem, What a rush!, Games maker, No Doubt, Surfs up, Know my strengths,

Have Adventures :-

Interest Badge Backwoods cooking

UMAs – Blackhole breakout, Keep warm in the wild, Sneaky s'mores, Survive the wild,

Take Action :-

Interest Badge Craftivism

UMAs – One small step, A game of no noise, Toads on the road, Awful Adverts,

Skills for my Future :- Skills builder Lead

Interest Badge Investigator

UMAs – Run the Risk, Pets rock,

By completing a Skills builder, and an Interest badge, and 240 minutes of UMAs in the same theme a Guide can achieve a Theme award.

Ameena, Emma, Fatimah, Inaya, and Sajjal all completed their Be Well Theme Award. Emma, and Sajjal both completed their Have Adventures Theme Award.

On achieving two theme awards both Emma and Sajjal have been awarded their Guide Bronze Award.

In October we took the Guides and the Brownies on an Indoor holiday weekend at Woodcroft with a theme of "Woodland Adventures".

We also:

Had a go at throwing tomahawks

Went on a trip to Bletchley Park

Had a fundraising evening and donated the £140 raised to Cancer Research and RSPCA

Attended remembrance day

Went to the cinema to see "Moana 2"

Went to the panto to see Peter Pan

Celebrated Chinese new year

Had fun at a Division Disco

Celebrated Thinking day

Annual Report for Blenheim Scout Troop 2024

The troop have had a busy time during the year covering problem solving and teamwork activities.

We made leather bookmarks and wrist bands and painted T shirts.

The World faith badge was completed and as part of this we had a visit to the Sikh Temple in Cardigan Street. The scouts found out about the history of the faith, the beliefs and rituals and heard a passage read from the sacred book.

They were also taken to see the bedroom at the top of the building where the Holy book is put to bed each evening, the double bed is richly covered. The scouts were also served refreshments and told about the number meals that are served from the kitchen.

Another visit the following week took the troop to the Town Hall where we were shown around by the Mayor, the silver room, a committee room, down the stairs to the front entrance area, we were allowed to go and sit at the back to see a committee meeting in progress. We were allowed to go out on the balcony the scouts enjoyed waving to people walking along George Street. Our final stop was the Mayors Parlour where we were shown his robes and two scouts were invested.

At Easter Paul Oakley finished working with the troop after several years, to take a break from scouting.

Returning after the break the scouts spent 4-5 weeks working on the electronics badge with help from Brendan, Nick Jarman and Richard Spragg all members of the team who organise Jamboree On The Air/Internet for Luton.

We made plastic from milk and Ian Explorer Leader with Griffen unit made candles with the scouts. Tent pitching was practised in preparation for camp.

Knots and lashings were worked on and each patrol made a Sedan chair which was raced, Ian came along again to support with this evening and was back the following week with Jack one of the assistant Explorer leaders when we made A frame walkers and then competed to see which one lasted the longest.

A parent Sara has joined the team to help at meetings, her scout name is Olive.

The group took part in District camp at Paccar in June and the members got to do lots of activities. A Friday evening was spent at Woodcroft Guide centre where shelters were built in the woods and we played wide games.

A ready steady cook evening saw the scouts making up sauces to go with pasta from a selection of ingredients. A hike from Inspire to Lilley and back with the Beavers and Cubs on a warm evening was followed by the final meeting of the term fire lighting and toasting marshmallows. The scouts had now completed the Outdoors in 24 challenge for which they all got a badge.

The summer break was extended and scout meetings did not resume until the start of October and most evenings have been spent working on clauses for challenge badges to try to enable some of the older scouts to complete Chief Scout Gold award before they leave. This has included healthy habits, learning code breaking to become spies completing a mission and performing an entertainment.

Griffen Explorers leaders helped out again by covering two weeks looking at map reading and using a compass as part of the Navigation badge and they have offered to organise an orienteering activity in the Spring probably at Dunstable Downs to complete the badge.

Thanks to the parents who help out on a rota and Sara, to John (Beech) for taking on extra with planning and preparation and special thanks to Ian, Jack and Stuart from Griffen explorers for supporting with activities to enable the troop to continue to stay open as the volunteers that had said they would be able to help in the Autumn did not materialise. The troop is desperately in need of a team of people to step up and take on scouting roles to enable it to continue until the summer and beyond, please see if you can think of people we could approach and if so contact either Brendan or myself.

Janet Owen (Cedar)

- 1 The Olive Tree Church is a local ecumenical partnership comprising the Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church and St Margarets Methodist Church. The Partnership, which had been operating informally for some years, was legally instituted on 1 April 2021.

It has been agreed that the LEP would operate on a 'single purse' principal with all monetary accounts under the control of the Trustees of the LEP. All income and expenditure would be reflected in the LEP accounts but in accordance with the regulations appertaining to each Church the ownership of Church buildings remains with the individual churches.

In the event of a dissolution of the LEP it is agreed that General Funds held as at the date of dissolution would be distributed as follows:

- a) The unspent funds attributed to each Church in respect of legacies bequeathed to the Baptist and Methodist Churches be returned to the denominational funds. The interest earned on unspent legacy monies is to be attributed to the relevant legacy funds and any administration costs in respect of the funds is to be charged to such funds. The leadership team is to attribute how the monies in the legacy funds are to be spent.
- b) The original amounts invested by each Partner Church in respect of funds held as at 1 April 2021, after the deduction of the legacy funds held as at 1 April 2021, will be returned to the Partner Churches
- b) In the event of either a surplus /deficit arising on General funds over the term of the Partnership this will be distributed equally between the Partner Churches

Legacy funds form part of the General fund but it is decided that these funds be identified by way of note as between the Partner Churches.

The balances on Legacy Funds as at 31 August 2024 were as follows

Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church	£17,865
TMCP account- Methodist legacies	£1,257
Olive Tree Church	nil

Discretionary Funds form part of general funds

These are monies put aside for certain purposes but should they not be needed they can be used for other expenditure.

At 31 August 2024 discretionary funds were

Youthwork	£8,737
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In the past a youthworker was engaged and funds were obtained from external sources and also church funds were set aside. Due to Covid and personal circumstances the youthworker decided to leave. Some monies may yet be repayable to the Methodist Circuit - the amounts have to be ascertained.



THE OLIVE TREE CHURCH

St Margarets Methodist Church and

Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church

worshipping together

42-46 Blenheim Crescent
Luton
Beds
LU3 1HB

23 November 2024

Dear David

The Olive Tree Church

SFA for the year ended 31 August 2024

I enclose a signed copy of the accounts for the last financial year.

Kind regards

G.A.

Glynis P Thompson

D Hallworth Esq.,
7 Windsor Close
Flitwick
Beds
MK45 1PT

THE METHODIST CHURCH
STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS

The Olive Tree Church (LEP Baptist and Methodist Churches)	Church
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FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31 August 2024

South Bedfordshire	Circuit	Circuit no.	34/4
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Registered Charity - Charity Registration number

1196158

If not a registered charity His Majesty's Revenue and
Customs Gift Aid number

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(The HMRC number is equivalent to a registered charity number in terms of evidence of charitable status and may be used to give to donors or grant funders wishing to see evidence of the organisation's charitable status. Methodist charities in England and Wales that are not registered charities are excepted from registration under Statutory Instrument 2014 No.242)

Minister:

Rev Michael Anokye

LEP Trustees

Mrs Madit Grant

Mrs Louise Newport

Ms Peace Okyere

Mrs Helen Owen

Treasurer:

Mrs Madit Grant

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

**The Olive Tree
Church (LEP Baptist
and Methodist
Churches)**

Church

SECTION A		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
		£	£	£	£
a1	RECEIPTS	Note			
a2	Offerings and Tax recovered	54,599		54,599	61,258
a3	Bank and CFB interest and Investment income	3,090		3,090	1,944
a4	Lettings	51,955		51,955	63,003
a5	Other receipts	4,856		4,856	4,155
a6	TOTAL RECEIPTS	114,500		114,500 (a7)	130,360

SECTION B					
b1	PAYMENTS				
b2	Circuit Assessment or Share	13,853		13,853	23,076
b3	Donations	6,895		6,895	6,600
b4	Repairs and Maintenance	37,041	1,544	38,585	13,349
b5	Utilities (Insurances, water charges, heating & lighting)	34,609		34,609	26,212
b6	Property employment costs	6,165		6,165	12,312
b7	Other payments	44,048	70	44,118	26,912
b8	TOTAL PAYMENTS	142,611	1,614	144,225 (b9)	108,461

SECTION C					
c1	NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR	(a6-b8)	(28,111)	(1,614)	(29,725)
c2	Total funds brought forward from last year		152,109	1,728	153,837 (c6)
c3	Sub total:	(c1+c2)	123,998	114	124,112
c4	Transfers and adjustments				(c7)
c5	TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR	(c3+c4)	123,998	114	124,112 (c8)
					153,837 (c6)

SECTION D			
FOR INFORMATION ONLY: MONEY RECEIVED AND PASSED ON TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS			
d	(these amounts are not to be included in total receipts/payments figures above)	£	£
d1	Balance brought forward from last year	475	
d2	Offerings/Gifts - received for external organisations	1,119	2,417
d3	Offerings/Gifts - passed to external organisations	1,283	1,942
d4	BALANCE STILL TO BE PAID	311	475
	(d1+d2-d3)		

2 of 5

The Olive Tree Church (Baptist and Methodist LEP)

SUMMARY OF CHURCH ACCOUNTS AND INTERNAL ORGANISATIONS REPORTING TO THE CHURCH COUNCIL

SECTION E

Please follow the Guidance Notes to complete this page

Summary of the Church accounts for the year ended 31 August 2024 and Internal Organisations reporting to the Church Council/Church Meeting. Note that the funds of an Internal Organisation would normally be Restricted funds unless it could be clearly shown that they could be used for any Methodist purpose. This section must be completed to arrive at the gross income and expenditure totals of the Church. If gross income exceeds the Accruals threshold, then the Accruals method of accounting AND A DIFFERENT FORM must be used to report the accounts (see Methodist website). Please refer to the guidance notes regarding transfers between the District and connected District Organisations.

	INTERNAL ORGANISATIONS	Receipts	Payments	Net Receipts/ Payments	Adjustments	Opening balances	Closing balances
e1							
e2							
e3							
e4							
e5							
e6							
e7							
e8	Sub total of Internal Organisations funds					(e11)	(e12)
e9	Church accounts (totals brought forward from page 2 - totals column)	114,500 (a7)	144,225 (b9)	(29,725)	(c7)	153,837 (c6)	124,112 (c8)
e10	TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH	114,500	144,225	(29,725)		153,837 (x)	124,112 (y)
	Continue on a separate sheet if necessary and bring the totals forward	TOTAL RECEIPTS	TOTAL PAYMENTS				

SECTION F

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

CHURCH - CASH FUNDS HELD at 31 August 2024

	OPENING BALANCES	CLOSING BALANCES
f1		
f2	17,876	21,203
f3	102,289	78,393
f4	10,654	320
f5	23,018	24,196
f6		
f7	153,837 (c6)	124,112 (c8)
f8	(e11)	(e12)
f9	153,837 (x)	124,112 (y)

SECTION G

OTHER ASSETS and LIABILITIES

	At 1 September 2023	At 31 August 2024
g1		
g2	8,077,534	8,540,176
g3	226,640	237,518
g4	6,000	
g5		

f4 Include only Funds held at the Central Finance Board

f5 Include only Funds held at Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes

g1 Include any other investments (not the cash element of TMCP trusts accounts this is included in line f5)

124,112
311 c/c
124,423

Name of Church - Olive Tree Church (Baptist and Methodist LEP)

Declarations and Scrutiny

I confirm that these Receipt and Payment based accounts for the year to 31 August 2024 have been prepared from the records of the Church and that they include all funds under the control of the Church trustees.

Signature of treasurer *[Signature]* Date..... *15.10.24*

Name and address of treasurer *MADIT GAWANT*

..... *38 MONTROSE AVENUE LUTON* Post Code..... *LU3 1HR*

Presentation to the Church trustees

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2024 were/will be* presented to the meeting of the Church trustees held on *12th JANUARY 2025*

Signature of the Chair of the meeting *[Signature]*

Name of the Chair of the meeting *MICHAEL ANOKYE* Date *20/10/2024*

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

The Olive Tree Church

Charity Number 1196158

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Olive Tree Church for the year ended 31 August 2024 set out on pages 1 to 3. As the Church's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Church's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 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 Act.

* delete or circle as appropriate

Name of Church - The Olive Tree Church (Baptist and Methodist LEP)

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 (other than that disclosed below*) which give me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- 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 this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

I have/have not* obtained independent verification of all investments with the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes or held in other trusts, bank balances and funds at the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church which are individually in excess of £10,000 (ten thousand pounds) at the balance sheet date.

Signature of independent examiner J. W. Crane

Name of independent examiner JOHN WILLIAM CRANE

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner RETIRED ACCOUNTANT

Name of firm (where appropriate) N/A

Address 22 DAWLISH ROAD

LUTON, BEDS Post Code LU4 9SD

Date 31.10.2024

* delete or circle as appropriate

THE OLIVE TREE CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1196158

Accounts



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Trustees' annual report (including Directors' report) for the period

From: September 1st 2022 To: August 31st 2023.

Charity name: The Olive Tree Church

Charity registration number: 1196158

Company number: N/A

Objectives and activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	The Olive Tree Church is a Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership formed from Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church and St Margaret's Methodist Church, in Luton, Bedfordshire. <i>'Baptists and Methodists United in Christ serving our community'</i>. The partnership was formed in 2016 and formally constituted in 2021, with the adoption of its Constitution on 21 March 2021. The purpose of the Charity is to advance the Christian faith in the Area of Benefit in accordance with the principles and practices of the Participating Churches. In achieving its purpose, the Charity engages in a range of activities, either on its own or with others, including (but not restricted to): - the celebration of public worship; - the teaching of the Christian faith; - mission and evangelism; - pastoral work, including visiting the sick and the bereaved; - the provision of facilities with a Christian ethos for the local community, including (but not restricted to) the elderly, the young and other groups with special needs; and - the support of other charities in the UK and overseas. Luton is acknowledged to be an area of high deprivation, and with its numerous cross-cultural issues, we find that there is tremendous benefit in the work of this church. Members of The Olive Tree believe that it is the core of our mission to serve the community in this situation. The church vision statement includes, <i>'We believe we are called to be a Christian presence and witness in our multicultural area, sharing the good news of God's love and forgiveness with all'</i> and <i>'We aim to be good Christian neighbours and develop deeper relationships with other faiths represented in our neighbourhood'</i>.

Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	It is a privilege to introduce our second annual report, which documents the many and varied ways in which The Olive Tree Church has faced the challenges of the times and lives out its mission to be an inclusive, evangelistic, growing, justice-seeking church. The calling of The Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission. Most of the work of the Church occurs within or is associated with the local community in Luton. With our local neighbourhood focus, we continued working with our community worker to run and support a range of activities, such as a Ladies Craft Group, Ladies Gym Sessions, English classes, Home Groups and Bible Study Groups, a Stay and Play Toddlers Group and a monthly Messy Church. We also held regular Foodbank collections and a Youth Group, as well as social activities such as an annual Garden Party, Barbecue and Fun Day, Quiz and Ploughman's, Sunday school outings and Fundraising events. Various community groups used our premises, (both the 'Tree' site, previously Blenheim Baptist, and the 'Branch' site, previously St Margaret's Methodist). These included a regular Scouts, Brownies and Guides groups, Karate club and three different Christian churches. We are pleased to report that as planned last year, work was started to update two toilets at the branch site, to become fully accessible. We remain committed supporters of both Baptist and Methodist work and charities together with other charitable causes that fit in with our ethos. We held monthly weekday lunches in support of Christian Aid and a special fundraiser during Christian Aid week, raising awareness of their projects and appeals and encouraging support. Towards the end of this period we appointed a new Baptist Minister in July 2023, and prepared the manse before his official induction in October 2023. The manse had been previously rented out whilst vacant.
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		We also donated or collected items on behalf of a number of local organisations including Youthscape, Luton Foodbank, The Salvation Army Christmas Toy Appeal and Azalea.
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	The Trustees of the Olive Tree Church have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit, such that all of the activities, projects and services provided by the Olive Tree Church are all regarded to be of public benefit in service to the community.

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	- N/A
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	- N/A
Contribution made by volunteers	Para 1.38	- N/A
Other		- N/A

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.	Para 1.20	The Olive Tree Church has provided benefit to: - Church members, both old and young, with opportunities to encourage and increase their faith and Christian witness, receiving regular fellowship, home groups, Bible studies, lunch clubs and activities, and prayerful support, as well as support in many different forms where needed, such as hospital and care home visits, lifts to medical appointments, pastoral care and financial help. - Members of the community, with a variety of activities to join and support where needed such as parent and toddler 'Stay and Play' group, English lessons, women's fitness sessions, Craft club, lunch clubs, Youth Group activities, uniformed groups such as Scouts and Guides. - Individuals, for example with food and clothing, or help to pay for transport, or the bills and rent. - Local churches and community groups, by providing our buildings to rent, meet in and use, such as Luton-based 'Oasis', and the Karate Club. - Luton Foodbank recipients, from regular church collections, including at Harvest Festivals. - Various Luton, UK and Overseas charities by regular donations, raising awareness of their work, and supporting where needed, e.g. giving Christmas presents for the Luton charity 'Azalea' to distribute to their beneficiaries and regular 'Christian Aid' lunches.
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Achievements against objectives set	Para 1.41	- N/A
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	- N/A
Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	- N/A

Other		- N/A
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Financial review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	The unrestricted income for the year ended 31 August 2023 was £123,523 (Last Year: £113,097). This increase in income was mainly because of increased income from the lettings of the buildings, which had increased by £12,000. Unrestricted expenses for the year amounted to £94,821 (LY: £105,668). This reduction in expenditure was mainly because of reduced repair and maintenance costs. The net receipts for the year amounted to £28,702 (LY: £7,429).
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Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	The reserves policy for the Olive Tree Church is modelled on that recommended by the Methodist Church, which is in accordance with the Charity Commission's Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP). The Olive Tree Church receives its income from donations by church members (including Gift Aid), by letting the buildings and renting the Manse, when vacant. We have considered our mission plans for the future and have decided to employ a Baptist Minister, holding funds to cover at least 3 years of salary and associated costs. This is in addition to meeting the Circuit Assessment, normal expenditure (including repair and maintenance costs) and the updating of two existing toilets so that become accessible toilets. We therefore consider that at this current time it is appropriate that we hold a higher reserve of £150,000 than that typically expected of 6 months expenditure expected, which on the 22/23 budget was roughly £50,000. At present, The Olive Tree Church holds the higher level of reserves and these will be maintained by regular donations from the congregation. If required, funding towards specific aims will be requested, and there will be careful monitoring of expenditure.
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	As at the end of the financial year (31 August 2023), the reserves were: Unrestricted Funds £152,109 Restricted Funds £1,728
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	N/A
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	N/A

Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	The Olive Tree Church now has a new Baptist minister to continue to shape the church and enable us to meet the challenges of the future in a very distinctive mission field. We have new members and a thriving junior church. As such we have no concerns for this charity continuing as an ongoing concern.
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	- N/A
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	- N/A
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	- N/A
Other		- N/A

Structure, governance and management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document: for example, trust deed, memorandum and articles of association etc	Para 1.25	The Olive Tree Church is a Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership which was approved by the Baptist and Methodist Church Denominational authorities and the Sponsoring Body: Churches Together in Bedfordshire on 18th April 2018. The Governing Document for the Olive Tree Church is its Constitution, which was finally adopted by the Leadership Team and church members on 21st March 2021.
How is the charity constituted? for example limited company, unincorporated association, CIO	Para 1.25	The Olive Tree Church is constituted as a Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership between Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church and St Margaret's Methodist Church, with allegiance to the Baptist Union of Great Britain and The Methodist Church to serve the Area of Luton.
Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	The Constitution states that the Olive Tree Church is administered and managed by a body of Trustees consisting of A) ex officio Trustees, being the ministers of the LEP, B) Four elected Trustees, elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting and, C) Not more than three co-opted Trustees, appointed by the Trustees. Elected Trustees shall hold office from the end of the Annual Congregational Meeting at which they are selected until the end of the third such meeting after their appointment, but shall be eligible for re-election at that meeting. No person may be elected as an Elected Trustee or appointed as a Co-opted Trustee unless he or she: A) is a Member; B) Is aged 18 or above; C) Is not disqualified from acting as a Trustee by virtue of section 72 Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision); and D) Has indicated his or her willingness to serve as a Trustee. Co-opted Trustees serve until the end of the next Annual Congregational Meeting following their appointment.

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	Para 1.51	- N/A
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	- N/A
Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	- N/A
Other		- N/A

Reference and administrative details

Charity name	THE OLIVE TREE CHURCH
Other name the charity uses	
Registered charity number	1196158
Charity's principal address	42-46 Blenheim Crescent Luton Bedfordshire LU3 1HB

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Rev Joanne Sherwood	LEP Minister (Methodist) - Chair	31 st August 2023 (left)	The Methodist Church
	Rev Michael Anokye	LEP Minister Chair	1 st October 2023	The Baptist Church
2	Madit Grant	Treasurer		Annual Congregational Meeting
3	Helen Owen	Communications		Annual Congregational Meeting
4	Dr Louise Newport			Annual Congregational Meeting
5	Peace Okyere			Annual Congregational Meeting
6	Ramon Akib	(Co-opted)		Annual Congregational Meeting
7	Mary Huffman	Community Worker (Co-opted)		Annual Congregational Meeting
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				

17				
18				
19				
20				

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

Director name	
- N/A	

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year
The Baptist Union Corporation Ltd	
The Methodist Church	

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	The Olive Tree Church does not own any property. Ownership of the buildings used by the charity remains vested in the participating churches namely Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church St Margaret's Methodist Church
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	- N/A
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	- N/A

Additional information (optional)

Names and addresses of advisers (optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
- N/A		

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (optional information)

- N/A

Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

- N/A

Other optional information

- N/A

Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees’ report (including directors’ report) above.

Signed on behalf of the charity’s trustees/directors

Signature(s)	Madit Grant	
Full name(s)	Mrs Madit Grant	
Position (for example Secretary, Chair, etc)	Church Trustee	
Date	25 th June 2024	



Olive Tree Church
Annual Reports
2023-4

The Olive Tree Church

The calling of the Olive Tree Church is to respond to wholeheartedly embrace the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, expressing this commitment through a life marked by love, fellowship, and dedicated discipleship in the pursuit of the mission of Christ. In fulfilling our calling, in 2023, we dedicated our resources to:

- Improve awareness of God's ever-present love and celebrate the profound depth of His love for us.
- Facilitate the growth and learning of individuals as Christians through a framework of mutual support and care.
- Embrace the role of a good neighbour by extending gift aid to those in need and actively challenging injustice.
- Engage in the transformative work of making more followers of Christ, fostering a community of believers.

In addition, we also achieved the successes below:

Over the past year, we have gathered in the church for various events and programs. We have had the opportunity to come together on different occasions to participate in different programs. On Sundays, we have enjoyed hearing from different speakers on various topics, which uplifts our congregation and has blessed us in many ways.

On the 7th of October, 2023, Reverend Michael Anokye became our full-time Minister, which has also influenced the direction of our ministry. We are focused on renewing our missionary efforts by getting to know Jesus and sharing his message with others. Our mission is to show love in the way Christ did and to introduce others to Christ's life-changing presence, which has helped us work well with other religious groups in Luton.

We provide pastoral care services to individuals who require emotional and spiritual support. Our team of dedicated pastoral care advisors possess essential skills in listening, comforting, encouraging, providing practical assistance, and prayer. We visited many people during 2023 and offered crucial support to individuals going through prolonged sickness or immediate family problems such as sudden job loss. We aim to provide counsel, support, and encouragement to those who need it most by visiting them in their homes and hospitals. We have also set up an intercession prayer team to pray for people in person, over the phone, or absentia and are committed to lifting people in prayer.

In 2023, the home groups of our church played a crucial role in promoting meaningful connections among our members. They provided a nurturing environment for individuals to deepen their faith and enhance their experience in Christ. These groups also helped us reach out to those who were unable to attend physical church services and meetings, particularly those who were bed-bound, allowing them to remain connected to the community.

At the Olive Tree, we believe that sharing the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ is a journey of making friends for God. This mirrors the profound reality that God has graciously made us His friends through His Son, Jesus Christ. We all strive to be fishers of men through our testimonies, preaching, and prayer for healing. Our community is committed to being dynamic, inclusive, and justice-seeking. We work towards transforming people's thinking about their lives and their impacts on the community by actively contributing to the transformative experience of our diverse community, which has been very positive in 2023.

Rev Michael Anokye

Trustees Report

The Olive Tree Church is a local ecumenical partnership of Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church and St Margaret's Methodist Church, in Luton. The partnership was formed in 2016 and formally constituted in 2021.

It is a privilege to introduce this annual report, which documents the many and varied ways in which The Olive Tree Church has faced the challenges of the times and lives out its mission to be an inclusive, evangelistic, growing, justice-seeking church.

The calling of The Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission. Most of the work of the Church occurs within or is associated with local community within Luton.

Luton is acknowledged to be an area of high deprivation, and with its numerous cross-cultural issues, we find that there is tremendous benefit in this work. Members of The Olive Tree believe that it is the core of our mission to serve the community in this situation. The church vision statement includes, *'We believe we are called to be a Christian presence and witness in our multicultural area, sharing the good news of God's love and forgiveness with all.'* and *'We aim to be good Christian neighbours and develop deeper relationships with other faiths represented in our neighbourhood.'*

As well as our local neighbourhood focus, we are committed supporters of Baptist work through BMS World Mission and Methodist work and charities such as All We Can - the Methodist Relief and Development charity; Action for children and others.

We have monthly weekday lunches in support of Christian Aid and usually have a special fundraiser in Christian Aid week. We try to raise awareness of their projects and appeals and encourage support.

We support a number of local organisations and charities including Youthscape, Luton Town Centre Chaplaincy, Luton Foodbank, Women's Aid, Keech Hospice, The Salvation Army Christmas toy appeal and Azalea.

Our New Minister Michael Anokye, who joined us in October 2023, continues to shape the church and enable us to meet the challenges of the future in a very distinctive mission field.

Madit Grant

Christian Aid Lunch

Each year we support the work of Christian Aid by meeting once a month for a simple lunch to raise money for Christian Aid. It gives everyone an opportunity to meet together. Our lunches consist of homemade soup, bread, tea, coffee, and cakes.

This year some of our ingredients for our lunches have been donated by Oasis, one of our community projects as part their outreach programme.

It's a very informal time and there's plenty to eat and more room for more people to join us, whether they come to church or not. It's an opportunity to enjoy each other's company, food and fellowship and not to be sitting at home on your own.

Madit Grant

Senior Steward

Once again where has this year gone? The past months have been a very busy time for me and the team; without their support the job would be much tougher.

Over the past year we have had a number of enjoyable events;
Quiz Night 4th March at the Branch. Around 90 people bought tickets for this event and it turned out to be a cosy social evening with friends. 14 teams, 5 rounds, questions printed and answers read out by our own Rev Barbara Bond, one of the oldest members of our congregation. We raised £382.00 for the earthquake fund.

Church Barbecue and Cream Tea event on Saturday 24th June was held at the Tree. Strawberries and cream were served with some music on the church lawn. There were family games and activities. An Ice cream van turned up for the children and young at heart.

New Minister – On 7th October we celebrated an important event in our church life a celebration with an induction service for our new minister, Rev Michael Anokye. Michael's life is a compelling narrative, illustrating that God can accomplish remarkable things. This testimony inspires, affirming that God can work through us for His divine purposes.

The Harvest Festival Service was led by Robin Wright. This year the Harvest gifts were donated to the Luton Foodbank.

Toy and Nativity Service – 10th December. Gifts of toys went to the Salvation Army Christmas toy appeal as in previous years. We also collected to buy gifts for the ladies supported by Azalea.

A Christmas Carol Service by candle light took place on 13th December in the afternoon, at which our musicians were led by Mark Newport.

Carol Singing at Elstow Manor, Wixams – 20th December, Members of the Olive Tree Church went along to Elstow Manor for the first time for an enjoyable 45 minutes of carol singing with the residents.

We have been pleased to welcome new people coming to Sunday services but we also have to record those of our fellowship who have died during the year – Pauline Pedder, John Roberts, John Rogers, Joanne Wood and Barry Harvey. They have all served the Olive Tree in different ways and we are grateful for their contributions to the life of the church and give thanks to God for their service.

In February we were pleased to welcome Michael and Irene Anokye and their children Michelle, George, Aidan and Angel into membership of the Olive Tree Church.

Our weekly worship services have been led by our minister Rev Michael Anokye and visiting preachers from both Baptist and Methodist churches.

Madit Grant

HOME GROUPS

Monday Home group.

Six of us meet twice a month at my house from 7.30 till 9.

The first half of the year we studied Mark's gospel, reading a couple of chapters a night and discussing its relevance to us and what God might be saying to us through it. The last 3 months we used the questions Michael gave us on his sermons- exploring the DNA of a growing church and looking at our response.

Our evenings begin with a drink and catch up time. We then have a short act of worship.

The Bible study follows. We finish with a time of prayer - the focus varies depending on what we've studied and the needs of the group, church and the wider world.

We all find it beneficial being part of the group, where we can support each other in times of happiness and times of challenge. We'd love you to join us

Elaine Sharpe

Wednesday House Group

The Wednesday evening house group has continued to meet fortnightly on Zoom during the last year. After completing a study of Mark's Gospel, we used a Cover to Cover Study Guide on the Seven Miraculous Signs in John's Gospel. We have recently started using Michael's notes and questions connected to his sermons. As well as reading and discussing the Bible we always share news and pray together, and these are important aspects of our group as we support each other. We also met in the Oasis room at the Olive Branch for a social get-together during December.

Kate Silwood

Thursday Afternoon Group 2023

At the beginning of the year we met on alternate Thursday afternoons on church premises and continued studying the Psalms into the summer term. After a long summer break, we met again in September when John Rogers said that he would no longer be able to attend meetings. John was originally responsible for the group and requested that it should be specifically for Bible study and not a Home or Cell group. His loss has made a big difference to the group.

In September we decided to look at the themes we normally consider in Advent and spent several sessions on John the Baptist and the nativity stories. We have continued to meet at church after Christian Aid lunch and now that we have only 8 members, we are trying to meet in someone's home on the other Thursday in the month.

Barbara Bond

The Olive Tree Church Fellowship Club

Our Fellowship Club met on the 4th Tuesday of the month during 2023. There are 26 on our membership list although attendances are usually between 18 and 20.

We follow the usual pattern at every meeting. We meet in the hall from 10.15am and enjoy coffee or tea and biscuits - thanks to Jenny Woodham. The meeting commences at 10.30am and during the year we have welcomed seven speakers who entertained and enlightened us on a variety of subjects.

In February Kevin Varty took us back to the days when we listened to the radio as he played different signature tunes and songs. In April Alan Campbell showed us some beautiful paintings of Luton – painted in the 1950s when Luton was changing and the Arndale was built.

In June David Longman took us further afield and showed us pictures of his travels in Myanmar and later in the year David visited us again and entertained us with his tales about Bedfordshire Churches. The title “Poor Nell and the Marshall of Hadleyville” intrigued us but it all became clear when he showed his beautiful pictures.

We were taken back to the past again when Kevin Varty gave a presentation on the life of Joyce Grenfell. This certainly made us realise that she was a very talented and funny lady.

We welcomed a return visit from two helpers from the Azalea organisation. It was good to hear that they are still working hard in Luton to give help and support to those trying to walk “free from exploitation”. We usually find time for two of our favourite sessions – a Beetle Drive (lots of laughter) and a visit to Wardown Museum Cafe (lots of talking and laughter)

There was laughter again during a visit in August by Barbara Donaldson and her four singers. The meeting was entitled “Bring-along, sing-along – a lighted hearted miscellany” and we were asked to bring some item or memory which made us happy. We certainly had such a happy morning as we were encouraged to join in Barbara’s cheerful songs.

We always have our own services at Easter and Christmas and these are very special times. We are indebted to those who help to make these occasions very moving. Kate Silwood took our Easter Service and Mark Newport provided the music. At Christmas Robin Wright led the worship and Gloria Lathwell played for us. On both occasions members helped by reading the bible passages and singing the hymns and carols.

We have enjoyed some very interesting sessions during 2023 but what is more important is the sharing of news, the chatter and the laughter – and the ending prayer when we think of those with worries, health problems or concerns.

The committee is very grateful to all who help to make our meetings go well – welcoming members, arranging the room, giving lifts, helping with the refreshments etc. The present committee – Wendy and Arthur Fielding, Pat Gillespie, Jenny Woodham, Betty Traynor and Betty McKean – have over the last 20 plus years really enjoyed planning meetings, welcoming friends and members from church and the community. However, we are all getting older and have decided that, after our Easter Service on Tuesday, 26th March, we can no longer carry the responsibility for running the Fellowship Club. Hopefully in the future others may feel inspired to take up the task of offering fellowship and friendship to church and community.

Betty McKean

Cameo

Our CAMEO Youth Group (which stands for 'Come and Meet Each Other') usually meets on the last Sunday each month from 5.30 to 7.30pm. Mark & Louise Newport have recently got it going again, this time with the help of Peace and Marvellous Akib.

Whilst for a while we consistently had just two participants, exploring different types of games - board games, 'parlour' games, electronic games, racket games etc... they have gradually been joined by others, such that typically 4-8 come along each month ... though with new faces each time ... we would now have 14 if everyone turned up!

Our latest activities have all centred around cooking challenges... making pizzas, different types of soup ... & pancakes! It's been great to see people growing in confidence, showing their parents what they have cooked & daring to try each other's creations!

Ages currently start a bit earlier than previously, at 9/10yr, with families from Messy Church, Scouts & of course those who come to church. We are also making connections with St Andrews and Youthscape. At the moment we mainly meet at the 'Tree' Blenheim Crescent site, but activities are being planned at the 'Branch' site too. We are looking forward to the weather warming up so we can meet outside too, for picnics, play rounders and fly kites together!

We are always interested in new ideas - & of course your prayers - and If you are interested in joining us, please call Louise on 07976 743767. Thank you!

Mark & Louise Newport

Sunday School

2023 was a great year for our Sunday School as we have had a number of new children and young people join us regularly and now have 16 if they all turn up. We have been able to have an 11 year plus group with Louise. Elaine, Peace, Loess, Christina and I have led the under 10's. It's so lovely having so many children.

We have followed Roots material each week which is based on a specific theme and has activities, bible readings and craft for the children to follow. The children have also taken part in some All age church services.

At Easter we all went to Mead Farm for the day where we saw some new baby lambs we could feed and we also enjoyed the activity centre and slides. At Christmas we had a visit to Smyths Toy shop followed by a successful visit to McDonalds. It was great fun.

We are looking for more help in the Sunday School as we have more diverse ages - so if you think you could help maybe one Sunday a month please let me know.

The Olive Tree children are really bonding and growing up together so please do take time to get to know them - they are not shy!

Claire

Messy Church

We hold Messy Church one Saturday a month and it is open to our Olive Tree families and families from our wider community. We average about 40-45 people each month and most of the families have become regulars from a range of cultures and backgrounds.

We have a theme based on a biblical story and do lots of messy activities, games and stories. We provide light refreshments and drinks.

This year we have done Messy New Beginnings, Messy Love, Messy Harvest, Messy Palm Sunday to name a few. In July we finished the year with a Messy Fun Day with face painting, bouncy castle and Pizza and Ice Cream.

At Christmas we held a Messy Christingle and some of the families also joined us for our nativity service.

We are in need of more helpers to support this. So, if you can offer 2 hours once a month on a Saturday, please let us know. You can help with craft, do reception, serve food or help with drinks. If you can come, we can find you a role.

Messy church is a great way for us to reach out to our community and we are now starting our eleventh year.

Claire

22nd LUTON BROWNIES

It has been a busy year again for us.

Last March the Brownies decided they would like to invite their Mums to our meeting for a cup of tea and cake to thank them for all they do for them. They made invitations and cakes the week before and then decorated the cakes for their Mums the next week. The Mums also had a bunch of daffodils to take home.

To celebrate Easter we made cards and chicks with crème eggs in for members of the Church. The girls also made some chicks for themselves to take home!

We had a Coronation Party in May for the new King. We made cakes and decorated the hall with bunting. A good time was had by all.

A treasure hunt ended our half term and the girls had clues to find letters which spelt out a Skills Builder – Have Adventures.

For Father's Day we made cards and invited the Dads along to help the girls gain their Aviation Badge. They had to make paper planes and see who could fly them the farthest. There was a lot of competition amongst the Dads!

We then worked on the Camp Skills Builder and learnt about what to take to camp, how to pack it, the parts of a tent and camp fire safety. We went to Woodcroft on 4th July but it was really wet so we stayed inside and did UMAs (unit meeting activities). We went back on 18th July when the weather was kinder to us and actually lit a fire and toasted marshmallows to make smores. Yummy!

On 2nd August we decided to visit Woodcroft for a family evening and invited everyone to come along. We had a lovely time and lit a fire to again toast marshmallows!

In September we worked on the Influence Skills Builder and learnt about communicating with other people more effectively. One of the sessions was about a role model and we took the opportunity to visit the Mayor at the Town Hall in November to coincide with Parliament Week. We sat in the Council Chamber and the girls were able to ask the Mayor lots of questions before he took us to his parlour and showed us all the silverware given to the town from other countries over many years. We had our photo taken with the Mayor and also on the grand staircase in the entrance of the Town Hall.

We went on an Indoor Holiday from 3-5 November with the Guides to Woodcroft, our Guide Activity Centre at Bramingham. Our theme this year was All around the World. The girls completed crafts from many countries and sampled different food – including sushi. They also had time outside to explore the woods.

At the end of November we decorated pots and planted daffodils so that the girls could gain their Grow Your Own Badge. They took them home and they are all growing well. We had some bulbs left over so have planted them and left pots around the Church, which will hopefully flower soon.

Some of the girls went to the cinema in Luton for a showing of “Wish” the new Disney film at the beginning of December. This was arranged through Luton North Division and around 135 Rainbows, Brownies and Guides attended for a private viewing on a Saturday morning. It was brilliant and the girls thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

The girls painted “positive” pebbles just before Christmas – the idea being that they put something on their pebbles to make them feel happy.

After Christmas we had a New Year Party to celebrate the coming of 2024.

On Saturday 13th January we went to the panto at Stevenage and saw “Sleeping Beauty”. It was brilliant and we thank Jenny Woodham for organising this for us. We are looking forward to “Peter Pan” next year.

We are celebrating festivals this half term and learnt about Robert Burns on 23rd January. We had a Burns Night dinner with soup, Haggis, neeps and tatties plus shortbread, which the girls decorated. Some tried the haggis but a lot were a bit reticent.

Most of the girls attended the Luton North Division disco on Friday 2nd February and had a really good time. They had glow sticks and bought sweets - so they were full of sugar when they went home! We celebrated Chinese New Year by making lanterns and learning more about the origins of the Chinese Zodiac. We played a game with chopsticks – moving Maltesers from one saucer to another and trying not to drop them on the floor. We also had some prawn crackers and noodles – which were also eaten with chopsticks.

13th February is Pancake Day and we will obviously be having pancakes!

Our Thinking Day celebrations are a bit late this year owing to half term. Thinking Day is on 22nd February – the joint birthdays of our founders Lord and Lady Baden Powell – and it is a time when we remember all Girl Guides and Scouts around the world. We will have a Thinking Day campfire at our meeting on 27th February and our Division celebrations are on Sunday 3rd March.

We have 14 Brownies at present with another one starting at the end of February. Most of the Brownies are continuing to go to Guides so their numbers are increasing rapidly.

Kirsty and myself are the Brownie leaders. Lauren has returned to university and Sue now helps Fiona with the Guides. Khadijah – our Young Leader – is studying for her A levels so has also had to leave us. We have had people come along to help but they have not been with us very long. Jenny will always help out and is our Home Contact when we need one.

I would like to thank all the leaders for their help and support over the last year as without them our activities could not take place.

Anne Gibbons - Brownie Leader

Guides

In the past year our numbers have increased to 11 Guides.

Within the 6 themes we have worked on various Skills Builders and Unit Meeting Activities (UMAs) including

Know Myself :- Skills builder Network

UMAs – The two match challenge, Particularly peckish penguins, Treasure hunters, Directors cut, World centre welcome, Votes for women, Wartime Guides, Balloon frenzy,

Express myself :-

UMAs – Pass it on, Knock Knock, Storytelling silhouettes, Wait...What?, Superpower pairs.

Be well :- Skills builder First Aid

UMAs – Equal everything, Totally ga-ga, Ready steady teddy.

Have Adventures :- Skills builder Camp

UMAs – Help, Black hole breakout, Warm in the wild, Intergalactic snacks, Get carried away.

Take Action :- Skills builder Influence

UMAs – Painting under pressure, Global goalie, Man on the moon, One small step, Drawing distractions.

Skills for my Future :- Skills builders Live Smart and Lead

UMAs – Paper pilots, Run the Risk, Instruction disruption, Fizzy fun.

Over the August bank holiday we joined with St Augustine Guides and took a small group to the Wellies and Wristbands camp at Foxlease in Hampshire. Wellies and Wristbands is a festival for Guides and Rangers. There were live bands on stage each evening. During the day there were all kinds of activities including archery, kayaking, geocaching, wall climbing, bouncy castles, science tent, shelter building, craft tent, zip lining, and many more.

In September Anne Gibbons won BBC three counties radio award for volunteering.

In November we took the Guides and the Brownies on an Indoor holiday weekend at Woodcroft with a theme of “around the world”.

We also celebrated the Coronation

Mother's day and Father's day

Went to the Town Hall for Parliament week

Attended the Remembrance Day parade at the memorial in Marsh Road

Went to the cinema to see “Wish”

Went to the panto to see Sleeping Beauty

Celebrated Thinking day

Fiona Watson 22.2.24



Beaver Section Report 2023

Each meeting starts with a coming in activity that beavers can join in with as they arrive. This is often a craft type of activity linked to the theme for the week. This is followed with games and the main activity. Finally we have a joint game with the cubs taking advantage of the larger number of children in the combined group for some team games.

The programme has been full of indoor and outdoor activities towards the beaver challenge and activity badges. For the Outdoor challenge they have found out about local wildlife, made bird feeders, built shelters in the woods near Bide-A-While for their teddies and pitched tents.

Activities for the Adventure challenge have included putting the Green Cross code into practice during a walk around Biscot, joining in a hike with the cubs around Warden Hill, climbing trees, and during the summer an evening on the beach with sandcastles and volleyball and then a night of water games. At the end of the summer term we had two joint activities with the cubs which included caving and pedal carts (in the rain!) at Bromham and then several wide games in the arboretum at Wardown Park

The world challenge has seen the beavers celebrating the pre-Lent carnival in Denmark (Fastelavn) and later St Patrick's Day. During a meeting to celebrate King Charles coronation, each beaver wrote a letter to the king and queen to congratulate them, followed by afternoon tea, with homemade party poppers and a chance to renew their promise to the newly crowned King. In November the beavers had an evening to reflect on Remembrance and they painted poppies on stones to take home.

Many of the starter activities contributed to the creative section of the Skills challenge. The beavers also visited Wardown Park and found out about its history. At the end of the year, they made wooden lanterns and Christmas crackers.

Several evenings have been spent working on the teamwork challenge to encourage the beavers to work together and included a meeting where each beaver chose and led a game. The beavers have also completed six activity badges during the year. These were Creative, Space, Gardener, Emergency Aid, Safety and Camp Craft. The last of these included a day visiting the scout camp in September during which they learnt to light fires, cook a pudding to have after their packed lunch and had a range of other activities in the woods. The Space badge was completed during a sleepover in the church hall in the Easter holiday.

At the start of July we joined in the group family hike which was a circular route from Studham via Whipsnade to Dunstable Downs. This was an all day event and was joined by many parents. Unfortunately, we had to cancel the beavers night hike in the autumn due to torrential rain.

Beavers took part in three events organised by Icknield district. These were the Jamboree on the Air/Internet and swimming gala in October and Christingle in December.

Although we do not have a new leader yet, we have some good news concerning the start of the formation of a new leadership team for the beavers. Kelly Knapp has been helping me to run the beaver meetings throughout the year and has recently agreed to take a leadership role with the colony as a Section Assistant. Her help and support is hugely appreciated.

Four Beavers gained their Chief Scouts Bronze award: Thushi, Ibrahim, Dhruv and Zoe. Congratulations to all of them on achieving the top award for beavers. At the end of the year we have five beavers.

Brendan Owen - **Group Scout Leader**



Cub Section Report 2023

The cubs have had another busy year completing a lot of activities for their badges.

In January they started the new Money skills activity badge. This covered many aspects of money management from currency and budgeting, to spending habits, charity donations and scams and internet security. The best password they created would take over 1500 years to crack! Through the year several evenings were dedicated to teamwork, teambuilding and team leadership as part of the Teamwork and Team Leader challenge badges. The next badge to be completed was the Astronomer. As well as looking at stars and the moon, the cubs enjoyed making rocket launchers! The badge was completed during a sleepover in the church hall in February half term holiday. Some of the highlights included an edible model solar system and finding out about life on the International Space Station. They discovered that ordinary tasks like washing your hair and exercising on a treadmill are rather different when you are weightless. At the end of term we had a hike over Warden hills.

Another popular badge was the chef badge. The first week we spent an evening with activities looking at food hygiene and kitchen safety along with different cooking methods. Each six then planned a two course meal. The following week, it was time to don the aprons to prepare, cook and eat the meal. We had assistance from a good number of parents to make sure everyone was safe and they of course enjoyed the meal too.

As the weather got warmer, meetings were often outside. Cubs laid and followed tracking trails in the woods above Popes meadow, learnt how to play Bowls and had a USA Independence Day evening learning how to play baseball and enjoying the post-game BBQ. Later in July we went to the campsite at Bromham to complete some more adventurous activities for the Adventure Challenge. This included caving and pedal Karts. The first group on the pedal karts were the lucky ones as it was dry but heavy rain during the evening made the kart track very muddy for the second group whilst the other group remained dry inside the caving complex! For the last meeting of the term, we went to Wardown Park and played some wide games with the beavers.

Most of the pack and quite a few parents took part in our summer family hike which was a day out walking around Studham, Whipsnade and Dunstable Downs where we stopped for lunch before returning on a different route to the start point.

A rather unusual badge was the YouShape Award which consists of four badges which requires the cubs to think of something they want to change, plan how to do it, lead and finally represent it to other people. As part of this, each six ran an entire pack meeting. Most of the cubs completed the final part during our Summer 3 Day Event which introduced

the local community to scouting activities during August. We are the first pack in the district to complete this badge.

In September the cubs tried out some life skills - ironing their necker, making a hot drink (and washing up) and window cleaning (the lower half of the church hall windows were much clearer after their efforts!). We then moved on to complete the Scientist badge with six different experiments. With Jamboree on the air approaching we linked this to the Communicator badge with coded messages and invisible ink. In November the activities were linked to parts of the World Challenge badge with themes of Remembrance, Diwali, Scouting in Japan and a Highland Games night to celebrate St Andrew's day. The final badge for the year was the Entertainer badge. The cubs chose to perform Jack and the beanstalk as a pantomime show for their parents. One night was spent making the scenery and props which included a 4m high bean stalk, a large throne seat for the giant and a cottage for Jack and his mother.

During the year the cubs took part in the district swimming gala and Jamboree on the Air/Internet events.

Three Cubs gained their Chief Scouts Silver award: Adam, Nathan and Raiyan. Well done to them for achieving these top awards. At the end of the year we have 18 cubs although three of those will be moving to scouts in January.

There is still no leader for the Cub section and meetings are led by Brendan (Hathi) and Chetana (Raksha) supported by Ambiga (Baloo) and parents on a rota. In September we welcomed Saima (Bagheera) who has joined us for 6 months. She lives locally and a volunteering placement is part of her degree studies.

Brendan Owen **Group Scout Leader**

Scout Troop annual report 2023

It doesn't seem possible that it is a year since I was last writing a report!

Scout meetings cover varying themes in order for scouts to work towards gaining challenge badges as well as interest badges.

Teamwork activities and problem solving are regular activities as working together is an important life skill and the scouts have to be reminded there is no I in team.

The scouts took part in an evening at Barton Springs organised and run by the District Explorers which covered a variety of activities.

We have made: biscuits, paper bricks, bee houses and to complete the model maker badge, Warhammer models from a kit.

We have learnt: first aid, about different tools what they are used for and how to use them, how to carry out tasks with different disabilities to improve understanding, mental health how to prevent problems and help people who have issues, about the Holocaust on Memorial day.

We deciphered codes with morse and semaphore, went litter picking around the church grounds. The scouts planned an evening themselves and then ran it as part of youth shaped scouting.

The troop took part in the District swimming gala, Jamboree on the Air, Remembrance Day parade and the group family hike from Studham to Dunstable Downs and back. A leader and a couple of Explorers who went to the World Scout Jamboree came along and talked about their experience and showed off their souvenirs, hopefully inspiring applications to go to Poland in 2027.

Outside we have pitched tents, lit fires and made toasted sandwiches, played games with water. To celebrate St.Patrick we had jacket potatoes, cakes, leprechaun juice and all things Irish, another evening we held a repair shop night.

Scouts set themselves a personal challenge and several actually completed it, gained the Environmental Conservation badge and at camp completed the Survival skills badge when most of the meals were cooked without utensils.

The crisp packets that have been donated were turned into 9 blankets which were taken to Noah along with 7 sleeping bags given to the group which were not needed as spares, these were all made into packages with some chocolate and had a gift tag with a message tied on. 3 scouts completed Chief Scout Gold Awards well done Lydia, Kaleb and Yasir.

My thanks to: the parents who have helped out on the rota and Ambiga, Beech (John) and in particular Oak (Paul).

Paul is leaving the troop at Easter, we really appreciate all the time he has given to the group and this means we need help to ensure meetings can run.

I am planning to step down as the scout leader in the summer.

Janet Owen - Scout Leader.

THE METHODIST CHURCH STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS

THE OLIVE TREE CHURCH (LEP Baptist and Methodist Churches)

Church

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 August 2023

South Bedfordshire

Circuit

Circuit no.

34/4

Registered Charity - Charity Registration number

1196158

If not a registered charity Her Majesty's Revenue and
Customs Gift Aid number

(The HMRC number is equivalent to a registered charity number in terms of evidence of charitable status and may be used to give to donors or grant funders wishing to see evidence of the organisation's charitable status. Methodist charities in England and Wales that are not registered charities are excepted from registration under Statutory Instrument 2014 No.242)

Minister:

Reverend Michael Anokye

LEP TRUSTEES

Mrs Madit Grant

Mrs Louise Newport

Ms Peace Okyere

Mrs Helen Owen

Treasurer:

Mrs Madit Grant

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

**THE OLIVE TREE
CHURCH (LEP
Baptist and
Methodist Churches)**

Church

SECTION A		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
		£	£	£	£
1	RECEIPTS	Note			
2	Offerings and Tax recovered	58,170	3,088	61,258	61,293
3	Bank and CFB interest and Investment income	1,944		1,944	152
4	Lettings	63,003		63,003	50,885
5	Other receipts	406	3,749	4,155	2,663
6	TOTAL RECEIPTS	123,523	6,837	130,360 (a7)	114,993

SECTION B					
1	PAYMENTS				
2	Circuit Assessment or Share	23,076		23,076	25,704
3	Donations	6,600		6,600	7,348
4	Repairs and Maintenance	13,349		13,349	22,726
5	Utilities (Insurances, water charges, heating & lighting)	26,212		26,212	22,203
6	Property related & direct employment costs	12,312		12,312	14,205
7	Other payments	13,272	13,640	26,912	41,388
8	TOTAL PAYMENTS	94,821	13,640	108,461 (b9)	133,574

SECTION C					
1	NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR	(a6-b8)	28,702	(6,803)	21,899
2	Total funds brought forward from last year		128,252	3,686	131,938 (c6)
3	Sub total	(c1+c2)	156,954	(3,117)	153,837
4	Transfers and adjustments		(4,845)	4,845	(c7)
5	TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR	(c3+c4)	152,109	1,728	153,837 (c8)

SECTION D					
FOR INFORMATION ONLY: MONEY RECEIVED AND PASSED ON TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS					
1	(these amounts are not to be included in total receipts/payments figures)		£	£	
1	Balance brought forward from last year				4
2	Offerings/Gifts - received for external organisations		2,417		1,181
3	Offerings/Gifts - passed to external organisations		1,942		1,185
4	BALANCE STILL TO BE PAID	(d1+d2-d3)	475		

Church

SECTION 5

Please follow the Guidance Notes to complete this page

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SECTION F

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

CHURCH - CASH FUNDS HELD at 31 August 2023

CHURCH - CASH FUNDS HELD at 31 August 2023		BALANCES		BALANCES	
1	Cash in hand	20			
2	Bank Current Account	54,145		17,876	
3	Bank Deposit Account	51,411		162,289	
4	Central Finance Board	3,980		10,654	
5	Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes	22,364		23,018	
6	Other funds				
7	SUB TOTAL - Church accounts	131,938	(c6)	153,837	(c8)
8	Total funds held by Internal Organisations (the closing balance total from above) (e12)		(e11)		(e12)
9	TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH	131,938	(c6)	153,837	(c8)

SECTION C

OTHER ASSETS and LIABILITIES

OTHER ASSETS and LIABILITIES			
g1	Investments (include Endowment(s))		
g2	Land & Buildings (see notes re Insurance value)	6,879,912	8,077,534
g3	Other Assets	201,455	226,640
g4	Loan(s) - show amount outstanding at year end	12,000	6,000
g5	Other Liabilities		

14 include only Funds held at the Central Finance Board

14 include only Funds held at the Central Finance Board
15 include only Funds held at Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes

01 Include any other investments (not the cash element of TMCP trusts accounts this is included in line 15)

Declarations and Scrutiny

I confirm that these Receipt and Payment based accounts for the year to 31 August 2023 have been prepared from the records of the Church and that they include all funds under the control of the Church trustees.

Signature of treasurer *[Signature]* Date..... *9.11.2023*
Name and address of treasurer *MRS MAURIT GRANT*
..... *38 MONTROSE AVENUE, LUTON* Post Code..... *LU3 1HR*

Presentation to the Church trustees

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2023 were/will be* presented to the meeting of the Church trustees held on ..*26TH NOV 2023*.....

Signature of the Chair of the meeting *[Signature]*
Name of the Chair of the meeting *NICHOLAS AMOBYE* Date *9.11.2023*

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

THE OLIVE TREE CHURCH (LEP)

Charity Number 1196158

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the *OLIVE TREE* Church for the year ended 31 August 2023 set out on pages *1* to *2*. As the Church's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Church's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 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 Act.

* delete or circle as appropriate

THE OLIVE TREE CHURCH (LEP Baptist and Methodist Churches) No 1196518

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 (~~other than that disclosed below~~) which give me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- 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 this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

I ~~have~~/have not* obtained independent verification of all investments with the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes or held in other trusts, bank balances and funds at the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church which are individually in excess of £10,000 (ten thousand pounds) at the balance sheet date.

Signature of independent examiner J. W. Crane

Name of independent examiner JOHN WILLIAM CRANE

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner RETIRED ACCOUNTANT

Name of firm (where appropriate) N/A

Address 23 DAWKINS ROAD

LUTON, BEDS Post Code LU4 9SD

Date 16.11.2023

* delete or circle as appropriate

THE OLIVE TREE CHURCH

England & Wales - Charity number 1196158

Accounts



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Trustees' annual report (including Directors' report) for the period

From: September 1st 2021 To: August 31st 2022

Charity name: The Olive Tree Church

Charity registration number: 1196158

Company number: N/A

Objectives and activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	The Olive Tree Church is a Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership formed from Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church and St Margaret's Methodist Church, in Luton, Bedfordshire. <i>'Baptists and Methodists United in Christ serving our community'</i>. The partnership was formed in 2016 and formally constituted in 2021, with the adoption of its Constitution on 21 March 2021. The purpose of the Charity is to advance the Christian faith in the Area of Benefit in accordance with the principles and practices of the Participating Churches. In achieving its purpose, the Charity engages in a range of activities, either on its own or with others, including (but not restricted to): - the celebration of public worship; - the teaching of the Christian faith; - mission and evangelism; - pastoral work, including visiting the sick and the bereaved; - the provision of facilities with a Christian ethos for the local community, including (but not restricted to) the elderly, the young and other groups with special needs; and - the support of other charities in the UK and overseas. Luton is acknowledged to be an area of high deprivation, and with its numerous cross-cultural issues, we find that there is tremendous benefit in the work of this church. Members of The Olive Tree believe that it is the core of our mission to serve the community in this situation. The church vision statement includes, <i>'We believe we are called to be a Christian presence and witness in our multicultural area, sharing the good news of God's love and forgiveness with all'</i> and <i>'We aim to be good Christian neighbours and develop deeper relationships with other faiths represented in our neighbourhood'</i>.

Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	It is a privilege to introduce this annual report, which documents the many and varied ways in which The Olive Tree Church has faced the challenges of the times and lives out its mission to be an inclusive, evangelistic, growing, justice-seeking church. The calling of The Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission. Most of the work of the Church occurs within or is associated with the local community within Luton. With our local neighbourhood focus, we employ a community worker who runs and supports a range of activities, such as a Ladies Craft Group, Ladies Gym Sessions, English classes, Home Groups and Bible Study Groups, a Stay and Play Toddlers Group, a monthly Messy Church and Messy Sunday. We also have a regular Fellowship Club, Foodbank collections and a Youth Group, as well as social activities such as an annual Garden Party, Barbecue and Fun Day, Quiz and Ploughman's, Sunday school outings and Fundraising events, such for the Turkey Earthquake Relief Fund. Various community groups use our premises, (both the 'Tree' site, previously Blenheim Baptist, and the 'Branch' site, previously St Margaret's Methodist). These include a regular Scouts, Brownies and Guides groups, Karate club, three different Christian churches and until recently, a Cactus club and Slimming World. We are committed supporters of both Baptist work (through BMS World Mission), and Methodist work and charities, (such as All We Can - the Methodist Relief and Development charity; Action for children) and others. We have monthly weekday lunches in support of Christian Aid and usually have a special fundraiser during Christian Aid week, as we raise awareness of their projects and appeals and encourage support. We also donate to a number of local organisations and charities including Youthscape, Luton Town Centre Chaplaincy, Luton Foodbank, Women's Aid, Keech Hospice, The Salvation Army Christmas toy appeal and Azalea.
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Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	The Trustees of the Olive Tree Church have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit, such that all of the activities, projects and services provided by the Olive Tree Church are all regarded to be of public benefit in service to the community.
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	- N/A
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	- N/A
Contribution made by volunteers	Para 1.38	- N/A
Other		- N/A

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.	Para 1.20	The Olive Tree Church has provided benefit to: - Church members, both old and young, with opportunities to encourage and increase their faith and Christian witness, receiving regular fellowship, home groups, Bible studies, lunch clubs and activities, and prayerful support, as well as support in many different forms where needed, such as hospital and care home visits, lifts to medical appointments, pastoral care and financial help. - Members of the community, with a variety of activities to join and support where needed such as parent and toddler 'Stay and Play' group, English lessons, women's fitness sessions, Craft club, coach outings, uniformed groups such as Scouts and Guides, - Individuals, for example with food and clothing, or help to pay for transport, or the bills and rent. - Local churches and community groups, by providing our buildings to rent, meet in and use, such as Luton-based 'Oasis', and the Karate Club. - Luton Foodbank recipients, from regular church collections, including at Harvest Festivals. - Various Luton, UK and Overseas charities by regular donations, raising awareness of their work, and supporting where needed, e.g. giving Christmas presents for the Luton charity 'Azalea' to distribute to their beneficiaries, regular 'Christian Aid' lunches and collecting for the Turkey Earthquake appeal.
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Achievements against objectives set	Para 1.41	- N/A
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	- N/A
Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	- N/A
Other		- N/A

Financial review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	The Olive Tree Church has unrestricted funds at the end of the financial year amounting to £128,252. This is the first year of the charity and therefore comparative figures for the previous year are not available. The surplus of income over expenditure amounted to £7,429. The balance carried forward came from the funds of the two churches now constituted as the LEP.
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	The reserves policy for the Olive Tree Church is modelled on that recommended by the Methodist Church, which is in accordance with the Charity Commission's Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP). The Olive Tree Church receives its income from donations by church members (including Gift Aid), by letting the buildings and renting the vacant Manse. We have considered our mission plans for the future and have decided that in order to employ a Baptist Minister, we need to hold funds to cover at least 3 years of salary and associated costs. This is in addition to the cost of continuing to employ a Community Worker, meet our Circuit Assessment and cover our normal expenditure and routine repair and maintenance costs for the buildings. We are also planning this year to update two existing toilets so that they are accessible. Employment of a Baptist Minister will require additional cost to renovate the Manse before they move into it, approximately £15,000. We will also lose any further income from renting the Manse. We are also aware that due to the cost of living, it is likely that utility bills will continue to increase, particularly next year when the current fixed rate payable for the Branch will expire and require a new contract at most likely the current higher rate. We therefore agree that at this current time it is appropriate that we hold a higher reserve of £90,000 than that typically expected of 6 months expenditure expected, which on the 21/22 budget was roughly £50,000. At present, The Olive Tree Church already holds the higher level of reserves and these will be maintained by regular donations from the congregation, holding a Gift Day on the church's anniversary (Easter Day), where funding towards specific aims will be requested, and careful monitoring of expenditure.
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	As at the end of the financial year (31 August 2022), the reserves were: Unrestricted Funds £128252 Restricted Funds £3686

Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	N/A
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	N/A
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	The Olive Tree Church is seeking a new minister to continue to shape the church and enable us to meet the challenges of the future in a very distinctive mission field. Whilst looking for a Baptist Minister, we have the option of seeking a Methodist Minister from the South Bedfordshire Circuit, if the search becomes protracted. We therefore have no concerns for this charity continuing as an ongoing concern.

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	- N/A
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	- N/A
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	- N/A
Other		- N/A

Structure, governance and management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document: for example, trust deed, memorandum and articles of association etc	Para 1.25	The Olive Tree Church is a Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership which was approved by the Baptist and Methodist Church Denominational authorities and the Sponsoring Body: Churches Together in Bedfordshire on 18th April 2018. The Governing Document for the Olive Tree Church is its Constitution, which was finally adopted by the Leadership Team and church members on 21st March 2021.
How is the charity constituted? for example limited company, unincorporated association, CIO	Para 1.25	The Olive Tree Church is constituted as a Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership between Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church and St Margaret's Methodist Church, with allegiance to the Baptist Union of Great Britain and The Methodist Church to serve the Area of Luton.

trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	The Constitution states that the Olive Tree Church is administered and managed by a body of Trustees consisting of A) ex officio Trustees, being the ministers of the LEP, B) Four elected Trustees, elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting and, C) Not more than three co-opted Trustees, appointed by the Trustees. Elected Trustees shall hold office from the end of the Annual Congregational Meeting at which they are selected until the end of the third such meeting after their appointment, but shall be eligible for re-election at that meeting. No person may be elected as an Elected Trustee or appointed as a Co-opted Trustee unless he or she: A) is a Member; B) Is aged 18 or above; C) Is not disqualified from acting as a Trustee by virtue of section 72 Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision); and D) Has indicated his or her willingness to serve as a Trustee. Co-opted Trustees serve until the end of the next Annual Congregational Meeting following their appointment.
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	Para 1.51	- N/A
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	- N/A

Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	- N/A
Other		- N/A

Reference and administrative details

Charity name	THE OLIVE TREE CHURCH
Other name the charity uses	
Registered charity number	1196158
Charity's principal address	42-46 Blenheim Crescent Luton Bedfordshire LU3 1HB

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Rev Joanne Sherwood	LEP Minister (Methodist) - Chair		The Methodist Church
2	Madit Grant	Treasurer		Annual Congregational Meeting
3	Helen Owen	Communications		Annual Congregational Meeting
4	Dr Louise Newport			Annual Congregational Meeting
5	Peace Okyere			Annual Congregational Meeting
6	Ramon Akib	(Co-opted)		Annual Congregational Meeting

7	Mary Huffman	Community Worker (Co-opted)		Annual Congregational Meeting
8				
9				
10				
11				
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13				
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15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

Director name	
- N/A	

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year
The Baptist Union Corporation Ltd	
The Methodist Church	

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	- N/A
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	- N/A
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	- N/A

Additional information (optional)

Names and addresses of advisers (optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
- N/A		

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (optional information)

- N/A

Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

- N/A

Other optional information

- N/A

Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report (including directors' report) above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees/directors

Signature(s)

Madit Grant

Full name(s)

Mrs Madit Grant

Position (for example
Secretary, Chair, etc)

Church Trustee

Date

26th June 2023

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Community Worker Report - March 2022 to March 2023

Although Covid is still around, this year has felt a lot more like a normal year with activities resuming and for them to be able to keep running during term time.

Monday afternoon OTC runs a Stay and Play group for the families in our community. It's such a needed activity especially due to the previous years of staying home and with limited help from flying start due to the drastic funding cuts which took the staff serving all of Luton from 90 staff to 16 staff. We have a community link person Naeema, who we can refer concerns to and I (Mary) attend Flying start zoom meetings to find out what other help and programs I can offer the parents. Talk Talk has been well used due to the children being behind in with their speech because of Covid Lock downs. We have over 40 mothers in our Whatsapp group and a regular 12- 14 families a week. Quite a few with 2 kids each. Help is always welcome.

BIG thanks to Elaine and Helen who faithfully support this weekly and Jenny who always jumps in at the last moment when we need her. Alexandra and Josie (Ywam) are now helping when they can.

Tuesdays over the last year we have been blessed to have the help of both Shammah and Alexandria to enable our church to keep running two important activities – Ladies Exercise class and English class. Shammah is a personal trainer so has lead the women in the community in vigorous exercises using weights and our gym equipment. The women have really enjoyed the next level she has led us into. While she is away, February to April I'm leading a badminton class. In May, we hope to get Shammah back till the summer break in August.

Alexandra does a great job at leading our English class. We have a variety of nationalities coming to the group – Pakistani, Bangladesh, Spain, Chile, Morocco and China. Weekly 4 – 8 people.

Thursdays – OTC continues to work with Rukia and Fatheha – Creative Expressions. We have been working together to for the last 8 years. Our numbers have risen after Covid took quite some time to get the women to come out of their homes. This year 16 – 20 ladies and a creche of 2 – 4 kids.

BIG thanks to Barbara, Gloria and Rose who faithfully support this group fortnightly.

Monday morning I attend a prayer meeting for the community, pastoral phone calls and work on the projects Administration. **Thursday morning** I visit folk in our church who are mainly unwell or house bound with Joanne.

Last **Sunday of the month**, Claire or Loess help me run a **Messy Sunday** to help bring our European families into the church alongside our OTC kids. Some weeks we have 14 kids.

I was able to host 3 fundraisers for our community – Pakistan flooding, Somalian drought and 25th February Turkey/Syria earthquake.

Plus I have been nominated for Heroes of Biscot ward for my service in the community.

Mary Huffman – Community and Pastoral worker for the OTC church.

HOME GROUPS – Reports

The **Monday evening group** meets fortnightly and we start our meeting with a cup of tea or coffee and biscuits before spending time sharing news. Then we read and discuss a Bible passage before uotoiopraying for each other and the needs of others. We are currently studying the gospel of Mark. New members are welcome – please speak to Elaine or Helen.

The **Wednesday Evening house group** meets fortnightly and has been meeting on Zoom for the last three years. There are nine of us in the group and we share the leadership of meetings between us. We always spend some time sharing news and praying for each and for the needs of other people. After finishing a course on Mark's gospel, we had a few 'one-off' sessions when whoever was leading chose the theme and Bible passage. We have now just started a 7-session series on Colossians. We always try to start our discussion of the Bible reading by responding to the questions, 'What stands out for you in this passage? What particularly speaks to you?' We also circulate notice of the Bible reading and discussion starters by email a few days before we meet, to give people the opportunity to prepare if they are able to.
Kate Silwood

Thursday afternoon group

The Bible Study group has continued to meet on alternate Thursdays over the past year. We have a small group of those who come regularly, together with others who come when they are able. We will miss John Roberts, one of our core members; although he was not able to contribute to the discussion recently, his prayers were always appreciated.

Over the past year we completed reading through Mark's gospel, and then in the Autumn term studied the seven signs in John's gospel. This gave some of us the motivation to look again at John's gospel as a whole. We are now studying some of the psalms. These are stand-alone sessions, so do please come and join us at the Olive Tree if you can.

2022 Annual Report Sunday School and Messy Church

Sunday School

2022 was a really good year for growing our Sunday School at the Olive Tree. We regularly now have 7-9 children joining us on a Sunday Morning from the ages of 3 to 11. They all get on well together and we have been able to have some great times most recently going to Smyths Toy Shop at Christmas and onto McDonalds.

Elaine, Loess and I lead the Sunday School on a rota with support from Peace, Betty and Christina. Betty has decided to stand down now and we would really thank her for all the support she has given children over the generations and we will miss her. Thanks to Peace and Christina for their ongoing support.

Each Sunday we follow the Roots programme of activity, bible story, games and crafts. It often aligns to the theme in the church. We have reintroduced recently the Children Slot in the service which we hope you are enjoying.

On the 4th Sunday of each month, we have a Messy Sunday where we invite families from Messy Church to join us and have a family event in the hall. This is a great way to get our Messy Church families more engaged in our Sunday activities and they are very popular.

During 2023 we want to really get our children engaged and involved in the life of the church – and we are really keen to ensure the services encourage and involve them. Please do chat to them and ask them about what they have been doing...!

Messy Church

Messy Church meets on a Saturday morning once a month and we encourage families in our community as well as our own church families to come along. We regularly have 40-50 people attending mainly children with their mums and dads. We then also run Messy Sunday once a month as above.

We follow a theme each month – during 2022 – we had Messy Easter, Messy Love, Messy Wedding, Messy mothers etc and all the craft, stories and games are based on the theme with link to a bible story. The crafts are encouraged to be messy and fun. We have also had some popular social events like a Messy Fireworks night and a Fun day. In December we had a Messy Christingle.

The families come from the local community and represent many cultures, religions and countries – it is really great to have such a diverse and inclusive group. We can all learn from each other. Messy Church finishes with refreshments and gives the children chance to eat the cakes they have made. Pizza is still definitely number one favourite.

Do come along one Saturday and join in with us.

Claire

The Olive Tree Church Fellowship Club

What a happy, successful year 2022 proved to be for our Club! We were so blessed in many ways - being able to meet in the church with a varied programme over fourteen mornings (only once a month after Easter), an average attendance of about twenty, and speakers who were entertaining, informative, and often uplifting through their passionate presentations. Above all perhaps is the happiness of the camaraderie and friendship we experience as we meet up again and share in the ups and downs of each other's journey through life, exchanging news and views and a kind word or two of encouragement.

Let us cast a look back on some of the highlights of this past year! Often, through the wonder of modern technology, as 'arm-chair travellers' we were conveyed virtually far and wide. In Bedfordshire we discovered beautiful wild orchids: we participated in the National Open Gardens Scheme: we toured UK holiday areas and visited historic buildings: we joined in British folklore celebrations, singing traditional melodies to live music: we were also transported to India where images of a missionary's 50 year's work with needy children were very moving: we flew with the Children's Air Ambulance Service, being inspired to donate to this amazing charity: we even accompanied a contestant as he appeared in the TV show 'The Chase' – a very popular morning. So too was that of a police officer and a bank manager to advise on personal and financial security in today's world of scams and fraud.

The Christian ethos of our group is reflected by the special services we held – firstly at Easter, which was kindly led by the Minister, the Rev Joanne Sherwood and then at Christmas for the first time in two years. This was a team ministry of members with the lusty singing of beloved carols. The familiar Biblical messages of hope and love that Christ's coming, passion and resurrection inspire were conveyed movingly. It is our practice to close each meeting with a prayer of thanksgiving and intercession as we go our separate ways.

The Fellowship Club is part of the Olive Tree's outreach and attracts a goodly number of members from outside the church community as well as a faithful core of those from within. We are truly grateful for the leadership and commitment of three church members - Betty McKean, Jenny Woodham and Wendy Fielding. We also greatly value the encouragement and caring support that Mary Huffman, the Church's Community Worker, generously offers. A sincere thankyou to all these friends, to all the members for making each meeting a joy with their enthusiastic presence and to others who help with lifts, seating arrangements, musical accompaniment and in various practical ways.

The loss of staunch supporters through advancing years and changes of personal circumstances has been sad and none of us is getting any younger. We pray that God will bless us with an influx of new members from the church community and wider afield to share actively in the work and enjoyment of the Club.

We also pray that God will continue to guide and bless us in 2023. We meet regularly in the hall on the last Tuesday of each month from 10.15 a.m., starting with a cuppa and a chat. Our meetings are very lively and enjoyable so why not join us? A warm welcome awaits you.

Pat Gillespie (Committee member)

22nd LUTON BROWNIES

We seem to have done a lot since last year - perhaps making up for time lost due to Covid.

For Mother's Day we painted plates and pots and made cakes - so everyone had a lovely present for their Mum - along with a bunch of daffodils. For Easter we made chocolate nests.

We went to Legoland on 26th March 2022. It was lovely to have a fun trip with the girls - who really enjoyed their day out.

After the Easter break we worked on the Innovate skills builder badge - making edible architecture (fruit and vegetables joined with cocktail or kebab sticks); a boat made out of a sponge to see which sail was the best shape to get it across the paddling pool the fastest, and thought of an invention.

We visited Woodcroft - our Guide Activity Centre at Bramingham - on two occasions - one at the end of May and one at the beginning of July - and collected wood to light a fire and toast marshmallows - yummy!

We made cakes and bunting for our Platinum Jubilee Party in June to celebrate 70 years of the Queen's reign. We also sent cards thanking her for being such a special person. We went to Wrest Park for Dragons in Tiaras - a Brownie event organised by Bedfordshire County Girl guiding - to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee. We took part in many activities - decorating biscuits, making tiaras and learning from the sailors on HMS Wales what needs to be done on a ship. We also met a dragon!

Not forgetting Dads - we made cards and presents for them for Father's Day.

We ended the term by having an "All the fun of the Fair" evening, with ice creams, on one of the hottest evenings of the year.

On our return in September we had received a letter from the Queen's lady in waiting at Balmoral Castle thanking us for the Platinum Jubilee cards we had sent. However, by this time the Queen had unfortunately passed away. We were very proud of our letter and this took pride of place on our notice board in the hall for some time - along with messages from the Brownies remembering the Queen.

We then worked on the Explore skills builder badge - learning how to read a map, to make a compass, and giving our feet a pamper after a walk.

We went to Woodcroft over the weekend of 4-6 November for a Pack Holiday - when the girls stayed 2 nights, carried out activities and learnt home skills. Our theme was Magical Kingdoms and we worked to gain a challenge badge which included activities from Disney films.

We learnt about the working of Parliament as we celebrated Parliament week in November. We found it is sometimes very difficult to make decisions when you can see both sides of the argument.

We finished term with a "Come as you like" party and enjoyed cakes and Brownies (the chocolate variety) we had made the previous week.

Since January we have been working on the First Aid skills builder badge - chosen by the girls - and now know how to treat a wound and put someone in the recovery position if they are unconscious.

On Saturday 14th January we went to the Gordon Craig Theatre to see the panto "Cinderella". This is always a highlight of our year and again it did not disappoint! Many thanks to Jenny Woodham who organises this event for us every year and is our Home Contact when needed.

Most of the girls attended the Division disco at Woodcroft on 20th January. It was lovely to see them enjoying themselves in their sparkly party outfits!

We are celebrating Thinking Day at our meeting on 21st February (Thinking Day is actually on 22nd February - the joint birthdays of Lord and Lady Baden Powell our founders - when we remember all girl scouts and guides around the world) with a campfire and learning about the Guiding World flag and World Centres. We may also have some pancakes as this is Shrove Tuesday.

Some of the girls are attending the Division Thinking Day event on Sunday 26th February when we will be meeting Miku - a cartoon girl - and take part in activities to help her find peace and balance within the world.

We have 14 Brownies at present and have been encouraged that most of the older ones have now moved on to Guides.

Kirsty and myself are the main Brownie leaders but we also have two new helpers - Sue Skinner and Lauren Abbott (who has returned on her gap year from University). This extra help is lovely as it gives us flexibility to provide help with the Brownies or the Guides - who now meet at the same time. Fiona is mainly with the Guides but will always help out with the Brownies if needed.

I would like to thank all the leaders for their help and support over the last year, as without them our activities could not take place.

Anne Gibbons - Brownie Leader

1st Wardown Guides

With the end of covid our numbers had dropped to one guide, but in the past year that has now increased to 7.

Within the 6 themes we have worked on various Skills Builder badges and Unit Meeting Activities (UMAs) including

Know myself :- UMAs – World Centre Welcome, Votes for Women, Against the law, Poppy pinwheels, Hello my fabulous friend, Aeroplane answers, Dear future me.

Express myself :- Skills builder Innovate.
UMAs – Prepare to be amazed, Claymakers, Wait...what?.

Be Well :- Skills builder First Aid.
UMAs – Road Trip, Safe places, Heads shoulders knees and cone, Totally ga-ga, Know your strengths, Save your Tail.

Have adventures :- Skills builder Explore.
UMAs – Thirsty work, Help, Sneaky smores, Solar simulation.

Take Action :- Skills builder Make Change.
UMAs – Carbon calculator, K is for kindness.

Skills for my future :- UMAs – Patch up plastics, Interstellar engineers.

In addition, to these Huda also achieved :- Express myself theme award by gaining an interest badge (confectioner), a skills builder (innovate) and over 240 minutes of UMAs in the theme, and Have Adventures theme award by gaining an interest badge (Backwoods cooking), a skills builder (camp) and over 240 minutes of UMAs in the theme.

By gaining 2 theme awards Huda also achieved her Guide Bronze award – a great achievement.

We also celebrated the Queens platinum jubilee in the summer.

Went on a “Magical Kingdoms” indoor holiday weekend in November at Woodcroft with the Brownies.

Took part in activities for Parliament week – again with the Brownies.
Went to the see the pantomime ‘Cinderella’ with the District at the Gordon Craig Theatre in Stevenage, where 4 girls made their promise as a Guide.

Attended a Division Disco with other Brownies and Guides.

As you can see, we have been very busy and now with more girls, we can do so much more.

Fiona Watson - Guide Leader



Beaver & Cub Section Report 2022

The Beavers and Cubs started the year still meeting together due to a lack of leaders.

After an evening playing games and problem solving they made a cup and ball game from paper cups and then tried activities which tested co-ordination. Skills activities included: tying shoe laces, laying the table, ironing their scarf and changing a light bulb. Some Beavers and Cubs planted trees at Bromham campsite as part of the Queen's Jubilee Canopy and started collecting toys and games to donate to Keech to sell in their shops. Chair basketball and Boccia made a paralympic sport evening. They made chocolate chip biscuits, carrot cake and carrot batons then after eating talked about healthy snacks. A popular teambuilding activity was building a marble run.

During an evening outdoors in early March, they learnt to light fires and then boiled water to make hot chocolate drinks, while enjoying their drinks, they came up with ideas for future activities and then had a campfire. On St. Patrick's day the evening had an Irish theme. This was followed with finding out about local services and included going out for a walk around the Biscot area to find some of them. The month ended with separate beaver and cub hikes. The beavers went on a hike along the river walk to the source at Wauluds Bank and the cub's hike took them on a circular route from Putteridgebury out to Cockernhoe and back.

In April St. George and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee provided themes for meetings and to allow the Beavers and Cubs to complete their Outdoor challenge badges a Saturday meeting was organised when they pitched tents, lit fires, prepared and cooked a meal and cleared up.

Meetings with a science theme enabled beavers to gain the experimenter badge and cubs the scientist badge. The Outdoor Messy Science was particularly popular with erupting volcanoes and launching rockets! Cards were made for father's Day along with fudge. Another hike this time both sections did the same route across Bradger's Hills and Stopsley Common. The Cubs completed the athletics badge and Beavers started the Health and Fitness badge. For the final meeting of term they went climbing at Tokko.

It was decided that separate meetings were needed for Beavers and Cubs so in September Beavers started at an earlier time of 5.45pm and then finishing at 7pm with Cubs starting at 6.50 and finishing at 8.15pm, this enabled a joint game before the Beaver closing ceremony followed by the Cubs opening ceremony.

Beaver Section September to December

Each evening starts with a coming in activity that beavers can join in with as they arrive. This is often a craft type of activity linked to the theme for the week. This is followed with games and the main activity. Finally we have a joint game with the cubs taking advantage of the larger number of children in the combined group for some team games.

The first meeting was taken up with games, a fire drill and devising a code of conduct. An evening at the park to play wide games was a joint session with the cubs. The Health and Fitness theme was resumed and after looking at healthy food, balanced diet and junk food the beavers made apple boats, next they learnt about healthy hearts and how to take their pulse before and after a game. For the final part of the badge we spent an evening looking at tooth care. After eating some chocolate - the beavers cleaned their teeth and then used disclosing tablets to see how well (or not) they had done the job!

The Beavers started working for the communicator badge, for this they wrote a letter to themselves and posted it, learnt their addresses and phone numbers, sent a text and learnt to spell their name phonetically, the badge was completed with a session at Jamboree on the Air.

The beavers made paper planes as part of the Air Activities badge which they completed by a visit to the RAF Museum at Hendon, travelling by train and bus with the cubs and scouts.

The beavers went to visit the fire station in Studley Road and were joined by the cubs, here they visited the hazard house and saw around the station. The photographer badge was tackled next with a talk about how cameras work and how to take good photographs. The photographs they took were used to make calendars. Beavers decorated hearts for care homes and held a bring a friend evening, finishing term with a world cup countries evening involving games from other countries and tasting breads and biscuits from around the world.

Cub Section - September to December

Cubs worked on the Local Knowledge badge and looked at the Luton coat of arms and then designed their own, and had a speaker visit to talk about living in Luton related to Black History month. They also worked on Air Activities both before and after the museum visit in order to gain their badge. As a Youth Shaped activity cubs planned their dream camp, the fire station visit and some follow up activities meant cubs gained the fire safety badge. Healthy eating for cubs was part of the skills challenge. Cubs had a bring a friend evening and there were slots of activity bases for them to try. St. Nicholas day was the theme for an evening towards the Our World challenge badge and the term ended with a games night - sadly depleted by illness.

Two Beavers gained their Chief Scouts Bronze award: Shayaan and Isaac and four Cubs gained their Chief Scouts Silver award: Correy, Sami, Zayaan, and Dishen. Well done to all of them for achieving these top awards.

There are still no leaders for either the Beaver or Cub sections and meetings are led by Brendan supported by Chetana (Raksha), Ambiga (Baloo), Kelly (Maple), Young Leader CJ and parents on a rota.

SCOUT SECTION ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Our year started with a visit from the District Commissioner to present C.J. with his Chief Scout Gold award. Some scouts went to Bromham camp site to plant trees as part of the Queen's green canopy, which was one of the Platinum challenge activities these were activities which started with the letters in platinum and we under took several of them but not all. For Chinese New Year we made dragon puppets and devised a dance for them.

We regularly organise activities which encourage teamworking and the scouts working together rather than as individuals which is a concept they seem to find difficult. To cover environmental issues we looked at recycling: why we do it, what can be recycled and how and where to recycle as well as what gets made from recycled products. The scouts were asked to think of a skill they had they could teach the others and one session as a result of this was playing badminton. As gifts for Mothering Sunday the scouts made dragonfly paracord keyrings and cards. Some scouts spent a weekend on a boat supporting John on his practise Queens Scout expedition. We held an easter egg treasure hunt to end the term.

Back after a break we celebrated St. George by designing our own heraldic shield. With the better weather we spent a lot of evenings outside working on the Outdoor challenge this included making camp gadgets, knots, using an axe and saw safely, learning to use lamps and different types of stoves, pitching tents, first aid and fire lighting then we toasted sandwiches wrapped in foil.

At the group AGM Ayaan was presented with his Chief Scout Gold award.

We spent an evening weeding the area around the stores but then had to cancel the last meeting before the summer break when John (Beech) tested positive for Covid and so did Cedar.

The first meeting back in September was an evening led by John about what he had done to complete his Queen's Scout Award, this was the day following the Queen's death. The hope is that some of the scouts will be inspired to move on to explorers and gain the top awards. We walked to the park and went into the arboretum area and played games one was called smuggling.

Ready Steady Cook was popular and the parents who supervised each patrol had a fun time too. Next we made a bug hotel which is outside by the stores. We have embraced the crisp packet project which involves cutting the empty packets so they open flat, washing and drying them to get rid of the grease then putting them between layers of plastic which is ironed to seal it, the result is a blanket, with the foil inside to help warm people up, these

are being given to people in need and homeless and is an ongoing project we are working on, donations of empty crisp packets gratefully received.

To complete stage 2 of the air activities badge we made hot air balloons and flew them with the aid of hair dryers, sent messages using phonetics, looked at the dangers at airfields and spent a day at Hendon air museum. Scouts took part in JOTA and did lots of activities as well as talking on the radio, morse activities were the most popular. The scouts painted poppy stones and took part in the Remembrance Day parade in town. We made Christmas decorations and learnt new skills like sewing, knitting and made chocolate fudge. We finished with a party for Christmas with games, pizza, crisps, drinks and fudge.

There are currently 17 members in the troop with regularly 14 present each week. Thanks to the parents who have come along and helped out when needed. I would like to thank John (Beech) for coming along and especially encouraging the scouts to say about what they want to do. I also want to congratulate him on being awarded the Queens Scout Award. A very special THANK YOU to Paul (Oak) for all he does with the troop, the work he puts in on the crisp packet project and congratulations on getting a ten year service award.

Janet Owen (Cedar)

THE METHODIST CHURCH STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS

THE OLIVE TREE CHURCH -Local Ecumenical Partnership

Church

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 August 2022

South Bedfordshire	Circuit	Circuit no.	34/4
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Registered Charity - Charity Registration number

1196158

If not a registered charity Her Majesty's Revenue and
Customs Gift Aid number

(The HMRC number is equivalent to a registered charity number in terms of evidence of charitable status and may be used to give to donors or grant funders wishing to see evidence of the organisation's charitable status. Methodist charities in England and Wales that are not registered charities are excepted from registration under Statutory Instrument 2014 No.242)

Minister:

Rev. Joanne Sherwood

LEP Trustees

Mrs Madit Grant

Mrs Helen Owen

Ms Peace Okyere

Mrs Louise Newport

Treasurer:

Mrs Madit Grant

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

**THE OLIVE TREE
CHURCH -Local
Ecumenical
Partnership**

Church

SECTION A		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Totals this year	Totals last year
		£	£	£	£
a1	RECEIPTS				
	Note				
a2	Offerings and Tax recovered	61,293		61,293	29,299
a3	Bank and CFB interest and Investment income	152		152	19
a4	Lettings	50,885		50,885	11,395
a5	Other receipts	767	1,896	2,663	9,119
a6	TOTAL RECEIPTS	113,097	1,896	114,993 (a7)	49,832

SECTION B					
b1	PAYMENTS				
b2	Circuit Assessment or Share	25,704		25,704	12,316
b3	Donations	7,348		7,348	3,498
b4	Repairs and Maintenance	22,726		22,726	807
b5	Utilities (Insurances, water charges, heating & lighting)	22,203		22,203	2,120
b6	Property related - direct employment costs	14,205		14,205	1,620
b7	Other payments	13,482	27,906	41,388	44,590
b8	TOTAL PAYMENTS	105,668	27,906	133,574 (b9)	64,951

SECTION C		6			
c1	NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR	(a6-b8)	7,429 (26,010)	(18,581)	(15,119)
c2	Total funds brought forward from last year		124,085 26,434	150,519 (c6)	64,699
c3	Sub total	(c1+c2)	131,514 424	131,938	49,580
c4	Transfers and adjustments		(3,262) 3,262	(c7)	100,939
c5	TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR	(c3+c4)	128,252 3,686	131,938 (c8)	150,519 (c6)

SECTION D					
FOR INFORMATION ONLY: MONEY RECEIVED AND PASSED ON TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS					
d	(these amounts are not to be included in total receipts/payments figures above)		£		£
d1	Balance brought forward from last year		4		
d2	Offerings/Gifts - received for external organisations		1,181		489
d3	Offerings/Gifts - passed to external organisations		1,185		485
d4	BALANCE STILL TO BE PAID	(d1+d2-d3)			4

SUMMARY OF CHURCH ACCOUNTS AND INTERNAL ORGANISATIONS REPORTING TO THE CHURCH COUNCIL

SECTION E

Please follow the Guidance Notes to complete this page

Summary of the Church accounts for the year ended 31 August 2022 and Internal Organisations reporting to the Church Council/Church Meeting. Note that the funds of an Internal Organisation would normally be Restricted funds unless it could be clearly shown that they could be used for any Methodist purpose. This section must be completed to arrive at the gross income and expenditure totals of the Church. If gross income exceeds the Accruals threshold, then the Accruals method of accounting AND A DIFFERENT FORM must be used to report the accounts (see Methodist website). Please refer to the guidance notes regarding transfers between the District and connected District Organisations.

INTERNAL ORGANISATIONS	Receipts	Payments	Net Receipts/ Payments	Adjustments	Opening balances	Closing balances
e1						
e2						
e3						
e4						
e5						
e6						
e7						
e8	Sub total of Internal Organisations funds				(e11)	(e12)
e9	Church accounts (totals brought forward from page 2 - totals column)			(c7)	150,519 (c6)	131,938 (c8)
e10	TOTAL CASH FUNDS HELD BY CHURCH				150,519 (x)	131,938 (y)
Continue on a separate sheet if necessary and bring the totals forward		TOTAL RECEIPTS	TOTAL PAYMENTS			
		114,993 (a7)	133,574 (b9)	(18,581)		

SECTION F

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

CHURCH - CASH FUNDS HELD AT 31 August 2022

	OPENING BALANCES	CLOSING BALANCES
f1	26	26
f2	73,579	54,148
f3	51,390	51,411
f4	3,953	3,989
f5	21,571	22,364
f6		
f7	150,519 (c6)	131,938 (c8)
f8	(e11)	(e12)
f9	150,519 (x)	131,938 (y)

SECTION G

OTHER ASSETS and LIABILITIES

	At 1 September 2021	At 31 August 2022
g1		
g2	6,628,766	6,879,912
g3	194,101	201,455
g4	18,000	12,000
g5		

f4 Include only Funds held at the Central Finance Board

f5 Include only Funds held at Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes

g1 Include any other investments (not the cash element of TMCP trusts accounts this is included in line f5)

Name of Church . The Olive Tree Church (Local Ecumenical Partnership)

Declarations and Scrutiny

I confirm that these Receipt and Payment based accounts for the year to 31 August 2022 have been prepared from the records of the Church and that they include all funds under the control of the Church trustees.

Signature of treasurer

Date 8 Nov 2022

Name and address of treasurer Madit Grant

38 Montrose Avenue Luton Beds LU3 1HR

Presentation to the Church trustees

I confirm that the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2022 were/will be* presented to the meeting of the Church trustees held on 20/11/22

Signature of the Chair of the meeting

Name of the Chair of the meeting

Date 8th Nov. 2022

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the

Olive Tree Church (Local Ecumenical Partnership)

Charity Number . 1196158

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Olive Tree Church for the year ended 31 August 2022 set out on pages 1. to 3. As the Church's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Church's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 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 Act.

* delete or circle as appropriate

Name of Church . The Olive Tree Church (Local Ecumenical Partnership)

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 (~~other than that disclosed below*~~) which give me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
 - the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.
- ~~the the~~

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

I ~~have~~/have not* obtained independent verification of all investments with the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes or held in other trusts, bank balances and funds at the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church which are individually in excess of £10,000 (ten thousand pounds) at the balance sheet date.

Signature of independent examiner J. W. Crane

Name of independent examiner JOHN WILLIAM CRANE

Relevant professional qualification of independent examiner RETIRED ACCOUNTANT

Name of firm (where appropriate) N/A

Address 22 DAWKIN ROAD

LUTON, BEDS Post Code LUN9SD

Date 18.11.2022

* delete or circle as appropriate

Sep-22

Notes to THE OLIVE TREE Accounts
Year ended 31 August 2022

- 1 The Olive Tree Church is a local ecumenical partnership comprising the Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church and St Margarets Methodist Church. The Partnership, which had been operating informally for some years, was legally instituted on 1 April 2021.

It has been agreed that the LEP would operate on a 'single purse' principal with all monetary accounts under the control of the Trustees of the LEP. All income and expenditure would be reflected in the LEP accounts but in accordance with the regulations appertaining to each Church the ownership of Church buildings remains with the individual churches.

In the event of a dissolution of the LEP it is agreed that General Funds held as at the date of dissolution would be distributed as follows:

- a) The unspent funds attributed to each Church in respect of legacies bequeathed to the Baptist and Methodist Churches be returned to the denominational funds.
- b) The original amounts invested by each Partner Church in respect of funds held as at 1 April 2021, after the deduction of the legacy funds held as at 1 April 2021, will be returned to the Partner Churches.
- b) In the event of either a surplus /deficit arising on General funds over the term of the Partnership this will be distributed equally between the Partner Churches

Legacy funds form part of the General fund but it is decided that these funds be identified by way of note as between the Partner Churches.

The balances on Legacy Funds as at 31 August 2022 were as follows

Blenheim Crescent Baptist Church (part of the BCBC Deposit account)	15565.59
TMCP account- Methodist legacies	22304.99
Olive Tree Church	2097.74