



Stanley Road Baptist Church

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT for the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024

Aims and purposes

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

Objectives and Activities

The Trustees of the Church seek to encourage and enable people to know God and worship Him. Whilst we have regular attenders from outside Morecambe, our focus is on the community surrounding our church building. We aim to encourage a discipleship where faith grows and is put into practice, with regular opportunities for Bible study, teaching, prayer, and Communion. The Trustees have considered the Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. We particularly try to enable people to live out their faith as part of our local community through groups operating from church and drawn from all age ranges and catering for all abilities. To facilitate this work it is important that we maintain the building fabric of Stanley Road Baptist Church.

Achievements and Performance

Worship and Prayer

Trustees are keen to offer services, facilities and events through the year that are engaging, varied, meet individual needs and promote spiritual growth.

Regular events are:

- Whole congregation worship, prayer and Bible teaching to develop a knowledge and trust in Jesus.
- Smaller adult groups for more personal fellowship, Bible teaching and pastoral care.
- Children's groups on Sundays and midweek to teach Bible truth and develop relationships.
- Regular or occasional Café-style events for friendship and support.
- Community Café with good food available and a warm welcome of friendship and support.
- Missionary and outreach work directly and indirectly via local partners.

Our Sunday morning gatherings continue to be the highlight of our ministry as a church. We have been pleased that the number of regular worshippers has been consistent. It was a delight to celebrate living faith in the form of several **believers' baptisms**. Sarah Duff, Peter Kelly, Nina Gadsdon and Sara Barks. We continue to use the pop-up baptistery on loan from Lancaster Baptist Church.

The **teaching on Sundays** was led mainly by our pastor while other members of the church were able to preach on occasion too. Various topics were covered, including 1 Peter and Galatians, Genesis 1-3 and the seven 'I Am' sayings of Jesus. There was a short series looking at the characteristics of worship as part of our consideration of how to re-order the church space. We have introduced regular prayer for people in their life outside of Sunday, called 'This Time Tomorrow'. We have made prayer available after each Communion service too. We continue to integrate more musicians into our sung worship each week, which has been encouraging to see.

Specific groups

Prayer and Praise meet on a Friday for fellowship and a short spiritual talk, and again made several donations to local charities. These included Christians Against Poverty, North West Air Ambulance, St John's Hospice, SSAFA armed forces charity and Wolfwood wildlife rescue and rehabilitation. This group continues to be very committed, and gives the opportunity for occasional 'special' meetings such as when visitors from charities and mission agencies visit. **What's What** is a monthly group, held on Sunday mornings, for adults with learning difficulties who regularly attend our services. It was a joy to see another of the group baptized in December. Some members of the group were able to join in the 'Count Everyone In' teaching at the Keswick Convention in July, for the second year in a row. We became official partners with 'Count Everyone In', which is a charity

that works with adults with learning disabilities. We held a special 'What's What Extra' just before Easter when the group invited friends along.

It has been encouraging that our **SPACE group** for children on Sunday mornings has been able to move to every week, giving more of a consistent provision for families and children. This has been because of two new leaders joining. A new curriculum was started in January and this has been well-received.

The Boys' Brigade has continued to meet each Friday in term time, with the Senior/Company sections (ages 11-18). The company had an excellent camp in North Wales in the summer. The company have also taken part in inter-company competitions and a range of outdoor activities, especially in the summer.

Our **Men's and Women's Ministries** continue and again had two successful Christmas meals in December. Three Bible study groups continue, including one in church on a Wednesday morning.

For these groups, we rely heavily on volunteers. We ensure there are up-to-date DBS checks for those working with children, young people and/or adults at risk. We take training seriously and have put on safeguarding sessions this year, as well as reviewing our Safeguarding policy and instigating a clear 'appointment' procedure.

All are welcome to engage with the life of the church. At the end of March 2024, there were 88 people in membership. Seven new members were added (Pauline Shieldhouse, Sarah Duff, Heike Dacres, Matt and Laura Bradley, Nina Gadsdon and Mark Simmons); five people were taken off the list after a review (Jackqueline Beswick, Dominic Beswick, Dorothy Bowling, Isobel O'Neill and Stephen Peel); and member Terry McGrow died (June 2023). We conducted the marriage of Brendan and Natasha Lowry in August, and Peter and Dawn Kelly in November. Estimated regular weekly attendance over the year is between 70 and 80.

Key Trustee matters

Over the past year, we have aimed to build in a structure of regular review of our policies. This has included reviewing and updating our Safeguarding policy, with a new team set up to lead in this key area. We have also updated our Health and Safety policy, Food Safety policy and procedures and our Data Protection policy. We had two supplementary training sessions as Trustees in the areas of Data Protection and Fire Extinguisher use. During this year, we took time as Trustees to consider our response to a consultation for the Baptist Union Council on whether it is appropriate or not for Baptist Union Accredited Ministers to be in a same-sex marriage. We discussed this at several meetings, and some Trustees attended teaching sessions at Capernwray Hall on issues of sexuality and identity. We responded to the survey, articulating our support for a traditional view on marriage. The result of the consultation was announced just before the end of this year with the Council deciding against changing the rules.

We are working on how we manage ourselves as Trustees. A small 'admin' group of Pastor, Secretary, Treasurer and Pastoral Secretary meet each month, in advance of the Trustees meeting to plan the agenda and check on progress of various matters. It is important that we use our time well to be efficient in our meetings. This has helped and we will aim to continue with this pattern.

Building maintenance and usage

We have continued to maintain and manage our church building, although we have not been able to move forward as quickly as hoped on certain projects. The stairwell was overhauled with new decoration and a de-clutter. Work on drainage at the front of church has helped keep the basement drier and new fascias etc. were installed on the hall and back wall. This was done by external contractors.

Issues especially relating to the **hall** need attention soon and discussions have been held with potential suppliers. We will need to move forward soon, especially as our current financial situation should enable us to pay for improvements. We have had a period of trialling a new layout in the **church** and we will need to move towards a final decision in the next financial year.

We continue to see the **foyer space** being used, by the church, mission partners and outside groups. Some events now happen regularly. There are the church Source prayer meetings; the LMDCDC client Christmas meal; and another visit from our BMS Link Missionary. We again hosted a NISCU prayer lunch, as well as the summer celebration for NISCU, attended by Christians from across the North Lancashire area.

We have seen a growth in the **number of community groups** with other educational and charitable purposes using the various spaces around our building. Two theatre groups have begun to use the church space for rehearsals, and there are now regular dog training classes in the hall. Two exercise groups made up of members of the local Polish community have begun. The local Christian Light and Life mission has grown and now has two meetings a week in our building. The relationship with The Bay Singers community choir grows and they were again a key supporter of our Christmas Fair, while The Dance Factory has also continued two afternoons a week. Another dance group, Panache, ceased using the hall due to lower numbers attending.

There are other less frequent, or one-off, hires, such as lantern workshops for the community BayLight event and we were the base for a cycling event. Another Baptist church used our facilities for an away day, and we have seen a continued growth in children's birthday parties. All of these bookings have brought benefit to our community as well as contributing income. We aim to balance these bookings with the flexibility to use our space for our own activities. Sometimes groups are reluctant to use our premises as we are a church, but we strive to be accommodating and welcoming to groups that work within our ethos and purpose as a church.

The management of our building comes under the Trustees, with activity led by Karl Werner, our buildings manager. We increased our cleaning provision this year in response to the increased usage of the building.

Pastoral care

We continue to try to care for those connected to the church, although this is always a challenge given the situations that people are in. There are several members who fulfil responsibilities such as Communion for those who are housebound; visiting those not able to gather for worship; and hospital visits. **House groups** are also a key place for pastoral care and we are grateful to those who open their homes regularly and prepare studies to share with others.

After having to respond to several **emergency pastoral situations** last year, it was decided to set up a pastoral fund within the general account so that we can respond more effectively. This has worked well and we have been able to support several crisis situations, one that we were made aware of through our local primary school. We also were able to make gifts at times of celebration, and to friends connected to the church, such as one of our former Capernwray students, who has started Theology studies at university.

Our monthly **Communion services at Woodhill House** have continued and the relationship continues to be strong. We are often invited to provide spiritual and pastoral care to residents, including at times of end of life. This is a real privilege.

Mission and Evangelism

Being concerned for, and helping, those in need is an expression of our faith. This year, we have further developed our café provision in the foyer space, initially on Tuesdays, but now on Wednesdays. We provide hot drinks, good baking and hot food. Numbers are reasonable, and it has been good to see relationships develop, especially with some people who have started to worship regularly with us. The café is an area for potential development in the coming year.

Easter and Christmas are our key times for community engagement. We had a busy Christmas Eve carol service this year, but we can improve our 'next steps' offer to those who come along. Integrating people into the church community so that they can explore their questions is a challenge.

Our schools continue to be central to life in our community and we seek to support them as best we can. The Listening service at West End Primary School, which we run alongside NISCU, has really bedded in this year and we hope to grow the team by at least one person next year. We gave a gift of books, including some Christian titles, to Sandylands School as they rejuvenated their library. Our pastor helps with teaching of the religion curriculum at Sandylands, and both Sandylands and West End sent classes to the church for a 'Walk Through Easter' workshop in March 2024, which went very well.

As well as serving within the church, members have volunteered with various organisations, including LMDCC, West End Impact and Safe Families UK.

Besides our own outreach programmes mentioned above, the church supports several local charities through our regular giving. **NISCU (Northern Inter-Schools Christian Union)** helps local schools with teaching on the Christian faith. **Lancaster, Morecambe and District Churches Debt Centre** offers advice and assistance with debt-related issues. Their office is in our building. **Ambassadors Football** also have an office in our building and their CEO, Martin Bateman, again came to share on a Sunday morning.

As well as these charities, money was also raised at Christmas for Bible Society work in the Middle East, and at an Open Doors prayer event in February. Our charity calendar also raised funds for our mission partners.

We have **built up the relationships** with our mission partners. We had a visit from Matt, our BMS missionary, to a midweek prayer evening as part of his farewell tour as he and Julia came to the end of their time with BMS; We have since adopted a new BMS missionary, Genesis, from Uganda and hope he might visit us later this year.

The church continues to keep in contact with our former assistant pastor, Mark Young, in his new role with **The Lighthouse Community** in Llandudno. Mark has returned to Morecambe on several occasions and keeps us up to date with his ministry. Several members continue to give regularly to support Mark in his role and we are in the second year of our commitment to provide £4,000 in financial support for three years.

Churches Together Partnerships

Stanley Road Baptist Church is a member church of the Baptist Union and the North Western Baptist Association. We hold occasional events with Caton and Lancaster Baptist churches. Our Pastor meets with other ministers in local and regional groups, both inside and outside the Baptist denomination. He is part of the Morecambe Churches' Forum, which meets sporadically.

Financial Review

General Overview

Total income received into the General Fund was £71,705, against expenditure of £72,292, leaving a small deficit of £587. The main source of income continues to be regular gifts of members and friends of the church. In the accounting year, gifts and donations totalled some £43,511. Reclaimed tax, under the Gift Aid Scheme amounted to £5,047. Further claims are pending, for the year, which will come into the 24/25 accounts.

Rental Income from groups and organisations using the premises amounted to £12,452. Other income from 'Charitable Activities' came to £8,105, including an insurance claim for £2,541. Other income was received from the use of solar panels, a Lancashire County Council 'warm spaces' grant, and interest on bank deposits.

In addition to the General Fund, we have two '**Restricted**' funds. Appeals income amounted to £1,791, which was passed on in full to the receiving organisations. Donations, including gift aid, of £4,061 were received into the support fund for Mark Young and the Lighthouse Community Church.

Total **General expenditure** was £72,292. Of this, some £35,632 was spent on **Ministry**. This figure includes stipend, pension costs, and other expenses. Regarding the pastor's stipend, the decision was taken by the Trustees and unanimously confirmed by the church members to work towards a higher level of 110% of 5/6 of the standard Baptist Union stipend, with this change being implemented over the next three years.

Regular work through the church's various ministry and mission groups accounted for £3,743. **Mission giving** to other organisations totalled £7,896, representing just under 11% of overall expenditure. Much of this was to our chosen mission organisations: BMS World Mission; the Baptist Union Home Mission Fund; Lancaster, Morecambe and District Churches Debt Centre and NISCU school workers. As already highlighted, donations to several charities were also made via Prayer and Praise. As in previous years, £1,200 was given to our Boys Brigade Company to support their work.

General admin and 'running' costs were £2,756, whilst all building related costs, including utilities, repairs and renovations amounted to £22,265. Also included in this figure are caretaking and cleaning costs.

Assets: The balance of accounts at March 31, 2024 were: NatWest Current and Savings Accounts £29,899; NatWest Cowan Bequest £2,817; Baptist Union Deposit £30,000. This gives total monetary assets of £62,716, represented by the fund balances below.

Funds: The General Fund decreased during the year from £61,370 to £60,594. The Restricted Funds balance increased from £2,090 to £2,122.

Reserves Policy: We have a minimum reserve target of £30,000. Our policy is to maintain sufficient funds to facilitate six months' notice for our Minister and the settling of any other outstanding financial commitments, before an orderly closure of the church, should this ever become necessary.

Summary: The accounting year has seen a fair consolidation of our assets. The final 'cash' position at the end of April 2024, is largely unchanged from the 2023 figure. This stability, despite the numerous calls on our resources, is largely down to faithful and committed giving. Utilization of the premises by outside groups, is expected to continue, providing significant, additional income. The imminent challenge posed by building work requirements, in the coming months and years, will necessarily deplete our reserves. We currently have a good 'buffer' to enable £30,000 to be earmarked for work on the buildings, but it may be desirable to replenish funds through special appeals and 'gift days.' We are grateful to God for all His provision for the church and look to Him, in faith, to meet our future needs.

Volunteers

We would like to acknowledge that our church life is based largely on the dedication of volunteers who teach children, supply music, run the kitchen, maintain the building, attend to administration and finances, and oversee the pastoral care of our congregation. We thank each one of you for your love, dedication and service.

Structure, Governance and Management

The Trustees manage the church in accordance with our constitution (CIO adopted October 2021), and meet a minimum of 11 times a year. The average level of attendance was 95%.

Trustees include the Pastor, who chairs the meetings, with others appointed from the membership at a Church Members' AGM. The appointment of Trustees is public, clear and open, enabling members to prayerfully consider who should be appointed and with notice of forthcoming elections. Candidates are nominated, and elected by secret ballot of the church members. There is an opportunity for postal votes to be made in advance.

Reference and Administrative details

Stanley Road Baptist Church, Morecambe is situated in Stanley Road, Morecambe. The correspondence address is Stanley Road Baptist Church, Stanley Road, Morecambe, LA3 1UP

Trustee members serving within the period April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024 are:

Minister: Reverend Steven Hewitt (Pastor, Chair)

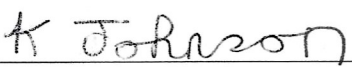
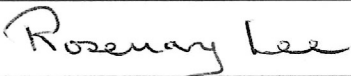
Elected members:

Mrs Stella Walsh (Secretary)	Mrs Dawn Warburton (Treasurer- <i>until June 24, 2023</i>)	
Mr Andrew Sadler (Treasurer – <i>from June 24, 2023</i>)		Mrs Rosemary Lee
Mrs Christine Betteridge	Mrs Sandra Todd	Mrs Denise Beal
Dr Robert Henderson	Mr Robert Middleton	Mrs Sarah Middleton
Mr Alan Parker (<i>until June 24, 2023</i>)	Mr Jason Palmer (<i>from June 24, 2023</i>)	
Mrs Kath Johnson (<i>from June 24, 2023</i>)		

Declarations

The Trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signatures		
Full name	Kathleen Johnson	Rosemary Lee
Position	TRUSTEE	TRUSTEE
Date	May 7, 2024	May 7, 2024

**STANLEY ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH CIO 1197276 –
ACCOUNTS FOR THE 12 MONTHS ENDING 31 MARCH 2024.**

GENERAL FUND

		12 months to		
RECEIPTS	Notes	31/3/2024	7 months to 31/3/2023	
Grant (LCC Warm Spaces)		£ 450		
Offerings	5	£ 43,511.36	£ 23,846.63	
Donations & other income	1	£ 7,237.10	£ 6,075.58	
Use of premises		£ 12,451.96	£ 6,143.64	
Repayment from utilities		£ 1,581.65	£ 1,400.52	
Ministry & Mission groups		£ 868.07	£ 445.07	
Gift Aid & Small Donations	2	£ 5,047.30		
Bank & BU Corp Ltd interest		£ 557.75	£ 35.19	
		£ 71,705.19	£ 37,946.63	
PAYMENTS	Notes			
Ministry		£ 35,632.44	£ 19,523.91	
Ministry & Mission	5	£ 3,743.25	£ 2,458.80	
External Mission		£ 7,895.77	£ 4,049.24	
Admin		£ 2,755.65	£ 3,730.00	
Building renovations & upkeep	5	£ 22,265.15	£ 12,100.73	
		£ 72,292.26	£ 41,862.68	
Surplus(+)/Deficit(-)		-£ 587.07	-£ 3,916.05	
Balance b/f 1st April		£ 61,181.16	£ 65,097.21	
Balance c/f		£ 60,594.09	£ 61,181.16	

APPEALS - RESTRICTED FUNDS

<u>RECEIPTS</u>		
Donations	£	1,790.56
<u>PAYMENTS</u>		
Bible Soc, Open Doors & Baptist Mission Soc	£	1,819.97
Deficit	3	-£ 29.41

LIGHTHOUSE COMMUNITY CHURCH - M. YOUNG RESTRICTED FUND

<u>RECEIPTS</u>			
Donations & Legacies	£	3,660.00	£ 2,705.00
Gift Aid & Small Donations	£	401.47	
	£	4,061.47	£ 2,705.00
<u>PAYMENTS</u>			
	£	4,000.00	£ 1,000.00
Surplus	£	61.47	£ 1,705.00
Balance b/f 1st April	£	2,090.10	£ 385.10
Balance c/f	£	2,151.57	£ 2,090.10

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

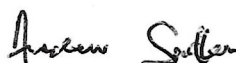
<u>ASSETS</u>			
Unrestricted Funds	£	60,594.09	£ 61,370.36
Restricted Funds	£	2,122.16	£ 2,090.10
Non monetary assets	4	£ 2,521,205.00	£ 2,325,835.00
		£ 2,583,921.25	£ 2,389,295.46
<u>LIABILITIES</u>			
	£		£ 189.20

NOTES.

1. Includes a £2,541.32 insurance claim.
2. Gift aid was claimed, received and included in the 2023 financials for the period 1/01/2022 to 31/08/2022. Gift aid for the period 1/09/2022 to 31/03/2023 reflects in the 2024 accounts
3. "Appeals" have been separated from "Donations" to provide additional information.
The deficit of £29.41 is explained by gift aid of £41.41 paid in advance to Open Doors and a November £12 donation to be paid to BMS in April 2024.
4. Non monetary assets are reflected at their insured value as at 2nd June 2023 and are comprised of buildings £ 2,429,414 and their contents £91,791.
5. As at 31/03/2024, unpaid sundry creditors £233.73 and an estimated £3,000 due to the gas supply company that has not been able to bill the Charity. A complaint has been filed. Unbanked receipts £551.70.

The Receipts and Payments and the Statement of Assets and Liabilities were approved at a Trustees meeting held on

SIGNED.



Andrew Sadler

(Treasurer)

May 7, 2024

Notes to the Accounts.

1. The accounts have been prepared on a Receipts and Payments cash basis as permitted by section 133 of the Charities Act 2011 provided the Charity's income is not over £250 000, and the Charity Commissioner guideline CC16 for receipts and payments accounting has been applied.
2. The principal accounting policies are:
 - * Income is recognized upon receipt of cash or cash equivalents to which the Charity has entitlement.
 - * Expenditure, inclusive of irrecoverable VAT, is recognised upon payment of an invoice or claim for which the charity has an obligation to settle. The Charity has not registered for VAT.
3. Fund accounting. General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity. Restricted funds are donations which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors; they include donations received from appeals for specific activities or projects.
4. The Trustees did not receive any remuneration.
5. The Independent Examiner was not paid for the examination.
6. A single £450 "Warm Spaces Grant" was received from the Lancaster County Council.

Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of Stanley Road Baptist Church.

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above Charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31st March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report.

As the Charity'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 Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

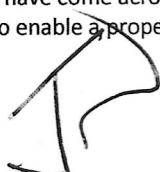
Independent examiner's statement.

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

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.

Signed:



Date: May 7, 2024

Name: John Pollard

Address: 8 Lake Grove, Morecambe, Lancashire, LA4 4LH

Relevant professional qualification or membership of professional bodies (if any). MAAT MCIPS