

2024-25



STANLEY ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH

ANNUAL

REPORT

INCLUDING ACCOUNTS

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

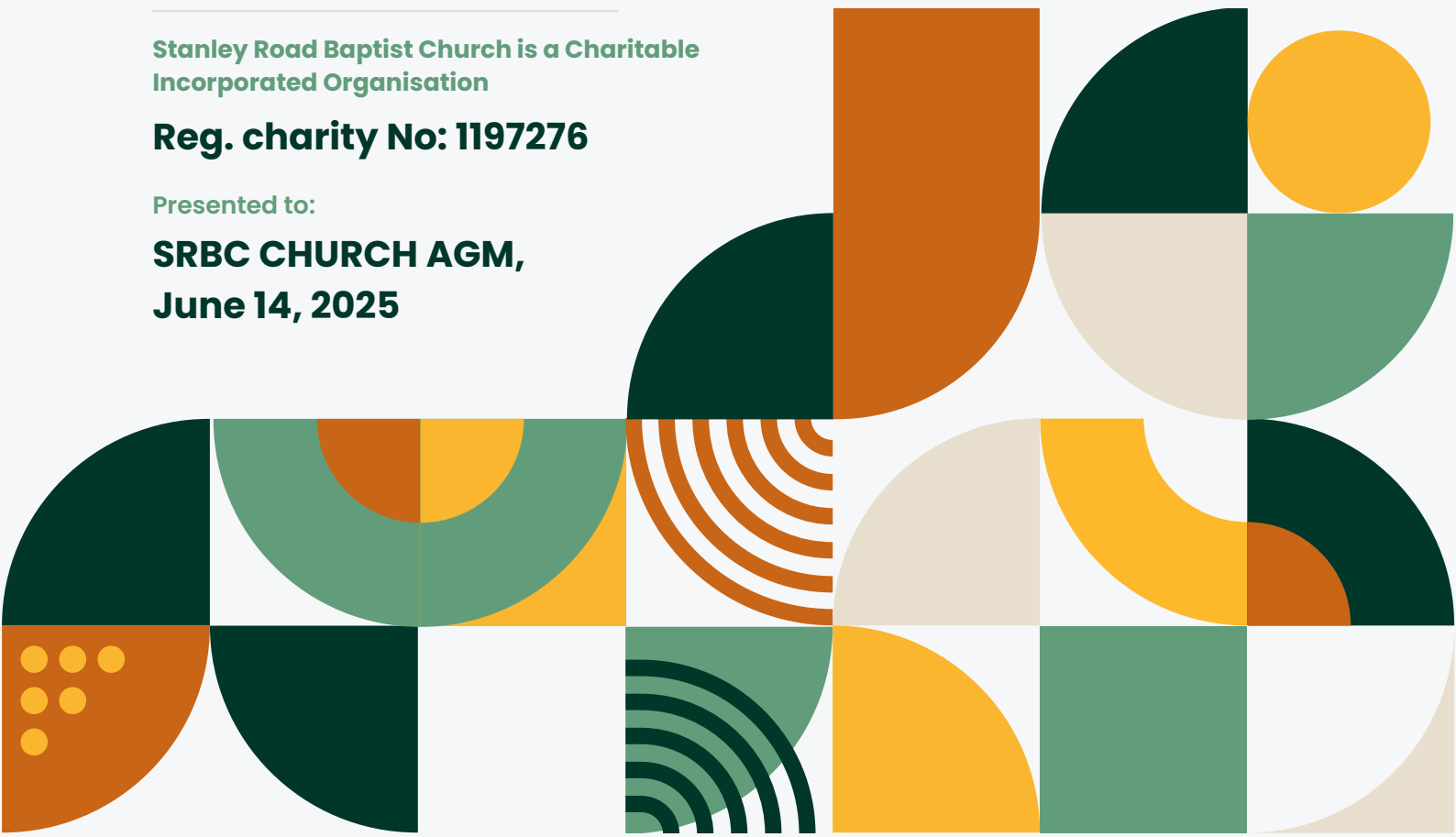
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Stanley Road Baptist Church is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Reg. charity No: 1197276

Presented to:

**SRBC CHURCH AGM,
June 14, 2025**





Stanley Road Baptist Church

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

for the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

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

The church, its trustees and its members are keen to offer services, facilities and events through the year that are engaging, varied, meet individual needs and promote spiritual growth.

Our **Sunday morning gatherings** continue to be the highlight of our ministry as a church. We have seen a consistent number of worshippers through the year. As the ethnic diversity of Morecambe changes, this has been seen in our congregation, with regular worshippers now coming from China, Ghana, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. We have several **believers' baptisms** lined up for Easter 2025, so outside this annual report. We did conduct the baptism of Ian Smith in his care home, just before Christmas 2024.

The **teaching on Sundays** was led mainly by our pastor, Rev Steven Hewitt, with other members preaching on occasion. Several people shared short testimonies as part of the sermons. Various topics were covered, including Old Testament characters, Jesus' parables, 1 Thessalonians, and Mark's Gospel. Some of these series have linked with the SPACE (Sunday School) 'The Biggest Story' curriculum. **SPACE** now meet every Sunday, which is a real encouragement to us as a church, in particular those with children. We now have prayer ministry available after every service. We have introduced a contactless card machine too.

We held our second **Church weekend** in November 2024. We spent the Saturday at Heysham Golf Club with Friday and Sunday at church. For the first time, we invited a guest speaker, Pastor Ian Ellershaw, from Carnforth Free Methodist Church, who was well-received. The mix of worship, fun, and general time together made for a memorable weekend. The next Church weekend will be in Spring 2026.

There was a change to our Friday activities this year. Long-term leader of the **Prayer and Praise**, Gena Harrison, stood down due to ill health. Since January 2025, the programme has been shared around regular members and others in the church, and occasional guest speakers. It has been an opportunity for some to have their first experience of speaking. We have added a fortnightly prayer meeting beforehand, which is proving popular.

Specific groups

What's What is a monthly group, held on Sunday mornings, for adults with learning difficulties who regularly attend our services. We continue to be official partners with 'Count Everyone In', a charity experienced in this area of ministry, and its directors Pete and Christine Winmill led a training day for us in January 2025 and took our Sunday service. We held a special 'What's What Extra' at Christmas for the group and some visitors.

The Boys' Brigade has continued to meet each Friday in term time. In September 2024, the Junior section (ages 8-11) was added to the Senior/Company sections (ages 11-18) for the first time since the Covid pandemic. Again, the company had an excellent summer camp and produced an annual display for family and friends.

Our **Men's and Women's Ministries** continue and again had two successful Christmas meals. We now have an additional Bible study group (now named '**Growth Group**') start, in addition to the other three. These groups have been excellent places for new relationships; for growth in faith; and for some to learn leadership skills.

For our activities, 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, reviewed our Safeguarding policy and continued to implement a clear 'appointment' procedure.

Membership

All are welcome to engage with the life of the church. The estimated regular weekly attendance over the year is between 70 and 80. At the end of March 2025, there were 92 people in membership. In the past year, 10 new members were added (Barbara Jasper, Debbie Bowes, Sara Bakes, Brian and Joan Robinson, Roland and Mary Webster, Terry and Jayne Connor, Gina Gao); Three people were taken off the list, either because of resignation (Alan Parker, Margaret Parker) or as now attending another fellowship (Debbie Bowes); and another three members (Derek Stillings, Barbara Mann and Doreen Turner) died during the past year.

Building maintenance and usage

We have continued to maintain and manage our **church building**. We hired external contractors to repair the kitchen roof and roof furniture. We took the significant financial step of buying a Defibrillator for use in the church. We have continued to discuss work on the church and hall, but have not moved forward significantly.

We continue to see the **foyer space** being used, by the church, mission partners and outside groups. There are the church prayer meetings; the LMDCDC client Christmas meal; and we hosted a visit from our BMS missionary, Genesis Acaye. We again hosted a NISCU prayer gathering and an inter-church gathering to support the Open Doors charity. We hosted a concert, raising money for Cancer Research, in July.

We continue to see a **number of community groups** hire our space. Two theatre groups use the church space for rehearsals, and several care agencies have held training sessions in the building. We also host occasional activities from BEE Unique, supporting families with neuro-diverse children. The local Christian Light and Life mission and The Dance Factory have now developed so they have their own buildings, but long-term users Slimming World, Dog Training, The Bay Singers and the Bridge group continue, as do birthday party bookings.

These bookings have brought benefit to our community as well as additional income. We aim to balance the bookings with the flexibility to use our space as we wish. Management of the building is led by the Trustees, with activity led by Karl Werner, our buildings manager. We employ two cleaners (one self-employed).

Pastoral care

We continue to try to care for those connected to the church. 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** (or 'Growth 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.

We have taken some time this year to review how Pastoral care is delivered at Stanley Road. This review is ongoing but should lead to some results in summer 2025. We continue to use our pastoral fund to respond to crisis situations this year. We also were able to make gifts at times of celebration.

Our monthly **Communion services at Woodhill House** have continued. We are sometimes invited to give pastoral care to residents, including at times of end of life. This is a real privilege. We also work with Woodhill on a bi-monthly Carer's Café to support people who have, or have had, additional caring responsibility.

Mission and Evangelism

The church continues to look outwards in various ways. We hosted three students from **Capernwray** during their outreach programme in March. This was a successful time, particularly with the chance to teach RE to each class at West End Primary School on one morning, and a popular 'Pancake Party' for local families.

Our **regular Wednesday café** continues to be an important part of our mission strategy. We have met people for the first time through this ministry who have gone on to worship regularly with us. It works very well as a space for members to meet one another and deepen their relationships. There is the option of joining the regular Growth Group and we have recently added a 'Craft Corner', which is proving popular.

Easter and Christmas are our key times for community engagement. We had a very busy Christmas Eve carol service this year, and our musicians in particular worked very hard with a wonderful programme of carols and performance songs. We also got our 'knitters' to make angels to give away as Christmas decorations.

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 continues. Our pastor helps with teaching of the religion curriculum at Sandylands, and both Sandylands and West End again sent classes to the church for a 'Walk Through Easter' workshop in March 2025, which went very well.

We keep in touch with Brian Robinson, who is a relatively new member, and is now teaching in the Far East with **Teach Beyond**. And we were blessed by a visit from our **BMS link missionary**, Genesis Acaye, from Uganda. He shared at a Saturday evening event as well as in a Sunday morning service. We keep in contact with our former assistant pastor, Mark Young, in his role with **The Lighthouse Community** in Llandudno.

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

Besides our own outreach programmes, 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. **Ambassadors Football** has an office in our building and their CEO, Martin Bateman, again came to share on a Sunday morning. Money was raised at Christmas for the **BMS Appeal** for maternity services in Chad.

Churches Together Partnerships

Stanley Road Baptist Church is a member 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. He is part of the Morecambe Churches' Forum, which meets sporadically.

Financial Review

General Overview

Our main source of **income** continues to be the regular gifts of members and friends of the church. In the accounting year, gifts and donations totalled some £43,958. This represents a small increase on the previous year. Reclaimed tax, under the **Gift Aid** Scheme amounted to £15,700. This figure has been somewhat 'inflated' as roughly half relates to the 23/24 year, but was been received into the accounts at the beginning of 24/25.

A significant income stream is provided by groups and organisations, paying **rental fees** for use of the premises, which saw a 34% increase on last year.

In addition to the General Fund, we have two '**Restricted**' funds. Appeals income was received and passed on to BMS, Boys Brigade and Christians against Poverty. Donations, continue to be received into the support fund for Mark Young and the Lighthouse Community Church. As of 31 March, the fund balance stands at £3,394. Prayer and Praise donated £200 from their fund, with £50 going to Samaritans, RNLI, Wolfwood and Macmillan.

Total **General expenditure** was £82,251. This represents an overall increase of 14% on last year. Admin and 'running' costs were higher, but include expenditure on the 'Church Weekend.' This outlay was largely matched by income received from attendees of the event, meaning there was minimal net cost. All building related costs, including utilities, repairs and renovations saw an overall 20% increase. This was mainly due to sky high utility bills - particularly gas. A new contract for gas supply commences on 1 April 2025 and should mean a significant reduction in our bills. Repairs to the kitchen roof came to just under £3,000.

Assets: The balance of accounts at March 31, 2025 were: NatWest Current and Savings Accounts £35,897; NatWest Cowan Bequest £2,857; Baptist Union Deposit £30,000. This gives total monetary assets of £68,754, represented by the fund balances below

Funds: The General Fund increased during the year from £60,594 to £65,324. The Restricted Funds balance increased from £2,122 to £3,430

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 final ‘cash’ position at the end of March 2025, is encouraging. Again, we acknowledge the faithful and committed giving of members and friends. Use of the premises by outside groups, is something we welcome. Whilst providing significant, additional income, it means that community and family groups have access to good facilities. The Gift Aid Scheme continues to prove a great benefit to us. Looking ahead, the challenge posed by necessary repairs, renovations and improvements to our buildings, is very real and will almost certainly deplete our reserves in the next financial year. We are grateful to God for His faithfulness in providing for all our needs during the past year and so we press ahead, in faith and dependence on Him.

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 92%.

Trustees include the Pastor, who chairs the meetings, with others appointed from the membership at the AGM of Church Members. 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

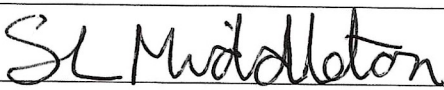

Trustee members serving within the period April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025 are:

- Minister: Reverend Steven Hewitt (Pastor, Chair)
- Elected members: Mrs Stella Walsh (Secretary) Mr Andrew Sadler (Treasurer)
- Mrs Denise Beal (until June 15, 2024) Mrs Rosie Lee (until June 15, 2024) Mrs Sandra Todd
- Mrs Christine Betteridge (until June 15, 2024) Mrs Kath Johnson Mr Jason Palmer
- Dr Robert Henderson Mr Robert Middleton Mrs Sarah Middleton
- Mr Matthew Bradley (from June 15, 2024) Rev. Mark Simmons (from June 15, 2024)

Declarations

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

Signed on behalf of the charity’s trustees:

Signatures		
Full name	SARAH MIDDLETON	MARK ANDREW SIMMONS
Position	TRUSTEE	TRUSTEE
Date	MAY 6 th 2025	MAY 6 th 2025

STANLEY ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH CIO 1197276.
RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS FOR THE 12 MONTHS ENDING 31 MARCH 2025.

GENERAL FUND - UNRESTRICTED

<u>RECEIPTS</u>	<u>Notes</u>	<u>12 months to 31/03/2025</u>	<u>12 months to 31/03/2024</u>
Grant (LCC Warm Spaces)		£ 450.00	£ 450.00
Offerings		£ 43,958.20	£ 43,511.36
Donations & other income		£ 7,113.44	£ 7,237.10
Use of premises		£ 16,691.00	£ 12,451.96
Repayment from utilities (Solar Panels)		£ 1,737.42	£ 1,581.65
Ministry & Mission groups		£ 460.00	£ 868.07
Gift Aid & Small Donations	1	£ 15,700.07	£ 5,047.30
Bank & BU Corp Ltd interest		£ 1,321.10	£ 557.75
		£ 86,981.23	£ 71,705.19
<u>PAYMENTS</u>	<u>Notes</u>		
Ministry		£ 37,767.98	£ 35,632.44
Ministry & Mission		£ 5,073.74	£ 3,743.25
External Mission		£ 8,557.61	£ 7,895.77
Admin		£ 3,969.68	£ 2,755.65
Building renovations & upkeep		£ 26,882.12	£ 22,265.15
		£ 82,251.13	£ 72,292.26
Surplus(+)/Deficit(-)		£ 4,730.10	-£ 587.07
Balance b/f 1st April		£ 60,594.09	£ 61,181.16
Balance c/f		£ 65,324.19	£ 60,594.09

APPEALS - RESTRICTED

<u>RECEIPTS</u>			
Donations		£ 545.00	£ 1,790.56
Gift Aid & Small Donations		£ 77.66	
		£ 622.66	£ 1,790.56
<u>PAYMENTS</u>			
BMS, Boys Brigade & Christians Against Poverty		£ 557.00	£ 1,819.97
Surplus(+)/Deficit(-)		£ 65.66	-£ 29.41
Balance b/f 1st April		-£ 29.41	
		£ 36.25	-£ 29.41

LIGHT HOUSE COMMUNITY CHURCH - M. YOUNG - RESTRICTED

<u>RECEIPTS</u>			
Donations & Legacies		£ 3,605.00	£ 3,660.00
Gift Aid & Small Donations	1	£ 1,642.49	£ 401.47
		£ 5,247.49	£ 4,061.47
<u>PAYMENTS</u>			
Surplus(+)/Deficit(-)		£ 1,242.49	£ 61.47
Balance b/f 1st April		£ 2,151.57	£ 2,090.10
Balance c/f		£ 3,394.06	£ 2,151.57

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

<u>ASSETS</u>			
Unrestricted Cash Funds		£ 65,324.19	£ 60,594.09
Restricted Cash Funds		£ 3,430.31	£ 2,122.16
Non monetary assets	2	£ 2,609,475.00	£ 2,521,205.00
		£ 2,678,229.50	£ 2,583,921.25
<u>LIABILITIES</u>			

NOTES.

1. Two Gift Aid/GASDS claims were made and received during the 2024/25 financial year.

The first claim received in April 2024 was in respect of offerings received in the previous financial year.

The second claim was in respect offerings received during the current financial year up to 01/03/2025.

2. Non monetary assets are reflected at their insured value as at 24th June 2024 and are comprised of buildings £2,514,470 and their contents £95,005.

3. Expenditure incurred in March but paid in April totalled £2146.36. One cheque of £150 was issued in March but presented in April. These transactions will only reflect in the 2025/2026 financials (Accrual accounting not employed).

The Receipts and Payments and the Statement of Assets and Liabilities were approved at a Trustees meeting held on May 6, 2025:

SIGNED.



(Andrew S. S. S. - Treasurer)

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 recognized 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. No grants were received during the year.

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 2025.

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:



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

Address: 8 Lake Grove, Morecambe, LA4 4LH

Date: April 28, 2025