

The Church of the Living Hope

Charity Number: 1197334

Financial Reports

For the Period 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2022

The Church of the Living Hope

Trustees' Annual report

For the Period 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2022

Principal Address

14 Gleneagles Close, Hubberston, MILFORD HAVEN, Dyfed, SA73 3SG

Trustees

Name	Office	Date appointed	Date resigned
Geoff Wright	Chairperson	04/01/2022	26/09/2022
Derek Kozel	Treasurer	04/01/2022	26/09/2022
Andrew Bookless	Ex-Officio	15/12/2021	
Linda Lewis		15/12/2021	
Graham Andrew		15/12/2021	
Selina Johnson	Secretary	04/08/2022	
Janet Llewellyn		05/10/2022	
Allison Johnstone	Chair	31/08/2022	

Structure, Governance and Management

The Church of the Living Hope is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
Our governing document is a Constitution Document.

Our Board of Trustees consists of members of the congregation and headed by a Chair of Trustees

Existing trustees and associate members can nominate other members to be trustees. Trustees will then assess their suitability, vote and appoint them.

Further information can be found in our Constitution and Associate Membership document

All trustees are required to undertake trustee training and safeguarding training and be have regard to our charity's policies and procedures and relevant Charity Commission guidance

Objectives and Activities

The objects of the Charity are:-

The Objects of the charity are the advancement of the Christian faith, for the benefit of the public especially but not exclusively within Milford Haven and the surrounding county of Pembrokeshire, and such other charitable purposes as shall, in the opinion of the charity Trustees, put into practice the Christian faith in accordance with the Church of the Living Hope's Statement of Faith and Theological Position.

In order to fulfil these Objects, the trustees were guided by a number of priorities during the year :

1.As a first step, to establish a worshipping congregation in a suitable building within the community . This would enable those who wanted to belong to the church to meet together to worship, to pray and to receive Christian teaching, and could also be the base from which we reached out to serve our wider community. Other church meetings, such as prayer meetings and Growth Groups would also take place to build up the church's life.

2.To appoint a Part-time Minister to guide forward the church in its life and mission. In time, it was also agreed to have a small leadership team to assist the minister in this.

3.To be a church that was actively missional, seeking to reach out to the wider community. Our first step in this regard would be to establish a parent-and-toddlers group.

4.To develop relevant policies and procedures. These should enable the church to move forward in a safe and effective way.

5.To find suitable external oversight for the church to help to guide it forward .We believed that it was important that we called on the wisdom and expertise of other Christian leaders, who would help as we moved forward in the church's life and mission.

6.From the start, it was very important to us that we would welcome all. This priority was expressed in a Statement of Theological Position that was produced before the church was registered as a charity. A part of this says that: 'We gladly affirm the dignity and worth of every human being, created and loved by God. We would want to welcome all people to our church services and activities, regardless of race, background, gender, sexual orientation or practice, and religious or political views.'

In making decisions through the year we have kept "the advancement of the Christian faith, for the benefit of the public" at the forefront of our priorities. We are grateful for the guidance of the Charity Commission in regard to Public Benefit, which has been circulated to all of the trustees.

The Church of the Living Hope

Trustees' Annual report (Continued)

For the Period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020

Achievements and Performance

Development of the Church

Sunday Worship

The Church of the Living Hope met for worship for the first time on the evening of Sunday 9th January 2022 at Hubberston and Hakin Community Centre. This was considered an ideal venue at the heart of our community, and we have been grateful for the help and support of its Trustees in enabling us to meet there. Since then, we have continued to meet in the Community Centre weekly on Sunday evenings, with an average weekly attendance of 25-35 people, although we have sometimes numbered more than that. One encouraging development is that the number of musicians leading our hymns and worship songs increased during the year, and we have also been pleased to see new people joining the congregation.

We offer refreshments after the services, which has helped to nurture a sense of belonging and friendship and we also offer prayer for healing or for other needs.

In addition to our Sunday evening services, we decided to offer something different in the Community Centre on a Sunday morning, which would be more accessible to children and families. On Easter Day 2022, we had an informal Cafe Church service, and we then gradually developed a pattern in the coming months, which led to us offering activities or services in the Community Centre 3 times a month, consisting of a Cafe Church, Family Services (followed by a Shared Lunch) and an informal Chill-&-Chat time, with food. These services and activities began to achieve their purpose, as we gradually saw more children and families joining us, as well as a few older people.

Growth Groups / Prayer Meeting / Imagine Heaven Course

As well as Sunday worship, we have organised weekly "Growth Groups" for Bible study and prayer to encourage people to grow in their faith. Initially, there were two groups meeting online, and then from May 2022 onwards a third group began to meet in person in the group leader's home. These have been a source of encouragement to those who have been part of them.

A small prayer meeting has also met regularly, initially online and then in person.

We also ran an online course called "Imagine Heaven", designed for people who are new to faith, as well as for church members, which looked at "Near Death Experiences" and how they fit in with what Christians believe about heaven and the after-life.

Leadership Team

Since the Church of the Living Hope started, Rev Andy Bookless (a former Church in Wales Vicar) has been recognised as the Church "Minister". The Trustees agreed to employ him part-time in that role, with effect from February 1st 2022, and he has been helping to guide the church forward. From near the end of April 2022 he has been assisted in this role by a Leadership Team, including four other people - namely Helen Bookless, Shirley Harrison, Linda Lewis and Graham Andrew, two of whom are also Trustees. This Leadership Team is accountable to the Trustees, and provides a report of its meetings to the Trustees. It seeks to develop the vision and direction of the church, and also works alongside the Minister and congregation in guiding forward its spiritual life, pastoral care and mission. This team meets regularly and is involved in organising church services and activities.

Church Membership

During the year, the Trustees decided to introduce a system of Associate Membership through which people could officially become "Church Members", although we emphasised that people who were not members were equally welcome to take part in church activities. We did this mainly to enhance the sense of belonging to the church. By the end of the year, 29 people had become Church Members, although this only represents about half of those adults who attend services fairly regularly.

Outreach to the Community

In January 2022 a Parents and Toddlers Group - known as Little Fishes and organised by the Church of the Living Hope - started to be held in Hubberston and Hakin Community Centre, offering play activities for the children, facilitating social interaction for adults and toddlers, providing some refreshments, and having a singing and Bible story time. This followed on from a similar group that had taken place in another local church, prior to the Covid pandemic. The group has been extremely popular, and has a waiting list of people wanting to come. A small but dedicated team has shown great commitment to this group.

We have also reached out on a small scale in other ways, for example, through offering "Healing on the Streets" prayer outside some local shops, through a community needs survey, through a number of church members serving as volunteers in a Warm Space held on Friday mornings in the Community Centre, and by hosting a Light Party for children at the Community Centre.

The Leadership Team and Trustees are continuing to think, pray and plan about further ways to develop the life of the church, and our service and outreach to the wider community.

Policies and Procedures and other matters

Behind the scenes a great deal of hard work has been done by the Trustees, Leadership Team and others in establishing the charity, including developing some policies and procedures, and a Code of Conduct for Trustees, opening a bank account, undergoing Safeguarding Training, and facilitating the church's activities. This has all contributed to the church being in a healthy and stable position from which we are looking forward to growing and developing our activities further.

We have also established other ways to spread information about the church and its activities, including a Facebook Page and a Website <https://www.thechurchofthelivinghope.co.uk/>.

Oversight and Guidance

The Trustees and Leadership Team of the Church of the Living Hope have looked very carefully into whether to affiliate with some kind of wider network of churches. In the end, we decided not to do this for the time-being, but asked two Welsh church leaders who have considerable experience in starting or assisting new churches, to give us some oversight and guidance. We have been extremely grateful for the input and wisdom shared with us by these two people - Julian Richards and Rob Jones.

We have also appreciated the links that we have with other local churches, and are involved in a national network called New Wine Cymru, which draws together Christians from many different denominations and groups in sharing good practice about how to share our faith with people in our communities.

Policy on Grant making

Although we do not make formal grants, we do adhere to the principal of "Tithing". By this we mean that 10% of our income is gifted to other charities as proposed by church members. In making these gifts we do not look for or receive any kind of return. For example to Tearfund - a charity whose purpose is the relief of poverty and suffering in some of the poorest countries in the world.

Contribution made by Volunteers

As we have only one paid member of staff, our volunteers provide a significant contribution to the running of our organisation. From Trustees, to children's workers, administrative and technical assistants and members providing catering for events and church services. We are deeply indebted to all who give their time and support to enable the functioning of our church.

Financial Review

Year End financial position

The Charity is just under 1 year old and during its first year of operation it has received a mixture of one of grants and regular giving from members of the Church congregation.

The ongoing operational budgets have been set to ensure that operational costs are kept below the level of the regular monthly giving resulting in a surplus of £13,435.75 at the end of the first year of operation. Of this sum £7,000 has been allocated as reserve funding.

Reserves Policy

Based on current operations level, the Church of the Living Hope holds a reserve of £7,000

Our income is primarily based on the freewill giving of church members. The reserve is therefore available for use in the event of a significant drop in our income, whether long or short-term. It would be used to cover outstanding commitments including hall hire and Minister's salary

It is also kept for use if the charity were to close for unforeseen reasons. In that event it would enable us to wind down gradually, over a period of 6 months so that members can come to terms with the situation and find another church.

Given the financial oversight by the Trustees there is no current risk of the Charity not being able to continue as an ongoing concern.

Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the Charity's Trustees

Allison Johnson

Dated

The Church of the Living Hope

Independent Examiner's Report on the Accounts

For the Period 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2022

Respective responsibilities of Trustee and Examiner

The Charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 ("The Act").

The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Act and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under Section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the Act), and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts (set out on page 5) presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that, in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with Section 130 of the Charities Act;
- 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

Signed: 

Name: ROBIN MILNER

Date: 17/5/23

Neon Numbers Ltd
259 Copnor Road, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO3 5EE

The Church of the Living Hope

Receipts and Payments Account

For the Period 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2022

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Last Year £
Receipts				
Start-up donations	3,850	-	3,850	-
Member donations	25,519	-	25,519	-
Payments				
Cost of charitable activities	10,505	-	10,505	-
Charitable projects	1,985	-	1,985	-
Assets and investment purchases				
Stage Equipment	3,443	-	3,443	-
Net Receipts / (Payments)	13,436	-	13,436	-
Cash held at 1 January 2022	-	-	-	-
Cash Held at 31 December 2022	£ 13,436	-	£ 13,436	-

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

as at 31 December 2022

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Last Year £
Assets				
Cash at bank	£ 6,436	£ 7,000	£ 13,436	-