



ANNUAL REPORT

2024

Latchford Baptist Church

Registered Address: Loushers Lane, Latchford, Warrington WA4 2RP

Charity Registration Number: 1200649

Trustees:

The Revd C Urwin (Minister)

Mr R Urwin (Church Secretary) (from 28 Jan 2024)

Mr P Wilkinson (Church Treasurer)

Mr C Ablott

Miss T Critchley

Mr M Hulse (until 28 May 2024)

Miss R Nichols (from 28 Jan 2024)

The Revd N Stanton (Transitional Minister) (until 12 July 2024)

Mrs S Wilkinson

Property Trustees

The Baptist Union Corporation Ltd., Baptist House, 129 Broadway, Didcot OX11 8RT

Bankers

The Co-Operative Bank plc, P O Box 250, Skelmersdale WN8 6WT

Independent Examiner

Mr I Hope

Annual Report for 2024

The Trustees present their Annual Report for 2024

Structure, Governance and Management

Latchford Baptist Church is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). The assets, liabilities and activities of the Unincorporated Church were transferred to the CIO on 1 January 2024.

The Charity is governed by a constitution based on the Approved Governing Document for Baptist Churches. Baptism by immersion upon personal profession of faith is the normal mode of entry into the membership of a Baptist Church. Membership of the Church is open to those who have professed faith in Jesus Christ and who have indicated acceptance of the Beliefs of the Church, a willingness to participate in the activities and acceptance of the duty of Members. Persons seeking membership who have not been baptised may be welcomed as Associate Members in accordance with the Constitution.

The Church Members' Meeting normally takes place four times per year and has responsibility for the overall policy of the Church. In accordance with the Constitution, the Members appoint up to five Trustees, who together with the Minister(s), Church Secretary and Treasurer (who are also appointed by the Members), are responsible for the day to day running of the Church's work and witness, and the financial and legal aspects of the charity. All Members are encouraged to take an appropriate part in the spiritual and practical tasks involved in the furtherance of the charitable objective.

Relevant matters may be submitted to the Church Members' Meeting by the Trustees for guidance or may be raised by Members in the Church Members' Meeting for further consideration by the Trustees. Though the Constitution permits decisions to be made at Church Members' Meetings by appropriate majorities, the Church seeks to work by consensus wherever possible.

Objectives and Activities

The principal purpose of the charity 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 other parts of the world.

To achieve the principal objective, which is set out above, the Church provides a variety of activities both to its membership and to the community generally. The aim is to show the love of Jesus Christ in both word and deed and to bring people into a closer relationship with Him as living Lord.

Central to the work and witness of the Church is the provision of regular public services of Christian worship. These services normally take place each Sunday at 10.45 am. The Church seeks to be a friendly and welcoming community, and the services are open for anyone to attend.

The Church holds prayer to be of central importance and seeks to incorporate prayer within our regular activities, including a fortnightly prayer meeting.

The Church runs a midweek group on the church premises for the growth of faith and discipleship and further details can be obtained from the Trustees on request, or at the Sunday services of worship.

The Church is responsible for a Wellbeing Café (Renew with a Brew) which meets in the church premises on Tuesday mornings. It is open to adults from the church and local community and offers a warm, safe space where everyone is welcome and valued. Renew with a Brew has a focus on attending to our mental health and wellbeing, by connecting with others and making

friendships, learning new skills, bringing or sharing hobbies, and thus demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ.

The Church works in partnership with Warrington Foodbank to provide an affordable food pantry (The Little Shop at Latchford) which is run in the premises for three two-hour sessions each week. The shop is open to anyone from the community to help them make their limited money go further. It also provides support as a friendly meeting place, offering refreshments and signposting people to other helpful organisations and resources.

Whenever possible, the Church makes available its premises, at a reasonable rate, to community groups, including other churches. This is done as an acknowledgement of our commitment to serving our community in various ways.

The Church operates a safeguarding system to ensure that all people working with children and adults at risk are appropriately vetted through the Disclosure and Barring Service and receive regular safeguarding training.

The Church is a member of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and the North Western Baptist Association.

The Church has read the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit and is satisfied that the activities outlined above clearly demonstrate that the charity is providing a benefit to the public.

Achievements and Performance

The Church does not measure the success of its programmes only in numbers, including financial numbers, but also in less tangible areas. These would include the practical and emotional support of individuals and families within the church and the wider community. Also, through our support of churches, projects and organisations with a national and international reach, the impact of the Church is also seen in the spiritual and physical transformation of lives in places further afield.

2024 has been a year with a lot of change and challenge for the Church, but through it all we have seen the faithfulness of God.

We have greatly appreciated the continuing ministry of the Revd Carolyn Urwin, our Minister, especially through her overall leadership and regular leading of Sunday Worship in its various forms. She has developed a whole range of worship resources, in particular for our café services, Lifelines (liturgy-based) services and other reflective services. This has given confidence to other Church Members to offer to lead more services. This is especially helpful as there are now fewer visiting preachers available, and with Carolyn most likely due to retire in 2025.

We developed a monthly pattern for Sunday Worship which normally includes a communion service, a service led by a visiting preacher, a café service, accessible to people not used to coming to church, and a Lifelines service.

Our Transitional Minister, Revd Neal Stanton, concluded his time with us in July when it reached its natural ending. His contribution, particularly with the development of the Little Shop at Latchford, was acknowledged at a farewell lunch held in December.

Malcolm Hulse stepped down as Church Secretary at the AGM in January 2024, and Robin Urwin was elected in his place. Malcolm's contribution to church life over many years, together with that of Gill, his wife, was greatly appreciated and will be missed, as they have now moved from the area.

It has been wonderful to see the building being used by our own groups and also outside users on every day of the week.

Renew with a Brew, our Renew Wellbeing café, has been running for 3 years, meeting every Tuesday morning, thanks to the commitment of our team of Hosts. We regularly have 20 people attending and we were pleased to welcome the walking footballers from Warrington Town FC next door, which brought numbers up to 28 on some occasions. As well as offering our regular activities of games, jigsaws and crafts, alongside our prayer space, we have established links with several local support groups in Warrington, who come and offer advice.

A new initiative this year was the opening of the Little Shop at Latchford as an affordable food pantry, in partnership with Warrington Foodbank in April. The former prayer room, which was no longer in use, was refurbished and fitted out as the Little Shop. Chris Ablott has taken the lead in forging the links with the Foodbank and the team of volunteers, which includes some from our church. The Little Shop currently opens for three sessions each week – Tuesday (5 to 7 pm) and Thursday (10.30 to 12.30 and 1.30 to 3.30 pm). The number of shoppers from the local community has gradually built up during the year and now can exceed 60 a week. The Little Shop is helping people from our community make ends meet, especially during the current cost of living challenges. The Church provides free refreshments for all the shoppers while they wait and we raise awareness of what the Church can offer to them, as well as signposting them to organisations and resources that can help with a wide range of issues. Towards the end of the year, the Church had a Food Hygiene Inspection and was awarded a 5-star rating, covering both Latchford Baptist Church and the Little Shop

The Church midweek group followed three courses during the year – Spot the Difference (a Lent Course), Fruitfulness on the Frontline and Growing on the Frontline. These helped develop our faith and built confidence in living out our Christian lives wherever we are.

Two other churches meet on the church premises - the Latvian Church (WCF Jēzuski Khangeri) and JCIM (a predominantly Filipino congregation). Other regular users this year have been NCT for ante-natal courses, 3RS for after-school tuition, Tai Chi classes for people with long covid and Alcoholics Anonymous. The premises were used for the Local and General Elections and were also made available for occasional one-off bookings from the local community.

The Trustees seek to ensure that the church buildings are kept in good repair and are fit for purpose. Having buildings in good repair means they can be used safely for church activities and by other groups. Servicing the three central heating boilers, the fire extinguishers and fire alarms, and PAT testing all 100 portable appliances are an essential part of this. These, like many other tasks, are so often unseen and we are grateful to our Fabric Committee who oversee and often undertake much of the work. With the premises being used by a lot more people, we increased the hours of the church cleaner.

The major work undertaken this year, in addition to that already mentioned in relation to the Little Shop, was the replacement of the floor in the Hub and purchase of additional chairs, which completed the refurbishment of the Hub. The Hub now offers a warm, welcoming and attractive environment which has been appreciated by all the groups that use it. Other work undertaken included the installation of a TV screen and cover in the Hall, the purchase of a portable PA system for use in the Hub, a replacement water heater in the kitchen, the purchase of a portable urn for use in the Hall, fixing leaks in the Hub skylight and in the roof above the Store.

Other highlights of the year:

- The services in Holy Week and on Easter Sunday led by our minister were much appreciated by all who came.
- The Christmas services – with Coffee and Carols in the Hub being held for the first time – attracted people from Renew with a Brew and the Little Shop. This was led by our minister, as were the Carol Service, the Christmas Day service and the Reflective service the Sunday

after. All these were very well received, thanks again to our minister and all those who took part.

- Two community gardening days were held
- The Tear Fund Quiz afternoon attracted folk from the Little Shop and Renew with a Brew as well as members of the congregation and raised £433 for Tear Fund.
- Visitors to the Facebook pages for Latchford Baptist Church and Renew with a Brew have increased significantly.
- Christmas gift bags were made at Renew with a Brew and filled with small gifts and presented to shoppers and volunteers at the Little Shop.

During 2024 one new Member was welcomed into membership, two resigned due to moving away from the area, and one sadly died. Barbara Pitcher had been a Member since 2014 and was a faithful member of the congregation and has been greatly missed. The membership as of 31 December 2024 stood at 27. A review of the membership is currently underway.

Following the departure of the Revd Neal Stanton as Transitional Minister, the Trustees held a Strategy Day in September to consider the way ahead for the Church. They recognised that there were now fewer Church Members and there was the possibility the time might come when we could not continue to function properly as a Church and CIO. In the meantime, the current strategy is to focus on sharing God's love through active engagement with our local community and witness to people around us wherever they are. We will continue to work and pray together for sufficient growth in numbers to keep the Church open.

The Trustees presented a draft Strategy Statement to the Church Members' Meeting in October and this was agreed with a few small adjustments. A number of steps were agreed including:

- continue to encourage church people to be more involved in engaging with people who come to Renew with a Brew and the café we run alongside The Little Shop and Talking Point.
- advertise our Café Services (which will be on a wellbeing-related theme) to those who attend Renew with a Brew and The Little Shop
- speak to the NWBA Team about future transition in the light of our recent experience with Transitional Ministry.
- make adjustments in the light of our now being a smaller church by having a smaller diaconate, whilst encouraging participation by the whole of the Church in the tasks that need to be done.
- explore the potential for more of the administrative tasks to be performed by paid workers or volunteers from within or outside the Church congregation.
- have a regular Sunday programme of services which include those suitable for being led by Members of the Church.
- co-ordinate the themes of Sunday services, the Midweek Group and the Prayer Meeting so they become part of a single programme rather than separate strands, enabling us to more clearly hear and respond to God's leading.
- promote the sense of 'belonging' by ensuring our Church's programme is oriented towards creating opportunities for people with no church allegiance to feel there is somewhere they can belong and regard as 'theirs'.

It was also agreed to plan into the programme for 2025 the idea of meeting on a Friday evening once a month instead of meeting on the Sunday morning that week. The format would be adjusted so it was less churchy than the café services with a simple meal at the beginning with a view to making it more accessible for people who already come to Renew with a Brew or who visit the Little Shop. It will be called 'Searchlight'.

The Trustees have since met with the Revd Jane Henderson of the NWBA and the Revd Ken Livingstone, an experienced Baptist minister, as a result of which they have invited Ken to work with them on an occasional basis over the next few months as a development advisor as they try to seek a sustainable way forward.

Financial Review

The Church continues to raise the majority of the funds which it needs to carry on its activities from within its own membership and congregation. No wider public appeal was made for funds during the year.

The accompanying financial statement shows that the balance in our accounts reduced by just over £7,000 from £65,829 to £58,456 by the end of 2024. This mainly resulted from some significant non-recurring expenditure, e.g. Transitional Ministry and improvements to The Hub, and therefore was not a cause for concern. There were welcome increases in the weekly offerings and income from the hire of the buildings.


The Church expressed its part in the life of the wider church by making donations to local, national and international organisations and societies with Christian aims and objectives compatible with the Church's own charitable purpose.

The Church is heavily dependent on its membership working as volunteers in all aspects of the Church's activities, many of which run with little or no impact on the Church's expenditure but nevertheless contribute substantially to the achievement of the Church's objectives. We are grateful to everyone who has played a part, however big or small, in serving the Church through the past year.

We are grateful to Phil Wilkinson for all his work on the finances over another year as Church Treasurer. He will be standing down from this role at the AGM in January 2025.

The Trustees are satisfied that they have more than sufficient reserves at the end of the year, together with ongoing income anticipated, to enable the Church to function effectively in the coming year.

Signed by Robin Urwin on behalf of the Trustees

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Robin Urwin', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Date: 17 January 2025

LATCHFORD BAPTIST CHURCH

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS AND STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES FOR 2024

The accounts and statement of assets and liabilities as set out on pages (1 to 4) relating to the year ended 31st December 2024 are as approved by the deacons.

Signed: (Treasurer or other Deacon authorised to sign on behalf of all the deacons)

Philip J. Williams

Date:

16/01/25

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINER(S) TO THE DEACONS AND MEMBERS OF LATCHFORD BAPTIST CHURCH

In accordance with the provisions of Section 43 of the Charities Act 1993, I have examined the receipts and payments account(s) and statement of assets and liabilities of Latchford Baptist Church relating to the year ended 31st December 2024. The examination did not extend to a comprehensive audit of such accounts or statement.

I confirm that the accounts and statement accord with the accounting standards of the church and that such records satisfy the requirements of the Act. I am not aware of any matter which attention needs to be drawn in order to obtain a proper understanding of the accounts.

Iain Buchanan

(signed by independent examiner):

IAIN BUCHANAN HOPE AIB.

Name (with other professional qualifications)

and address: 47 WHITEFIELD ROAD

STOCKTON HEATH

WARRINGTON

WA4 6NA

Date:

16th JANUARY 2025

LATCHFORD BAPTIST CHURCH**Financial Statement for the year ended 31st December 2024****General Receipts and Payments**

<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Note</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Weekly Offerings		27,001.40	25,123.50
Use of Buildings	2	18,996.00	11,515.00
Donations	3	518.15	1,013.34
Mission	4a		
Raised for Other Causes	4b	599.05	458.17
Fund Raising	5	2,269.18	1,287.56
Other Income	6	18,414.83	22,240.00
Church Groups	11	280.00	220.00
		68,078.61	61,857.57

Payments

Ministry	7	30,375.15	27,833.93
Mission	4a	7,587.80	6,679.55
Other Causes	4b	362.55	563.10
Church property	8	22,557.14	24,476.32
Administration	9	2,668.41	4,009.22
Other Expenditure	10	867.69	150.00
Church Groups	11	265.91	305.22
		64,684.65	64,017.34

Surplus (Deficit) for the year**3,393.96 - 2,159.77**

Balance at 1st January		1,380.43	3,540.20
Interest from Deposit Account	13	303.25	413.13
Interest from BUC Deposit Account		1,632.62	302.99
Balance at 31 December		4,774.39	1,380.43

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31st December 2024**Assets**

Current account		4,774.39	1,380.43
Deposit account - BU	14	42,336.16	64,448.87
Deposit account - Coop	14	11,348.58	
Non-monetary assets	12	70,000.00	70,000.00
		128,459.13	135,829.30

Liabilities**0 0**

LATCHFORD BAPTIST CHURCH

Notes to the accounts

1 The basis of accounts

These accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis and accord with S42 (3) Charities Act.

2 Use of buildings

Latvian Church	7,560.00
JCIM	3,380.00
3RS	2,860.00
NCT	1,731.00
Goldensmiths	120.00
Conexus Tuition	600.00
Tai Chi	1,000.00
AA	480.00
WBC	900.00
Miscellaneous	365.00
	<u>18,996.00</u>

3 Donations

518.15

518.15

4a Mission

	Income	Expenditure
BMS World Mission		2,616.00
HMF		2,796.00
NWBA		750.00
Foodbank		200.00
Renew Wellbeing		350.00
Room at the Inn		150.00
UCB		150.00
Church		515.80
WYFC		60.00
	-	<u>7,587.80</u>

4b Other causes

	Income	Expenditure
Foodbank (Harvest)	45.00	45.00
Pancreatic Cancer	60.00	90.00
Room at the Inn (Christmas)	152.55	152.55
Warr Youth for Christ	85.00	25.00
BMS	50.00	50.00
	<u>392.55</u>	<u>362.55</u>

5 Fund raising

Cards/Books	179.78
eBay sales	873.65
Stewardship	1,206.25
Miscellaneous	9.50
	<u>2,269.18</u>

LATCHFORD BAPTIST CHURCH

Notes to the accounts

6 Other income

Gift Aid Repayment	4,922.61
Transfer from Deposit Account	12,500.12
D/A interest	111.19
1&1 Internet Credit	13.81
NWBA Min Conf Refund	265.00
Refund From Hope (NS)	335.00
Amazon Refund	10.10
BMS	130.00
Tearfund Quiz	103.00
Booklets Sale	24.00
	<u>18,414.83</u>

7 Ministry

Stipend (nett)	6,314.61
Tax/NI (Total)	1,579.44
Expenses	804.98
Rent, Phone, etc	5,574.78
Pension	4,014.57
NS Total Costs	11,656.77
Preaching Fees	430.00
	<u>30,375.15</u>

8 Church property

Electricity	800.56
Gas	1,981.02
Cleaning	2,725.00
Telephone Church	431.64
Hub Modifications	5,851.84
Water	120.38
Chairs in Hub	1,445.40
Toilet Heaters	867.00
Window repairs	150.00
Leaflet Holders	324.78
Insurance	3,279.57
New Television (Hall)	688.98
New Boilers	459.97
PA System	306.49
Boiler Service	180.00
PAT testing	200.00
Fire Extinguisher service	85.20
Miscellaneous	2,659.31

22,557.14

9 Administration

Catering	740.86
Printing & Stationery	482.24
Fees	760.11
Gifts / Flowers	169.80
CIO Costs	515.40
	<u>2,668.41</u>

LATCHFORD BAPTIST CHURCH

Notes to the accounts

10 Other expenditure

	Income	Expenditure
Transfer to D/A		111.19
Conexus Refund		450.00
BMS		162.50
Tearfund		144.00
		<u>867.69</u>

11 Church groups

	Income	Expenditure
Transfer from D/A	200.00	265.91
donations to Renew	80.00	
	<u>280.00</u>	<u>265.91</u>

12 Non-monetary assets

The legal title to the church premises is held in trust by the church's custodian trustee (The Baptist Union Corporation Ltd)
The church owns the contents (insurance valuation)

70,000.00
<u>70,000.00</u>

13 Interest on deposit account

Cooperative Bank	303.25
BUC	1,632.62
	<u>1,935.87</u>

14 Disposition of monies in Deposit Account

Church	6,348.58
Gilbert Legacy	5,000.00

BU Deposit Account

42,336.16
<u>53,684.74</u>