

Although the CIO was registered in May 2023, at the end of December 2023 the church had not moved to CIO status, as we awaited updates to bank accounts and then our charity registration for tax purposes. However, we have uploaded the Accounts of the unincorporated church, with the Pastors' report to the Annual Church Meeting in February 2024.

Annual Report 2023

Our toddler group has over the past 12 months, as it has always done through the years, served the very youngest in our community and those that care for them. The number we have on any Wednesday can vary significantly from a quiet week with just 10 or so people to the busiest where we can over 60 in the building. We are grateful to the efforts of the whole team who set up and clear up, welcome, provide crafts, serve refreshments and keep watch on the door each week.

Tuesday Fellowship has continued its once a month format it has used since reopening at the end of Covid with the usual mix of interesting and varied speakers. The current team will be 'retiring' from the roles in the summer and that means, as things stand right now, that after numerous decades Tuesday Fellowship (in its various forms) will be ending. We are all so very very grateful to the hard work of those who have led the group over such a significant period of time. We pray that all those seeds sown both long ago and more recently will continue to bear fruit

Our weekly prayer meetings continue to happen alternately on a Tuesday evening and Thursday morning. The variety in days and times is to enable as many people as possible to attend. If you have not been to one yet, we'd really encourage you consider coming along.

Colin kindly prepared the material and led two outstanding teaching courses this year: The Timeline of Jesus; and the Timeline Of Acts. Both courses were very well received and we all learned so much from it. Thank you Colin for the immense effort that went into preparing and delivering it.

The Monday Journeys group has continued to meet and it's diverse members continue to discover Jesus in a range of teaching material. They have recently just started once again the course that they first ran and are named after: Journeys.

The Exchange has continued to meet most Fridays offering an opportunity for a drink, biscuit, craft, dolls house renovation, games, puzzles, crochet and most importantly providing a good way of building relationships both in the church and in the wider community. We know that it is very much appreciated by all those that come along. Over this past year we have also been joined once a month by Colchester Councils community tech team who help people with a variety of technology related questions.

Beach Club was again such an important week in the year with the opportunity to share the gospel with so many young (and older folk who accompanied them). Last year it had a science based theme. A big well done to all those who work so hard planning throughout the year and then in the actual week to enable to this to happen.

In the summer Jen was, with Kathryn's help, once again able to support the Lion's in their Fun Day by leading various games.

The Guides and Brownies (Monday) and Rainbows (Thursday) continue to meet in the church building. It is good to be able to support groups which provide work with young people.

We decided to end Outdoor church. Although very much valued by those that went along, there was not a consistency in those able to attend to warrant it continuing.

In November, for the third consecutive year, we worked with JK May for their 'Light A Candle' event which was held in the church building. In many ways this is a simple event, with the bereaved offered a cup of tea, a candle to light, and the offer of prayer. It is always a privilege to be there.

We were, for the first time since Covid, able to provide a full set of events for schools again with Easter Cracked, Christmas Unwrapped, assemblies as well as a Christingle at Langenhoe school

In December we once again held the Christmas Tree Festival. The church was packed for most of the weekend with record numbers of trees and visitors with some people yet again staying for hours to enjoy the trees, crafts, atmosphere and conversation.

In our church services this year we have covered a variety of topics which included : 1 Thessalonians, Questions (a series where the topics were set by you all), James, Fear Not and an all age service series on the Lord's prayer. We were also grateful to be joined by Steve Tinning who spoke to us on the topic of refugees and Angela Shereni who joined us for the anniversary service. Causeway kids sessions have continued to look at different books of the Bible. We are thankful to all who help make our time on a Sunday work : those who welcome, those who clear up, those who serve tea and coffee, the music and sound team, the tech team, the readers, the pray-ers, the service leaders and speakers, the fire team, prayer team, the cleaning team, the communion set up people, the people who put together the rotas, and those who help in any other way. Every Sunday is a big team effort and only possible because of the efforts of so many.

In the background the CIO process has been continuing. We thought that this would be complete by now, however unfortunately, although very near it is not finished in time for this years ACM. Once again we are grateful to all those in the Diaconate and Eldership for all they do – much of which is never 'obviously' noticeable, but without whom church life would rapidly grind to halt.

Very sadly since our last report we suffered as a church family the loss of Roy Johnson, whose gift of gentleness was evident to all, and Robin Childs who served the church, particularly through music, so diligently for so long. Please continue to remember their families in your prayers.

A few weeks ago, we announced that we would be moving on in May to serve the Lord in Melbourn. We know that this will be huge wrench to leave you all and the community and will miss you all. However, we believe this is the Lord's calling and our leaving will create an opportunity in which a new work will be possible, both in yourselves and eventually in whoever is called to serve this community in the future.

Finally, we want to say a massive thank you to everyone who has helped in the life of the church over the past year, whether it is listed here or not, whether it is obviously visible or not - we thank you all.

Rob Hughes
Pastor

West Mersea Free Church
Accounts 2023

	2023			2022		
	General	Restricted	Total	General	Restricted	Total
Income						
Offerings, incl GA tax	61,948	2,667	64,615	55,139	4,973	60,112
Interest	1,608		1,608	314		314
Rental of Mill Road	8,979		8,979	8,784		8,784
Other	876		876	1,082		1,082
Total	73,411	2,667	76,077	65,420	4,973	70,393
Expenses						
Pastors, incl NI, Tax & Pension	44,506	0	44,506	38,674	3,160	41,834
4 Whittaker Way costs	9,070		9,070	6,902		6,902
Total	53,576	0	53,576	45,576	3,160	48,736
Ministry Expenses						
Pastor's expenses	1,967		1,967	1,574		1,574
2 nd Pastor expenses	0		0	100		100
Printing & Stationery	729		729	868		868
Youthwork Expenses	114		114			
Speakers' expenses	209		209	235		235
Subscriptions & licenses	771		771	787		787
Other expenses	1,605		1,605	1,260		1,260
Total	5,395	0	5,395	4,824		4,824
Church Costs						
Heating & Lighting	1,559		1,559	1,255		1,255
Insurance	1,874		1,874	1,682		1,682
Water rates	202		202	171		171
Equipment	443		443	88		88
General Maintenance	1,421		1,421	162		162
Fire protection	619		619	508		508
Total	6,118	0	6,118	3,867		3,867
34 Mill Road	1,961		1,961	1,545		1,545
Total	1,961	0	1,961	1,545		1,545
Direct giving paid out		2,637	2,637		3,029	3,029
Grants & Donations – tithed	7,174		7,174	6,560		6,560
Total	7,174	2,637	9,811	6,560	3,029	9,589
Independent examination	90		90	90		90
Bank charges	0		0			
Total	90	0	90	90		90
Total of annual expenses	74,315	2,637	76,951	62,461	6,189	68,650
Pension deficit repayment			0	8,100		8,100
CIO solicitors fees	2,052		2,052	1,380.00		1,380.00
Chairs	3,237	2,030	5,267			
Total of one off expenses	5,289	2,030	7,319	9,480		9,480
Total of all expenses	79,604	4,667	84,270	71,941	6,189	78,130
Surplus / (Deficit) for year	-6,193	-2,000	-8,193	-6,521	-1,216	-7,737
Bank balances b/f	69,870	4,383	74,252	76,391	5,599	81,990
Bank balances c/f	63,677	2,383	66,059	69,870	4,383	74,252
Barclays current account			354			11,655
Barclays deposit account			13,896			12,298
BU deposits			51,809			50,300
			66,059			74,252
Unrestricted			63,677			69,870
Restricted			2,383			4,383
			66,059			74,252

Balances 2023	31/12/22	Income	Expenses	31/12/23
	£	£	£	£
General Fund	69,870	73,411	79,604	63,677
Restricted Funds				
Elders' retreat	533			533
Site development	1,205			1,205
Earthquake appeal		1,143	1,143	0
Hands at Work		110	110	0
Christmas Appeal		1,210	1,210	0
Church project	2,000	30	2,030	0
Legacy	145			145
Toddler Group money	305			305
Air Ambulance (CTF)		174	174	0
Youth Work	195			195
Total Restricted funds	4,383	2,667	4,667	2,383
Total Funds	74,252	76,077	84,270	66,059

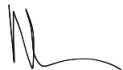
Tithe Account	2023	2022
CYO	1,631	1,200
BUGB	1,631	1,200
BMS	1,631	1,200
Beach Club	650	650
Hands at Work	1,631	1,200
Womens Refuge		370
Beacon House		370
1st Responders (Mersea)		370
Total	7,174	6,560

Non Monetary Assets	2023	2022
Church Premises	2,045,407	1,826,255
Church Manse	557,360	497,642
34 Mill Road	313,783	299,412
Fixtures, fittings & Equipment	210,045	194,955
Total	3,126,595	2,818,264

Report of the independent examiner to the deacons and members of West Mersea Free church

In accordance with the provisions of the Charities Acts I have examined the receipts and payments accounts and statements of assets and liabilities of WMFC relating to the year ended 31st Decemeber. This examination did not extend to a comprehensive audit of such accounts or statements. I confirm the accounts and statements accord with the records and that such records satisfy the requirements of the Acts.

I am not aware of any matter to which attention needs to be drawn in order to obtain a proper understanding of the accounts.



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