



Modern Church  
faith in the world

# **Annual Report of the Trustees for the year 2020**

**to be presented to the Annual General Meeting on**

**14<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at 7.30 pm**

**On Zoom**

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**Registered charity no:** 281573

# **ABOUT MODERN CHURCH**

*faith in the world*

## **We understand that**

- genuine faith is committed to the search for truth, wherever it comes from
- it is possible to think and talk about God in ways that make sense in our time and culture

## **We encourage**

- open discussion: freedom to explore ideas, ask questions and change our minds without fear of disapproval
- critical scholarship: keeping up to date with good research, examining the implications of new insights and discoveries
- willingness to change: so that what we believe now can be expressed in the things our churches do and say.

## **We expect our theology to be**

- public: talking the language of ordinary people, not that of a religious club
- relevant: engaging with what is going on in society, informing our faith and how we live
- respectful: willing to learn from others, within and outside Christianity, since we accept that we don't have all the answers.

## **Public benefit**

As a charitable organisation we consider that our objects have the following public benefits:

- we have a duty within our present-day society to present Christianity in a way which can be understood by ordinary people
- we encourage all church people, both ordained and lay, to play a full part in the governance and activities of their churches and foster greater engagement with the mission of the churches to support the poor, sick and needy in society

- by engaging in research and study we can help our fellow Christians come to a deeper understanding of their faith and how it has developed
- our approach to theology will encourage people of all faiths to better understand one another thus promoting constructive relations between the faiths.

## **Report from the Chair**

Here we are: second year of the pandemic. The UK is in the premier league as far as infections and deaths are concerned. We have learned of our systemic inequalities across a cornucopia of fault-lines – economic, educational, ethnic, health, employment, disability, etc, etc. Brexit and Covid have elided – or should that be collided? – creating a deeply uncertain future. Column inches are now filling up with speculations of how any new normal must not be a return to an old normal. But the verdict's still out.

Churches have Zoomed and YouTubed. Liturgy has wobbled, sometimes happily, sometimes disastrously. We have missed the Body of Christ's communal imperative. Coffee hour on screen is not quite the same as in the flesh. Nevertheless, Online Church has done well in some manifestations.

Through the year MC trustees and Council have also zoomed. Business has had to be curtailed of course during the year, but we have planned and then re-planned. In particular we missed the in-person learning, togetherness and banter of our annual conference. The theme was chosen to coincide with the publication of the Church of England's 'Living in Love and Faith' report, and therefore was both timely and a chance to present some alternative progressive thinking on issues of sex, gender, and relationships. In the event that report was delayed and the conference transferred to 2022.

The lack of meeting together in physical space did not stop the trustees from forging ahead with other planning of different kinds. These included:

1. Making arrangements for a conference in 2021 on the urgency of the Climate Emergency, its challenges, fears, and hopes in the light of faith, and to be chaired by Dr Christopher Southgate from the University of Exeter (whose 2018 book is titled *Theology in a Suffering World: Glory and Longing*, where 'glory', as the blurb explains, is not necessarily about beauty or radiance, but is better understood as a sign of the unknowable depths of God). The conference however had to be transferred to online 13-14 July, 2021. But the promise of strong and informative presentations from top-class speakers has not been lost, and we expect an extensive take-up of interest.
2. In October we launched a splendid insert of MC as a marketing opportunity.
3. Responses to the November publication of *Living in Love and Faith* were arranged as blog posts on the website. Again, some first class

writers were invited to produce critical and thoughtful pieces for us to ponder.

4. Planning for a conference day on 'Christology', probably at Oriel College, Oxford, was initiated as an anniversary MC event of the Girton College conference 100 years previously which had provoked considerable controversy and pushed MC firmly into the limelight.
5. The developing website continued to attract attention from people feeling themselves to be in the theological wilderness and wanting to belong to a community of thoughtful theological enquirers.

2020 was also the year when the 3-year review of the General Secretary's post was carried out and we are pleased to report that Jonathan's tenure with MC was extended for a further 2-year period in accordance with his contractual arrangements. On a sad note, we received news of the death of David Simon who was a much-valued member of MC and our treasurer for the last 3 years. I attended his funeral where love for David, from family, friends, and colleagues was much in evidence. Rosalind Lund kindly stepped in as an interim treasurer and we are most grateful for her willingness and generosity in doing this.

There are many volunteers who contribute generously of their time and energy to make MC the vibrant movement that it is. In this regard, let me pay tribute to the Trustees and Council who contribute so much to our work. Most especially, we are grateful to Diane Kutar, our Administrator, for keeping us focused and organized. We are delighted that Diane is to be ordained this summer and we wish her prayerful best wishes for her future, knowing that her future parish is to be one of the luckiest in the Church of England. We are grateful too to Professor Adrian Thatcher whose enthusiasm at the helm as Managing Editor for Modern Believing is unbounded. Canon Dr Michael Brierley continues as Book Reviews editor, a role which he fulfils with consummate skill and for which we are thankful. Anthony Woollard continues with equal enthusiasm as editor for Signs of the Times which continues to receive accolade upon accolade; we are grateful for the enormous work that he puts into each production. We are thankful also that Canon Trevor Pitt is Book Reviews editor for SOTT.

No organization these days has a chance of achieving much without a strong profile on social media and through a clear and engaging website. We are lucky to have Joe Priestley at the helm on these fronts and I am thankful for his professionalism and skills.

Professor Elaine Graham has been our President since the July 2019 conference and we are enormously grateful that she accepted the position. She is greatly respected as a theologian and has contributed

much wisdom to MC's life and purpose for many years. Her support for MC is a great boost for MC.

Finally, I express our thanks to Jonathan Draper, our General Secretary, who continues to stimulate Trustees and Council with ideas and options for future development. He is a great asset, networker, and guiding light. His contributions to MC should not be underestimated.

In spite of all the pandemic hurdles, MC is in good heart and is clear that there remains much for liberal Christian thought to do. Thank you to all our members for what you contribute and what you stimulate.

***Alan Race, Chair***

## **Report from the General Secretary**

The period since my last report has been one of real and virtual activity. The final in person activities were taking Modern Church (MC) to the Church Times 'Festival of Faith & Literature' at Bloxham School, and our residential Council Meeting in Leeds in mid-March just before the first lockdown. An irony of not meeting in person as MC Trustees has been an ability to meet more frequently about only one or two issues and this has facilitated some quicker decision-making.

### *Signs of the Times and Modern Believing*

Signs of the Times has continued its new life under the leadership of Anthony Woollard. Apart from distribution issues, this continues to be a very good and important part of what MC offers and it's good to see the circulation growing.

A great deal of work took place during 2020 to look at the design and policies of Modern Believing under the leadership of Adrian Thatcher. Adrian and I met with Rebecca Paveley about design and re-launch issues a number of times in 2020, culminating in a new design 'soft launched' with the October 2020 issue. In fact we had planned for a re-launch event at St James' Piccadilly in October 2020, but, because of lockdown restrictions, were unable to. The rescheduled event, for April 2021, was eventually cancelled, and a re-launch took place on YouTube in January 2021. The re-launch of MB has been very successful in terms of design, policy, and content, and Adrian has done a splendid job of securing a wide range of scholars to write for us.

### *Sponsorship*

The 2020 Greenbelt Festival was cancelled because of Covid restrictions and Trustees took the opportunity to review our sponsorship of the event. In the end Trustees decided not to continue our sponsorship of Greenbelt. The Society for the Study of Theology (SST) annual conference was also put online only, and our opportunity for sponsorship fell by the way. We do anticipate continuing our sponsorship of SST in the future, and we advertised our re-launch of MB through the SST network. We also continued to be in contact with the *Church Times* (CT) about their various festivals throughout 2020, and those conversations have borne fruit in 2021: more about that in the 2021 Report.

While not strictly sponsorship, MC used our growing relationship with the CT to place a printed-in insert into the CT in late October 2020 with sample articles, information about MC, and information about how to join or affiliate with MC. This was a considerable success. About 30 new members and the same number of new Affiliates resulted from the insert,

and the next month was very busy with posting a welcome letter and copies to those who joined as a result of the insert. While we will have many opportunities to be seen in the CT and on their website during 2021 (through sponsorship arrangements), this particular initiative was very successful.

### *Communications Officer*

January 2020 saw the start of the work of Joe Priestley as MC's Communications Officer. Joe has fitted in very smoothly to MC, and his skills with a wide range of media has been extremely helpful throughout this strange year. He has played a major role in the design of our insert into the CT, and the re-launch event for MB.

### *Living in Love and Faith*

During the second half of 2020 I also arranged for a number of people to be prepared to comment, on the MC website, on the 'Living in Love and Faith' documents when they eventually came out on November 2020. As the documents were published MC was able to field a wide range of significant people to comment, and this also created a great deal of traffic to our website and comment on the pieces. These are now grouped together on the MC website as a 'Resources' section and continue to be accessed by large numbers of people from all over the world.

### *Other Organisations*

We have made some slightly more 'formal' arrangements to cooperate with organisations we already do some work with: Inclusive Church (of which I am a Trustee on behalf of MC), One Body One Faith, Open Table, SCM, PCN. These organisations have together issued a Partnership Statement (it can be found on the MC website). We have also become a partner with a new organisation called MoSAIC, working towards a more inclusive church (there was an article about it in the CT 26/2/21). At this point both groupings are 'talking' more than 'doing' anything, though our main grouping of Partners are looking to offer a range of resources for theological education which is a prime area for MC.

Each of these activities has, of course, a wide range of 'sub-activities' within them: meetings, emails, telephone calls, papers to write, and, even occasionally, time and space to think. In all of that I am grateful to Alan Race for his gentle and encouraging supervision of my work, and for the support and encouragement of the Trustees. I am also grateful that the Trustees felt able to renew my contract for a further two years in



September 2020, and I look forward to continuing to work with the Trustees to spread the word about MC far and wide.

***Jonathan Draper, General Secretary***

## Modern Believing

### *Review of Policy Changes*

In my last report I mentioned the changes in editorial policy agreed by the Trustees, after consultation with the Editorial Board and the Editorial Team. 2020 is the first year of their operation, so it is time to review them. The changes were

- i. to cease to rely on uncommissioned, peer-reviewed articles for the non-conference editions;
- ii. to invite articles from established scholars in accordance with themes for each edition, decided by the Editor; and
- iii. to provide a sharper focus for the journal, based on the need a) to update our readers with developments in the different branches of Theology, and b) to provide a progressive alternative to 'theology-lite' conservative assumptions and positions.

Review of i). At the start of the year, there were an insufficient number of available articles to publish. With the full co-operation of Elaine Graham (Chair of the 2019 conference, 'Theology in the Public Square', and guest editor of the conference edition (61.1)), I resolved the problem by running a second conference edition (61.2), and increasing the maximum word length of each article from 3,500 to 4,500 words. Even so, 61.1 ran with only 3 articles. 61.2, 'Theology in the Public Square (2)' also had 3 articles, increased to 4 by a late unsolicited essay, which, given the absence of time, was peer reviewed and accepted by me.

I received 9 unsolicited articles for possible inclusion in 2020 (and 2 or 3 frivolous ones), including the deeply personal essay on the Clergy Disciplinary Measure, by Josephine Stein. This article brought the number of articles up to 4 in 61.2, and was widely read (and also circulated independently). Three were published in 61.3; one was rejected; two are currently being reviewed; two are 'reserves'; one may be published in 2021. The difficulty of filling the journal with quality contributions at the start of the year fully justifies the policy change to commissioning articles. However, it is essential that conference speakers agree in advance to the likely inclusion of a version of their talks in the conference edition.

Review of ii). The new policy applied only to 61.4, 'Biblical Interpretation'. The issue was led by a strong article from John Barton, and contained an essay by an emerging theologian (Robert Brown). But the issue was weakened by the withdrawal, at a late stage, of Yvonne Sherwood, due to covid-19, so the promised article, 'Feminist Interpretation of the Bible' was lost, thereby reducing the focus and impact of the edition. However, 61.4

sets in train an unbroken series of focused editions, at least until the end of 2023, and I continue to be thankful for the willingness of well-known theologians to agree to write for us.

It is too early to review iii) except to say that a sharper focus will be achieved by the specific themes chosen for future editions.

### *Redesign*

Work began in 2019 on the redesign of the journal. Richard Remington provided the templates, and incorporated feedback into several revisions, leading to the use of the agreed format in the publication of 61.4. I'm grateful to Jonathan Draper for his liaison with Richard and personnel at Liverpool University Press (LUP). The hard copy of 61.4 has enabled a more thorough assessment of the impact of the new design. Several comments, all of them minor but cumulatively significant, have been made and agreed (and will be operational from 62.2 onwards). I thank Michael Brierley in particular for suggesting improvements.

### *Relaunch*

It has been necessary, due to covid-19, to postpone (twice) and then cancel the physical event scheduled to take place at St. James Piccadilly. Members will have had opportunity to take part in the online launch which took place on 28th Jan. 2021.

### *Readership*

The steep decline in membership of Modern Church is reflected in the number of print copies produced:-

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Members hip	368	362	330	326	252
Institution s	77	79	73	71	76

A membership drive is clearly necessary. There were 17 new full members, responding to the Church Times insert in October 2020 (and more have joined since).

However the online readership is more encouraging. ATLA (American Theological Libraries Association) reports the number of viewing and downloads is steadily increasing. As an example, here are the download statistics (of articles and/or abstracts), for the same month (May), for 5 years:

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 Jan - May
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Totals	181	165	154	121	158	326	180
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The Head of Statistics at ATLA reported:

As far as comparable usage, I can tell you that Modern Believing's usage is well ahead of average. Last fiscal year, you received 0.29% of the total usage of the database (which was 22,519 hits out of a total 3,910,233). My own personal bar is that a journal is doing very well if it receives 0.10% or more, and you are nearly three times that. From a comparative perspective, Modern Believing is receiving extremely significant usage. It's even more impressive when one considers that many of the top-performing journals are in the field of Biblical Studies, as they draw heavy use not only from scholars but also from clergy in sermon preparation.

The latest figures (2019) from LUP show there were 958 downloads from the LUP website in 2019 compared with 766 in 2018 (25% increase). Readership from the USA, and on the LUP platform, is equivalent to UK readership – 33% in each case. There has also been a 100% increase in the number of clicks from the Kudos platform to Modern Believing articles on the LUP platform (in 2019).

### *Postal Delivery*

There is a preparation schedule which I agree annually with LUP. The schedule guarantees delivery of the journal, by the 5th of the month, provided copy is presented 11-12 weeks previously (e.g., in order to secure of the July edition by July 5th, copy must be received by LUP on or before 15th March). I submit copy for all the articles, editorial, and cover data: Michael Brierley submits copy for the reviews. We have submitted copy for each edition well within our deadlines. There have been delays (which continue) in the print distribution, but these are probably due to reduced staffing during the pandemic (including postal staff at Liverpool), so I have not queried late arrivals.

I thank Michael Brierley for his 11th year as Reviews Editor; the Trustees, Team and Board for their enthusiasm, advice and support; the authors who have shared their wisdom; and the team at Liverpool University Press for their professionalism and courtesy.

***Adrian Thatcher, Editor Modern Believing***

## **Communications Officer Report**

During 2020, Modern Church's communications have adapted well to changing conditions. Excellent foundations were laid with the arrival of the new website in April, which has grown throughout 2020 with nearly

50,000 views in 2020. We are fast approaching 2,000 followers on Twitter, 1,000 followers on Facebook and 100 subscribers to the blog.

Much of this success has been built on the work of my predecessors, though I have taken a markedly different approach to communications, mostly in response to the tumultuous and fast-changing news agenda. Instead of scheduling tweets ahead of time, I have been focusing on ensuring Modern Church is able to respond quickly to items such as the Church of England Evangelical Council's film, the so-called "Beautiful Story", the Black Lives Matter protests and much besides.

This work is complemented by our excellent team of regular bloggers and occasional blog authors, who are building a vibrant online presence, and those involved in redesigning and relaunching Modern Church's excellent print resources. We have also seen a steady stream of Affiliates joining the cause since the publication of the Church Times insert, which has been most pleasing.

Thank you for continuing to invest in me, for the excellent support received across the board and for helping me to find a home in liberal theology.

***Joe Priestley, Communication Officer***

## **Membership Report**

2020 was the seventh full year for which the subscriptions to Modern Church were managed by Liverpool University Press (LUP) and operating on a calendar year subscription. The management of membership has now been taken in house with LUP. The numbers of subscribers for the three year previous period were as follows:

<b>Subscription Type</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>Note</b>
Individual Member	275	218	199	1
Joint Members	21	21	16	2
Life Members	9	8	8	
Honorary Members	0	0	0	
<b>Total Members</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>223</b>	

**Notes**

1. Of which 72 paid the concessionary rate (69 in 2019).
2. Of which 8 paid the concessionary rate (9 in 2019).

***Diane Kutar, Administrator***

## Signs of the Times Report

In 2020, in the midst of a pandemic which has proved a supreme “sign of the times”, our quarterly newsletter continued to develop in its design, and to give a voice to our membership and others.

A sad highlight of the year for Modern Church was the loss of our most valued Treasurer, David Simon. In the first edition of 2020 he wrote movingly about “losing loved ones before their time”, an article which proved all too prophetic when he himself died (not from Covid) in the late summer. Our final edition celebrated his life and his contribution to Modern Church.

Other highlights included a contribution on theology/spirituality and autism from a new, young voice, Erin Burnett from Northern Ireland, who is herself autistic and from whom I hope we will be hearing more. Then, over the course of the year, we had contributions from a project at Bramhall Methodist Church in Greater Manchester on Science and the Language of Faith; an article by Paul Brett on a similar theme; one from Alan Race on another “sign of the times”, the fall of the Colston statue in Bristol in response to the resurgence of Black Lives Matter; and a provocative one on what the Church can learn from Extinction Rebellion in terms of its governance and modes of action.

Along with our website, Signs has become in a real sense our principal “shop window”, and is available not only to members but to the new category of Affiliates, and distributed to those interested at such other events as we have been involved in during the year. If any members would like extra copies to distribute to enquirers in their own church or neighbourhood, or at events which they attend, they should request these from Diane Kutar ([office@modernchurch.org.uk](mailto:office@modernchurch.org.uk)) and she will try to accommodate them.

A corollary of the new design is that there is now, even at an increased size of 20 pages (but reduced format), somewhat less space to fill with text, though we have more recently been able to increase this somewhat. That means that the editorial team can be more selective in considering contributions – though members’ offerings are emphatically still welcome and we will do our best to make use of them as soon as space allows. There has, in fact, been an increasing flow of high-quality contributions from a number of sources.

The management of book reviews remains in the capable hands of Trevor Pitt. Trevor is always looking for books to review and people to review them, and your suggestions will always be appreciated. Thanks are due to

him, and to the other members of the editorial team – our General Secretary, our Communications Officer, and Lorraine Cavanagh and Helen Burnett – and to our designer Richard Remington; but above all to our contributors.

***Anthony Woollard, Editor, Signs of the Times***

## **Treasurer's Report**

Sadly during the course of 2020 our much loved Treasurer, David Simon, died of cancer. During his time as Treasurer, where his expertise in accountancy was greatly appreciated by the Trustees, he also found time to be the Secretary of the 2019 annual conference. His steady presence is much missed.

As I had been Treasurer only a couple of years before David took on the role, it fell to me to stand in and pick up the reins again and I hope you will forgive any errors and omissions in the way these accounts have been presented. I am however, reassured that they have been looked over closely not only by my fellow Trustees, but also by our valued Independent Examiner Jonathan Rudge.

This has been a strange year from many points of view and activity for 2020 was much less than in 2019 as you can see from comparing the accounts for these two years. There is an operating deficit of £36,217 on the year, of which about £31k is on legacy projects. We have taken out a total of £40k from our investments in two tranches in order to maintain our planned spending.

### ***Greenbelt***

The invoice from Greenbelt for £6,600 owing from 2019 was only sent and settled at the end of January 2020.

### ***Signs of the Times***

Signs of the Times has come in on the amount agreed for the revised budget. However, this is an expensive production currently being sent out to all our members and affiliates and is part of our Legacy Project of outreach work – of which more later.

### ***Modern Believing***

It was agreed that Adrian Thatcher, a Trustee, should be paid £2,500 p.a. as Editor. Adrian has requested that this be paid in two tranches one in October and the other in March – hence in this financial year, there is only one payment to him. There are some small expenses in addition.



Liverpool University Press are now not only publishing MB but also managing our membership list which was previously subcontracted to Turpin. In an effort to move beyond a large backlog of books awaiting review, over £1k was for postage costs relating to book reviews.

### *Subscriptions and Membership*

The subscription income (and membership numbers) remains considerably down following the handover from Turpin to LUP. LUP did an enormous amount of work to follow up lapsed members, most ably supported by Council member David James, but while we had some positive responses, it seems that a considerable number of members decided not to renew. Partly as a result of this it was decided that another part of the Legacy Project should be to publish a 4-page insert in the Church Times in the autumn. Following this we gained a number of new members as well as some new affiliate members. Our General Secretary took on responsibility for sending out joining packs and it is hoped that some of these affiliates at least will become full members in due course.

### *Conference*

High Leigh conference centre has treated us very well over the enforced cancellation of the 2020 annual conference due to Covid-19 and initially agreed to transfer our deposit to 2021. This deposit will be held over for another year for the 2022 conference.

### *Legacy*

This financial year we have spent approximately £27,500 (somewhat less than the £60k which David Simon had anticipated) on legacy projects if we include the spending on SOTT and the relaunch of MB. This leaves over £125k of the legacy for the projects for which it has been earmarked. For 2021 these include the continuing funding of the paid General Secretary (£20k) and the relaunch of MB, while the work on the relaunch of the website under Joe's auspices also requires further work. Already we have entered into a sponsorship for conference projects with the Church Times which it is hoped will further raise our profile.

### *Future Treasurer*

We are currently recruiting for a new Administrator to replace Diane Kutar who will be leaving us at the end of May and it has been decided to include a bookkeeping role in that post to carry forward the day to day work, currently done by the Treasurer. We will however, continue to have a Treasurer as a member of the Board of Trustees, who will supervise the new Administrator with regard to financial management and bookkeeping.

***Rosalind Lund, Acting Treasurer***

**Receipts and Payment Accounts to 31 Dec 2020**

		<b>Note s</b>	<b>2020 £</b>	<b>2020 £</b>	<b>2019 £</b>	<b>2019 £</b>
<b>RECEIPTS</b>						
Subscriptions (inc affiliates)			11,234	11,234	9,665	9,665
Gift Aid						
Investment Income			15,061	15,061	15,643	15,643
Conferences	Annual Conference	1	2,949	4,303	13,991	14,873
	Council Residential		1,354		882	
	Other		0		0	
Miscellaneous	Donations	2	125	1,238	638	1,912
	Publications (MB royalties)	3	1,113		1,274	
	Other		0		0	
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>				<b>31,836</b>		<b>42,093</b>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>						
Legacy Project	Gen Sec	4	17,500	31,296	17,500	27,209
	Greenbelt (due from 2019)		6,598		7,556	
	Projects (CT insert; MB relaunch)		6,352			
	Gen Sec Travel Expenses		846		2,153	
Publications	Modern Believing	6	6,374	13,466	4,272	11,825
	SOTT (Legacy project)		5,825		4,053	
	Editors		1,267		3,500	
	Other pubs		0		0	
Communications	Comms Officer		6,985	8,598	6,680	10,826
	Website costs & advertising		1,613		2,508	
Admin				10,043	1,638	
					0	
	Administrator		7,296		7,710	
	Accounting fees		430			
	Trustees room hire		210		190	
Conferences	Admin Expenses (inc post re new Affiliates and insurance)	1	2,073	4,650	4,490	18,887
	Other (Data Protection)		35			
Conferences	Annual Conference	1	2,950	4,650	15,772	18,887
	Council Residential		1,700		2,845	
					270	

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>68,05</b>	<b>81,13</b>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>SURPLUS/DEFICIT - CASH FLOW</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>36,21</b>	<b>39,04</b>
	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>

## Notes

- 1 Conference 2020 was cancelled - some people who had paid deposits or full fees chose to have them transferred to set against the 2021 conference; others to make a donation to MC's general funds. High Leigh agreed to transfer the deposit paid for accommodation in 2019 to 2021 and a further roll-over has been agreed to take us to 2022.
- 2 Donations - at the end of 2019 and again at the start of 2020 two large payments were received from an unknown donor. Investigation revealed that these had been made in error and they were duly refunded in May to the tune of £1649. However, as a result of the cancelled conference for 2020 (for which payments were made in 2019 and 2020) a total of £1,006 was most generously donated. Restricted donations for student bursaries at the annual conference are treated separately.
- 3 Modern Church receives payments from LUP in relation to subscriptions from libraries and institutions, referred to as royalties (in previous annual accounts included under subscriptions).
- 4 Greenbelt was cancelled in 2020, but MC had already decided to focus on other projects for this year. The payment here relates to a late invoice received for 2019.
- 5 Legacy projects - in addition to the expenses relating to the work of the General Secretary, limited in 2020 by Covid-19, but which did include attendance at the Bloxham Festival of Faith and Literature, MC invested in an insert in the Church Times in October, a redesign of Modern Believing (under a new Editor) and a re-launch of the journal (postponed to 2021 and held on-line). The CT insert led to a significant increase in membership and Affiliate enquiries and some additional posting and printing costs relating to MB and SOTT.
- 6 Signs of the Times (SOTT) also had a re-design in 2019 which was fully rolled out in 2020. This members' newsletter is now published and distributed independently of LUP, hence the decision to list it as a separate item under Publications. The costs of this should be considered as part of our Legacy Project.
- 7 Investments (CCLA shares) - 2020 has proved to be a volatile year with the value of our shares going down and up. We have withdrawn a total of £40,000 in value during the course of the year to pay for our Legacy projects as budgeted.

# Balance Sheet 2020

## FUNDS

## STATEMENT

## Members

## Funds

### Opening balances

		2020	2020	2019	2019
		£	£	£	£
Undesignated		110,908		38,833	
Designated	Reserves	263,429		263,429	
	Legacy Projects	163,247		190,722	
Restricted	Student bursary fund	451	538,035	871	493,855
Surplus/deficit Cash Flow		-36,217		39,044	
Unrealised holdings gains/losses		33,047	-3,170	83,244	44,180
<b>Closing Funds</b>			<b>534,865</b>		<b>538,035</b>

### Represented by

Undesignated		145,731		110,908	
Designated	Reserves	263,429		263,429	
	Legacy Projects	124,929		163,247	
Restricted	Student bursary fund	776		451	
<b>Total Funds</b>			<b>534,865</b>		<b>538,035</b>

### Members' Assets

CAF Bank current account	28,086		22,981	
PayPal	135		1,324	
		29,551		25,766
CCLA Investment Account	1,330		1,461	
		505,314		512,269
CBF Year End Valuation				
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>534,865</b>		<b>538,035</b>

## NOTES TO THE BALANCE SHEET

### Legacy Projects

Legacy funds brought forward	163,247	190,722
Legacies received	0	0
Legacy expended during year	-38,318	27,475
Legacy funds remaining at year end	124,929	163,247

### Student Bursary Funds (Annual conference)

Funds brought forward	451	871
Donations received	325	165
Grants awarded (none - no conference in 2020)	0	-585
Grant Funds remaining at year end	776	451

### Annual Conference accounts (accruals basis)

Conference fees received	1	14,145
Conference costs (inc repaid conf fees)	-4,130	16,742
Deficit (-)/surplus	1,509	-2,597

### Note re fees received for cancelled 2020 conference

Repaid conference fees	2,295
Donations (converted from deposits and full fees)	1,006
Rollover to 2021/2022	1,538
Unresolved at 31/12/2020	800

**5,639**

### Payment to Trustee

A payment of £2,500 was authorised by the Trustees to Prof Adrian Thatcher for his work as editor of Modern Believing, of which £1,250 was paid in 2020, and the remainder is due in March 2021)

Unrealised holdings gains/losses (includes £40,000 withdrawn during the course of 2020 as part of the Legacy project)

**Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Modern Church**  
**For the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020**  
**Registered Charity no. 281573**

**Independent examiner's statement**

I report on the accounts of the Modern Church ("theTrust") for the year ended 31 December 2020, which are set out on the attached pages and show a cash deficit of £36,217, together with funds totalling £534,867

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

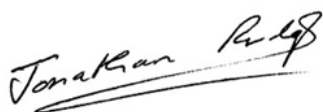
I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**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:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- 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 order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Jonathan H. Rudge MA FCA  
20 Blackthorne Close  
Solihull B91 1PF  
30<sup>th</sup> April 2021

## **Modern Church Officers and Post-holders: 2020**

**President** Professor Elaine Graham

**Chair of Council** Canon Alan Race

**Vice Chair of Council** Mr Anthony Woollard

**General Secretary** The Very Rev'd Dr Jonathan Draper

**Secretary** Rev Dr Jan van der Lely

**Treasurer** Rev David Simon (until June 2020)

**Acting Treasurer** Mrs Rosalind Lund (from June 2020)

### **Vice Presidents:**

Prof Paul Badham

Prof Elaine Graham

Rev Dr Nicholas Henderson

Dr Peter Mills

The Most Rev Barry Morgan

The Very Rev Prof Martyn Percy

The Rt Rev Dr John Saxbee

The Rt Rev Brian Smith

The Rt Revd Tim Stevens

Rev Canon Richard Truss

The Rt Rev Martin Wharton

Rev Jonathan Clatworthy

## **Council Members during 2020**

### **Rev Dr Jeyan Anketell**

Mrs Jean Barnett<sup>1</sup>

Dr Charlie Bell

Mrs Pat Boyd<sup>2</sup>

### **Rev Dr Lorraine Cavanagh<sup>1</sup>**

### **Rev Jonathan Clatworthy**

Rev Canon David Driscoll

### **Rev Ruth Fitter**

Rev David Howard<sup>1</sup>

Rev David James<sup>1</sup>

Rev Tom Keates<sup>2</sup>

Rev Tim Laundon

### **Mrs Rosalind Lund<sup>1</sup>**

Rev Stephen Parsons

### **Canon Trevor Pitt<sup>2</sup>**

### **Canon Dr Alan Race<sup>2</sup>**

Rev David Simon (until August 2020 - deceased)

David Storey<sup>1</sup>

### **Prof. Adrian Thatcher<sup>1</sup>**

Rev Dr Miranda Threlfall Holmes<sup>1</sup>

### **Rev Dr Jan van der Lely**

Kenneth Wilkinson Roberts<sup>1</sup>

### **Mr Anthony Woollard<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Term of office ends at the 2021 AGM but can stand for re-election

<sup>2</sup> Council members whose term expired in 2020 and their term was extended by one year due to the pandemic.

**In bold** – current trustees



## Modern Church

### Receipts and Payment Accounts to 31 Dec 2020

		Notes	2020	2020	2019	2019
			£	£	£	£
<b>RECEIPTS</b>						
Subscriptions (inc affiliates)			11,234	11,234	9,665	9,665
Gift Aid						
Investment Income			15,061	15,061	15,643	15,643
Conferences	Annual Conference	1	2,949		13,991	
	Council Residential		1,354		882	
	Other		0	4,303	0	14,873
Miscellaneous	Donations	2	125		638	
	Publications (MB royalties)	3	1,113		1,274	
	Other		0	1,238	0	1,912
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>				<b>31,836</b>		<b>42,093</b>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>						
			2020	2020	2019	2019
Legacy Project	Gen Sec		17,500		17,500	
	Greenbelt (due from 2019)	4	6,598		7,556	
	Projects (CT insert; MB relaunch)	5	6,352			
	Gen Sec Travel Expenses		846	31,296	2,153	27,209

Publications	Modern Believing	6	6,374	13,466	4,272	11,825
	SOTT (Legacy project)		5,825		4,053	
	Editors		1,267		3,500	
	Other pubs		0		0	
Communications	Comms Officer		6,985	8,598	6,680	10,826
	Website costs & advertising		1,613		2,508	
					1,638	
					0	
Admin	Administrator		7,296	10,043	7,710	12,390
	Accounting fees		430			
	Trustees room hire		210		190	
	Admin Expenses (inc post re new Affiliates and insurance)		2,073		4,490	
	Other (Data Protection)		35			
Conferences	Annual Conference	1	2,950	4,650	15,772	18,887
	Council Residential		1,700		2,845	
					270	
TOTAL PAYMENTS			68,053		81,137	
SURPLUS/DEFICIT - CASH FLOW			-36,217		-39,044	

## Notes

- 1 Conference 2020 was cancelled - some people who had paid deposits or full fees chose to have  
them transferred to set against the 2021 conference; others to make a donation to MC's general  
funds. High Leigh agreed to transfer the deposit paid for accommodation in 2019 to 2021 and a  
further roll-over has been agreed to take us to 2022.
- 2 Donations - at the end of 2019 and again at the start of 2020 two large payments were received  
from an unknown donor. Investigation revealed that these had been made in error and they were  
duly refunded in May to the tune of £1649. However, as a result of the cancelled conference for  
2020 (for which payments were made in 2019 and 2020) a total of £1,006 was most generously  
donated. Restricted donations for student bursaries at the annual conference are shown relative to  
the conference for which they were given and are shown separately under Funds.
- 3 Modern Church receives payments from LUP in relation to subscriptions from libraries and  
institutions, referred to as royalties (in previous annual accounts included under subscriptions)
- 4 Greenbelt was cancelled in 2020, but MC had already decided to focus on other projects for this  
year. The payment here relates to a late invoice received from Greenbelt for 2019.
- 5 Legacy projects - in addition to the expenses relating to the work of the General Secretary, limited in  
2020 by Covid-19, but which did include attendance at the Bloxham Festival of Faith and Literature,  
MC invested in an insert in the Church Times in October, a redesign of Modern Believing (under a  
new Editor) and a re-launch (postponed to 2021 and held on-line). The CT insert led to a significant  
increase in membership and Affiliate enquiries and some additional posting and printing costs  
relating to MB and SOTT.
- 6 Signs of the Times (SOTT) also had a re-design in 2019 which was fully rolled out in 2020. This  
members' newsletter is now published and distributed independently of LUP, hence the decision to  
list it as a separate item under Publications. The costs of this should be considered as part of our  
Legacy Project.
- 7 Investments (CCLA shares) - 2020 has proved to be a volatile year with the value of our shares going  
down and up. We have withdrawn a total of £40,000 in value during the course of the year to pay  
for our Legacy projects as budgeted. See Funds unrealised holdings gains/losses.

# MODERN CHURCH ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2020

## FUNDS STATEMENT

Members Funds		Note	2020 £	2020 £	2019 £	2019 £
<b>Opening balances</b>						
Undesignated			110,908		38,833	
Designated	Reserves		263,429		263,429	
	Legacy Projects	5	163,247		190,722	
Restricted	Student bursary fund		451	538,035	871	493,855
Surplus/deficit Cash Flow			-36,217		-39,044	
Unrealised holdings gains/losses		7	33,047	-3,170	83,244	44,180
<b>Closing Funds</b>				<b><u>534,865</u></b>		<b><u>538,035</u></b>

Represented by

Undesignated			145,701		110,908	
Designated	Reserves		263,429		263,429	
	Legacy Projects	5	124,929		163,247	
Restricted	Student bursary fund	2	806		451	
<b>Total Funds</b>				<b><u>534,865</u></b>		<b><u>538,035</u></b>

## Members' Assets

CAF Bank current account			28,086		22,981	
PayPal			135		1,324	
CCLA Investment Account			1,330	29,551	1,461	25,766
CBF Year End Valuation		7		505,314		512,269

**Total Assets****534,865****538,035****NOTES****Legacy Projects**

5, 6

Legacy funds brought forward	163,247	190,722
Legacies received	0	0
Legacy expended during year	-38,318	27,475
Legacy funds remaining at year end	124,929	163,247

**Student Bursary Funds (Annual conference)**

2

Funds brought forward	451	871
Donations received	355	165
Grants awarded (none - no conference in 2020)	0	-585
Grant Funds remaining at year end	806	451

**Annual Conference accounts (accruals based)**

1

Conference centre deposit	-2,247	
Conference fees received	5,639	14,145
Conference costs (inc repaid conf fees)	-4,130	-16,742
Deficit (-)/surplus	-738	-2,597

**Note re fees received for cancelled 2020 conference**

Repaid conference fees	2,295
Donations (converted from deposits and full fees)	1,006
Rollover to 2021/2022	1,538
Unresolved at 31/12/2020	800

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30<sup>th</sup> April 2021