



ALNWICK BAPTIST CHURCH

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

ALNWICK BAPTIST CHURCH TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

For the year from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024



1. Statutory information

Alnwick Baptist Church at Lisburn Street, Alnwick, Northumberland NE66 1UR was entered on the Register of Charities on 9 September 2011 with a new Charity Register Number of 1143745. The financial year runs from April to March.

The governing documents are a property Trust Deed (dated 1 July 1976), for which the current holding or Church Trustees are Mr Alastair Conn, Mr Brian Friend, Mr William McDonald and Mr Ian Simpson, and the Church Constitution (agreed 10 March 2011).

The mission statement of Alnwick Baptist Church is "To encourage people to accept and celebrate Jesus in their lives and to dedicate themselves wholeheartedly to following Him."

The Church banks with Lloyds Bank, Alnwick. The independent examiner is Mrs Jane Harvey FCA, of Greaves Grindle, Alnwick.

2. Trustees and governance

The Charity Trustees who served during the year were:

Rev Caroline Friend (Co-Minister)
Rev Chris Friend (Co-Minister)
Mr Russell Lee (Church Secretary)
Dr Margaret Andrew (Church Treasurer)
Mrs Gillian Curry *from 10 December 2023*
Mrs Julie Hammond
Dr Carol Jagger
Mr Andrew Kohler *resigned 11 February 2024*
Miss Susan Prince (Safeguarding Lead)
Mr Ian Simpson
Dr Ian Smith
Mrs Karen Smith
Mrs Dorothy Walls *retired 11 October 2023*

Charity Trustee appointment process:

- Names are brought before the Church through the existing Elders. If a nominee is willing to be appointed, they are asked to confirm they are not disqualified from acting as a Trustee.
- A quorum of 40% of Church Members is required at the Church Meeting, and confirmation is by secret ballot, with at least two-thirds of the Members (present and voting) in favour of the appointment.
- There is an induction process for each new Charity Trustee appointment which makes use of the Charity Commission's published guidance and regulation of charities.
- Elders must be Church Members, hold the doctrinal beliefs as stated for the minister in the Church Constitution, and have been baptised as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Elders serve for three years and may be re-appointed.
- Deacons must be Church Members, and the majority of the Diaconate been baptised as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Deacons serve for three years and may be re-appointed.
- Elders and Deacons are encouraged to read the Baptist Union of Great Britain Guidelines and its other resources relating to their responsibilities and positions.
- Elders and Deacons are aware of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in "The Advancement of Religion for the Public Benefit", and they have regard to this in their administration of the Church.

As Charity Trustees, the Elders and Deacons met jointly in person five times during the year. Separately, the Elders and the Deacons met regularly to deal with all the affairs of the Church: spiritual, pastoral and practical.

3. Charitable objective

Alnwick Baptist Church (“ABC”) is governed by a Church Constitution and a property Trust Deed, and as a charity is an unincorporated charitable association.

The Constitution states the principal purpose of the Church is the advancement of the Christian faith according to the principles of the Baptist denomination, to include the advancement of education, community service and other such general charitable purposes, in such parts of the United Kingdom and the world as the Church shall determine. The objectives of the Elders and Deacons are to ensure Church life, and work within the local area, help to fulfill that mission, both locally and more widely.

4. Organisational structure and decision making process

The members of the Church are accepted in accordance with the Trust Deed and the Church Constitution, which require them to acknowledge the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ; the absolute authority of the Holy Scriptures; salvation only by repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and to have made a personal confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Church Members’ Meeting normally occurs three times in each year, and has responsibility for the overall policy of the Church. In accordance with the Church Constitution, Members appoint Charity Trustees, who together with the Minister(s), Church Secretary and Treasurer (each also appointed by the members) and collectively known as the Eldership and Diaconate, 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. Church Members’ meetings are open to non-members. They can join in meeting discussions but only Members are entitled to vote.

Relevant matters may be presented to the Church Members’ Meeting by the Elders and Deacons for guidance, or they may be raised by Members in the Church Meeting for further consideration by the Elders and Deacons. Though the Trust Deed and the Church Constitution permit decisions to be made at Church Members’ Meetings by appropriate majorities, the Church seeks to work by consensus wherever possible.

In October 2023, the Church Members’ Meeting passed a resolution approving the Trustees to commission legal advice on two possible changes to Church governance and structure:

- Appointing the Baptist Union Corporation (BUC) as Property Trustee, in place of the four individuals currently acting as holding or Church Trustees; and
- Making an application to the Charity Commission to reform the Church as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

The purpose of this legal advice is to obtain the necessary and sufficient level of assurance (or otherwise) for the Trustees to recommend to Members that we proceed with these changes. This due diligence work is ongoing and the Trustees will report the outcome in our next annual report.

5. Objectives and activities

To achieve the principal objective set out above (see *Charitable Objective*), 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.

Services and acts of worship

Central to the work and the witness of the Church is the provision of regular public services of Christian worship, which normally take place each Sunday at 10:30am in our building on Lisburn Street. On the first Sunday of each month, our morning worship also includes communion. On the third Sunday of each month, morning worship normally is an all age service, and there is a reflective communion service at 7pm. In months with a fifth Sunday, we do not meet together at Lisburn Street. Instead, we each take our individual act of worship into our local community. There are also occasional services at other times which are advertised variously through the weekly diary on [our website](#), invitation leaflets, in the local press and on the church noticeboard. ABC seeks to be a friendly, open and embracing community and anybody is welcome to attend any of these services.

Missional communities

The Church also has several missional communities, which function as small relational services, usually held outside the church building within community settings. One example of this is *The Gathering*, a group meeting monthly on a Sunday teatime, in homes over food, to explore more about following Jesus.

Children and families

The Church welcomes children and families, with a broad range of activities co-ordinated by our Children and Families worker, Sarah Hamer. We have a children's programme as part of *Junior Church* in most morning services, and each month:

On the first Sunday, there is *Muddy Church* at 2.30pm, normally in Hulne Park.

On the second Sunday, there is *Messy Church* at 3.30pm (an activity supported by all the local churches in Alnwick), usually in St James United Reform Church, Alnwick.

On the third Sunday, as mentioned above (see *Services and acts of worship*), morning worship is an all age service.

Junior Church follows the same programme as the main church, making new opportunities for connections and discussions between parents and their children.

Young people

The Church also provides activities for young people independently and in partnership with other local churches. In her ABC role, Sarah visits several primary schools in our community, engaging with the students through different activities such as school assemblies and prayer groups. Each year we host our well-established *Higher Sports* holiday week for young people in Years 4 to 8 at St Paul's Primary School in Alnwick. The Church is also part of the ecumenical approach to regular youth work, as one of several local churches supporting the **Ignite Youth Project** (Charity No. 1089954). Ignite works in schools and amongst children and young people through clubs and other activities, using a 'youth cell' structure. Church members support Ignite financially, as volunteers assisting in schools work or youth groups, and by acting as trustees.

Church groups

The Church runs a series of midweek groups for the growth of faith and discipleship, hosted in the homes of some Members. In addition to the opportunity for bible study and to develop themes and practical application from the Sunday message, these groups form an important part of the prayer and practical support the Church family give to one another.

A prayer group faithfully meets in our building each Saturday morning from 9 to 10am, praying for the Church, our local community and the wider world.

Other group activities connecting with and supporting our local communities

A major commitment of the Church is running a debt advice centre in Alnwick, as a part of **Christians Against Poverty** (Charity No. 1097217), offering free debt advice and support to anyone in the local community who requests it.

A further substantial commitment is our *Warm and Welcome*, a safe warm space providing hot refreshments and companionship on a Wednesday, for the benefit of any in the local community. In the summer months, from April, this activity continues in a scaled down version known as the *Warm Welcome*.

The Church runs further groups and activities to connect with our local communities, including: a Tuesday morning *Explore group*, weekly *Faith Talks* at Weavers Court (local extra care housing), leading Christian services in community residential settings and a *Walking group*.

The Church offers and supports various events for people of all ages to allow opportunities to build relationships, explore different expressions of worship and develop personal faith. We do these both as an individual church and also by partnering with others, such as CTiA (Christians Together in Alnwick).

Further details of all our activities are available from the Charity Trustees on request by emailing info@alnwickbaptist.org.uk.

Providing activities appropriately and safely

The Church maintains and operates systems to ensure that all people working with children and adults at risk are safely recruited into their roles, including DBS checks where necessary. Once each year, in a Church Members' Meeting, a statement on the Church's Safeguarding Policy is

read out, to remind Members (and to update them, where required) about their responsibilities under the policy. The Church also formally reviews the Safeguarding Policy at least annually and update it where required. A specific Charity Trustee is responsible for oversight of the Church's safeguarding procedures, and the Church appoints and retains separate Designated Persons for the safeguarding of children and for the safeguarding of vulnerable adults.

6. Activities and achievements

We measure the success of our programmes in the opportunities we provide for fellowship, as well as the encouragement given to Members, the wider congregation and the community which we serve, rather than simply being driven by numbers. Nevertheless the Trustees recognise our responsibility to ensure that funds are utilised appropriately and effectively, and note some of our criteria for success can be difficult to measure.

In 2023/24, our achievements can be characterised by celebration through blessings, growth, continuing to innovate in order to offer new ways to be part of our Church community and engage with our local community for public benefit, alongside sustaining well established activities which also have a substantial public benefit. The Trustees are very proud of the breadth and depth of the activities and achievements of the Church family. We trust this report properly reflects these and wish to say a huge 'Thank you' to everyone involved.

The last year was very significant in the history of the Church as we celebrated our 140th birthday in October 2023. As we reflected on how to commemorate this milestone, the Church archives provided many examples throughout our history to demonstrate the love and desire of the Church to serve the community. We felt it very appropriate and important to continue this thread, and for the celebration to be a birthday blessing to our community. Every day throughout September 2023, the Church sent out postcards holding personalised blessings for different organisations, charities and community groups embracing schools, community centres and emergency services - over 100 different blessings cards were passed to over 1,650 individuals. Each day, these cards were complemented by a digital recording read out by a different Church family member with a personal connection to the given community. We also gave out more than 100 small treat gifts consisting of chocolate, tea and lavender bags, and left decorated pebbles around the town. Our 140th birthday celebrations culminated in an afternoon tea at the church building, attended by a multitude of people from the local community and the Church family.

At the beginning of April 2023, we had 86 members in the Church. In the year to the end of March 2024, this increased to 95 as we welcomed 14 new members, two members resigned, and sadly three of our members passed away.

We continue to encourage the Church that our 'family' is wider than just the congregation and to find their own 'home' where they feel part of church community and discipleship. For some, this is the weekly service and for others it is our midweek groups or missional communities. Over the year attendances at weekly services ranged between 90 and 110 people and we operated seven different midweek groups, involving around 70 people in total. The size of our total Church family continues to number around 170 people.

As we stated in Section 5, the Church aims to provide a variety of ways for people to connect with the Christian faith. Regarding our missional communities, the monthly *Gathering* has now been going for over six years, attracting numerous people keen to explore faith issues. This takes place in people's homes with informal discussion about 'Jesus encounters' in the Bible, followed by a meal together. In the past year, we were privileged to welcome a small number of Ukrainian families at the Gathering. *Thursday@7* has met fortnightly in the Alnwick Starbucks, enabling a small group to 'do shared lives and provide the opportunity to ask the bigger questions' in an informal and relational way within a familiar community setting. Alongside this, *Messy Church* has continued at its established base at St James United Reform Church, with around 14 families attending. Finally, over the last year, we have sustained a strong emphasis on missional listening teams to look to join in with what God is already doing in our community.

Our superb Minister in Training, Karen Smith, has continued to develop the group activities she leads at **Weavers Court**, actively listening and responding to the residents –

- A *Songs of Praise* or *Sacred Memories* (scripture coupled with a theme to support people sharing their stories of memories) service once each month, open all of the Weavers Court community. These services attract between 10 and 20 residents and special services such as Easter, Remembrance and Christmas are especially well-attended.

- Karen has introduced the theme of *Community*, and how God can work in community. One example of this is that the weekly discipleship group, *Faith Talks*, now also features a *Fish & Chips Night* each month. The time passed eating together has provided an opportunity to include others, both from Weavers Court and the Church family, and between six and eight residents regularly attend.
- The well established *Faith Talks* group, which has now been running for over six years, has continued to bear fruit.

All of this would not have been possible without the support Karen receives from the rest of the Weavers Court team: Kerrie Andrew, Chris Friend, Elaine Ingram and Elaine Leighton.

Away from Weavers Court, in January 2024 Karen founded a pilot Bible journalling group, *Writing in the Margins*, a novel form of discipleship for women. The three lead facilitators - Karen, Gill Curry and Elaine Leighton – each host a monthly group of three to four women or around 12 in total. Now in her final year as a Minister in Training at ABC, Karen and all those who support her have been seeking to discern ‘what next?’. As part of her own searching for what God may be calling her to, Karen has initiated several activities in her local village of Widdrington Station – the *Widdy Vision*. She hosts a monthly *Spud Night* when between five and seven women usually attend, reaching a group of 13 women in total. Karen also serves at the weekly Warm & Welcome meals and Wednesday coffee mornings in the village, in addition to her monthly meetings with the local clergy and individual pastoral support.

Karen has accomplished all this from just the 1½ days a week she works for the Church, and her heart for these ministries is wonderful to witness.

The children and families in the ABC community continued to enjoy and benefit from the wide-ranging activities available to them through the energy and endeavour of our wonderful Children and Families worker, Sarah Hamer, and the volunteers supporting her to deliver the programme. Sarah has also continued to develop her outreach work in schools. She holds regular assemblies at Swansfield Park primary school (every half-term) and St Michael's C of E primary school (every term). Sarah also holds prayer spaces fortnightly in St Paul's Catholic primary school, each time helping a group of between six to eight children to explore three or four different prayer stations. The Church is so blessed by Sarah, and we continue to be amazed by the breadth and scope of the work she and her team of volunteers achieve.

In July 2023 we held our annual Higher Sports holiday week, an event which the Church first ran in 2012. Once again it proved very popular, running at capacity with 40 young people from Years 4 to 8. The event is a substantial commitment, delivered by a fabulous team who fulfil the roles of Games Organisers, Team Leaders and Young Leaders, as well as providing refreshments and performing essential administration. It was a great week of team games, where participants were mindful of the Olympic values: encouragement, friendship, respect, fair play, determination and inspiration. Each day was concluded by a ‘Team Talk’ from one of the leaders, who spoke about the difference God makes in their life.

The Church has continued to support the regular work of the Ignite Youth Project. Over the past year, there have been four youth cells, which Chris Friend and Sarah Hamer have both helped to lead, engaging with around 25 young people aged between eight and eighteen.

We have maintained our commitment to a debt advice centre in Alnwick, as a part of **Christians Against Poverty** (Charity No. 1097217). The Church employs Neill Parker in the part-time role of CAP Alnwick Debt Advice Centre Manager. A common theme among clients is poor physical and mental health; which is often a barrier to them seeking help. Our *Befrienders team* has continued to be invaluable in this aspect of the work, encouraging and supporting clients to use the service. Despite their best efforts, some clients do drop out of the system through a combination of chaotic lifestyle and health problems, although in a few cases they are willing to seek to return. In the 12 months to the end of March 2024:

- Five clients became debt free.
- Contact was made with eight new clients.
- Four clients still continue on their journey to debt freedom.

In January 2024, the Trustees agreed to the formation of a new working group, to provide further support to Neill in publicising the CAP message and driving referrals. We hope this initiative will bear fruit and assure a continuation of the Church's support for the CAP Alnwick Debt Centre when the Trustees review its position in early 2025.

Our *Warm and Welcome* ministry has carried on into a second year, receiving between 5 and 13 guests every week, of which five men and three women are regular attendees. This community activity was sustained by a team of around 12 people whose members rotate as volunteers to help each Wednesday, complemented by additional helpers who make the soup or cake provided to the guests. This ministry, led by David and Judy Riddington, has been a wonderful way for us to demonstrate God's heart of compassion for the community and we have been encouraged as some guests request prayer or ask questions about our faith.

In the past year, we have also made a new commitment to a further ministry with a community focus. In July 2023, the Church Members Meeting agreed that we become a supporting church for **Hope into Action UK** (Charity No. 1137686), through a service level agreement with **Gateway into Life** (Charity No. 1184557). Gateway into Life is a franchise of Hope into Action UK, operating under the name of **Hope into Action: Northumberland**. In the Hope into Action model, a house is purchased in a local area from funds provided by national investors, which is linked with a local church partner providing support for the property and the tenants through a Friendship and Support Group (FSG). Thus far, we have established the FSG, consisting of 10 Church family volunteers in allocated roles such as property maintenance and tenant befriending, led by the FSG Co-ordinator Rob Andrew. Recently, our partner Hope into Action Northumberland confirmed they now have an investor in place to purchase a house in Alnwick for the Church to support, and we are actively searching for a property suitable for a refugee family or refugees.

We had expected our activities in the Northumberland Hall to cease this year because of a plan for the building to permanently host a local project. However, that plan remains on hold and the Church was able to host our *Harvest Ceilidh* in the Hall. This event was a great success, with 80 people enjoying food, fellowship and dancing. It was a similar story our *Carol Service* in the Hall, when we considered the theme 'Do not be afraid'. For many in our local community, this is 'their' carol service, perhaps due to the neutral status of the venue. It was wonderful to see the Hall full to capacity.

We continued to seek to be a positive impact in the local community through other established activities, some as ABC and some by the Church or its family providing support to other charities and organisations, including:

- Leading Christian services at the **Abbeyfield House** residential care home and **St Pauls Court** sheltered housing, providing support and friendship to residents.
- Operating as volunteer Chaplains in the **Duchess High School**, working closely with the school's pastoral team.
- Supporting the local community centre **Community@NE66** (Charity No. 1171202), both in a 'hands on' capacity and serving as trustees of the charity, and the **Alnwick District Food Bank** (Charity No. 1173294), a charity with trustees both of faith (with at least four different churches in Alnwick represented) and not.
- Actively supporting **Christians Together in Alnwick** (CTiA) and participating in shared activities such as the *Lenten Lunches* and the *Good Friday Act of Witness* service in the Alnwick market square (CTiA is an association of churches and other organisations in Alnwick and Shilbottle who express their Christian faith in fellowship and shared action).
- The involvement of some of our Church family in work at **HMP Northumberland**, including services for prisoners by **Good News For Everyone** (formerly Gideons UK - Charity No. 221605), the **Sycamore Tree Project** (part of **Prison Fellowship** - Charity No. 1102254) for restorative justice, and the **Welcome Centre** for families visiting prisoners.

Finally, our firm commitment to pastoral care and support for the Church family was maintained through the exceptional work of the Pastoral Team coordinated by Pauline Davidson and the Prayer Line facilitated by Chris Friend and Thelma Pallas. More generally, prayer has continued to be a crucial and fundamental endeavour by the Church, through the Saturday morning prayer meeting, where between seven and nine people regularly attend, as an integral part of the seven midweek groups, and in a monthly gathering to pray for Christians experiencing persecution in different parts of the world, informed by information produced primarily by **Open Doors** (Charity No. 1125684).

7. Financial review and policies

The Church continues to raise 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 most significant recurring expenses are related to the ongoing employment of:

- Rev Chris Friend and Rev Caroline Friend as Co-Ministers of the Church, who lead and co-ordinate the Church's activities including the Sunday Services, provide pastoral care for the congregation and other people, and equip and encourage the membership in their life, Christian witness and service.
- Mr Neill Parker as CAP Alnwick Debt Advice Centre Manager, on a part-time basis.
- Mrs Sarah Hamer as Children and Families Worker, on a part-time basis.
- Mrs Karen Smith who commenced a three-year part time work placement (1.5 days per week) on 10th October 2021 as part of her ministerial training.

The Church expresses its part in the life of the wider church by making donations to national and international Christian 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 are run with little or no impact on the Church's expenditure, but which nevertheless contribute substantially to the achievement of the Church's objectives.

The financial statements set out on pages [11] to [17] cover the Church's financial year ended 31 March 2024.

Total receipts for the year amounted to £174,362 (preceding year £195,182) and total payments were £163,829 (preceding year £163,182), producing a surplus in the year of £10,533 (preceding year surplus of £32,000).

Regular monthly giving to the Church, mostly through Gift Aid, continued at a similar level to the previous financial year, and the Charity Trustees are grateful for the consistency of this financial support.

The Church also benefited from the higher rates of interest paid for balances on deposit, due to the healthy level of reserves sustained through the year.

In May 2023 a substantial legacy of £18,294 was received by the Church from the Estate of Beth Chappell, who sadly passed away in 2022. Beth was a member of our church for over 40 years and served as Treasurer for several years. Her embroidery skills can be seen in many of the lovely banners that hang in the church.

Donations of £1,838 for the CAP Alnwick Debt Centre, £2,227 for ministry training costs, and £500 for hardship gifts were received from a variety of donors. £1,364 was given for our 140th Birthday Blessings celebration. The Charity Trustees wish to acknowledge the generosity of these donations which enables the Church to support work within our local community.

Total financial reserves as at 31 March 2024 amounted to £158,974 (31 March 2023 £148,441), of which £19,831 are held in restricted funds (31 March 2023 £27,063).

The Church continued to allocate a significant amount of its income to supporting a range of external organisations engaged in Christian outreach and teaching, promotion of justice and care for the poor and needy, and the development of personal faith.

The Charity Trustees would like to express their appreciation to Jane Harvey of Greaves Grindle, Chartered Accountants, Alnwick for once again carrying out the independent examination of the Church's financial statements.

Reserves policy

The Charity Trustees' policy is that the minimum amount of unrestricted funds to be retained should cover normal operating costs for six months, as well as holding a reserve for the cost of replacing equipment (photocopier, PA system etc) - say £85,000 in total. Actual reserves shown in the financial statements as at 31 March 2024 substantially exceed this figure. This is because of the donations received in 2022 to support the CAP Alnwick Debt Centre, Weavers Court and Children and Families activities which would normally have been paid for out of general funds.

The Church budget for the year 2024-2025 anticipates a loss of £58,000, due to the continued high cost of living increases in the coming year and funds for a new disabled access or purchase of a replacement lift. There is also the possibility of supporting our current Minister in Training as a Newly Accredited Minister on a part-time basis. The Church hopes that grants may be available

to fund some of these projects. Most of the deficit could be covered by the surplus currently held in reserves, still leaving £86,000 in general reserves in the event that no grants are obtained. The Trustees assess this to be an acceptable position but are aware that reserves cannot be allowed to drop below this level in future years.

Investment policy

The Charity Trustees seek to invest the Church’s funds in such a way as to produce investment income whilst minimising the risk of capital loss. Interest-bearing deposits are currently held with the COIF Charities Deposit Fund and the Baptist Union Corporation Loan Fund.

8. Signature and declaration

I declare that in my capacity of Charity Trustee, that

- The Charity Trustees have approved the report above; and
- They have authorised me to sign it on their behalf

Rev Chris Friend
(Minister & Elder)

Rev Caroline Friend
(Minister & Elder)

Mr Russell Lee
(Deacon & Secretary)

Date:

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ALNWICK BAPTIST CHURCH

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024



Receipts and payments account for the year ended 31 March 2024

	Year ended 31 March 2024			Year ended 31 March 2023
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £	Total £
Receipts				
Offerings and donations - Gift Aid	95,704	-	95,704	91,230
Offerings and donations – other	15,641	80	15,721	15,145
Tax reclaimed via Gift Aid	24,972	-	24,972	28,072
Interest receivable	7,647	-	7,647	2,542
Donations for ministry training costs	-	2,227	2,227	3,026
Donations for Warm Hub/Boiler	-	-	-	25,900
Donations for CAP	-	1,838	1,838	17,724
Donation to Hosts of Ukrainian Families	-	-	-	4,000
Donations for other organisations	-	2,130	2,130	1,498
Receipts for church events (Note 6)	5,329	-	5,329	3,465
Legacy received	18,294	-	18,294	-
Donation for Hardship Fund	500	-	500	500
Lady Hewley Trust Grant	-	-	-	2,080
	168,087	6,275	174,362	195,182
Payments				
Staff employment costs (Note 2)	102,624	-	102,624	96,936
Upkeep of church premises (Note 3)	8,490	-	8,490	6,301
General expenses (Note 4)	9,893	80	9,973	8,163
Equipment and furniture (Note 5)	150	-	150	5,189
Church events (Note 6)	7,232	-	7,232	4,687
CAP Alnwick Debt Centre (Note 7)	515	4,013	4,528	5,306
Donations (Note 8)	21,418	6,757	28,175	30,358
Warm and Welcome Hub (Note 9)	-	1,662	1,662	5,654
Weavers Court (Note 10)	-	995	995	588
	150,322	13,507	163,829	163,182
Surplus/(deficit) for the financial year	17,765	(7,232)	10,533	32,000
Bank/deposit balances at start of year	121,378	27,063	148,441	116,441
Bank/deposit balances at end of year (Note 11)	139,143	19,831	158,974	148,441

The notes on pages [13] to [17] form part of these financial statements.

ALNWICK BAPTIST CHURCH

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Statement of assets and liabilities as at 31 March 2024

	<u>31 March 2024</u> £	<u>31 March 2023</u> £
Bank/cash balances		
Lloyds Bank	7,781	6,385
Charities Deposit Fund	111,193	102,056
Baptist Union Corporation Loan Fund	40,000	40,000
	<hr/> 158,974	<hr/> 148,441
Other monetary assets		
Debtor - tax reclaimable via Gift Aid (re: Tax year 2023/24)	25,753	24,972
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Fixed assets retained for church use

Alnwick Baptist Church premises, Lisburn Street, Alnwick NE66 1UR
Furniture, fittings and contents of church premises

The notes on pages [13] to [17] form part of these financial statements.

Approved by the Charity Trustees of Alnwick Baptist Church and signed on their behalf by:

Rev Chris Friend
(Minister & Elder)

Rev Caroline Friend
(Minister & Elder)

Mr Russell Lee
(Deacon & Secretary)

Date:

ALNWICK BAPTIST CHURCH

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Notes to the financial statements

1 Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis, as permitted by Section 133 of the Charities Act 2011.

General funds are for the furtherance of the normal purposes of Alnwick Baptist Church and are not subject to any restriction of use.

2 Staff employment costs

	Year ended 31 March 2024	Year ended 31 March 2023
	£	£
Salaries	76,014	72,150
Manse rent (leaseback on Ministers' residence)	9,988	9,072
Council tax and water rates	2,287	2,181
Employer's NI contributions (net of Employment Allowance)	-	-
Employer's pension contributions	8,600	7,907
Telephone and broadband	1,154	1,450
Travel expenses	4,261	3,741
Courses and conferences	320	435
	<hr/> 102,624	<hr/> 96,936

Rev Chris Friend (full-time) and Rev Caroline Friend (part-time) were employed by the Church throughout the year as Co-Ministers. The Co-Ministers, who were also Charity Trustees, lived in a house rented from them by the Church.

Mr Neill Parker was employed part-time by the Church throughout the year as Manager of the Alnwick Debt Centre, which is run by the Church in partnership with Christians Against Poverty (CAP).

Mrs Sarah Hamer was employed part-time by the Church throughout the year as Children and Families Worker.

Mrs Karen Smith continued a part-time work placement (1.5 days per week) as part of her ministerial training, for which she was paid pro-rata (0.3 full time equivalent) of the Baptist Union recommended ministerial stipend. Karen was also a Charity Trustee.

All of the employees are members of personal defined contribution pension plans into which the Church makes an employer contribution equivalent to 10% of salary.

No sums were reimbursed to the Charity Trustees for their work as Charity Trustees (2022-23 none).

3 Upkeep of church premises

	Year ended 31 March 2024	Year ended 31 March 2023
	£	£
Gas, electricity and water (see Note 8)	1,990	2,925
Repairs, maintenance and cleaning	4,991	1,947
Insurance	1,509	1,429
	8,490	6,301

4 General expenses

As referenced in Section 4 of our annual report (*Organisational structure and decision making*), the Church has commissioned legal advice on two possible changes to governance and structure. This due diligence work is ongoing and payments made up to 31 March 2024 for legal advice are included in the analysis of general expenses below:

	Year ended 31 March 2024	Year ended 31 March 2023
	£	£
Teaching materials	625	356
Children and Families resources	937	766
Photocopying, postage and stationery	2,481	1,991
Website, audio system and IT	1,168	969
Safeguarding	773	-
Subscriptions	925	908
Fees/expenses to visiting speakers	572	360
CCLI copyright licence	866	772
Legal Fees (Anthony Collins for advice relating to CIO)	864	-
Other	762	2,041
	9,973	8,163

5 Equipment and furniture

	Year ended 31 March 2024	Year ended 31 March 2023
	£	£
Laptop computer	-	1,349
Microphones (for portable sound system)	-	950
Portable sound system	-	2,112
Water heater	-	653
Key	-	5
Ladders	-	120
Shelving	120	-
Twin port plug	30	-
	150	5,189

6 Church events

Table 1 below provides an analysis of the gross expenditure on Church events. For certain activities, there is an associated income stream and Table 2 accounts for this by reporting the net expenditure on each activity. Where income exceeded gross expenditure, the net income shows as a number in brackets – for example, in the year ended 31 March 2024, the Craft event raised £143.

With reference to the Bassenfell holiday: in the year ended 31 March 2024 this event took place from a Monday to a Friday; but in the year ended 31 March 2023, in contrast it was run over a weekend.

Table 1: Church events gross expenditure	Year ended 31 March 2024	Year ended 31 March 2023
	£	£
Bassenfell holiday	4,993	3,098
Carol service	601	552
Rob Halligan concert	525	-
General catering	291	99
Harvest ceilidh	259	256
140 th birthday blessings	230	-
Higher Sports	212	283
Thursdays@7	121	383
Lenten Lunches	-	16
Craft event	-	-
	7,232	4,687

Table 2: Church events net expenditure / (income)	Year ended 31 March 2024	Year ended 31 March 2023
	£	£
Bassenfell holiday	409	514
Carol service*	601	552
Rob Halligan concert	375	-
General catering	291	99
Harvest ceilidh*	259	256
140 th birthday blessings*	230	-
Higher Sports	(138)	(122)
Thursdays@7	19	65
Lenten Lunches	-	16
Craft event	(143)	(158)
	1,903	1,222

* Offerings for the 140th birthday blessings and donations at the Harvest ceilidh and Carol service are not part of the *Receipts for Church events* totalling £5,329.

7 CAP Alnwick Debt Centre

The Church runs the Alnwick Debt Centre, in conjunction with Christians Against Poverty (CAP), a national charity. Employment costs for the Manager of the Alnwick Debt Centre are included in the staff employment costs in Note 2. Other amounts paid during the year were as follows:

	Year ended 31 March 2024	Year ended 31 March 2023
	£	£
Donation to Christians Against Poverty central costs	4,528	4,992
CAP Alnwick Debt Centre running costs	-	314
	4,528	5,306

8 Donations

The Church supports Christian work in a variety of situations through prayer and financial giving.

	Year ended 31 March 2024	Year ended 31 March 2023
	£	£
Baptist Union Home Mission	5,500	5,400
BMS World Mission (includes visit of Clarks)	5,980	5,400
Harvest offering – BMS Days of Plenty (previous year BMS Good Land Appeal)	838	1,000
Christmas offering – Embrace the Middle East (previous year Community@NE66 and Alnwick Homes for Ukraine Support Group)	639	812
Cord Global	-	120
Ignite- general (formerly Contagious)	3,334	3,000
Tearfund	500	500
Release International	500	500
Good News For Everyone (formerly Gideons UK)	500	500
Lifepath Brinkburn	500	500
The Farming Community Network	500	500
Open Doors	500	500
Newcastle West End Refugee Service	500	500
Community@NE66 (Alnwick Community Centre)	834	1,500
Rural Ministries	500	500
Hope into Action	500	-
Alnwick Homes for Ukraine Support Group	834	500
Ignite - Messy Church, Open the Book (Bill Dunsire Thanksgiving Offering)	554	-
MND (Ken Muter Thanksgiving Offering)	395	-
Contribution to ministry training costs (Karen Smith)	4,627	4,626
Hosts of Ukrainian Families	-	4,000
Northern Baptist Association (Donation for speaker)	140	-
	28,175	30,358

9 Warm and Welcome Hub

Last year the Church received donations to run a Warm and Welcome Hub for local people providing a warm environment and soup, rolls, hot drinks, and cake. Warm and Welcome continued to run this winter, and in the summer months as Warm Welcome, providing a place for coffee, cake and chat. Costs of the Hub are shown below. Soup and cake were mostly donated free of charge by members of the church, and no volunteers received payment for their time spent helping at the Hub.

	Year ended 31 March 2024	Year ended 31 March 2023
	£	£
Fridge	-	145
Boiler	-	3,300
General expenses	580	963
Gas and electricity	1,082	1,246
	1,662	5,654

10 Weavers Court

In 2022 a grant was received from the Lady Hewley Trust to provide Fellowship meals to residents, and a separate donation was given to support Faith talks and other activities at Weavers Court. Money was still available to support these activities this year.

	Year ended 31 March 2024	Year ended 31 March 2023
	£	£
Fellowship meals	816	448
Faith talks etc.	179	140
	<hr/> 995	<hr/> 588

11 Reserves in Restricted Funds

	Year ended 31 March 2024	Year ended 31 March 2023
	£	£
Reserves CAP	-	2,175
Reserves Warm Hub/Boiler	18,584	20,246
Reserves Weavers Court	1,247	2,242
Reserves ministry training costs	-	2,400
	<hr/> 19,831	<hr/> 27,063

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINER to the Trustees of Alnwick Baptist Church (“the Charity”)

I report to the Charity Trustees on my examination of the financial statements of the Charity for the year ended 31 March 2024, which are set out on pages [11] to [17].

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Charity’s Trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (“the Act”).

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity’s financial statements carried out under Section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent Examiner’s statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with Section 130 of the Act; or
- the financial statements 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 this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.

Jane Harvey FCA
Greaves Grindle
Victoria House
Bondgate Within
Alnwick
NE66 1TA

Date: