



## TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT Year ended 31 August 2011

<b>Section A Reference and administrative details</b>			
<b>Charity name</b>		Stafford Methodist Circuit	
<b>Charity Commission registered number</b>		1135822	
<b>Charity's principal address</b>		Asbury House, Merrey Road, Stafford ST17 9LX	
<b>Names of the trustees who manage the charity</b>			
<b>Trustee Name</b>	<b>Office (if any)</b>	<b>Dates acted (if not for whole year)</b>	<b>Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)</b>
Revd. J A Reynolds	Superintendent Minister		Ex officio (Standing Order 552 CPD*)
Revd. J N Adams	Minister		Ex officio (Standing Order 552 CPD*)
Revd. T J Lowe	Authorised Minister		Standing Order 510 CPD*
Revd. A Jeffries	Supernumerary Minister		Standing Order 510 CPD*
Revd. K Hawkins	Supernumerary Minister		Standing Order 510 CPD*
Mrs J D Wood	Circuit Steward		Ex officio (Standing Order 552 CPD*)
Mr J C Kirkbride	Circuit Steward		Ex officio (Standing Order 552 CPD*)
Mr T W B Lloyd	Circuit Steward		Ex officio (Standing Order 552 CPD*)
Mrs V E Bates	Circuit Steward	February 2011	Ex officio (Standing Order 552 CPD*)
Mr R S Hodson	Circuit Property Steward		Standing Order 510 CPD*
Mr P E H Bell	Circuit Treasurer		Ex officio (Standing Order 552 CPD*)
Revd. D A Ackroyd	Circuit Lay Minister		Standing Order 510 CPD*
Mr J Phillips	Circuit Youth Worker		Standing Order 510 CPD*
Mrs C A Hamer	Circuit Pastoral Assistant		Standing Order 510 CPD*
Mrs S J M Fisher	Circuit Pastoral Assistant		Standing Order 510 CPD*
Mrs R J Nuttall	Circuit Schools' Worker		Standing Order 510 CPD*

Mrs L B Reade	Circuit Administrator & Circuit Meeting Secretary		Standing Order 510 CPD*
Mr I Mason	Local Preachers' Tutor		Standing Order 510 CPD*
Mrs D M Bailey	Church Steward		Berkswich Methodist Church Council
Mrs I M Cantrill	Church Representative		Rising Brook Methodist Church Council
Mrs G M Cattley	Church Steward		Woodseaves Methodist Church Council
Miss P Clarke	Church Steward		Rowley Street Methodist Church Council
Mrs L Cook	Secretary		Woodseaves Methodist Church Council
Mr J G Darrant	Church Steward		Trinity Methodist/URC Church Council
Mr P Davies	Church Steward		St. John's Methodist/URC Church Council
Mrs E A Donaldson	Church Steward		Weston Methodist Church Council
Mrs C Edwards	Church Steward & Local Preachers' Sec.		Barlaston Methodist Church Council
Mr D Ellison	Church Steward	Until March 2011	Gnosall Methodist Church Council
Mrs A E Follows	Church Representative		Rowley Street Methodist Church Council
Mrs S Francis	Church Steward		Rising Brook Methodist Church Council
Mr D H Frost	Church Steward		Berkswich Methodist Church Council
Mr D Green	Church Treasurer		Rowley Street Methodist Church Council
Mrs H Haigh	Church Steward		Trinity Methodist/URC Church Council
Mr T H Harrison	Church Treasurer		Gnosall Methodist Church Council
Mr D A Hemingway	Church Steward		Bishops Offley Methodist Church Council
Mrs M E Hemingway	Church Steward		Bishops Offley Methodist Church Council
Mrs E Hodson	Church Steward		All Saints Milwich Church
Mr T Houghton	Church Steward		Trinity Methodist/URC Church Council
Mrs J Jobling	Church Representative		Gnosall Methodist Church Council
Mrs J C Johnson	Church Treasurer		Barlaston Methodist Church Council
Mr D G Kirby	Circuit Rep. to Synod		Standing Order 510 CPD*
Mrs H M Kirby	Church Representative		Eccleshall Methodist Church Council

Mr R W Knight	Church Treasurer		All Saints Milwich Church Council
Mrs V Murphy	Circuit Rep. to Synod		Rising Brook Methodist Church Council
Mr F J Newby	Church Steward		Berkswich Methodist Church Council
Mrs J Palin	Church Steward		Bishops Offley Methodist Church Council
Mrs P Powell	Church Representative		Berkswich Methodist Church Council
Mrs P J Pritchard	Church Representative		Gnosall Methodist Church Council
Mrs G Sharp	Church Steward & Local Preachers' Sec.		Barlaston Methodist Church Council
Mrs O M Skellern	Church Treasurer		St. John's Methodist/URC Church Council
Mr D J Smith	Church Representative		All Saints Milwich Church
Mrs C A Stewart	Church Steward		St. John's Methodist/URC Church Council
Mrs J M Timmis	Circuit Rep. to Synod		Standing Order 510 CPD*
Dr. M Timothy	Church Steward		Berkswich Methodist Church Council
Mrs M E Turner	Church Representative		Weston Methodist Church Council
Mrs P Tweed	Church Steward	from March 2011	Gnosall Methodist Church Council
Mr P A Wall	Church Treasurer	to February 2011	Eccleshall Methodist Church Council
Mrs J M Williams	Church Representative		Trinity Methodist/URC Church Council
Mrs A F Wilson	Church Treasurer		Berkswich Methodist Church Council
Mrs J R Wilson	Church Treasurer		Woodseaves Methodist Church Council
Dr. P Yates	Church Treasurer	from February 2011	Eccleshall Methodist Church Council
			<i>*The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of The Methodist Church</i>
<b>Names and addresses of advisers</b>			
Independent Examiners	Bradshaws, Charter Court, Well House Barns, Chester Road, Chester. CH4 0DH and Stone.		
Bankers	NatWest Bank, 41 Greengate Street, Stafford ST16 2JA		

<b>Section B Structure, governance and management</b>	
<b>Type of governing document</b>	Deed of Union (1932) and Methodist Church Act 1976
<b>How the charity is constituted</b>	Act of Parliament
<b>Trustee selection method</b>	Appointed by local churches Ministers and Circuit Stewards are automatically trustees
<b>Additional governance issues</b>	
	<p><b>Induction Training</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Range of guidance produced by Methodist Convention</li> <li>• Leaflet 'The Role of a Trustee in The Methodist Church' given to each trustee</li> </ul> <p><b>Structure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part of the Wolverhampton &amp; Shrewsbury District</li> <li>• Accountable to The Methodist Conference</li> </ul> <p><b>Risks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considered by the Circuit Leadership Team</li> <li>• Take professional advice as required</li> <li>• Regular review process</li> <li>• Adopted Safeguarding Policy and ensured that it is rolled out to the churches</li> </ul>
<b>Section C Objectives and activities</b>	
	<p>The purpose of the Methodist Church are and shall be deemed to have been since the Date of Union the advancement of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The Christian faith in accordance with the doctrinal standards and discipline of The Methodist Church;</li> <li>b) Any charitable purpose for the time being of any Connexional, District, Circuit, local or other organisation of The Methodist Church;</li> <li>c) Any charitable purpose for the time being of any society or institution subsidiary or ancillary to The Methodist Church;</li> <li>d) Any purpose for the time being of any charity being a charity subsidiary or ancillary to The Methodist Church.</li> </ol> <p>The Circuit produces a bi-monthly preaching plan and newsletter to ensure that regular acts of worship take place at each of the 9 Methodist Churches and 3 Local Ecumenical Partnerships in its geographical area. These are open to all people without charge.</p> <p>The Charity trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The Stafford circuit is constituted to offer acts of worship in its church communities and to further the mission of the Church in Stafford and across the borough of Stafford. With our primary internal function being that of worship, we organise acts of worship in each of the 12 Circuit churches every Sunday. We also offer monthly worship to HMP Stafford as well as offering chaplaincy support to the Prison, Stafford Rangers Football Club and Stafford FE College. Our internal structure is based upon a Circuit Meeting which meets four times a year; a Local Preachers meeting which meets four times a year; A Circuit Leadership Team which meets between six and eight times a year; Staff Meetings which meet monthly and individual Church Councils which oversee the work in the 12 churches and which meet between two and four times a year. Our meetings are more than just talking shops. They are the place where the important decisions about how we operate as church communities are made. Within them we plan our strategies to fulfil our role as Charity trustees. They are well attended and well led by various members of staff.</p>

<b>Section D</b>	<b>Achievements and performance</b>
	<p>Our primary external function is that of mission and evangelism. All of our churches are involved in some kind of mission activity that seeks to embed the Church within its local community and give opportunities for Christian witness and mission. In this past year we have been involved in running a market stall in Stone; running a coffee shop inside the local doctors surgery in Weston; operating eight pieces of youth work across the Church communities; working in local schools, leading assemblies and supporting the schools in their delivery of the RE curriculum by providing opportunities to engage in an interactive way with the stories of the bible, Christmas and Easter; and we have on-going involvement in the work of HMP Stafford and Stafford Rangers FC. Many of our church premises offer space for diverse, locally based community groups to meet. We have excellent relationships with the local care homes and we operate a regular pattern of Holy Communion services in homes across Stafford. All of the above have contributed to the on-going missional life of the Stafford Circuit.</p> <p>We have a committed staff team which comprises of four presbyters and six lay workers, some of whom are full time and some part time. They cover the roles of Youth work, Schools work, Pastoral support and administration.</p> <p>Our youth team continue to deliver 8 weekly open youth clubs, 2 cell groups and a monthly worship event. In addition, they have organised their annual youth weekend and taken a group to 'Soul Survivor'. They have also worked closely with other denominations and the Mid Staffs Youth Net organisation on an ecumenical approach to working with children and young people.</p> <p>Finally, our membership figures have continued to grow for the second year running at a time of national decline. We believe this is due to our pro-active desire to share our faith with all sectors of our communities. We have an open door policy and welcome all to our church communities irrespective of race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality or any kind of disability.</p>
<b>Section E</b>	<b>Financial review</b>
	<p>Receipts for the year in respect of unrestricted funds were £230,599, slightly higher than in the previous year. Contributions from churches within the circuit were, as planned, 2.6% higher than in 2009/10 at £218,300. 95% of total unrestricted income therefore derives from the churches within the Circuit. A 10% shortfall in rental income was due to a short void period in the tenancy of the Gnosall Manse.</p> <p>Despite increases in stipends, salaries and pensions, total employment costs fell slightly during the year. This was largely due to the Circuit no longer contributing to the employment costs of Anglican clergy. During the year a minister and a lay employee experienced periods of extended sickness; as a result, travelling expenses were lower and some recovery of Statutory Sick Pay was possible.</p> <p>Manse and Property costs were higher than in the previous year. As a result of a change in Ministers, the Circuit incurred both removal costs and significant costs associated with renovating the Stafford (Trinity) manse. As a result of the high expenditure, some other planned property repairs and improvements have been deferred until 2011/12.</p> <p>Excluding the Property Fund, unrestricted reserves stood at £145,599 at the end of the year. The excess of expenditure over income on unrestricted funds was £8,284 for the year, some £8,000 better than budgeted.</p>

<b>Section F Policies</b>	
<b>Reserves policy</b>	<p>The Charity needs to hold sufficient working capital to provide for the payment of quarterly ministerial stipends and expenses; periodic lay employee salaries and associated costs; and contributions to the District. The Charity also considers that it is prudent to maintain sufficient resources to cover unplanned expenses on the manses and circuit office or any shortfall in the ability to raise the full Circuit Assessment from churches.</p> <p>It is the Trustees policy to maintain a balance on unrestricted funds equivalent to between three and four months average annual unrestricted expenditure to cover unexpected requirements which may occur from time to time, and also to maintain a fund of between £50,000 and £75,000 to enable the Circuit to assist its churches with appropriate grants and loans. The level of reserves is monitored and reviewed by the Circuit Treasurer (on an ongoing basis), by the Circuit Leadership Team (every six months), and by the Trustees (annually).</p>
<b>Section G Statement of Trustees responsibilities</b>	
	<p>The trustees are responsible for preparing the annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.</p> <p>Law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of charity's financial activities during the year and of its financial position at the end of the year. In preparing financial statements giving a true and fair view, the trustees are required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;</li> <li>-make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and</li> <li>-prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.</li> </ul> <p>The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 1993. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.</p>
<b>Section H Declaration</b>	
<b>The charity's trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.</b>	
<b>Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees</b>	
<b>Signature(s)</b>	
<b>Full Name(s)</b>	Jeffrey Arthur Reynolds Leigh Barbara Reade
<b>Position</b>	<b>Chair (Superintendent Minister) Secretary</b>
<b>Date</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2011

**Independent Examiner's Report  
to the Trustees Of Stafford Methodist Circuit**

I report on the accounts of the Stafford Methodist Circuit for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> August 2011 which are set out on pages 8 to15.

**Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner**

The Charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act) and that an Independent Examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts (under section 43 of the Act);
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 43(7)(b) of the Act); and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of Independent Examiner's statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

**Independent examiner's statement**

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the trustees have not met the requirements to ensure that:
  - proper accounting records are kept in accordance with section 41 of the Act; and
  - accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act; or
  -
- 2 to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

**A J Bradshaw**  
**Bradshaws Limited**  
Chartered  
Accountants  
Registered Auditor  
23<sup>rd</sup> November 2011

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