



Aylesbury Methodist Church and Centre  
BUCKINGHAM STREET, AYLESBURY, BUCKS. HP20 2NQ

## ANNUAL REPORT 2014 - 2015



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Registered Charity No. 1129749



*Aylesbury Methodist Church & Centre (AMC), Buckingham St.*



*The church family socialising in Peter and Pamela Farmer's garden*



*Rev. Peter Hancock, Chair of the Northampton District*



*The Church Council is the local decision-making body and the church trustees*

## 1 - INTRODUCTION

### What is in this year's report?

1. Introduction
2. The church and community centre
3. Church organisations (A to Z)
4. Charities we support
5. Church accounts

### Why do we need an annual report?

As a registered charity, the Charity Commissioners need to be sure we warrant our charity status. The Church Council have also requested an annual review of our activities in the year and outline plans for the future.

### Who are we?

We are an inclusive town centre church, seeking to be a channel for God's love for all people, irrespective of their creed, race, ethnic origin, skin colour, nationality, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation or marital status.

We are part of the Vale of Aylesbury Circuit, and the Northampton District of the Methodist Church. Our minister, Rev. Helen Kirk, is also the Circuit Superintendent and our District Chair is Rev. Peter Hancock.

Our governance is set out in great detail in Constitutional Practice and Discipline (CPD) which can be downloaded from the Methodist Church website ([www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk)). The local decision-making body is the Church Council whose members are also the church trustees.

### Who was on the church council?

Circuit ministerial team, church stewards, leadership team, meeting secretary, church treasurer, missions rep, a circuit steward, reps from the church membership appointed by the General Church Meeting, namely: Rev. Helen Kirk, Rev. Irena Byron, Rev. Fred Ireland, Rev. Keith Edwards, Arthur Sara, Janice Matthews, Robin Barrett, Elaine Hope, Melanie Dean, Trevor Nord, Gill Marks, Raymond Murisa, Roger Kirk, Jennie Torpey, Pat Powell, Kevin Hardern, Margaret Miskin, Michele Challenger, Peter Farmer, Peter Green, Tim Olufosoye, David Wilderspin, Keith Wallace, Brian Latham, Geoff Nicholson, Lynne Bernstone, Vivienne Kemp, Allan Horne, Steve Marks, Derrick Matthews, Brian Taylor, John Miskin, Marilyn Storer, Francis Ayles, Pat Starr, Babs Trend.

## 2 – CHURCH & COMMUNITY CENTRE

Having been asked to write this piece for the annual report reflecting on my first year as minister at AMC I find I'm a little stuck. You see, to me, annual reports speak of facts, numbers, statistics, evidence of progress made and achievements gained. However the business of a church is about the unchanging love of God that touches and transforms the messiness of our humanity and that's not easy to appraise. For example, how can you quantify generosity that is so much more than a column on a spread sheet and instead involves the offering of time, talents, commitment & hospitality? How do you measure the quality of care offered when most of it is carried out unnoticed through informal visits, phone calls, lifts given and cakes baked? How can we assess the effectiveness of our mission when it is not about 'signing up new recruits' but sharing the love of Christ in the world? How can we evaluate the success of our worship for it concerns divine presence which brings hope, comfort, inspiration, joy and challenge to individuals and community alike? And yet all of these things happen in abundance at AMC.



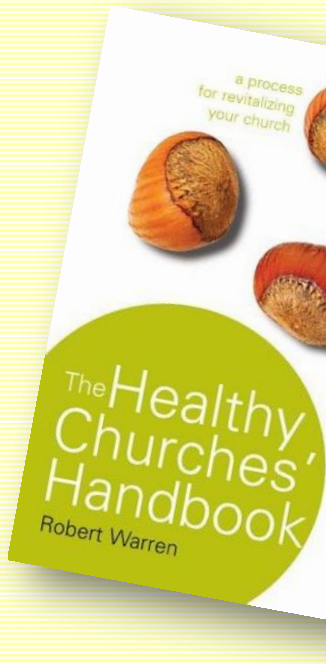
**Rev. Helen Kirk**

So what can I say? Well the first thing is 'Thank You'. Thank you to all the people who offer their time and talents to welcome, clean, make music, arrange flowers, support charities, work with children & young people, make tea, answer phones, repair and mend, do admin, paint walls, offer prayer, lead, organise, sew, knit, cook, shop, sing and care in the name of Jesus. I will never cease to be amazed by your incredible generosity.

But, and there is always a but, if we are about meeting the messy business of humanity with the love of God then there is always more to do. We have never 'made it'. We can never be complacent. So how do we continue to value the uniqueness of humanity with the compassion of God? How do we fulfil our calling to be Christ in this place? I think there are a number of priorities for the year ahead:

1. To see all of our young people as gifts to be valued and nurtured even if that is costly in terms of time, money or change.
2. To continually remember that we are a 24/7 church; that the conversations that take place on a Monday, for example, are as important as on a Sunday.
3. To believe that the term 'welcome' means much more than just saying 'hello' but is instead an invitation to belong
4. To recognise that our care of the needy is not a duty that must be done but is actually an opportunity to encounter God
5. To ensure that the agendas of all of our meetings are concerned with the mission of God so that our discussions and decisions may be the work of the kingdom rather than hoops to be jumped through.
6. To regard all of our building - whether the worship area, coffee bar or meeting rooms - as sacred space where the presence of God is shared and realised.
7. To know that each and every person, whoever they are, has a story to be heard.

Such things do not fit assessment criteria but they are what AMC is about - that calling to be an ever present symbol of the unchanging love of God amidst fragile, chaotic and wonderfully unpredictable humanity. So here's to another year!



### *Our priorities...*

- 1. Children, young people & families*
- 2. Encourage & nurture faith*
- 3. 'Beyond the welcome'*



*Peter Farmer, Chair of the  
Community Centre  
Committee*

## **Healthy Churches - Peter Green**

During Helen's first year with us, we have undertaken a review of the whole life of the church. This was using the 'Healthy Churches' approach developed by Anglican priest Robert Warren. Based on the seven common characteristics or 'marks' of 25 growing churches of different sizes and situations, the process has now been tried, tested and refined over the last 20 years and across denominations.

Over 100 people completed Healthy Church questionnaires and over 60 attended the follow-up meetings to discuss the analysed results. Overall, the response was a very positive view of the church. There are many good things happening and many caring and committed people involved.

Whilst each group's approach was different, the priorities of areas we need to work on were remarkably similar. The top three concerns from all the meetings can be summarised as:

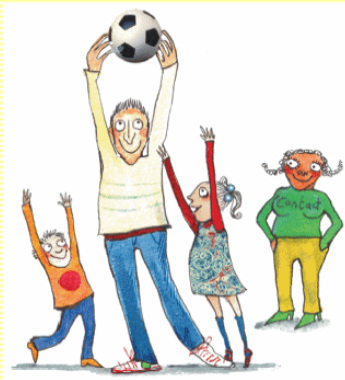
1. The work with children, young people and families must be a priority and should be resourced.
2. There is a strong desire to encourage and nurture faith through small groups, Bible study, teaching and preaching connected with daily lives and the opportunity to worship in different ways at different times.
3. In outreach, we need to go 'beyond the welcome'. We need to engage and involve people on the fringes of the church and community.

Underpinning each priority must be clear goals and good communication. The leadership team has since been working on how best to move this forward. The agreed method is to make use of small action groups tackling specific topics with clear briefs. This should help us to bring in more people with a wider range of skills, gifts and insights than our present structure allows.

## **Community Centre - Peter Farmer**

The Community Centre provides valuable accommodation for all of the church organisations and also for other groups which provide support or services for the disadvantaged in the town. Throughout the year the Centre was used, in almost equal measure, by both groups, plus, in occupancy terms, a small number of other organisations including Christian groups lacking a place of worship of their own.

The operation of the Centre is controlled by the Office Administrator, Carla Barnes, supported by a large number of others, including Jennie Torpey, David Rogers, numerous Receptionists, a team of Duty Managers and many others



Aylesbury  
Child Contact  
Centre



Kevin Hardern  
Resources Co-ordinator

*Big thanks to...*

*Duty Managers*

*Event Managers*

*Property Stewards*

*Church Cleaners*

*The Chair People*

dealing with the operation, maintenance and cleaning of the facilities and services. Without their committed support the Centre would “grind to a halt”

Among the most significant for the disadvantaged groups, run or actively supported by AMC members, are:

**Sees the Day**, which provides social, active, learning and creative activities for those with learning difficulties. Its motto is “Supporting you to have a good day your way”.

The **Aylesbury Child Contact Centre** which enables children from broken families to meet their absent parent, on a regular basis, in a safe and caring environment.

The **Monday Contact Club**, a daylong club for elderly, isolated residents of Aylesbury town and surrounding area.

The **Aylesbury Deaf Coffee Morning Club** which brings together, on a regular basis, those with acute hearing problems, moderated by people trained to communicate with all of the members.

All take full advantage of either or both of the two kitchens, well equipped for the provision of tea/coffee and biscuits and, for the Monday Contact Club, hot lunches.

## Resources - Kevin Hardern

During the year the Resources team has evolved very much into Property Management, as the management of the Community Centre comes under a separate group which gives focus to clients and the office itself. We have had the regular support of many volunteers for:

- Duty Mangers, one of whom is always available for emergency call out. Their main role is to be an escalation point in case of emergencies and also to ensure new clients have access, if needed, out of normal hours
- Events Manager, available as a contact for large events. These are made available to clients who are unfamiliar with the premises but have a large ‘event’, normally in the church, and need a single point of contact before and during the day
- Property Stewards, for specific areas, like small DIY jobs, audio-visual (AV), cleaning, internal decoration, health and safety, external works, alarms and entry systems, and gardens to name but a few. There is a significant amount of work needed on premises maintenance, and their commitment is much appreciated
- Church cleaning - a rota of some 27 volunteers and their companions who keep our church clean for worship every week.

There are also one-off events, and this year saw the replacement of all the chairs in the church, a fund-raising



*Kathy Seabrook - daily cleaner  
for the community centre*



*Melanie Dean,  
Senior Steward*



*Tim Olufosoye  
Safeguarding Officer*

effort managed by 'The Chair People' and the main 'Chair Person', Brian Taylor to whom we all owe a great deal of thanks.

The church would not function without the significant support it gets from volunteers and of course Kathy Seabrook, our cleaner, who keeps the community centre clean and tidy on a daily basis and Claire Curtis who cleans up on Monday mornings. This all helps the place to provide a good service to its clients at reasonable rates, very much in line with our mission. We all know that...

**...if we all give a little we all gain a lot!**

### **Church Stewards - Melanie Dean**

We now have 8 church stewards - which is a great situation. One of us still needs to attend Safeguarding Training and several stewards would like AV training.

We would ordinarily have two stewards 'retiring' next year but Gill Marks has offered to continue as a Steward. We have had 4 people step down from counting the offertory over the last year. However, current stewards are all willing to be counters and our four 'new' stewards can be included in the rota. Whilst this gives us more counters, if anyone feels they would like to join the counting team - please let me know.

We have recently revised and updated the 'Readers' List'. Rev David Jenkins joined us for our Church Anniversary Service and lunch afterwards. A sounding of the Fire Alarm and a fire evacuation drill are both planned for the new year.

### **Safeguarding - Tim Olufosoye**

Rev. Helen and I have been working as a team on safeguarding issues and hope to involve more people as well. During the year, a new entry key fob has been introduced, allowing us to be able to monitor usage of the premises if needed. We now have a visible safeguarding notice on the notice board at the entrance of the community centre with a safeguarding contacts list. We have also installed an auditing system for safeguarding checks so that they are all up to date. Policies and procedures have also been approved for the monitoring of groups staying overnight.

### **New Website - Peter Green**

One way of improving our communications with the outside world was to revamp our church website. Helen had previous experience of using a Cheshire-based company Then Media who have developed an online method of matching



*Peter Green, Web Editor*



*One of Andrew Kirk's photos of the Easter Labyrinth*



*The Defibrillator on the church car park wall*



*AMC supporting Aylesbury in Bloom*

preachers' availability with preaching needs. They offered a very cost-effective, cleaner, fresher and easier-to-use system than our old one. It also gave us a simple means of having a social media presence with the opportunity to engage with people outside the church. Our new website went live at the end of August and the Circuit website will be live by Christmas. This year we will seek to grow awareness of who we are and what we do through our website and social media.

### **Easter Labyrinth - Helen Kirk**

The Easter labyrinth was designed to help us think about Christ's suffering as he journeyed towards the cross, and to reflect on the events of Easter. It was designed to help us think and pray about our own lives too, and think about people who are suffering in the world. The labyrinth had the cross at the centre and was based on a design of a fountain in Damascus. The pathway led to the centre of the room with a different way out so that we didn't have to retrace our steps. On the way were stations aimed to help us pray, think and meet God.

### **Defibrillator - Brian Latham**

The town's first publicly accessible defibrillator to help in cardiac arrest is now installed on the church wall in the car park for use by the general public. It was fully funded by a local Masonic lodge. In the event of an emergency, dial 999, ask for 'Ambulance' and tell them where you are. They will give the code to access the portable machine from its yellow box. I have arranged training via the local ambulance service and if anyone else is interested they should contact me on 01296 624964.

### **Flower Baskets**

We were happy to support an initiative by Aylesbury Town Council to "flood the town with flowers and make Aylesbury an attractive and colourful town to visit." Along with other organisations and businesses, we have displayed subsidised hanging baskets at the front of the church. The cost includes watering and maintenance in the summer months.



*The new church chairs, courtesy of Brian Taylor's 'Chair people'*



*Pat Powell's many years of Leadership Team input into our worship*



*Community Centre bookings have more than doubled under Michele Challenger's Outreach*



*Chris Hough, a retiring member of our amazing Volunteer Army!*

## **Leadership Special Thanks – Peter Farmer**

The Church Council accepted, with much regret, the 'retirement' of Pat Powell, Brian Taylor and Michele Challenger after many years of valuable service at AMC.



**Brian** has been a long standing member of the property team and will still retain some of his duties. He was a Duty Manager of the Community Centre, and overseer of its cleaning. He has a long record of seizing and heading-up initiatives, the latest of which was the replacement of the church chairs referred to earlier in this report.



**Pat**, with a special input on worship, helped by her forming and leading the Aylesbury Creativity Group, has given continuous and valued service on the Leadership Team since its inception.



**Michele**, with an outreach brief, has overseen the more than doubling of community centre usage since its refurbishment and the development of improved policies and procedures for its smooth running.

All have helped to shape the overall mission and well-being of the church as well as contributing greatly in its running and oversight, whilst holding their key posts. To all of them, we say a Very Big Thank You.

## **Volunteer Special Thanks – Peter Green**

Mention has already been made of the vital importance to the smooth running of both church and centre of our volunteers. A typical example of these unsung heroes and heroines is Chris Hough who leaves us with husband Harry to return to their Somerset roots. From helping Chris Taylor prepare thousands of packed lunches for the old MAYC London youth weekends, Chris has been a regular helper in other catering events, and volunteering in the charity Christmas card and Fair Trade shops, the weekday and Sunday coffee bars, and latterly in organising the Sunday volunteer rota. To Chris and all our other volunteers we say another Very Big Thank You.



### 3 – CHURCH ACTIVITIES A - Z



*AMC & Friends' coach trips included...*



*A trip to Henley for a boat trip*



*Street Angels in town*



*Remembrance Day banner*

#### **AMC & Friends' Trips - Pauline Noble**

It is always a treat to enjoy a performance in the Cadogan Hall just off Sloane Square. 43 of us went by coach to the Royal Philharmonic's Christmas Cracker concert a few days before Christmas where we were treated to a mixture of instrumental, solo and audience participation carols to set the scene for Christmas. In March we tried something a little different and 29 of us thoroughly enjoyed the hugely amusing play 'The 39 Steps' at the Criterion Theatre, whilst in April a full coach attended an excellent Tchaikovsky Gala concert in the Royal Albert Hall. For a slightly different summer outing, 44 of us enjoyed a boat trip on the River Thames at Henley, joined by David & Paula Jenkins, followed by an excellent high tea at their church in Caversham after a guided tour of their garden.

#### **Aylesbury Town Centre Chaplaincy**

We continue to provide financial and prayerful support to this initiative by the local Christian community to help serve the needs of people who work in and visit the town. It has been formed as an independent charitable trust and has volunteers serving as trustees, (including our Rev. Keith Edwards), chaplains and street angels drawn from across the town's churches. All are motivated by Christian principles of love and service and are fully respectful and committed to serving people of all backgrounds and of all faiths or none.

#### **Banner Group – Brenda Horne**

Our banner group continue to design and sew banners to add to the worship, fellowship and decoration of our Church. We have also continued to sew the banner for Women's World Day of Prayer which is circulated to the various churches around Aylesbury. Previous ones can be seen decorating the corridors of the centre. Janice and Rosemarie are working on a new communion banner for the lectern.

#### **Boys' Brigade - Margaret Miskin BB Captain**

Numbers have remained steady with 22 boys attending regularly on a Tuesday evening. Josh Maguire and



*Jack Nord & James Charlton with their Queen's Badges & The Lord Lieutenant of Bucks.*



*Linda Gill, retired as Girls' Brigade Captain after 20 years involvement*

James Hanson received their President's Badge and are starting to work on the requirements needed for their Queen's Badge. It was with great pleasure and pride that Jack Nord and James Charlton completed their Queen's Badge training and received the top B.B. badge from Sir Henry Aubrey Fletcher during a Sunday morning service.

The highlight of the year was taking the boys to London for the day. A river boat trip and the London Eye Experience culminated the end of our Company's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations.

### **Bereavement Support - Joy Murphy**

During the year we have met informally for an hour or so over a cup of tea and biscuit, for people to share or hear about experiences and coping strategies after the loss at some time of a loved one.

### **Bible Study - Rev. Helen Kirk**

A desire for Bible study related to everyday life was established in the Healthy Churches process and so I am leading a programme of study for 2015-16.

### **Crèche - Viv Kemp**

More people have volunteered for the rota to keep young minds and fingers occupied in the crèche off the vestibule during morning services.

### **Girls' Brigade - Linda Gill (Retired GB Leader)**

After 20 years service to 1st Aylesbury Girls' Brigade Company I retired in July 2015. I have very fond memories of the officers and helpers and girls that I have had the pleasure of working with and leading over those years. A few memories that came to mind were the camps which I was part of, both as a district and as a company, and I hope the experiences and fun shared stays with the girls who attended as dearly as myself as a leader. I also appreciate the support of the leaders and helpers that I had the joy to work with and I wish all the best for the future of 1st Aylesbury Girls Brigade as it moves forward. As I think of the badges and awards gained in all my time involved with such an amazing organization, I feel honoured to have been a part of it.

### **Good Faith Book Club - Peter Green**

We meet six times a year on a Saturday afternoon to discuss books about faith and related topics chosen by the group. Those unable to attend a session often email in their



*One of the Good Faith Book Club's choices*



*Derrick Matthews...*

*Music for worship*

*Candlelit carol service*

*Silent Film Spectacular*

*'From Calvary to Glory'*

*Songs of praise 2015*



*Andrew Kirk*

comments. Summaries of our discussions are written up by different volunteers for our AMC website. This year's books have been about Jesus and women in the gospels; an inspirational story of *The Boy Who Harnessed The Wind* and provided electricity to his poor village in Malawi; the biography of Malala – the girl who stood up for education and was shot by the Taliban; a short book on ethics; Francis Spufford's *Unapologetic, about why, despite everything, Christianity can still make surprising emotional sense*; and our own Richard Maguire's illuminating book, *I dream in Autism*.

## **Hospital Chaplaincy**

Four of our church members continue to be part of the Stoke Mandeville Hospital chaplaincy team, offering support for people of all faiths and none.

## **J Team - Viv Kemp**

Numbers have remained steady throughout the year, though not with the same people each week. This seems to reflect the changing patterns of family life and commitments.

## **Music - Derrick Matthews**

My main role is playing the Organ and leading the Church Choir. We rehearse about three times a month and would welcome any others who would like to join the choir. In addition, I have organised five events In 2014-15: The Candlelit Carol Service; another Silent Film Spectacular, (profit towards new chairs and cushions £708.80); a Circuit Choral service 'From Calvary to Glory' - repeated the following Sunday evening in Tring Parish Church; the 30th Anniversary Organ Concert (profit towards Church Property Maintenance £1036.29) and the Circuit Choral Service. 'Songs of Praise 2015', with hymns set to well known tunes by the great composers.

## **Music Group - Andrew Kirk**

I am always as surprised as I am delighted that, even in the smallest of churches in the remotest of places, there is nearly always some evidence to be found of the diverse and deeply creative resource that music offers to the life of worship. Musicians at Aylesbury Methodist Church contribute to this rich tradition by exploring and developing both their own individual talent for music-making, as well as how best to work together and lead others as they meet for worship. Just as music itself is always renewing, refining and recreating, so too are the musicians who constantly seek to develop their



*“How do we build for the future? Think big. Share ideas. Play on!”*



*Heather Murray*

*“If you have a prayer request please contact me.”*



*The SOS's renowned  
Easter Sunday  
Breakfast*

own individual skills, as well as bring on the next generation of musical talent. We are truly fortunate at AMC to have a diverse and enthusiastic group of musicians, each of whom bring tremendous ability and experience that are as unique as they are adaptable, reflecting the unstoppable creativity that has driven musical expression for millennia. However, what fascinates me more in this context is not how best to celebrate what we have achieved thus far – however accomplished (or otherwise) that may be. Rather, I want to ask how best we as musicians – voice, instrument, technical support or administration – can adequately ‘live up to’ the unlimited possibilities that music offers whilst maintaining our Methodist heritage that states we were, ‘born in song!’ Music is never static, the Spirit of God is never static – a *connection* or *parallel* that does not exist by chance. So come on you musicians of Aylesbury Methodist Church, don’t be afraid to ask the big questions like, ‘How do we build for the future?’ or ‘Where do we want our music to go?’ or even ‘What needs to be added... or pruned..?’ We’ve truly come a long way since Wesley himself said, *“I have no objection to instruments of music in our worship, provided they are neither seen nor heard.”* Think big. Share ideas. Play on!

### **Prayer Group** – Heather Murray

God has met with us in a wonderful way in the past year. We have come as a small group to spend time in His presence, to worship and give thanks to Him for all the blessings he has bestowed on us as a group, and also for listening so well to our prayerful requests for so many people. No request too small or too big for Him. All requests are honoured by us, and our prayers continue for as long as it takes. We have had amazing answers to our prayers. Even though we meet every other Tuesday morning of the month from 10.30 to approximately 11.30, prayers are carried in our hearts and minds during the time that we are not together. We were so happy to host Sister Bernadette from the Catholic Church at one of our meetings. We spent time with her group that day to pray and just be quiet in His presence. If you would like to know more or you have a prayer request, please contact me on 01296 437894.

### **SOS (Sometimes On Sundays)** – Viv Kemp

SOS is an informal fellowship group that meets around once a month, usually in someone's home. Anyone is welcome to come along. This year’s programme has included a Reggae Evening, a Pie Evening, Easter Sunday Breakfast, ANZAC Day Celebration, an October Beer Fest in May, a



*Sociable soup lunches*



*Happy atmosphere at Sunbeams*



*Tuesday Fellowship's Pearl Riley*



*Youth exchange visitor*



*Pauline Noble, Chris Sara and Sandy Steeden fund-raising*

Murder Mystery Evening, a Summer BBQ and a Starters and Puddings Evening.

### **Soup Lunches - Irene Wadkins**

As a change from lunching alone all the time, the Soup Lunch events offer the opportunity to meet friendly people in a relaxed setting. In our first year, we are assessing. We have met on Wednesdays in the church vestibule and continue to assess the most popular frequency.

### **Sunbeams - Margaret Miskin**

I took over the running of the baby, toddler and mums group from Keith Edwards in September. There are a regular number attending with a few dropping in from time to time. It is such a happy atmosphere where there is plenty of room for the children to play with a wide selection of toys.

### **Tuesday Fellowship - Pearl Riley**

Meeting fortnightly on Tuesday afternoons, the Fellowship's programme of visiting speakers and the opportunity to socialise over a cup of tea has attracted over 30 members with an average attendance of over 20.

### **Youth Exchange - Viv and Steve Kemp**

Despite the absence of a youth club, our youth exchange with the German sports club T.u.S. 05 Daun continued as strong as ever. This 52<sup>nd</sup> year was our turn to host the Germans and we had another super programme. It ended with the traditional supper, concert and recap slide show, attended by parents and people involved in the exchange over the years. The mayor, Cllr. Allison Harrison, was present throughout the evening. Two special thanks were to Richard, our superb German coach driver for whom this trip would be his last after 20 years, and to the youngsters themselves. They were a great bunch of kids and it's been a privilege to be their leaders.

## **4 - SUPPORTED CHARITIES**

### **Action for Children - Pauline Noble**

This is the children's charity supported by the Methodist Church with over 400 projects reaching out to vulnerable children and young people. In this last year we have raised over £2,500 for the charity. Events have included



The 'wonderful toys and presents' at the December Toy service...



Shop Manager Cliff Darlington

a Caribbean evening, a summer market stall in the town centre with homemade produce and bric-a-brac, and a Christmas gift stall in Friars Square. Donations have come from internal church groups and also Christmas and Action for Children Sunday retiring collections. However, one of our main fund raisers still comes through the little Home Collection Boxes, raising last year just over £650. More people are urgently needed to have one of these boxes at home to put in small amounts of change when they are able. The Faringdon and Southmoor Action for Children's Family Centres have said a huge "thank you" on behalf of all their children for the wonderful toys and presents taken their after the December Toy Service. Money donations to MASKS (Make A Special Kid Smile) came to just over £271 and this has been passed to the charity towards the extras needed for the seat to lower children with special needs into the swimming pool.

### **All We Can (formerly Missions) - David Wilderspin**

All We Can is now the operating name of the Methodist Relief and Development Fund. It helps people find solutions to poverty and become all that they can, by investing in partnerships that improve quality of life and create positive, long-term change in some of the world's poorest communities. In this church over the past year we have been involved in the following fundraising events: Quiz sheets; soup lunches, including the Harvest soup lunch which raised money for Whitechapel Mission; Joy Murphy's lunch & talk about Karibuni; Haddenham village walk & quiz; retiring collection for JMA as well as the JMA collection boxes. We have received occasional contributions from the Sunday coffee bar. Members of the church have also continued to make regular, much appreciated contributions to the Aylesbury foodbank.

### **Cards for Good Causes - Cliff Darlington**

I am pleased to report that the card shop had another successful year. The total sum raised was £17,200. I very much appreciate the help from members of the church who joined the volunteers from the Charities to work in the shop. Also, I would like to express a big thank you to the team of managers. It would have been an impossible task without their help. They are Bob Bucknell, Steve Marks, Geoff Nicholson, Arthur Sara and Brian Taylor. Finally, might I say a big thank you for being able to use the Church, and to all of you who made purchases in the shop.



*The only national charity dedicated solely to epilepsy research*



*Joy Murphy & Karibuni visitors at the first Family Fun Day*



*Eric Obudho to join KPMG*

### **Christian Aid - Jennie Torpey & Maureen Tucker**

This is an organisation that insists “the world can and must be swiftly changed to one where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty, striving to achieve equality, dignity and freedom for all, regardless of faith or nationality”. As a church we support that aim, and each year we organise house-to-house collections during Christian Aid Week, as well as holding services and collections within the church. During the past 12 months we have raised £2,667.69 to help their work

### **Epilepsy Research UK - Allan & Brenda Horne**

Our daughter Caroline copes well with this life-changing problem and we have raised money for the charity by attending crafts shows, holding coffee mornings and running tombola stalls. Over more than ten years, we have raised over £15,000 in this way, and been invited to receptions at Downing Street and The Royal Society by the organisation as a way of saying thank you. More importantly, we have met recipients of the grants, and other fund raisers, and heard where the money is spent. Administration costs are kept very low, and no Government money is available for this very important research

### **The Karibuni Trust - Claire Starr**

2015 saw Karibuni celebrate their 20th birthday. A series of events across the year had great support from the circuit. Aylesbury Methodist Church hosted an anniversary service in July and a 1920s themed concert in April. Members also helped to make the charity's first annual Family Fun Day a success in August. Two of Karibuni's workers on the ground in Kenya were hosted during their stay in Buckinghamshire over the summer by Church and Circuit members.

The financial support that Karibuni received throughout the year has helped progress to be made at projects in Kenya. Limuru Methodist Academy opened three new classrooms at their school, replacing draughty corrugated buildings. Elsewhere, Erick Obudho, one of the first children to be taken into Karibuni-supported Tusaidie Watoto Nursery 20 years ago, has recently gained a place on KPMG accountant's prestigious graduate programme in Nairobi, as an audit associate.

The charity continues to look forward, having recently launched a new sponsorship scheme. There are more events planned for the New Year and the trustees thank you for your continuing support.



*Some happy recipients of the Link to Hope shoeboxes*



*Peter Watkins (Centre) with help from David Neville and Allan Horne loads our harvest gifts onto the Whitechapel van.*



*Over £10,000 in cash plus presents, gifts and food were donated by AMC members last year*

## **Link to Hope - Margaret Miskin**

We had another fantastic year for our Shoebox Appeal. My garage ended up with 207 boxes being stored there before John and Simon came to pick them up in their transit van and take them to the main depot in Worthing. A total of 34,597 Shoeboxes were sent out to Romania, Moldova, Albania, Bulgaria and the Ukraine. A heartfelt thanks go to all those who contributed.

## **Whitechapel Mission - Peter Watkins**

The London Whitechapel Mission for the homeless was once again the recipient of the generous offerings brought by members of the church to the harvest thanksgiving service. The charity provides a lifeline to men and women caught in the cycles of poverty, hopelessness and dependencies of many kinds. By encouraging each person to address the issues which caused their homelessness, we help them to gain the skills and confidence to make lasting changes in their lives.

## **Other charities**

Altogether last year, the church and its various groups gave over £10,000 to these charities: Action for Children, Alfam Foundation, British Legion, Cancer Research, Christian Aid, (Nepal Earthquake Appeal), Easter Offering, Ebola Crisis Appeal, Epilepsy Research, Florence Nightingale Hospice, GREAR Ormond Street Hospital, Karibuni Trust, Kidney Research, Methodist Homes, Methodist Relief and Development, Ministers' Housing Society, Oxfam, Presbytery Fund, Property Fund, Spinal Injuries Unit, Town Centre Chaplaincy, Wheel Power, Whitechapel Mission and Wingrave Methodist Church.

# **5 - THE ACCOUNTS**



The following accounts were approved by the autumn church council meeting and have since been audited.



**AYLESBURY METHODIST CHURCH ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST AUGUST 2015**

**Income and Expenditure Account**

		<b>Budget 2014/15</b>	<b>Actual 2014/15</b>	<b>Budget 2015/16</b>
<b>Actual 2013/14</b>	<b>General Fund</b>	£	£	£
£	<b>Income</b>			
63,903	Collection (note 2)	64,000	73,057.67	66,000
11,879	Income Tax refund (note 3)	11,500	13,401.90	12,000
39,010	Lettings	39,000	47,231.10	41,000
5,358	Fund raising (note 3)	7,500	3,522.80	5,000
3,349	Donations and legacies	1,000	2,745.76	1,000
710	Weddings and funerals	700	891.00	700
115	Bank interest	300	97.22	100
1,194	Coffee Bar profits	1,000	1,447.00	1,100
199	Other income	100	252.09	100
<b>125,717</b>		<b>125,100</b>	<b>142,646.54</b>	<b>127,000</b>
	<b>Expenditure</b>			
	MINISTRY			
74,616	Circuit contribution	77,640	77,640.00	78,720
2,700	Donations and subscriptions (note 4)	2,700	2,700.00	2,700
1,000	Local outreach (note 4)	1,000	1,000.00	1,000
<b>78,316</b>		<b>81,340</b>	<b>81,340.00</b>	<b>82,420</b>
	PROPERTY			
10,037	Heat, light, water and refuse	11,600	10,552.25	10,600
7,072	Cleaner's wages and supplies	7,100	7,699.37	7,700
17,465	Building maintenance (note 5)	2,000	2,590.01	2,000
4,035	Equipment maintenance	5,000	9,754.61	4,000
2,998	Improvements	1,000	1,723.47	1,000
658	Organ and pianos	500	315.00	500
3,149	Insurance	3,200	2,979.45	3,100
<b>45,414</b>		<b>30,400</b>	<b>35,614.16</b>	<b>28,900</b>
	OTHER			
3,495	Administration	3,200	4,469.47	3,500
5,581	Administrator - wages	5,700	5,051.12	5,700
2,725	Telephones	2,700	2,991.92	2,800
2,106	Church Activities	3,000	1,892.20	2,500
997	Publicity	1,000	2,591.98	1,000
586	Other	400	2,718.12	500
<b>15,490</b>		<b>16,000</b>	<b>19,714.81</b>	<b>16,000</b>
<b>139,220</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>127,740</b>	<b>136,668.97</b>	<b>127,320</b>
<b>( 13,503)</b>	<b>Net (expenditure) / income</b>	<b>( 2,640)</b>	<b>5,977.57</b>	<b>( 320)</b>
( 251)	Net transfers between funds		204.63	
<b>( 13,754)</b>	<b>Net (expenditure) / income after transfers</b>		<b>6,182.20</b>	
53,181	Balance brought forward 1/9/2014		39,426.63	
<b>39,427</b>	<b>Balance carried forward 31/8/2015</b>		<b>45,608.83</b>	

**AYLESBURY METHODIST CHURCH ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST AUGUST 2015**

**Restricted Funds**

**Income and Expenditure Account**

	<b>Church Chairs Fund</b>	<b>Benevolent Fund</b>	<b>Church Organisations</b>	<b>Total</b>
	£	£	£	£
<b>Income</b>				
Tax recovered	50.00			50.00
Fund raising	4,319.80			4,319.80
Other income		896.10	16,522.60	17,418.70
<b>Total income</b>	<b>4,369.80</b>	<b>896.10</b>	<b>16,522.60</b>	<b>21,788.50</b>
<b>Payments</b>				
Other expenses	19,236.65	150.00	19,508.91	38,895.56
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>19,236.65</b>	<b>150.00</b>	<b>19,508.91</b>	<b>38,895.56</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure)</b>	<b>( 14,866.85)</b>	<b>746.10</b>	<b>( 2,986.31)</b>	<b>( 17,107.06)</b>
<b>Transfers between funds</b>	420.00		( 560.00)	( 140.00)
<b>Net income / (expend.) after transfers</b>	<b>( 14,446.85)</b>	<b>746.10</b>	<b>( 3,546.31)</b>	<b>( 17,247.06)</b>
<b>Balances brought forward 1/9/2014</b>	14,545.00	525.67	13,021.44	28,092.11
<b>Net income / (expenditure)</b>	<b>( 14,446.85)</b>	<b>746.10</b>	<b>( 3,546.31)</b>	<b>( 17,247.06)</b>
<b>Balances carried forward 31/8/2015</b>	<b>98.15</b>	<b>1,271.77</b>	<b>9,475.13</b>	<b>10,845.05</b>

**Endowment Funds**

**Held by The Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes**

	<b>Mead Bequest</b>	<b>Stranks &amp; Staley's Bequests</b>	<b>Totals</b>
	£	£	£
	Restricted	Unrestricted	
<b>Balances brought forward 1/9/2014</b>	197.34	3,317.58	3,514.92
Income	5.91	64.63	70.54
Paid to General Fund			-
Paid to J Team and Choir	( 5.91)	( 64.63)	( 70.54)
Change in Value of investments	12.33	90.65	102.98
<b>Balances carried forward 31/8/2015</b>	<b>209.67</b>	<b>3,408.23</b>	<b>3,617.90</b>

**AYLESBURY METHODIST CHURCH ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST 2015**

**Balance Sheet**  
as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2015

Fund balances at 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2015	General Fund	Restricted funds			Total
		Chair fund	Church orgs.	Benevolent	
	£	£	£	£	£
Per income & Expenditure summaries	45,608.83	98.15	9,475.13	1,271.77	56,453.88
Capitalised expenditure	903,730.00				903,730.00
Endowment funds held by the Trustees For Methodist Church Purposes	3,408.23		209.67		3,717.90
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>952,747.06</b>	<b>98.15</b>	<b>9,684.80</b>	<b>1,271.77</b>	<b>963,801.78</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>					
<b>Assets:</b>					
<b>Fixed tangible assets</b>					
Community centre improvements	903,730				903,730.00
<b>Current assets</b>					
Bank balances					
HSBC current	6,896.38				6,896.38
HSBC deposit	9,626.94				9,626.94
Central Finance Board	24,182.09	98.15	337.56	1,271.77	25,889.57
Imprest account	100.00				100.00
Held by church organisations			9,131.66		9,131.66
Endowment fund accounts*					
Stranks & Staley's bequests	3,408.23				3,408.23
Mead bequest (J Team & Choir)			209.67		209.67
Debtors (see note 6)	11,605.00		5.91		11,610.91
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>55,818.64</b>	<b>98.15</b>	<b>9,684.80</b>	<b>1,271.77</b>	<b>66,873.36</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>					
Lettings deposits	1,100.00				1,100.00
Creditors (note 7)	5,701.58				5,701.58
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>6,801.58</b>				<b>6,801.58</b>
<b>Net current assets (current assets less liabilities)</b>	<b>49,017.06</b>	<b>98.15</b>	<b>9,684.80</b>	<b>1,271.77</b>	<b>60,071.78</b>
<b>Net assets (all assets less liabilities)</b>	<b>952,747.06</b>	<b>98.15</b>	<b>9,684.80</b>	<b>1,271.77</b>	<b>963,801.78</b>

\*Held by Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes



## Notes to the Accounts – Roger Kirk

1 The accounts are prepared on the accruals basis. This means that income and expenditure is shown in the year to which it relates and the cost of sizeable tangible assets with a life greater than one year will be capitalised and charged to revenue over a suitable period of years. No comprehensive valuation of the church buildings and its contents is shown in the balance sheet as this is considered irrelevant but the recent major improvements to the rear premises were capitalised. The buildings are insured for £2,651,152, the organ for £51,273 and other contents £191,826.

2 The actual of £73,057 for collection income is made up of envelopes £26752, bank standing orders £38,454 and cash £7851.

3 The separate account created for the Church chairs fund shows, this year, the remaining fund-raising income and all the expenditure incurred. There is a small balance of £98.15 remaining which if not used for the purpose of the fund will be transferred to the main Church account.

4 Donations and subscriptions include £1700 paid to four connexional funds and £1000 to Methodist Missions. In addition, retiring collections, Church Organisations, the Missions Committee and Sunday coffee bars resulted in a further £6511.89 being given to 21 charities during the year of which £1567.84 was to Methodist Missions and MRDF.) The £1000 under local outreach is for the Town Centre Chaplaincy.

5 The actual of £9781 for equipment includes £1,349 for projector bulbs, and £4590 for boiler repairs. This latter includes £1,870 for a major service carried out in the last few days of the year by the new contractor. The £1,723 shown under improvements is for the new entry system.

6	Debtors include:	
	Tax refund re April to August 2015	5,120
	Lettings	<u>6,485</u>
		<u>11,605</u>

7	Creditors include;	
	Missions	1000
	Utilities	342
	Telephones	368
	Mead bequest	6
	Tax refunds for Stone and Waddesdon	1,116
	Boiler maintenance	1,870
	Publicity – Web site fees	<u>1,000</u>
		<u>5,702</u>

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