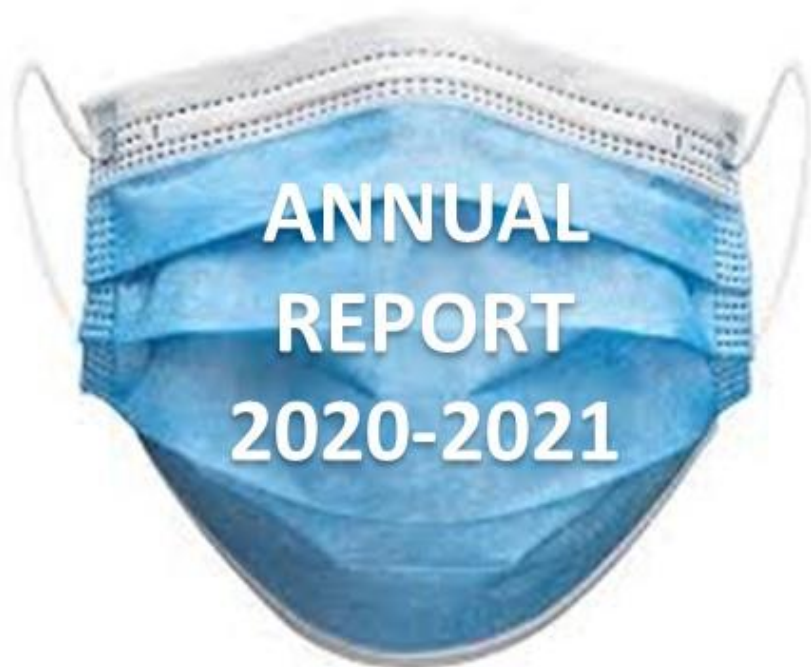




Aylesbury Methodist Church & Centre



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CONTENTS

This annual report shows what we, as a registered charity, have done during the past Methodist year (September 2020 to August 2021). It includes how our organisation, youth and other groups, the charities we support, and our finances have been affected by, and risen to, the challenge of the coronavirus pandemic.

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WELCOME – Rev. Richard Atkinson

I don't know about anyone else but simply trying to piece together the last year is complicated. When have we been allowed out and when locked in? What has been vaguely normal? We went on holiday. What has been different? Celebrating Christmas at Easter and having to sit outside to abide by the regulations. Remembering what restarted when, or at least trying to, adds to the fun.

The good news is that we are back and apart from the continued request to wear masks things are feeling relatively normal; Christmas is being planned in the hope that all the usual events and services will take place. It has been good to see the gradual return of our congregation. There are still those coming back for the first time, and I suspect this will continue for a while yet.

All this means that the content of the Annual Report will not be as fulsome as in previous years because as we look back, the shadow of the pandemic still casts a large shadow. However, we appear to be emerging and with booster jabs and such more normal life is ahead. We have new folk who have joined us, we are looking to rebuild and hopefully continue to serve the community around us as well as proclaiming the story of our faith in Jesus Christ

Our hope and prayer need to be that the potential contained within these passages spurs us on in the adventures that the future has in store.

Blessings,

Richard.

ORGANISATION

Governance – Peter Green

Methodists belong to local churches or ecumenical partnerships, but also feel part of a larger connected community, **the Connexion**. The local decision-making body is the **church council**. Members of this council are also the church trustees and comprise elected officials and representatives from the **annual General Church Meeting**, which anyone can attend. Our own church council members last year were:

Rev. Richard Atkinson, Jackie Simpson-Tyda, Roger Kirk, Gill Marks, Gill Nord, Kaz Tyda, Frances Ayles, Elaine Hope, Philip Kolade, Matilda Phiri, Keith Wallace, Vivienne Kemp, Peter Green, Margaret Miskin, Albert Odro, Jennie Torpey, Arthur Sara, Pauline Noble, David Neville, Peter Farmer, Kevin Hardern, John Miskin, Sandie Steeden, Rae Garden, Babs Trend, Paul Ingram, Lynn Bernstone and Tim Olufosoye.

At Aylesbury, the church council appoints **church stewards** and a **leadership team**. Church stewards ensure the smooth running of worship services and act as a conduit between minister and congregation. The leadership team includes church steward representatives and acts as the executive arm of the church council.



District Chair Rev. Helen Cameron with our minister and Circuit Superintendent, Rev. Richard Atkinson

Aylesbury Methodist Church & Centre belongs to the **Vale of Aylesbury circuit**, a group of 16 churches served by a team of ministers. The circuit is led by the superintendent minister, who is also our own minister, Rev. Richard Atkinson. He presides over the circuit staff (both lay and ordained) and the circuit meeting, and with lay and ordained colleagues facilitates and encourages mission throughout the circuit. Our cir-

cuit is one of 21 within the **Northampton district**, whose chair is Rev. Helen Cameron. The district exists primarily to advance the mission of the Church in a region by providing support for the circuits in line with the connexional priorities.



The Covid-spaced 2021 Methodist conference

All districts are represented at the **annual Methodist conference**, the governing body of the Methodist Church. Detailed governance is set out in **CPD**, the Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church. This is available in two volumes as a free download from the Methodist Church website.

Leadership Team – Jennie Torpey

Leadership Team meetings continued to be conducted via Zoom throughout the imposition and lifting of various Covid restrictions during the year. This enabled the team to monitor the resumption of Sunday Church services and other activities in the Church and Community Centre.

Both Government Covid regulations and Methodist Church guidance were strictly observed during Sunday services, and a small and increasing number of the congregation attended between September and December, until they had to be suspended again just before Christmas. However, services have continued to be streamed, either from the Church or from the Manse, and the daily Thought for Today videos recorded and made available on the website. Sunday worship resumed on 23rd May 2021, Harvest Festival, with current Covid guidelines in place.

Funds were made available for a Young Leaders scheme, and Charlie Levitt and Jeremy Hanson chosen to take these positions, working within the confines of lockdowns. Some safeguarding training was delivered by Zoom, with more planned for the autumn of 2021. Up until the end of April, AMC members, as part of a group from local churches, continued to cook and deliver evening meals to a local hotel, where rooms for rough sleepers were temporarily funded by the government.



NHS Blood Donation sessions - essential hirers during the pandemic

Use of the Community Centre was mainly restricted to essential hirers such as the NHS Blood Donation service and Sees the Day - a day centre for people with learning difficulties. However, several user groups plan to return in the autumn of 2021. The Coffee Shop in the Welcome Space is due to reopen in September 2021, initially on three days a week.

A security system upgrade installation took place in December 2020. Membership of the Leadership Team this year has been Rev Richard Atkinson, Peter Green, Kevin Hardern, Vivienne Kemp, Gill Marks, Margaret Miskin, Albert Odro, Tim Olofusoye and Jennie Torpey. Peter Green has now retired from the group after many years' service.

Church Stewards – Gill Marks

All the group of stewards at AMC have worked well together and liaised with Richard to ensure that our congregation come back to worship safely as we emerged from lockdown twice during this last year. We have worked out how to adjust as different rules have been brought in or relaxed and more and more people have been coming through our doors. Although some of our regulars are yet to come back, we are welcoming many new worshippers which is great to see. Also with fewer ministers and lay workers in the circuit, the stewards have worked



Gill Marks - Senior Church Steward

with many visiting preachers to ensure a smooth running service can take place.

Having dealt with many different problems over the last 12 months, we are all looking forward to the future when we hope things will be back to the new normal and our church seats are back full again. We are very grateful to the regular members who have also stood in to help with the extra jobs we have had to cover and would like to point out we can always do with more stewards if anyone is interested in this very worthwhile and rewarding role.

Property – Kevin Hardern

It has been a very strange year, with not much activity on the premises by users, but some continuing work needed on the fabric of the building itself and the services for which we contract.



Kevin Hardern



Tim Olufosoye



Jennie Torpey



Shirley Francis

Following the successful re-sanding of the main floor last year and the laying of the badminton court, this year's main project has been a revision of the security arrangements. This was led by Tim Olufosoye, ably assisted by Shirley Francis and Jennie Torpey. This has resulted in a much more secure environment for all users. It does not require any passwords for access, as all people with 'fobs' are uniquely identifiable on their opening of the building and opening its secure doors, both from the foyer and into the church itself.

Other works to the building include minor repairs to roofing, which was creating water ingress issues, and the replacement of Room 4 fire escape

door and surrounds. Certification of the 10-year electrical check, in line with legal requirements, has now been obtained and discussions continue about wall repair due to tree growth at the rear of the property. It is hoped this will be concluded next year. Regular, weekly checks of the property during periods of lockdown were undertaken by appropriate volunteers for which we thank them very much. We continue to retain final payment due to contractors for the 'Welcome Space' as they have yet to complete works adequately on the heat curtain in the foyer.



Trevor Nord

Finally, our sincere thanks go to Trevor Nord for leading the change of our telephone supplier from BT to Vodafone. This saved us considerable expense due to the nature of the contractual arrangements that were in place with BT, our reduced usage, and their inflexibility in altering the contract to meet our needs.

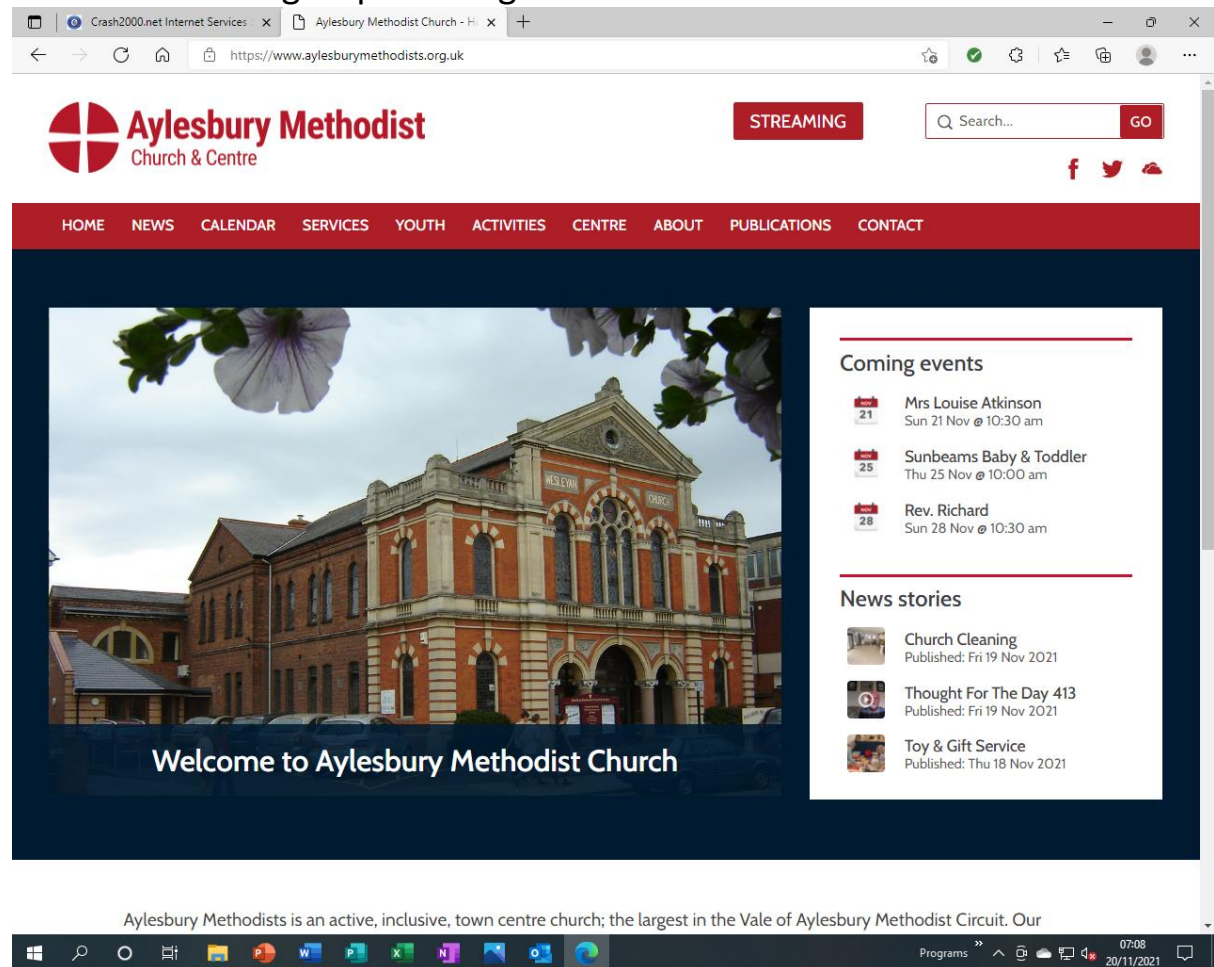
Let us all hope 2021/22 brings some sense of a return to normal use of the premises.

Communications – Peter Green

All church members share their faith with neighbours, friends, family, and the wider community with what they say and do. We have some tools to help in this, namely, our website, streamed services, social media, noticeboards, Thought For The Day videos and this annual report. Each gives more detail about who we are, what we do and what we care about. We look at each in turn.

Website: During the last year, we have been discussing with Then Media, our website providers, an upgrade to a faster, more stable platform. The transition was completed in September 2021, giving a refreshed look. By the end of 2021, thanks to Marilyn Storer's guidance, we will become compliant with government and Methodist Church data protection requirements by automatically removing news items more than two years old. The new site includes quick links to the weekly notices, preaching plan, calendar, and policies. During lockdown, the calendar was minimal but as we return towards normality, we are pleased to welcome back Margaret

Smith as the office volunteer who will help to populate the calendar with church and user group bookings.

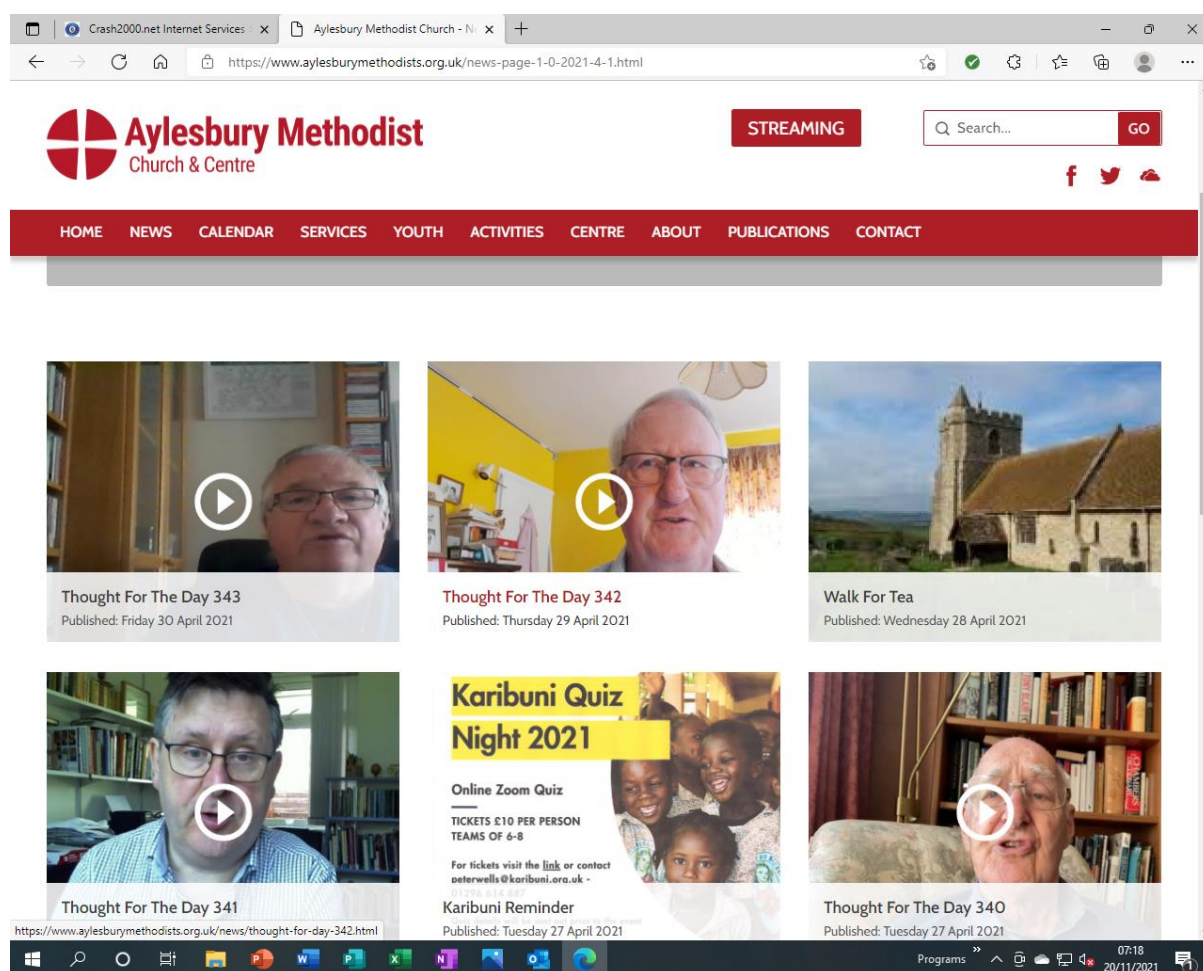


The 'new look' website

Social media: Whenever we post a news item or Thought For The Day video on the website, there is also a linked Facebook posting and Tweet. In addition, during the last year as part of the District Young Leaders' Scheme, Jeremy Hanson has also posted some items. Longer term, we would like someone to take on or guide our social media presence to help gain greater interaction with our local communities, so if you know someone who might be interested, please let Richard or me know. Support will be available to them from the recently formed Network of Methodist Communicators.

Streaming: Our streamed services have been a real blessing during the pandemic and continue to be so for those not yet able to return in person. We are indebted to The Sunday Service for providing us with the free equipment and technical support to enable us to stream services from both the manse and from church. A big thank you too to Albert Odro and Harry

Darku for manning the camera keyboard in the gallery each week since we returned to church. It is good to learn that some of our younger members have expressed interest in helping them. Services can be accessed from the Streaming button on the website and are kept on the site for about six weeks.



Geoff Short, Pete Honeyball, Richard Atkinson, and David Neville - some of the regular contributors to TFTD videos on the website News section

Thought For The Day (TFTD): 398 TFTD videos were produced six days a week during the pandemic, until a break was taken in July 2021. Shown on our website and averaging three to four minutes each, they were written and presented by Richard, other circuit clergy, and lay preachers. Feedback received, means that they are being recommenced with Richard and his lay team in November 2021. Our thanks go to Roy Collis, for his technical work to help make this happen.

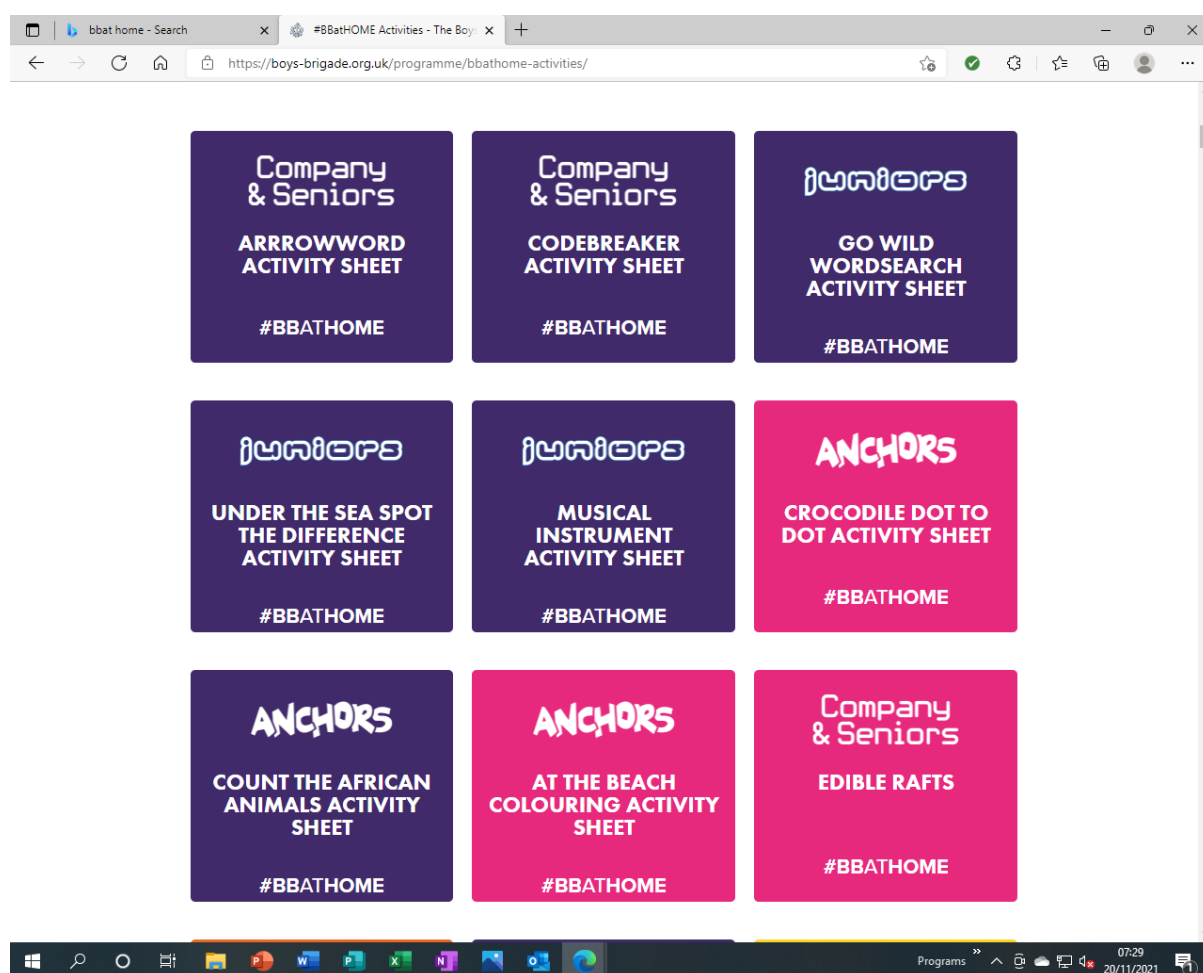
Noticeboard: Our external noticeboard was showing its age and the church council agreed to have a replacement one slotted into the existing posts.

Pandemic-related staff illnesses, furloughing and travel restrictions meant the installation was delayed until October but is now complete (see back cover of this report).

YOUTH

Boys' Brigade – Steve Kemp

We started back in the Autumn to face-to-face activities with social distancing and PPE in place although that made sessions difficult to run. When we hit another lockdown, we employed more excellent #BBatHome resources from Headquarters, supplemented with resources packs that we delivered to boys' homes.



Some of the BB resource material

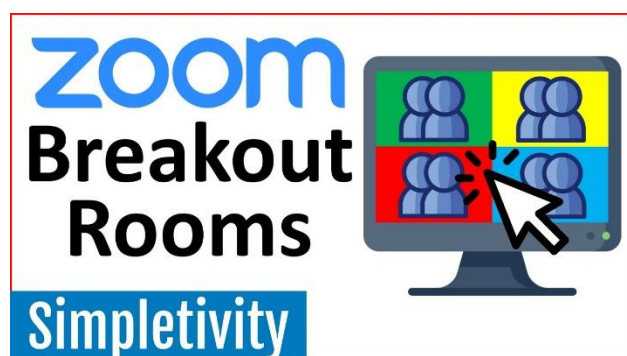
Zoom was used for weekly meetings for each age group with three officers on each call. We returned to face-to-face activities at the church before the

summer break including a carefully organised Awards/Promotion Evening for parents and family members to share in the boy's achievements during a difficult year, which saw one boy gaining the Queen's Badge (the highest award in BB) and one boy the President's Badge.

As always, I am very grateful to all the officers and helpers and the continued support from all parents/carers that enables BB to run; I truly believe we make a difference to the boys' confidence, outlook, and sense of community.

Girls' Brigade – Dawn Wright & Sarah Davidge

1st Aylesbury Girls' Brigade has continued to run throughout COVID albeit in a very different way. As every other organisation did, we had to adapt through the last year to all the restrictions. Being leaders with barely any technical ability between us, this at times was extremely stressful, but somehow, we managed.



We met each week via zoom – even managing to split into breakout rooms for the different age groups – I am still not sure that any of us believe we managed it! We are so grateful that we were able to find a way to meet as it became quickly obvious how much

many of our girls were struggling with home schooling and isolation from their friends. This was particularly noticed in our older girls. We tried to make Monday evenings as upbeat and fun as we could, with time for them also to talk in a safe space and realise they were not alone in some of their feelings.

Thankfully, we are now back at GB face-to-face on a Monday evening which is lovely. We have started back with games, craft and learning about things such as homelessness, refugees, and poverty.

We continue to be proud of all the girls and hope that over this next year they will continue to come along, have fun, and hear more about God's love for us all.

J Team and Creche - Vivienne Kemp

After various lockdowns and church closures, we tentatively opened our doors again at the beginning of the summer and have now resumed some form of normal activity. With numbers initially small as we returned to J Team, we began with all-age activities but have now split into two groups with more age-specific activities. We remain masked and covid-safe, but it has been a delight to welcome our youngsters back.

Sunbeams – Margaret Miskin

Sunbeams continues to thrive despite the many times we had to close because of Covid restrictions. Lots of text messages were sent and phone calls made so that we could keep in touch. It was truly wonderful when we all met up again. How the children had grown and the smiles on everyone's faces spoke louder than words. My thanks go to Elaine Hope, who stepped in when Mel left us. It really does take two to tango.

Youth Exchange - Vivienne Kemp and Dawn Wright



*Daun in the Eifel - home of our youth exchange
partners T.u.S. Daun*

Our exchange has now been in abeyance for 2 years although we continue to keep up with our German friends in Daun. Central Daun was affected by some flooding but luckily our friends all managed to stay safe, although former exchange leaders Gorden and Petra Nickel had some moping up to do in their holiday let near Gerolstein. We continue to

receive regular updates and will need to review in the autumn whether the virus has subsided enough for us to plan an exchange for 2022.

ACTIVITIES

Banner Group – Brenda Horne

We have not met since March 2020 and so have been unable to do any work on banners. Instead, we have all been working on our own projects at home. We are hoping to start again in the spring of 2022 when we shall be looking for new members and new ideas for banners.

Bedgrove House Group – Rosemarie Bucknell

Despite planning our programme together last November at our AGM we were unable to meet as planned due to the pandemic. The group said goodbye to two of our members who relocated back to Yorkshire but welcomed two new joiners, so our numbers remain at 16. Some of us learnt new skills as we embarked on 'Zoom' meetings and a monthly email from myself helped us to keep in touch, especially those of us isolating.



...a gloriously sunny day in April...

Our first meeting together was a coffee morning on a gloriously sunny day in a member's garden, where we enjoyed each other's company and a chat over cake and biscuits. Our garden party in August eventually went ahead having been delayed when the host was isolated because of a covid contact.

Although the weather was a little cool, we feasted inside in well ventilated rooms and enjoyed ourselves. Another coffee morning was also hot and sunny and enjoyed by all. Let us hope our plans for next year will be more achievable, but we will have to wait and see, won't we!

Flower Arrangers – Melanie Dean

During the time that the Sunday services were being streamed from Herston Close, flower arrangements were not created for the church. But the front gardens at AMC were tended and watered along with the indoor plants. (Kevin Hardern dealt with the weeds!) Once services resumed in AMC, an arrangement was placed at the front in church as usual.



*Thank you to
Janice Matthews*

Going forward, flower arrangements are created on Friday mornings and placed in the Church and the Welcome Space now the coffee bar has resumed. We also work together when decorating the Church for celebrations and we had a wedding!

Janice Matthews has now handed over the 'reins' of the Flower Team to myself - after many years of keeping us organised. My thanks to her for her dedication to the role and her mentoring. Janice will continue to create beautiful arrangements along with the rest of the team, who are myself, Ruby Darku, Edith Awadzi and Sue Kirk.

Friday Food – Karen Crussell

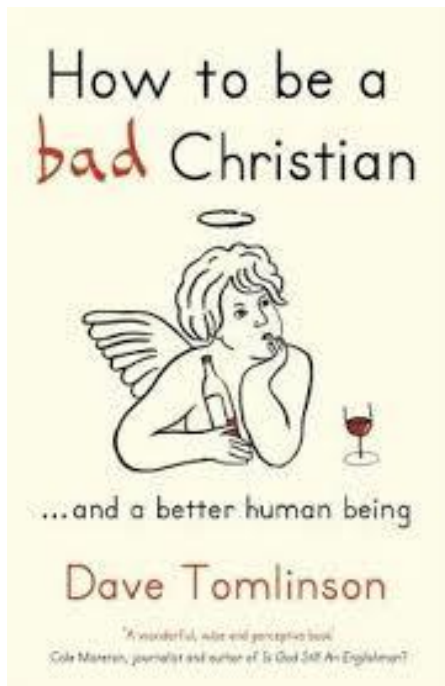
The provision of hot food and hospitality in our newly refurbished Welcome Space came to an end with the announcement of the first lockdown in March 2020. Since then, up until 30 April 2021, members of the Friday Food continued to work tirelessly alongside St Joseph's Church and the Quaker Meeting to ensure that all homeless people, lodged in a local hotel because of Coronavirus precautions, received a daily two course hot meal. Our efforts were much appreciated by the homeless guests at the hotel and the agencies supporting them.

There has been a noticeable reduction in rough sleepers in the town and this is expected to continue as the Council, AHAG and other organisations have expressed a determination to do all they can to ensure that accommodation is made available to all who need it.

The team, however, has not disbanded. We are maintaining contact with relevant organisations, ready to respond appropriately to the situation of

poverty and homelessness in our town as needs become apparent. We welcome feedback, suggestions, and ideas from anyone in the church community as to how we might most effectively do this.

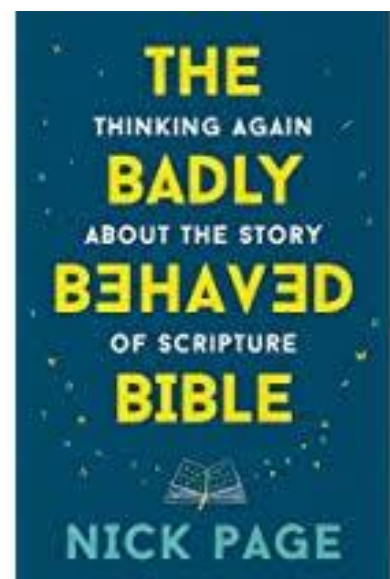
Good Faith Book Club – Peter Green



Zoom, rather than face-to-face meetings were the Covid-enforced order of the day this year for our six meetings. We aim for a mix of styles and genres to cater for our differing preferences. So, this year's books included an inspirational one by the American Bishop who spoke at Harry and Meghan's wedding, the work of a locally based charity working in Guatemala, an autobiography of England cricket captain and Anglican Bishop, David Sheppard and one on why faith makes sense in this secular world.

However, we found the two best books were bad books – *The Badly Behaved Bible* by Nick Page and *How To Be A Bad Christian And A Better Human Being* by Dave Tomlinson. A summary of our discussion of each book is on our website under Activities/Good Faith Book Club.

In the coming year, we plan to revert to meeting in person. As we come towards our tenth anniversary and 60th book, we will also debate whether to continue, or celebrate our ten years and cease to meet.



In Stitches – Pauline Latham

With some of our group shielding during the pandemic, we have not been able to meet but hope to do so, all being well, in early 2022.

Greeting Cards - Janice Matthews and Rosemarie Bucknell

For many years we have together crafted a large variety of handmade greetings cards which are available to purchase from the display stand in the Reception Area of the community centre. The cards are attractively priced and the substantial income from sales is transferred into church funds periodically. We are happy to create Personalised Cards to order. Please speak to one of us advising your requirements. You won't be disappointed!

Music Director's Report – Derrick Matthews

Choir: Regrettably since the outbreak of Covid 19 the choir have been unable to contribute to worship due to the prevailing restrictions. They have however, during recent weeks attended to give backing support to the appointed soloists during Sunday morning worship. Choir Members and Organists greatly miss providing their skills to the worship of our church and hopefully it will not be too long before 'normal service can be resumed! The Preachers and Stewards give generous support to the Choir, and this is greatly appreciated.



Derrick Matthews at the console

Organists: The appointed organists have attended on their allocated Sundays to accompany the appointed soloists and more recently the limited congregational singing. They have also provided suitable voluntaries before and after worship.

Organ Concerts: The acclaimed Annual Organ Concerts (34 to date)

were to have taken place with top recitalists Ian Tracey in 2020 and Gordon Stewart in 2021, but unfortunately these had to be cancelled as audiences of well over 200 could not be guaranteed or accommodated. Resumption of this event will hopefully continue when deemed viable.

Music Group - Sue Kirk

In May, live services resumed after the second lockdown, and the Music Group played at monthly family services. Our numbers were restricted to six, but in the Autumn we were allowed our full complement.

We thank Julie Maguire for her leadership and piano playing over the years and to Nick Aylen for his stage management. We are hoping to encourage younger singers and players to join the group.



Nick Aylen

SOS – Lynn Bernstone



During 2020, SOS continued with Zoom most months and in December we had a Christmas quiz and shared a coordinated virtual meal. We have a WhatsApp group where we share bits of news and very silly posts which crop up on various social media pages. We had our first face to face get together in September this year at the Storer's home. It was a very well attended, joyful occasion with wonderful food as you would expect at any

SOS do, matched with laughter and free flowing conversations. No one wanted to leave.

We have a couple of casual events planned for the rest of this year into January, after which we shall hopefully gather and put together our annual programme for 2022. As we didn't do half of what we had planned for 2020, we may well dip into that. We remain a happy, welcoming bunch, approaching 30 years of sharing fellowship.

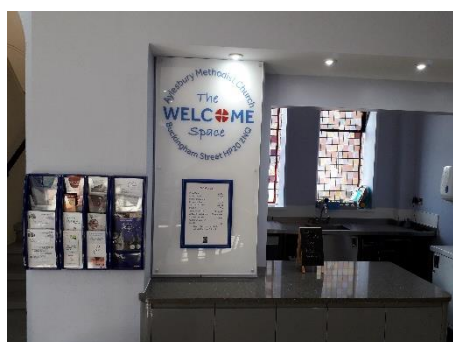
Tuesday Fellowship – Coral Soulsby

We are back, with much thankfulness for our health and strength to pick up the fellowship and friendship we enjoyed pre-virus.

Our first meeting was the long-awaited AGM. It was chaired by our Minister, the Rev Richard Atkinson, and ten of our members attended. The decision was voted on to limit our meetings to just once every month, at least until everyone feels happy to increase our meetings, if just for friendship and a cup of tea. Many thanks to Margaret and Jean for picking up the task of teas again. Thanks also to Roger Kirk for his assistance whilst we are without a treasurer.

Prayerfully, we will be able to again book the speakers who were cancelled due to the lockdown. They will be informative and inspirational, so I trust that others from the church family will join us for the afternoon on occasions.

Welcome Space Coffee Bar – Chris Sara



We were saddened, that like so many venues, we had to remain closed through much of the past year. We did open for a few weeks during the brief lifting of restrictions, with careful consideration to Covid rules. Our three or four regulars were pleased to be able to meet up again. However, with the age group of our volunteers, we struggled to open every weekday as we had previously done.

Pat Martin Seehusen, our co coordinator for the previous year, moved away from the area in June, and we offer our thanks to her for her work and wish her every blessing in her new home. I felt that I could not take on the responsibility again as I am away from Aylesbury on many occasions, so we closed again across the summer.

We are delighted that Margaret Miskin and Elaine Hope have taken on the task and have the coffee bar up and running again. Sadly, we are still short of helpers and so at present it is only opening on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, so far with very few clients attending. The ladies of the knitting group, who used the space on Fridays, were delighted when we reopened and now come along on Mondays. We do hope that we will continue to be supported as it is such a valuable space for people to meet and share friendship.

CHARITIES

Action for Children – Pauline Noble



Another very difficult year in our fundraising work for Action for Children with no possibility of holding any of our annual events or collecting money from those with home collecting boxes. However, hopefully there is a little light at the end of the tunnel and in 2022 we hope to have our annual Quiz and hold Cake and Produce Stalls in the church hall. We have also been able to start collecting in our home collecting box money, and

to date £345.13 has been forwarded to Action for Children HQ, together with a further donation of £75 for the Charity from our Wingrave chapel.

However, within this difficult year there has been a highlight. Shortly before our 2020 Toy Service there came an announcement of a Christmas lock down and therefore cancellation of our plans to collect new toys for children in our area who would otherwise have had very little. Not to be downhearted, and with help from our Church Treasurer, we put out an appeal for money donations and within 2 weeks had collected £900. In discussion with Bucks CC Outreach Officer as to the way forward, we then turned this money into vouchers for children and young people. All wrapped and each with a Christmas card ready to name they were handed to the Family Workers to deliver.

Cards for Good Causes – John Miskin

What a year 2020 turned out to be. First, we opened on 17th October, then we were closed on the 4th November because of “Lock Down”, then we opened again on 2nd December and then finally closed for the year on 19th December. This meant we were open for 32 days and closed for 23 days. However, we still managed to sell £6145.17 of cards and gifts.



Cards for Good Causes

Add to this we had all the Covid restrictions, hand sanitizer as people came in, signing in on the NHS app or manually, face masks, a one-way system around the shop and only 4 people in the shop at any one time. On top of all that we had a new computerised till system which allowed us to scan the bar codes and the computer did the rest, including taking a credit card payment.

I would like to thank all my volunteers, some of whom did not have a chance to work in the shop because of the lockdown. A big thanks goes to my duty managers, Steve Marks, Bob Bucknell, Arthur Sara and a special thanks to Cliff Darlington who after many years as manager and duty manager has decided to retire.

Christian Aid – Jennie Torpey & Maureen Tucker

Christian Aid is an international development organisation that insists the world can and must be changed to one where ‘everyone can live a full life, free from poverty and inequality’. Their aim to end poverty and injustice involves working in partnership with local organisations, as well as with governments and the private sector. Their work includes helping people to:

- claim their rights and access services such as healthcare and education
- ensure they are not discriminated against for any reason
- become more resilient to shocks and disasters such as drought, climate change and hurricanes
- make the most of opportunities, such as being able to sell their produce for a fair price.

Aylesbury Methodist Church counts Christian Aid as one the main charities

they support, with collections at the annual Christmas Carol Concert and the Christmas Eve Midnight Communion Service going to help fund the crucial work done by this charity.



The main fund-raising usually takes place annually during Christian Aid Week in May, with a House-to-House collection, and a retiring collection on Christian Aid Sunday, when we have a video or a speaker to tell the congregation about some

of the individuals whose lives have been transformed with help. Sadly, because of the Coronavirus pandemic, none of these events were able to take place this year; neither were store collections, which are another way we raise funds for Christian Aid. However, once the Church returns to a more 'normal' life, we plan to acknowledge, celebrate, and support the valuable contribution that Christian Aid makes around the world, during our Harvest Festival service in October, including a retiring collection.

We hope that our regular events will be able to take place during 2021 – 2022.

Karibuni Children – Joy Murphy



**Transforming young
Kenyan lives.**

Registered UK Charity Number 1044872

Last year really was a challenge to us all, and not least for those we support and work with in Kenya. Last year I told of how Karibuni had been able to raise extra money through generous donors, and by using a significant amount from reserves, to continue feeding the children and their families. This did cause many difficulties for the social workers who were approached and sometimes threatened by men not connected with the projects. The brave staff (mainly young women) confronted them and were able to send them away empty handed. In the meantime, very young,

hungry children unknown to the projects, but who had heard about the food parcels, were arriving and often the staff were moved to provide 'chai kidogo' (something small) for them, from their own resources.



Back to school

In January most children returned to school and the government decreed that both this year and next should each have four terms to replace the terms lost through the shutdown. For the children and staff this has meant very short holidays and increased pressure. For Karibuni it has meant an extra term's fees for two years! It is difficult to know what the Covid infection rate is in Kenya –

their official figures are very low, but quite different to the accounts we hear from the social workers on the ground.

We are experiencing rising prices of food and fuel here at home, and many people are struggling as a result. In Kenya, having lost crops last year to plagues of locusts, quickly followed by floods and then drought, all during the Covid pandemic, the cost of living has increased alarmingly. This obviously has repercussions for our fundraising this year.



Joy Murphy making a surprise visit pre-Covid-19

We have been able to have monthly zoom meetings with the social workers from the 6 largest projects, and this has been an invaluable tool, giving moral support to them and encouraging us. This has been so useful to both

sides, that it will continue in some way even after Covid. There have been some challenges – Kenya suffers from regular electricity cuts, and poor internet connections plus, on one occasion, a deluge of rain which, falling on a tin roof, made it impossible to hear what our Kenyan friends were saying!

Last year we were unable to have many fundraising events, although we did manage to have our annual quiz, albeit via zoom thanks to some very talented friends! This was successful and we raised almost the same amount as we do with our face-to-face quizzes, which we are hoping to have in January 2022 – possibly a hybrid affair to enable people not local to Aylesbury to join in.



Karibuni oven gloves

There are several small sales of Karibuni merchandise booked so far, including one in Wingrave Methodist Church on November 27th (2pm - 4pm) and one at Stone Village Hall on December 3rd. There are also two primary and a secondary school offering support in different ways – we are always delighted when young people want to be involved with Karibuni, and a Methodist Church in Kendal is going to adopt Karibuni as their Christmas project.

We are beginning to feel we are at the beginning of a re-opening of opportunities and are ready to take advantage of this. Several of us are ready and eager to go out to churches and other groups and share information about the work being done in Kenya among the children from the ‘poorest of the poor’.

Again, thank you for the support you continue to give to Karibuni – our hope is that none of us grow tired of enabling the children to reach their potential.

Link to Hope – Margaret Miskin



As was expected, our Link to Hope shoe box appeal was down on previous years as many of our regular donors were in isolation due to Covid-19 so found it difficult to participate. However, many very generously donated money which I then used to buy goods to fill some shoe boxes. From our local area, 85 boxes were sent to Link to Hope's main warehouse in Worthing ready to go on their journey to Romania and surrounding countries.

MHA – Jennie Torpey

MHA, (originally called Methodist Homes for the Aged), is a charity founded in 1943 by members of the Methodist Church. The charity provides care, accommodation, and support services for older people throughout Britain.



Their mission is to inspire the best care and wellbeing at every stage of later life, and are proud to be recognised as a leading provider of care and support in later life. They provide:

- care homes, many offering specialist dementia or nursing care.
- retirement living communities, with access to social and leisure facilities and flexible care if and when needed.
- 'Live at Home' community services to support those who wish to live independently in their own homes.

At Aylesbury Methodist Church we usually have an annual retiring collection in June on MHA Sunday, sometimes inviting a speaker to tell us more about their work, especially about the local project, Hillside Care Home, just along the road from the Church. Sadly, due to the church closures during the Covid-19 pandemic, MHA Sunday collections have been unable to take place for the past two years.

We have strong ties traditionally with Hillside, partly because of our proximity, since AMC is more accessible for residents to attend our Sunday services, if they are able. Our Minister and others regularly hold a short communion service for

the residents at the home, and Hillside have, in the past, held a service at AMC for families and friends to remember those residents who have passed away. Funerals of Hillside residents also sometimes take place at our Church.

However, again, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, communion services at Hillside were required to cease in March 2020, although it is planned to resume these in November 2021.

Whitechapel Mission - Ruth & Peter Watkins



*Whitechapel Mission -
always the homeless first*

We are pleased to report that we were able to support the Mission at Harvest time this year, both with food, clothing, and money. Despite a smaller congregation than usual for Harvest the gifts were very generous. Unfortunately, the Easter Breakfast did not take place, but I know some folk made a direct gift to the mission.

We have kept in touch with Tony Miller during the past year and we report that they have done sterling work coping with those clients unable or unwilling to access the help from the government. Now some of the restrictions are behind them, they have identified a new need for advice mainly to do with debt

and have managed to employ another person to help with this.

FINANCE

Notes to the accounts – Roger Kirk



Roger Kirk - Church Treasurer

Basis of accounts

This year our formal accounts will be submitted, through the formal Methodist channels, on the Accruals basis. This allocates income and expenditure to the year to which they relate rather than in which they were received or paid, thus providing a more meaningful picture of the accounts.

The year 2020/21 - General Fund

The accounts were affected by the closure of the Church, this time from December 2020 to May 2021 due to the Corona Virus pandemic. Lettings income, at £23,982 was again affected and was less than the £29,281 of the previous year.

To compensate for the loss of lettings income, additional income of almost £12,000 was received from members donations (£6,839) and the Governments job retention scheme (£4,966). A further benefit was the discount of 10% on the Circuit contribution, thus saving £8,000.

On expenditure, we spent £2,916 on improving the security system of the building and £1,816 on repairs to a door and a window in room 4 and 6 respectively.

The net result for the year was a surplus of £9,126, increasing our general fund balance to £44,214.

Restricted Funds

The Welcome Area Fund shows a balance of £3,393 and we are still waiting to pay the final balance to the contractor once all snags have been completed.

Joy Murphy making a surprise visit pre-Covid-19

Balance Sheet

Assets and Liabilities include the following debtors and creditors.

Debtors and prepayments	£
Tax refund	5,815
Letting fees	2,444
Water	521
Furlough grant	262
Stoke Mandeville MC	52
Payment in advance to Circuit	7,227
Deposit on new noticeboard	975
	<hr/>
	17,296

Creditors	
Utilities	300
Gift Aid to Stone MC	592
	<hr/>
	892

AYLESBURY METHODIST CHURCH		
Informal income and expenditure account for the year ended 31st August 2021		
General (Unrestricted) Funds on accruals basis		
<i>Note: The full accounts submitted to the Vale of Aylesbury Circuit will be found in an appendix to the Trustees Report.</i>		
2019/20	GENERAL FUND	2020/21
£		£
	INCOME	
87,993	Offerings & tax recovered:	83,232
69,455	Collection (services, standing orders and annual)	67,673
18,538	Income Tax refund	15,559
131	Bank & CFB interest and investment income	13
29,281	Lettings	23,982
44,251	Other income, detail in shaded area below:	19,922
3,470	Fund raising	3,180
7,805	Donations and legacies	6,839
27,302	Layworker (last year) and Young Leaders Scheme grants	4,000
3,205	Government Job Protection Scheme re Covid 19	4,966
881	Weddings and funerals	926
1,488	Coffee Bar profits	12
100	Miscellaneous	-
161,656	Income Grand Total	127,150
	EXPENDITURE	
83,184	Circuit contribution	74,616
-	Donations and subscriptions	1,000
21,299	Repairs & maintenance, detail in shaded area below:	13,524
11,014	Building maintenance	2,157
7,704	Cleaner's wages and supplies	6,154
2,581	Equipment maintenance (incl.organ & piano)	5,213
13,159	Utilities & insurance, detail in shaded area below:	11,292
9,612	Heat, light, water and refuse	7,742
3,547	Insurance	3,550
45,419	Other expenditure, detail in shaded area below:	17,602
3,537	Administration	2,126
9,599	Administrators - wages, less Circuit share	9,320
27,552	Layworker (last year only) and Young Leaders Scheme	2,902
2,264	Telephones	1,738
1,570	Church Activities	1,025
897	Publicity & miscellaneous expenses	491
163,061	Total Expenditure, excl. Welcome Area Improvements	118,034
(1,405)	NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) FOR THE YEAR accruals basis	9,116
36,867	Balance brought forward 1/9/2020	35,088
35,462	Subtotal	44,204
(373)	Net transfers between funds, excl. Welcome Area Fund	10
35,089	Subtotal	44,214
	Welcome Area Improvements:	
111,990	Funds transferred from the Welcome Area Fund	-
(111,990)	Above funds then expended on the Welcome Area and capitalised	-
35,089	GENERAL LIQUID FUNDS AT 31/8/21 C/ FWD.	44,214

AYLESBURY METHODIST CHURCH						
Informal Income and Expenditure Accounts for the year ended 31 August 2021						
Restricted Funds, Endowments and Church Organisations						
<i>Note: The full accounts submitted to the Vale of Aylesbury Circuit will be found in an appendix to the Trustees Report.</i>						
RESTRICTED FUNDS						
2019/20			Welcome Area Fund	Benevolent Fund		Total 2020/21
£			£	£		£
	Income					
64	Offerings			5		5
6,272	Grants, donations, etc & tax recovered		-			-
6,336	Total income		-	5		6
	Payments					
3,423	Other expenses		-	-		-
	<i>(£102,352 treated in 2018/19 as part of 'Transfer between funds' below)</i>					
3,423	Total expenditure		-	-		-
2,913	Net income / (expenditure)		-	5		6
-	Earlier years' expenditure capitalised		-			-
	<i>(added to and treated in 2018/19 as part of 'Transfer between funds' below)</i>					
-	Transfers between funds		-			-
2,913	Net income / (expend.) after transfers		-	5		5
870	Balances brought forward 1/9/2020		3,393	390		3,783
2,913	Net income / (expenditure)		-	5		5
3,783	Balances carried forward 31/8/2021		3,393	395		3,788
ENDOWMENT FUNDS HELD BY THE TRUSTEES FOR METHODIST CHURCH PURPOSES						
Totals 2019/20			Mead Bequest	Stranks & Staley's Bequests		Totals 2020/21
£			£	£		£
			Restricted	Unrestricted		
3,746	Balances brought forward 1/9/2020		210	3,548		3,759
25	Income		1	10		10
(25)	Paid to General Fund		(1)	(9)		(10)
-	Paid to J Team and Choir		-	-		-
13	Change in Value of investments		-	(27)		(27)
3,759	Balances carried forward 31/8/2021		210	3,521		3,731
CHURCH ORGANISATIONS						
£	Income					£
	Offerings & tax recovered					
	Investment income, etc					
5,591	Other income					1,846
5,591	Total income					1,846
	Payments					
4,976	Other expenses					3,066
4,976	Total expenditure					3,066
614	Net income / (expenditure)					(1,221)
398	Transfers between funds					-
1,012	Net income / (expend.) after transfers					(1,221)
10,702	Balances brought forward 1/9/2020					11,715
1,012	Net income / (expenditure)					(1,221)
11,714	Balances carried forward 31/8/2021 *					10,494
	<i>* Excludes Endowment Mead Bequest Fund, which is shown above.</i>					

AYLESBURY METHODIST CHURCH							
Informal Summary of Income and expenditure accounts for the year ended 31st August 2021							
(on Accruals Basis)							
All Funds							
Note: The full accounts submitted to the Vale of Aylesbury Circuit will be found in an appendix to the Trustees Report.							
Actual 2019/20 accruals basis			General Fund	Resticted Funds	Endow- ment Funds	Church Organ- isations	Totals
£			£	£		£	£
173,608	Income		127,150	6	10	1,846	129,012
	Expenditure, excl. Welcome Area						
171,459		improvements	118,034	-		3,066	121,100
2,149	Net income/(Expenditure)		9,116	6	10	(1,220)	7,912
	Welcome Area improvements:						
	- Earlier years' expenditure capitalised			-			-
	- Expenditure capitalised this year		-	-			-
13	Change in value of investments				(27)		(27)
2,162	Subtotal		9,116	6	(17)	(1,220)	7,885
	- Net transfers between funds:						-
		Welcome Area Fund	-	-			
		Other funds	10	-	(10)	-	
2,162	Subtotal		9,126	6	(27)	(1,220)	7,885
43,176	Liquid Funds Balances b/fwd 1/9/2020		35,088	3,783	3,759	11,715	54,345
45,338	Liquid Funds Balances c/fwd 31/8/21		44,214	3,789	3,732	10,495	62,230

Informal Statement of Assets and Liabilities on an accruals basis as at 31st August 2021

The formal accounts will include provision for depreciation, yet to be approved.

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021



Putting the greatest number of people in the greatest possible danger of finding the love of Jesus Christ