

# The **Methodist** Church

# ANNUAL REPORT 2025

# CONNEXUS

## Brewood, Codsall, Coven & Rakegate (Connexus) Hub Steering Group

1. This report provides an outline to the Annual Church Meeting on the work of the steering group, which has been meeting regularly to discuss the operation of a new multi-site single church to commence 1st September 2025. Discussions have included members from Brewood, Codsall, Coven, Rakegate, and initially, Fallings Park. However, Fallings Park Church Council decided to withdraw from the hub discussions in early February. Consequently, conversations have continued among Brewood, Codsall, Coven, and Rakegate. Notably, Brewood, Codsall, and Coven have already consolidated into one church and Rakegate have made a positive decision to do so also.
2. This report outlines the steering group's recommendations which have been endorsed by the Church Councils on the operation of the new church from 1st September 2025 and the subsequent steps.

### **Church Stewards**

3. According to CPD, Church Stewards are elected by the Church Meeting, and all Church Stewards are members of the Church Council. The new hub Church Meeting will elect at least one and no more than two Church Stewards from each hub location. This approach ensures representation from each hub location and maintains a manageable size for the new Church Council. It is recognizing that other local hub location stewards will assist with service preparation and leadership at a local level but will not be members of the Church Council.

### **Church Council**

4. The composition of the new hub church council is governed by S.O. 610. While adhering to this Standing Order, the membership of the Church Council will be kept as close to 20 members as possible. This measure aims to ensure appropriate representation and effective decision-making.

## **Finance**

5. Following consultation with existing Church Treasurers, Finance in the new hub will be managed as follows:
  - 5.1. There will be one Treasurer and 4 site coordinators/financial officers to consolidate finances for the beginning of the 'New Church'. This group will form the new church's Finance Committee/Working Group. Ideally, all finance officers will have online visibility and appropriate access to the hub's bank account to ensure transparency and protection for the Treasurer.
  - 5.2. An appropriate scheme of separation of duties between the Treasurer and the Finance Officers will be established for the new hub.
  - 5.3. A hub Current Account(s) containing unrestricted, designated, and restricted funds will be set up. Multiple accounts at the hub level may be created depending on the Treasurer's convenience. Comparable funds from different sites would be merged into a single fund (e.g., General Fund). Trusts/Legacies would be maintained for individual sites as per the donor's original request. Any new unrestricted legacies would benefit the entire new Church.
  - 5.4. Arrangements for petty cash/bookings account/fund, as necessary for each site, will be managed by finance officers, and the aim would be to handle these cashlessly if possible.
  - 5.5. Weekly collections and other cash and cheque receipts would be counted at each site and banked locally, with arrangements sought for local post office deposits.
  - 5.6. Combined church funds would be used to pay assessments and manage property as deemed necessary by a future property and finance committee, subject to the authority of the Church Council.
  - 5.7. The new organization will evaluate accounting and booking software from various sources to determine the best fit for needs, ideally establishing a Circuit standard for these.
  - 5.8. All employed posts will be on the circuit payroll, funded by the hub where necessary, with the job passed to a new circuit Treasurer.

## **Gift Aid**

6. It is recommended that one or two people could manage this for the hub with there being a local Gift Aid contact at each hub location. It is recommended that new consolidated databases be constructed to manage the Gift Aid process.

## **Safeguarding**

7. It is required that there is a Safeguarding Officer for the hub with named safeguarding contacts in each hub location.

## **Property**

### 8. Property Committee

- 8.1. Each location within the hub will have an individual to have oversight of the property there. These individuals will form the new Property Committee, and it will be chaired by one of their number.
- 8.2. The Property Committee will take collective responsibility for property matters across the hub and ensure that each individual responsible for a location has appropriate support.
- 8.3. The Property Committee will meet as it sees fit, but at least twice a year. At least one meeting will be a joint meeting with the Treasurer and Finance Officers.

### 9. Reactive Maintenance

- 9.1. Everyday reactive maintenance will be managed at a location level. The individual who has oversight of a location will be given delegated authority to deal with reactive maintenance within limits, including financial, set by the Church Council (Trustees). The Property Committee will define what is 'reactive maintenance' and place this before the Church Council for approval.

### 10. Planned Maintenance

- 10.1. A unified and costed maintenance schedule will be developed for routine maintenance tasks and inspections across all church properties. This will be presented for approval to the Church Council annually.
- 10.2. This schedule will aim to prevent potential issues through regular checks and timely interventions, thereby maintaining the properties in optimal condition.

### 11. Standardized Renovation and Development Process

- 11.1. A standardized process for renovation and development projects will be developed to ensure consistency and quality across all sites.
- 11.2. This process will include project planning, budgeting, and execution stages, with the Property Committee coordinating efforts and ensuring adherence to the church's guidelines.

- 11.3. All renovation and development projects will need to be recommended by the Property Committee and have the approval of Church Council.
12. Budget Allocation and Financial Oversight
- 12.1. A unified budget will be established for property management, providing transparent financial oversight and ensuring equitable distribution of resources across all sites.
- 12.2. The Budget will be developed annually between the Finance and Property Committees and approved by the Church Council. Significant Renovation or Development projects will be individually approved by Church Council and have their own financial allocation.
- 12.3. Regular financial reports will be generated to track expenditures and project progress, facilitating informed decision-making and accountability.
- 12.4. Ultimate financial oversight is the responsibility of the Church Council (Trustees).

### **Circuit Meeting**

13. The June Circuit Meeting passed the following resolutions:

**Noting that the Brewood, Codsall & Coven Methodist Church and Rakegate Methodist Church Councils have passed resolutions pursuant to Standing Orders 605A(2) and 942(1) to adopt the Local Church scheme set out in this resolution, the Wolverhampton CIRCUIT MEETING hereby RESOLVES to:**

- a. **note the proposed merger of Brewood, Codsall & Coven Methodist Church and Rakegate Methodist Church to form a single multi-site Local Church under the trusteeship of a single Church Council;**
- b. **note the proposed transfer (pursuant to SO 605A(3)) of the members of Rakegate Methodist Church into the membership of Brewood, Codsall & Coven Methodist Church, with the new merged Local Church to be known as Connexus Methodist Church;**
- c. **affirm (pursuant to SO 605A(4)-(7)) that the pastoral identity of each constituent chapel and Class shall be maintained; that the new Church Council shall exercise managing trusteeship over each chapel; and that there shall be appropriate representation from each chapel when electing church stewards and Church Council members in the new merged Local Church;**
- d. **approve this scheme and that it shall take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025, and thereafter (pursuant to Standing Order 605A(8)) the Wolverhampton Circuit Meeting shall keep the scheme's arrangements under review.**

#### 14. Connexus Hub Staffing

Following representation from the steering group the Circuit has agreed to support the funding of two new posts to support the establishment of the new multi-site church. These are:

**Centre Facilities Manager**, a 50% part-time post, fixed term for 2 years. It is expected that the hub will start contributing to the cost of this post in year 2 and fully fund the post if it is to continue beyond 2 years.

**Communities Pioneer**, a full-time post for 5 years. This post to be recruited post September 2025 following further consultation with Rev. Ildiko.

#### 15. Next Steps

- 15.1. 19<sup>th</sup> June 2025 Annual Church Meeting to vote in new officers, including Stewards and Church Council members.
- 15.2. 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025 single church hub Church Council to meet to authorise key actions necessary before 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025
- 15.3. The new hub commences on 1st September 2025 so we need to be as ready as we can be.

# Accounts

## **Trinity Methodist Church Codsall**

Histons Hill  
Codsall  
Wolverhampton  
WV8 2ER

Charity Number: 1135637

Trinity Methodist Church Codsall is the registered charity of Codsall Methodist Church. The charity is managed by the Church Council, which comprises the Trustees of the registered charity. Trustees are appointed at the annual general meeting.

The trustees for the 2023/24 year were: Rev Joanne Cox-Darling, Susan Fearnley, Robert Turton, Naomi Fearnley, Ruth Gaunt, Jane Ellis, Stephen Brown, Nadine Brown, Peter Davies, Stephen Fearnley, Helen Share, Julie Eccles, Pearl Mayhew, Alan Eccles, Marion Edge, Edith Heap, Veronica Cotterell

During the 2023/24 year the church continued to deliver its charitable objects, namely the advancement of - (a) the Christian faith in accordance with the doctrinal standards and the discipline of the Methodist Church; (b) any charitable purpose for the time being of any Connexional, district, circuit, local or other organisation of the Methodist Church; (c) any charitable purpose for the time being of any society or institution subsidiary or ancillary to the Methodist Church; (d) any purpose for the time being of any charity being a charity subsidiary or ancillary to the Methodist Church.

During the 2023/24 period the trustees of Trinity Methodist Church agreed to join with both Brewood Methodist Church and Coven Methodist Church, which will come into effect in the 2024/25 period and be reflected in the accounts and Trustee Annual Report for that period.

The financial position of the church is detailed in the accompanying accounts for the 2023/24 period that ended on 31st August 2024.

*Peter Davies*

**CHURCH  
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS  
ACCOUNTS**

**THE METHODIST CHURCH  
STANDARD FORM OF ACCOUNTS**

Trinity Methodist Codsall	Church
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FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 August 2024

	<b>Circuit</b>	<b>Circuit no.</b>	<b>2801</b>
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<b>Registered Charity - Charity Registration number</b>	1135637
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If not a registered charity <b>His Majesty's Revenue and Customs Gift Aid number</b>	
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(The HMRC number is equivalent to a registered charity number in terms of evidence of charitable status and may be used to give to donors or grant funders wishing to see evidence of the organisation's charitable status. Methodist charities in England and Wales that are not registered charities are excepted from registration under Statutory Instrument 2014 No.242)

Minister:

Reverend Joanne Cox-Darling
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Church Stewards:

H Share	
T Starling	
Rob Felts-Davies	
Eileen Hughes	
J Hall	
A Eccles	

Treasurer:

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**Finance Report**  
**Trinity Codsall Methodist Church**  
**For the period 1st September 2023 to 31st August 2024**

**Introduction**

This report has been provided to set out the financial position of Trinity Methodist Church as at the end of the 2023/24 financial year (31st August 2024) to present to the Annual General Meeting in June 2025.

**2023/2024**

The church finished the year in surplus of £7,127, which was a better position than the budget. This was largely due to Gift Aid for the prior 2022/23 year being received in the 2023/2024 period, so that effectively two years' Gift Aid came through in one year.

Incomings from lettings and other income were above budget some of which was caused by receiving overdue payments from the prior year. Outgoings on circuit assessment and utilities were in line with budget, property maintenance costs and other costs were lower than expected and utility costs were slightly higher. There were several discussions during the year about the need to invest in the Trinity Codsall Methodist Church building, to replace the heating system and work on the roof, but these were not undertaken.

The balance of incomings and outgoings has increased the amount held across bank deposits, Central Finance Board and TMCP to c. £97,163.

**2024/2025 and the Future**

The 2024/2025 financial period will be an exceptional period for Trinity Codsall Methodist Church.

Firstly, there has been a successful fundraising campaign that has enabled much needed investment in the property to replace the heating system for the church hall, upgrade the fire alarm system and make repairs to the roof, with further works to replace lighting and install solar panels due to be completed before 31st August 2025. This will mean that the incoming and outgoings are significantly different from the budget position.

Secondly, Codsall, Brewood, Coven and Rakegate churches have made the decision to join together to form one church at four locations. This will require budgets and accounts to be consolidated and reported, with further details included in the report from the Hub Steering Group.

As of 30 April 2025, Trinity Codsall Methodist Church has £101,428 held across the bank deposits, Central Finance Board and TMCP, with approximately £60,000 held in the bank accounts. The increase in amounts held since the beginning of the year is due to the funds raised through very generous giving, collections and one-off donations following the ask to support the property projects at the church. The forecast position for the end of the 2024/2025 period (31st August 2025) is that the incoming and outgoings will largely balance. This forecast takes into account the expected expenditure on lighting replacement and solar panel installation and the grants secured from the circuit and district to contribute for the solar panels.

As the hub moves towards a new way of working, I have made the decision that the time is right to resign as Treasurer of Trinity Codsall Methodist Church. I look forward to supporting whoever is appointed as the new Hub Treasurer and making the transition as smooth as possible, and I thank everyone for their welcome and help over the past 3 years.

Peter Davies

## **Charity Commission Annual Return 2024**

TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH CODSALL

Charity registration number: 1135637

Most of the information you give in this form will become publicly available on the Register of Charities. Any field that the Charity Commission will not display will be clearly marked.

This document is a record of the information provided in the Annual Return 2024.

### **PART A - Charity information**

#### **Financial period**

*Financial period start date*

01/09/2023

*Financial period end date*

31/08/2024

#### **Income and spending**

Income £

£ 75,644

Spending £  
£ 68,517

**Number of contracts from government**

How many contracts (other than grant agreements) did your charity receive from central government or a local authority during the financial period for this return?

0

**Number of grants from government**

How many grants did your charity receive from central government or a local authority during the financial period for this return?

0

**Income breakdown**

*Donations and legacies (excluding Endowments Received)*

£ 45,710

**Charitable activities**

£ 27,254

**Other trading activities**

£ 1,499

**Investments**

£ 1,181

**Other**

£ 0

**Grantmaking**

Is grant making the main way your charity carries out its purposes?

No

**Recipients of grants**

Please round all figures to the nearest pound (do not enter decimal points or commas).

*Individuals*

£ 0

*Other charities*

£ 0

*Other organisations that are not charities*

£ 0

### **Trustee payments**

Excluding out of pocket expenses, for what were any of the trustees paid during the financial period for this return?

*None of the trustees have been paid*

Did any of the trustees resign and take up employment with your charity in the financial period of this return?

No

### **Income from outside the UK**

Did your charity receive income from outside of the United Kingdom in the financial period of this return?

No

### **Delivering activities outside the United Kingdom**

Did your charity deliver charitable activities outside of the United Kingdom in the financial period of this return?

No

### **Spending outside England & Wales**

Did your charity spend funds outside of the United Kingdom in the financial period of this return?

No

Total Spending outside England & Wales

£

### **Trading subsidiaries**

Does the charity have any trading subsidiaries?

No

### **Charity contact details correct**

Is the contact address displayed from the Register of Charities, correct?

Yes

### **Charity headquarters details correct**

Is this the same address that you use as your charity's administrative headquarters?

Yes

**Charity contact address**

Address Line 1

Trinity Methodist Church  
Histons Hill  
Codsall  
WOLVERHAMPTON  
WV8 2ER

**Charity Headquarters address**

Trinity Methodist Church  
Histons Hill  
Codsall  
WOLVERHAMPTON  
WV8 2ER

**Membership type**

Is your charity part of a wider group structure with a parent body and subsidiary bodies?

no, the charity is not part of a wider group structure

**Employment contract types**

People were permanently employed by your charity

1

People were on fixed-terms contracts with your charity

Self-employed people were working for your charity

0

**Total overseas employees**

How many of the people above work on behalf of your charity outside of the United Kingdom?

0

**Total employee payroll**

What was the total amount spent on employee payroll during the financial period relating to this return?

£ 1,402

## **Employees' salaries**

Did any of your charity's employees receive total employment benefits of £60,000 or more in the financial period of this annual return?

No

## **Governance policies**

Internal charity financial controls policy and procedures

Yes

Safeguarding policy and procedures

Yes

Financial reserves policy and procedures

No

Complaints policy and procedures

Yes

Serious incident reporting policy and procedures

Yes

Internal risk management policy and procedures

No

Trustee expenses policy and procedures

No

Trustee conflicts of interest policy and procedures

No

Investing charity funds policy and procedures

No

Campaigns and political activity policy and procedures

No

Bullying and harassment policy and procedures

Yes

Social media policy and procedures

No

Engaging external speakers at charity events policy and procedures

No

## **Safeguarding**

Has your charity provided services to children and/or adults at risk in the financial period of the return?

Yes

a. All required standard DBS checks have been obtained

Yes

b. All required enhanced DBS checks have been obtained

Yes

c. All required enhanced with Barred List(s) DBS checks have been obtained

Yes

d. DBS checks are not required other than Basic DBS checks

No

## **Serious Incidents**

Has your charity reported all Serious Incidents (including any historical incidents) that the charity became aware of during the financial period of this return?

There were no incidents to report

## **External risk and impact**

Donations

Negative

Other income – grants

Unknown/No Change/Not Applicable

Other income – contracts

Unknown/No Change/Not Applicable

Other income – investment

Unknown/No Change/Not Applicable

Expenditure on charitable activities

Unknown/No Change/Not Applicable

Expenditure on overheads

Negative

Number of volunteers

Negative

Number of employees

Unknown/No Change/Not Applicable

Number of trustees

Unknown/No Change/Not Applicable

Fundraising activities

Negative

Capacity to deliver services

Unknown/No Change/Not Applicable

Total service demand

Unknown/No Change/Not Applicable

### **Volunteers**

Excluding trustees, provide an estimate of the number of volunteers who carried out charitable activities on behalf of your charity in the United Kingdom during the financial period of this return?

15

### **Privacy statement**

Any information you give us will be held securely and processed only in accordance with the rule on data protection. We will not disclose your personal details to anyone unconnected to the Charity Commission unless:

- you have consented to their release; or
- we are legally obliged to disclose them; or
- we regard disclosure as either (a) necessary so that we can properly carry out our statutory functions or (b) necessary in the public interest.

We may share and disclose information about you with relevant public authorities, regulatory bodies and agencies, outside the Charity Commission but only if:

- we can lawfully do so; and
- we decide that disclosure is necessary for national security, crime detection, prevention, and law enforcement, or other issues in the public interest

Information we collect about you

We will use this information:

To enable us to carry out our statutory functions and duties;

This will include the following actions:

- (a) update, consolidate, and improve the accuracy of our records;
- (b) undertake crime detection and prevention and law enforcement and assist the third parties specified above to investigate or prevent crime and carry out law enforcement;
- (c) data analysis, testing, research, statistical and survey purposes

Information we receive from other sources.

Information we receive from other sources

We may combine this information with information you give to us and information we collect about you.

We may use this information and the combined information for the purposes set out above (depending on the types of information we receive).

We will ensure that any such disclosure and use is proportionate; considers your right to respect for your private life; and is done fairly and lawfully in accordance with the data protection principles of the Data Protection Act.

The Data Protection Act 1998 regulates the use of 'personal data', which is essentially any information, however stored, about identifiable living individuals.

As a 'data controller' under the Act, the Charity Commission must comply with it. Any changes we may make to our privacy statement in the future will be set out in the replacement version of this form.

Please check back frequently to see any updates or changes to our privacy policy.

### **Declaration**

This annual return has not been submitted, and no Declaration has been made

## Brewood Methodist Church 2024- 2025

Brewood Methodist Church has had a quiet year as far as activities are concerned, due mainly to the fact that most of the regular congregation are 85 years or older and are quite infirm, mostly now need to use a walking stick or even two.

The fitter members of the congregation visited a local farm for a service lead by Jo Cox-Darling, for Rogation, and we were treated to a lovely lunch in the sunshine.

We held a Hub coffee morning in September which was well attended by the five churches involved at the time and we have had a Church Council Meeting here too.

We have had some maintenance work done on the building, eg. a sill put on the bottom of the outside of the vestry door to prevent rain from entering under the door, and the 2 doors into the courtyard were painted following this work.

Again, the fitter members of the congregation joined the Walk of Witness on Good Friday and were present at the switching on of the Christmas Lights in the village and joined in the carol singing in the square on Christmas Eve.

Some of the congregation were able to join in the Christians Together visit to two more farms for Rogation earlier this month.

Meetings were held in Brewood Methodist Church during the week of Christian Unity including an informal Sunday evening service lead by Jo Cox-Darling, when we had tea coffee and cake, which was enjoyed by everyone who came from the four churches in Brewood and Bishops Wood.

## Coven Methodist Church

Over the past year two of our members have sadly died and two of our stewards have ceased in their roles, leaving one remaining steward.

The congregation demographic is elderly, and this has also resulted in low attendance figures though illness and infirmity. The average attendance now is around 10 – 12. Our preferred worship style is what may be described as traditional and there is a strong desire to be able to continue worship in our own village.

Our Chapel has recently completed its quinquennial inspection, and I am awaiting the report, although at this stage I understand that there are no major issues relating to the condition of the property beyond general redecoration. Going forward, we would like to make improvements to our outdated and inadequate audio system, with the installation of a modern A/V system in order to improve facilities available for worship.

Our local parish church, St Pauls had been interregnum for several years but now has a priest in place, and we look forward to closer links with them for events, such as the Good Friday walk of witness in the future.

In terms of fundraising events, over the past few years we have held an annual event for Acorns Children's Hospice which is always well supported. In addition, we usually hold two food stuffs collections for the needy per annum. Our last collection was around Harvest festival last year and we are currently collecting again.

## Rakegate Methodist Church

At Rakegate we have the following activities:

- Fellowship every Tuesday 2.15pm until 3.30pm
- Lunch Club the last Tuesday of the month 12.30pm until 2.30pm
- Sunday service 10.30am until 11.30am
- The Rake Gate Tenants & Residents Association hold a Friendship Group every other week, sometimes on a Wednesday, sometimes on a Thursday from 11am until 2pm.
- They also hold a committee members' meeting every three months which is also open to the public, times vary.
- The City Council have their Love Your Community meetings roughly every three months from 6.30pm until 8.30pm.
- Our Labour councillors sometimes hold their surgery at the church, as and when required.
- We hire the church out for children's birthday parties.

*Marie Lane*

### The History of Rakegate Methodist Church

Rake Gate Estate in Oxley, Wolverhampton was built on the site of Rake Gate Farm. Some of the houses were built before the start of the Second World War, but then they were stopped to help with the war effort.

After the war the rest of the estate was built and was fully open for residents at the end of the 1940s. There wasn't a church on the estate so a Mr. and Mrs. Cochran who lived in Probert Road used to hold services in their front room in Probert Road. They used to have a collection which went to the "Buy A Brick" fund to build a Methodist church. The church was finished in 1953, the Coronation year. It had a large congregation and a Sunday school. They held a youth club there and a Fellowship group. Mrs. Mavis Dacre ran a girls' club, and there were summer and Christmas fairs. They also had a Shell Group, mothers and toddlers' group and a lunch club. On Christmas Eve midnight mass was held.

Due to the poor condition of the church, it was knocked down in 1998 and our new "Bungalow Church" was built. It opened at Easter in April 1999. Rev. Ivor Sperring had a big say in what went on with the design and building of the church as well as which activities went on.

When we re-opened in April 1999 our first minister was Rev. Valerie Ogden; after a few years with us she went to work at the University of Birmingham. We are a close-knit community and very welcoming to visitors.

## AV Desk and Technology

### **Online Worship**

Almost all Sunday services are streamed live on Zoom where we have two to six participants. The services are recorded, edited and uploaded to YouTube and are normally available by the following Monday. Unfortunately, due to YouTube policy we must edit out any videos used in the service, but a direct link is normally provided on-screen at the appropriate point.

In the last 12 months the videos on the Trinity YouTube channel have been viewed 680 times. The Trinity YouTube channel currently has 31 subscribers who receive notifications as soon as a video is added.

We live streamed and uploaded one wedding and two funerals to our private YouTube Channel. These generated a total of seventy one subsequent views.

### **Technology**

There have been a number of failures due to the age of equipment in the last twelve months. Two of the radio microphones have developed faults that cannot be repaired. Whilst we are managing with the remaining radio microphones, we will, in the near future, due to their age and poor condition, have to consider replacing them all. It would be sensible to use a modern solution that would include using radio microphones in the band area to eliminate the large number of cables that look unsightly and are a trip hazard.

## Internet

The Wi-Fi access point in the small meeting room was causing problems with slow connections and dropping out. After some investigation it was established that this was due to a failing power supply and the access point not supporting modern Wi-Fi protocols. A new access point was installed resolving the problems. The Wi-Fi access point in the Youth Centre which is of a similar age is planned to be replaced over the summer holidays.

*Trevor Starling*

## Car Rota

Firstly, I would like to tender my resignation as Car Rota co-ordinator, at the AGM, with immediate effect. The time feels right for me. I shall be happy to help out for as long as I am safe to drive.

Secondly, I would like to thank everybody who have helped with the car rota over its nearly fifty-five years of existence, and especially those who have helped over the last thirty or so years that I have been co-ordinating.

It has been a great pleasure to meet so many interesting people during this time, both drivers and passengers.

For anyone interested in social history, there has been an interesting change in our clientele. Originally, we were giving lifts to war widows and other ladies who had not had the opportunity to learn to drive. Recently, by contrast, most of our passengers have previously been drivers who have had to give up driving. In fact, our last two passengers were originally volunteer car drivers!

*Pat Ward*

## Choir

The Choir continues to meet on a Friday evening, from 7.30pm – 8.30pm, and members sign in on arrival; Health & Safety regulations are still observed.

Thank you to our pianists and treasurer, and others who help to make our singing and fellowship a success.

Our average membership is twelve, but singing together is still enthusiastic, and we would welcome more members, to share in our singing and fellowship.

We pray for our members who are sick or sad, and hope that they will be able to share in our 'Summer Meal' together, when Choir finishes for our Summer break in July.

*Marion Edge*

## Communion Stewards

There have been between thirty-five to forty regular communicants during the year and fifty-six on Easter Sunday. There were a regular six to eight communicants for Mid-Week Communion, which have taken place monthly. It would be lovely to see more people at the Mid-Week Communions.

*David & Linda Jones*

## Compline

Compline takes place most Tuesday evenings, from 7.45pm – 8.00pm, on Zoom.

One of the meanings of Compline is a service of quietness and reflection before rest, at the end of the day. Compline commenced on zoom during lockdown, and some years later it is still going ahead. Numbers remain fairly constant at between 10-14 people.

Those of us who want to do so take turns to lead the sessions, which usually include comments, bible reading, prayers, and one or two utube worship songs or certain pieces of music. This is a lovely way to finish the day, and it would be great for others to join with us – you won't have to take the service (unless you want to) – and to share in the service.

*Helen Share*

## Craft Group

We have nineteen members now with an attendance fluctuating between eight and fourteen members each week. Currently, there are five church members in the group, the remaining members are from the surrounding community. New members are always welcomed. We all share our varied talents and help each other.

We continue to make prayer shawls for those within the community and members have made 'forget-me-nots for the Alzheimer's Society, 4" square 'bonding blankets' for the mothers and babies of the neonatal unit at New Cross hospital and poppies were also made for Wightwick Manor's Remembrance display

In July we held a coffee morning, which was well attended, and the proceeds were donated to Church funds. On 2nd November our group organised a TableTop sale. Craft group had a table, where all goods were handmade. One of our members sold hand knitted toys of which the proceeds went to Acorns Children's Hospice. The total raised was £630 for Church funds.

Between October and November we painted baby Jesus onto oval stones, completing Trinity's Nativity set project. Our Christmas buffet was a wonderful celebration of all we had achieved in 2024.

A chat, tea and biscuits still continue each week, as well as being creative and sensitive to people's needs. This is just as important to us, as a group, as creating our 'crafty' items!

*Cathy Rathbone*

## Eco Church

Trinity is a 'Silver Award' Eco Church as most of you may be aware. This encourages us to care for God's earth in our worship and teaching, around our buildings and grounds, in our community engagement and in our personal lifestyles as church members.

*A Rocha* UK the Charity leading this initiative, equip churches involved, to demonstrate this good news for God's earth. They operate Eco-Church to help churches reflect the full scope of the gospel in their congregational life, and to acknowledge their achievement in that.

1. We are still considering how we can encourage wildlife into our green spaces, e.g. Hedgehogs and smaller wildlife. The Youth Club using our premises on Wednesday evenings are looking at setting up raised beds to grow various plants, on the lawn area at the back of the car park, which may increase the number of insects visiting the site.
2. Hopefully you are still drinking from recycled cups for coffee and tea when out and about; and these are used wherever possible within the church and user groups. As most of you know communion is also taken from recycle cups.
3. Limiting paper use within the church context is done each week using the screens during services to keep up to date on happenings; Notices are sent out online, by email where possible and also other information and news, reducing the use of paper and copier ink.
4. Toiletries and cleaning products etc are also eco-friendly where possible and are still being monitored regularly.

'Eco tips' in the Church Notices, also encourages everyone who reads them to use these types of materials in their own homes, wherever possible.

If you have ideas or suggestions, please let myself, or Helen know, as new ideas are always welcome.

## Flowers in Church

The flowers in Church serve multi-purposes. They enhance our prayerful space, express joy and celebration and symbolise the beauty of creation. Flowers remind us of the seasons, loved ones and special occasions. They can add comfort, a warm welcome and focus on God's creation. Arrangements appear at most services along with displays in the festive season, Easter, Harvest and Remembrance.

I have been involved with Church flower arranging for over 40 years now (as has Pete maintaining the grounds) and would like to take this opportunity of thanking the folk who kindly donate towards flowers. It is very much appreciated. Anyone who would like to contribute, please see me or Helen Share.

*Jan Sansom*

## Guiding @ Trinity

At Church we are very fortunate at Trinity, there are two Rainbow units (Wednesday & Thursday), two Brownie units (Tuesday & Thursday), one Guide and one Ranger unit (Tuesdays).

Across the units there are eight leaders, five young leaders and several occasional helpers. Overall, there are around one hundred girls that attend which is amazing. Sadly, we are struggling for leaders as we have so many girls who wish to stay within Guiding. We are in desperate need of a Ranger leader, to work with the girls who age from fourteen to eighteen and are involved and organise amazing activities, so if you know of anyone who may be interested, please do come and have a chat to me.

### The Rainbows

- have completed many badges including Interest, skills builders, Nature, Fairy and a tropical badge which included making a butterfly, donuts, mocktails, limbo and beach ball games
- Activities include toasting marshmallows, cake decorating, glow light dancing, learn how to plait, making pancakes, fruit sculptures, Mother's Day craft, Christmas arrangements, campfire songs, Chinese New Year escape room, trails and tracks, talked about families and relationships. and parties

- Each term they have a presentation evening for parents to see them being presented with their badges, certificates and those who have gained their main awards, Bronze, Silver or Gold
- Visits to see Santa on a canal boat, Codsall Panto, and to see Alpacas

### The Brownies

- have completed badges including baking, dancing, languages, zero waster, collecting, mindfulness, Aviation, grow your own, Inventing and jobs, skills builders incl. lead Stage 2, Communicator 2 & 3, first aid 2 & 3, camp 2 and feel good 2 & 3.
- Activities include making flapjacks, decorating biscuits, using their imagination to create things from what crafts were in the cupboard, wooden hearts coloured and decorated with flowers and gems, painted pebbles, parties, learnt the alphabet in sign language and how to spell their names and many Unit Meeting Activities were completed.
- Sleepovers, theatre visits, Wolf Mountain, local parks

### Guides & Rangers

- Completed skills builders incl. Camp 3 & 4, Explore 4 and Influence 3
- Activities to include planning their own programme for Rangers, organising adventures away during school holidays and weekends ie Edinburgh, Mocktails, experiments, general knowledge games, dodge ball, any food related activity is well received
- Visit to the Little dessert shop, meals out for the Rangers, visits to the park and chips!!

In September 2024, Brownies, Guides and Rangers went to Blackwell Court for the Counties fiftieth Anniversary camp known as 50Fest, this is the first time (maybe the last) that I take the Brownies away in tents. The weather sadly was not very kind to us but as we had brand new tents the girls had a great time, one unit was completely washed out on the Saturday night and had to retreat indoors, but all our girls were fine. This was a two-night event and they had activities all day Saturday, there was a fair which they didn't have to pay for as it was all in the price which the Brownies thought was amazing as they could go on anything they were tall enough for and it was so safe as it was in our designated area. They were able to do outdoor activities like climbing, zip wire, obstacle courses etc. The whole event was brilliant.

Finally, 5<sup>th</sup> Codsall Brownies celebrated their fiftieth Birthday in March with a party at The Firs in Codsall, over one hundred people were invited, including some of the County team, ex brownies, ex and current leaders, current brownies and their families. It was an amazing night, and I would like to thank everyone who over the

years has supported this Brownie pack. I have been connected to the unit for forty nine of those fifty years, as a brownie, pack leader, young leader and the Guider for thirty eight years of those, it has been so great to see girls come into the unit so timid and rather scared and leave to go to Guides confident and excited. I have had girls and now their children which I hope is a great testimony to how the pack is run and so the girls enjoy.

Let's hope all these units carry on for many more years with the Church supporting these young people by providing premises that are great for them to learn new activities and make new friends.

*Jane Ellis, Brown Owl*

## Grounds and flower display

With the return of Spring and the mower having returned from its annual service, around March the first cut is done hoping the grass has not grown too much over the winter months. Beds and borders are planted with a wide variety of environmentally friendly shrubs, perennials and bulbs. Yellow primroses in front of the Community Centre are naturalising and the lavender bee friendly border thriving. The Windsor Gardens border contains a wide variety of colourful plants, pink and white valerian which spreads itself freely, blue spires of camassia and the mounds of perennial geraniums all seem to like the heavy clay soil, as do the lilies, hydrangeas, roses and alchemilla mollis.

Wildflower beds on the car park side of Church hopefully will put on another colourful display for us and the insect life.

The "Scout Garage" has been painted and new guttering fitted. Pippins, the pre-school group, helped us by organising a "Rakethon" (sponsored leaf pick) and raised a magnificent sum of £630 for the new heating system. Special thanks to the Mums and Dads too. The edge of the field has been left to go wild and buttercups, violets, teasels, cow parsley are now beginning to establish.

You may have noticed a raised bed behind the garage which is a project by a Youth Group which meets on Wednesdays. It is called "Dig, Grow and Eat" to experience growing your own food. In time, there will be three raised beds. This is a project run at other Youth Centres in South Staffordshire,

Finally, thanks must also go to David and Ian Jones for keeping the edge of the car park free of weeds, a very important job which is very much appreciated.

*Peter Sansom*

## Ladies Lifegroup

Lifegroup was formed after an Alpha course at Trinity, and it has continued for over eighteen years, having reached many ladies of the church in that time. At the moment, we have approx. ten members.

We meet on alternative Wednesdays, 7.30pm, at Jane & Trevor Starling's bungalow. During the winter months we used to meet on zoom, but since the Men's discussion group also now meet (in a different room) at the Starlings we no longer do so. As our printed programme states below:

*'We laugh together, learn together, encourage each other, and sometimes cry together. Our discussions are designed to encourage debate and explore aspects of the Christian life in a friendly, honest, and informal environment'.*

Praying for each other and other matters at these evenings is also very important to us, and we sometimes extend this to our WhatsApp group

Over this past year we have studied various resources, including a series on Jesus is .....such as Hope, Purpose, Truth: a special Sunshine & Showers series (not the one taking place in June/July at Trinity) a study on the book of James, had a variety of speakers, including Jo Cox-Darling, Caroline Price (one of the project leaders from the Well Foodbank), and Hannah Seeley (a local preacher): held our Christmas social at Jane & Trevor's bungalow (its massive!) incorporating the men's discussion group, our various partners, and one or two others: had a fascinating evening of crafts, from our 'resident' crafter, i.e. Pearl: watched a Christian film .....

We are always open to other ladies joining us, even if it's only occasionally.  
*Helen Share, Pearl Mayhew, Jane Starling*

## Men's Discussion Group

At the start of the year a small group of the men, approximately six of us, were meeting fortnightly on Wednesday nights on the opposite week to the ladies.

Then common sense struck, why don't we meet on the same night as the ladies, albeit at a different venue. So, the ladies met at the home of the Starlings, whilst the men met at the home of the Shares.

Common sense hadn't finished! Starlings have a large living room and a large lounge, why not both meet there, ladies in the living room, men in the lounge.

So that's what we do now!

We have been led often by Trevor or Alan and, less frequently by Peter or Steve F. Subjects have included a sequence on prophets of the Old Testament, Peter & Cornelius and other subjects

*Peter Share*

## Office

I continue to work from home, with any phone calls from the church office being re-routed through to my mobile.

I use Mondays and Tuesdays, as my definite days, although you can usually find me at my PC on other days! The notices for the week are composed and sent to everyone on email. I also send out by post the Vine service from the Methodist Church and the notices to those people who are unable to attend services and who are not on email. The next Sunday's order of service arrives on a Wednesday, Thursday, or a Friday, from which I will produce the powerpoint of the service's hymns and readings, letting the rostered people for that week know the necessary information for the service so that they are kept in the loop. There are always myriad other office jobs need doing, which includes the upkeep of many rotas, dealing with CCLI and GDPR, the Connexus directory for all four churches in the Hub, emails, the website, various meetings for which I take notes

*Helen Share*

## Pastoral

Most members and attendees of Trinity know how the Pastoral Care system operates, but for those who do not I explain as follows:

Pastoral volunteers are allocated a list of people whom they contact by telephone on a regular basis, regardless of whether or not they meet at Sunday Services, to ensure that all is well with them. Should there be a concern about someone, they contact me, and I inform the Minister via email. All information is confidential. It is a rewarding undertaking that helps to increase and enrich shared fellowship and to make new friends.

At its onset, approximately three years ago, there were 13 volunteers. This number has dwindled to seven due, sadly, to health or other issues afflicting the now retired volunteers. This has resulted in longer lists for those still volunteering and a greater timescale between telephone calls.

If the members of Trinity wish to see Pastoral Care continue successfully, more volunteers need to come forward. If you are interested, please contact me (01902 751051) or Helen Share (07766 106615).

I am extremely grateful to all the volunteers, both past and present, for their valuable work, and I know it is appreciated by their recipients.

At Harvest time, as many of you know, the Harvest flowers are divided up and rearranged by Janet Sansom, who also gives such delight to us all with her regular displays in the Church and Church Porch. Volunteers then distribute the flowers to those members who are in distressing or difficult circumstances.

I conclude this Report with this question: How can we concern ourselves with care in the community if we are seen not to care for each member of our own flock?

*Veronica Cotterell*

## Prayer Space

As most of you know the prayer space and table are situated at the back of the church at Trinity, opposite to the Technology corner.

The display is still mentioning 'Calling God...' at any time, for example in the way we call each other on the phone or send messages on mobiles. God always hears us ....

There are also many prayer cards; some linked to The Methodist Way of Life, and some supplied by the Bible Society, plus some cards with Bible verses written on them. Please feel free to take them home, perhaps giving them to someone you know who may be in need of prayer, or a member of your family.

If you have a specific area of prayer that you wish to add, it could be someone needing prayer, a situation in the News or locally, even yourself, please use the little blank cards and then peg it on to the board.

There are also some pre-printed sheets for you to take with you. Or please take to a friend in need.

Do you need help to pray for someone you know, or love, you may wish to speak to one of the designated 'Prayer Warriors', Pearl Mayhew, myself (Nadine Brown) and also Ros Pedley. One of us is there most Sundays before the service, and afterwards for refreshments, so please speak to us if you need a private word. We can pray for God to hear us at these times, and trust that He will always respond in some way.

In the new Methodist Year, the table will be gradually updated, with a new theme. If you have any ideas, please let us know.

Praying for all. *Nadine Brown*

## Property

The past 12 months have seen quite a lot of changes and improvements at Trinity. It has been frenetic at times and stressful for a valiant few who have been instrumental in bringing about some much-needed new installations and improvements.

It all kicked off 'big-style', when one of the heat exchangers in the boiler room broke down and was officially condemned. This meant that an alternative heating source had to be sorted out for the community hall and coffee bar areas, and very quickly. Working with a Project Manager, Jo Cox-Darling, Jane Ellis, and our church treasurer, Pete Davies, all worked hard to bring about a sustainable and robust air source heat pump solution. In the midst of all this, they also arranged for a temporary warm air system to be installed to ensure that all those who regularly use the community hall on a regular basis were kept warm until the permanent heating had been installed.

Following quickly on, the same team tackled the next urgent project, which was the installation of a whole church fire alarm system. The previous system was inadequate to meet the safety standards of the Guiding Association, especially when the Girl Guides hold regular 'sleep-over' events on Trinity church premises.

A Property Risk Assessment has recently been carried out which has highlighted a number of other issues which will need to be undertaken as soon as possible. Some of the issues relate to health and safety, while other matters identify areas/items which need to be upgraded or replaced. Much of this 'upgrading work' could be tackled by our own members, thereby ensuring that labour costs are minimised. Future improvements including installing solar panels on the roof (to help us become even more eco-friendly) and improvements to the internal lighting.

Trinity continues to provide a great range of activities hosted by a variety of external agencies throughout the year. We, therefore, need to be mindful of maintaining our premises which are warm comfortable and welcoming.

*Steve Fearnley*

## Room bookings

### **Introduction**

This is now my fourth year of being involved in room bookings for Trinity. I hope my involvement continues to be beneficial to the Church.

### **Regular Room Bookings**

The number of regular users of the Community Centre has increased from 17 to 21 as follows:

**Pippins Pre- School Nursery** : Use the hall every day, Monday to Friday, from 8.30 to 1.30 and have an afternoon session until 3.30 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. **Rainbows/Brownies and Guides** : There are now 5 packs who use the Hall between them on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings.

**Fit and Fabulous** : A ladies keep fit class who meet every Monday in the Hall, 1.15 to 2.15

**Zen Yoga** : A twice weekly yoga class who meet every Monday and Thursday evening, 7.00 to 8.00

**We'll Meet Again** : A weekly meeting for older members of the community, they meet every Thursday from 10.30 – 12.30. They remain a popular and vibrant group.

**Histons Players** : The local amateur dramatics group who meet every Thursday evening at 8.00pm

**Perfect Pups**: A weekly dog training class who meet every Friday evening in the Hall, 7.00 to 8.00.

**Bilbrook and Codsall Cancer Support Group** : This group meets every third Friday of the month in the Lounge from 10.00 to 12.00.

**Codsall Singing for the Mind** : A Dementia support group who now meeting twice per month on Tuesdays 10.30 – 12.30

**Jam Youth Theatre**: A children's performing arts group who meet every Saturday 10.00 -1.00 (during term time)

**Craft Group** : Meet every Wednesday 1.00 – 3.00pm

**Tuesday Club** : Meet fortnightly at 2.30pm

**Staying Well Service**: Have sessions monthly, and use 3 rooms to hold NHS Wellbeing sessions

**Chill Out Club** : Youth Group for 8-17 year olds. Meet on Wednesdays, 5.30 - 9.30 during term time

**Karate** : Meets on Mondays 5.45 – 6.45

**Fitness Class** : Meets on Tuesdays 6.15 – 7.15

**Carers Group** : Meet once a month for coffee and a chat on Wednesday, 10.00 – 12.00

### **The new regular additions are**

**Counselling Sessions** : Various days and times

**Self Defense Class** : Sundays 4.00 – 6.00

**Relaxation Class** : Monday 7.30 – 8.30

**Diabetes Prevention Sessions** : Monthly on Monday and Friday

### **One Off bookings**

These continue to be a varied but valuable income stream – the following happening during last year

- Children's Parties
- Wergs Hall Residents Meeting
- Week-Long Children's Bible study sessions and Praise event
- Air Cadets AGM

- Children's clothing sale

### **Future Plans**

Whilst there is very little spare room capacity now, the aim is still to increase regular bookings as much as possible

*Sue Brookes*

## Safeguarding

During 2024/5 the standard practices for Safeguarding have been maintained.

The safeguarding policy was updated for the October 2024 Church Council, and it was agreed that Jane Ellis as Hub Safeguarding Officer for Brewood, Codsall & Coven with Gill Leach and Helen Halford as Assistant Safeguarding Officers and Liz Porteous (Brewood) and Eric Robinson (Coven) as named contacts.

There was a policy change in 2025 regarding sharp knives, and this has been adhered to by creating a locked cupboard in the kitchen @ Trinity (no other church has sharp objects stored on site) and added to this any sharp tools i.e. screwdrivers.

From a Red Zone perspective Lisa and the team at Pippins have had to tighten up on all their policies (due to the Southport incident) so they asked me to work with them on some of these to ensure that what they required the Church also had in place. These all were in order except the roller shutter in the kitchen to the coffee bar, the bolts have been removed and padlocks added for additional security. Also, there maybe a few items added in the coffee bar kitchen on allergens etc so that they comply from a health and safety perspective.

*Jane Ellis*

## Stewards/Leadership Team

The Stewards/Leadership Team are Jenny Hall, Steve Fearnley, Trevor Starling, Alan Eccles, Helen Share, Eileen Hughes, Rob Felts-Davies, Peter Share, Sue Fearnley, Jane Ellis, Pearl Mayhew, Pete Davies, Joanna Fearnley.

During this last year the team have met roughly every 6 weeks with Rev Dr Joanne Cox-Darling. At these meetings, we have dealt with many and varied issues, including finance, property, pastoral, worship, special events, risk assessments, safeguarding compliance, and other governance related issues.

Discussions within the team have led to many improvements as you will see from the Property Report – ie upgrading the heating system, the installation of a whole church fire alarm system, and many other issues which will need to take place as soon as possible. Discussion has also taken place concerning installing solar

panels on the roof in future weeks, and improvements to the internal lighting. Much of the work already taken place has resulted from a fundraising drive which has seen church members contributing an amazing amount of funds.

There have also been many discussions concerning the Circuit introduction of Hubs within the churches in the Circuit, with Brewood, Coven, Rakegate, and Trinity Methodist Churches forming a Hub together from this coming September.

The team have also met the person taking over from Rev Dr. Joanne Cox-Darling in September.

As usual, Stewards have been on duty for all acts of worship and funerals. All members of the team serve on the Church Council and representatives of the Team serve on the Circuit Meeting.

## Tuesday Club

Our ladies meeting continues to meet on a Tuesday afternoon, 2.30pm – 4.00pm, and our average membership is still around 12 ladies. Our meetings begin with devotions, and prayers for members who are sick or absent for other reasons; and they are contacted or visited by the pastoral work we do.

Thank you to our registrar, treasurer, and 'lift givers', and to those who help in the kitchen, and a huge thank you to our wonderful cake makers. The 'speakers' come from our own members, who talk about interesting things they do or 'special places they have visited.

We had a very special V.E day celebration, with red, white and blue cakes, and a red, white and blue flower arrangement – and chat about 'memories' of wartime.

We do quizzes, and share 'chatting' over coffee/tea and home-made cakes.

Anyone wishing to join us will be made very welcome

*Marion Edge*

# 'Together' Trinity's new Bereavement and Relationship Café

*(Whilst this event has only just commenced, we thought you would be interested to have information about how it is getting on)*

We're delighted to confirm the cafe opened on 8th May, 2025. Fifteen people attended. We sat down on one big table, shared drinks and biscuits and the conversations just flowed.

Our goal is to serve the community by creating a welcome environment for people to share and find friendship. There's no pressure, the cafe is open to everyone, and the initial response has been so encouraging. Why not come and join us and bring a friend!

*Simon and Joyce Ramshaw*

## Policy of policies

In addition to the policies and procedures of the Methodist Church contained online and in CPD – the following policies are in place and are available on request or in the file in the Minister’s Vestry in both locations.

Unless otherwise stated, the policies will be reviewed at the Annual AGM, following consultation with the relevant group or body tasked with the implementation and development of the policy.

Connexus Methodist Church is not an employing body.

Unless otherwise stated, the good practice guides for Methodist Insurance remain foundational.

<b>Protocol, procedure or policy</b>	<b>Group responsible for implementation and development</b>	<b>Date of approval</b>	<b>Due date of next review</b>
Accessibility Protocol	Accessibility/EDI officer Stewards Property	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Spring 2025
Booking Policy	Booking Secretary Finance	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2024 for long term rentals 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024 for ad hoc bookings
Safeguarding policy	Safeguarding Officer Church Council	October 2024	October 2025
Fire Risk Assessment	Property	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Spring 2025
Funeral Policy	Minister Leadership Team	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Spring 2025
Church Council Policy	Leadership Team	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Spring 2025
Images Policy	Safeguarding Officer AV team Stewards	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Spring 2025
Lone Workers Policy	Line Managers Minister Stewards	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Spring 2025
Eco Church Policy	Eco-Church champion Leadership Team	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Spring 2025
Health and Safety Policy	Property Leadership Team	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Spring 2025
GDPR policy	Church Council	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Spring 2025
Fairtrade policy	Church Council	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Spring 2025

Alcohol policy	Church Council	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Spring 2025
Medical Incident Policy	Stewards	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Spring 2025
Policy of Policies	Chair of Church Council	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	Spring 2025
<b>The following policies still need to be written and agreed</b>			
Asbestos policy	Property		
Tree maintenance schedule	Property		
Property upkeep schedule and annual inspection	Property Church Council		
Accessibility audit	Accessibility Officer		
Terrorism policy	Church Council		
Privacy Policy	Church Council		
Risk Register (per zone and per event)	Church Council		
Gambling policy	Church Council		
EDI impact for events	Church Council		

## Key Safe Policy

- There is a key safe at the rear of the property at **Codsall**.
- A spare key will be put in the key safe on the week there is an external booking.
- The key will be removed after the event has been completed.
- The key will open the rear doors and the cleaning cupboard
- All guests will be shown around the areas of their rental, prior to their event, to go through additional protocols and get to know the building.
- The safe code will be changed after each booking.
- The code will be kept on file in the minister's vestry – alongside other important rental information.
- Anyone with access to the key safe will need to sign the Keyholders Form and Disclosure form.

## Lone Working Policy for Volunteers

Connexus Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe environment for volunteers. This policy lays out the responsibilities with regards to working alone in the building or grounds. The risk assessment is to be reviewed annually or more frequently if there is any incident involving someone working alone.

## **Introduction**

At times, many church volunteers will be in situations where they are a 'lone worker'. The recommendations below try to be realistic about what can and cannot be put in place. Whilst it must be recognised that the Church does not have the structure associated with a large business, its aims to be a good employer, concerned about the safety of employees including volunteers.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the employer has a duty of care to advise and assess risk for workers when they work by themselves in these circumstances. However, employees and volunteers have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves, and other people affected by their work.

## **Aims of the Policy**

The aim of the policy is to:

- Increase volunteer's awareness of safety issues relating to lone working.
- Ensure that the risk of lone working is assessed in a systematic and ongoing way, and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Ensure that appropriate support is available to volunteers that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone.
- Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.
- Reduce the number of incidents and injuries to volunteers related to lone working.
- Protect everyone from safeguarding related harm.

## **Church Council's responsibilities**

- Identify staff and volunteers who are lone workers.
- Inform staff and volunteers of their responsibilities under the Lone Working Policy.
- Ensure all new staff and volunteers are aware of Lone Working protocols.
- Ensure that a risk assessment has been completed and documented and is regularly reviewed. A formal Risk Assessment is needed for lay workers and Presbyters.

- Put procedures in place which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with Lone Working
- Define limits of what cannot be done while working alone
- Ensure that staff and volunteers identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training.

### **Staff and Volunteer Responsibilities**

- It is the responsibility of all volunteers, employees, contractors, and Ministers to take care of themselves.
- No-one should never knowingly put themselves at risk.
- Ensure they read, understand and comply with the Lone Working policy.
- Participate in the risk assessment process to reduce the risk associated with lone working. Any incidents of injury should be recorded in the accident book kept in the kitchen. Any safeguarding concerns should be recorded and reported through the safeguarding protocols.

### **Good Practice for Lone Workers**

- All employees and volunteers leaving the workplace (or home) to undertake work-related tasks alone should consider leaving details of where they are going and their estimated time of arrival back at base.
- When arranging one-to-one meetings, employees, Ministers, and volunteers should consider whether contact could take place in an environment where confidentiality could be maintained but others would be in the vicinity.
- Lone workers should have access to adequate first-aid facilities.
- Lone workers should be provided with a mobile phone and other personal safety equipment where this is necessary.
- Lone workers should ensure that external doors remain locked.

### **Risk Assessments**

The current risk assessment follows, and forms part of this policy.

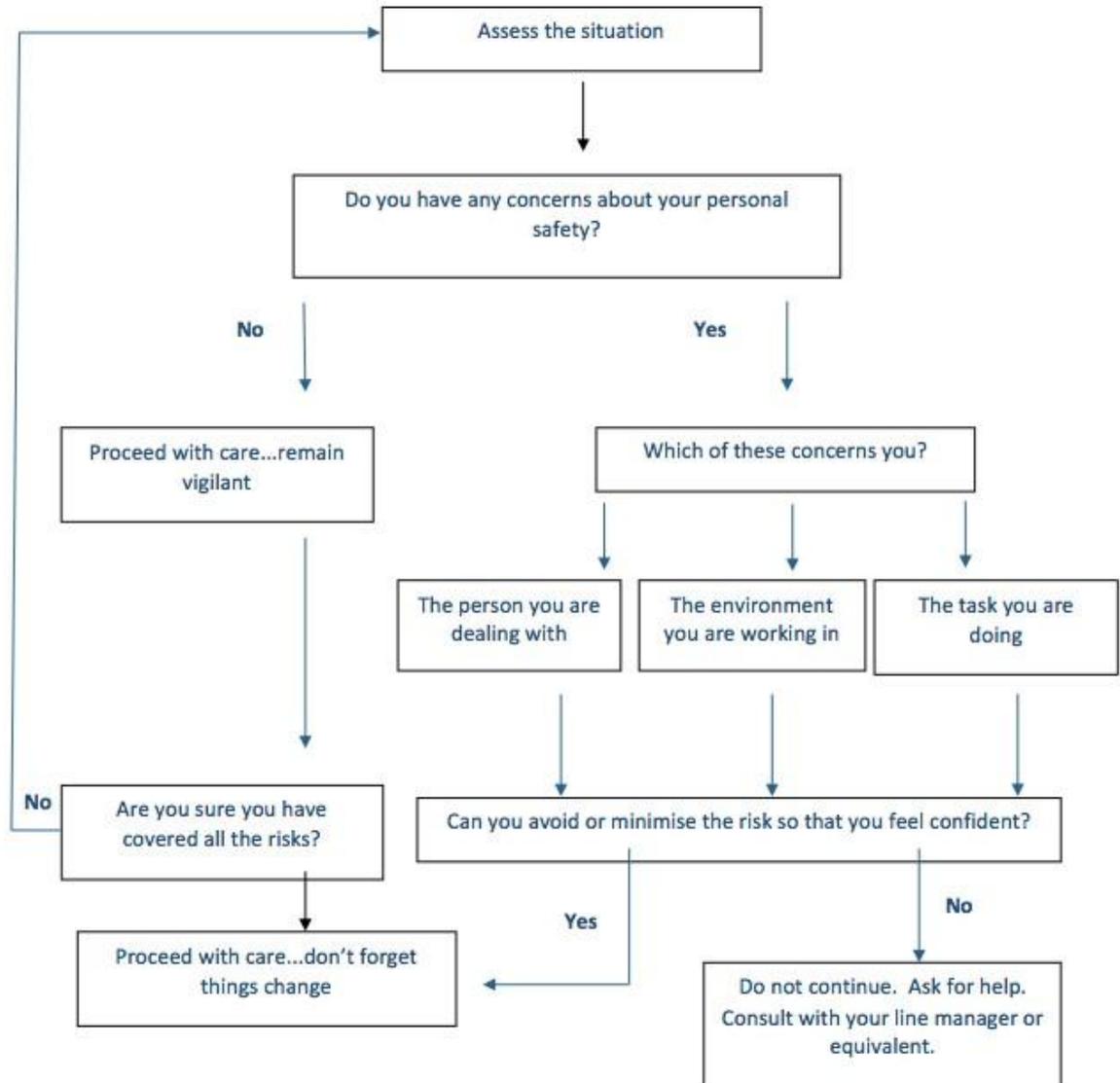
For reviewing the lone working risk assessment, the following questions will be considered:

- Is it necessary for the individual to work alone?
- Does the workplace or task present a special risk to the lone worker?
- Is there a safe means of entry and exit?
- Is there any cash or valuables on the premises?

- Do lone workers have knowledge of the hazards and risks to which they are possibly being exposed?
- Do lone workers know what to do if something goes wrong?
- Does someone else know the whereabouts of the lone workers and what they are doing?
- Are there adequate channels of communication in an emergency?
- Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone?
- Is there a risk of violence?
- Are women especially at risk if they work alone?
- Is any known risk attached to a home visit?
- Has an alternative to a home visit been considered?
- Has safe travelling between appointments been arranged?
- Have reporting and recording arrangements been made where appropriate?

## Lone Working Risk Assessment

Use this to assess your environment, and your working practices, as well as for an instant assessment of a situation.



From Personal Safety at Work, Suzy Lamplugh Trust 2006, revised 2008

# Policy on photography and publicity

Our policy statement on photography, on the Internet and for publicity ...

At Connexus Methodist Church we take the issue of child safety very seriously, and this includes the use of images of children.

We occasionally include images of children and young people in publications and on our website, but we have a duty of care which means that the information we give is limited, reducing the risk of inappropriate contact.

We ask that parents give consent, usually at the time when their children enrol or register to join our clubs or groups, for the church to take and use photographs and images of their children. This is on the understanding that any use of images at all venues of Connexus Methodist Church is underpinned by our Safeguarding Policy – Good Practices, no.7.

In addition, at Codsall in the sanctuary, there is often livestream recording. The dedicated safe zone is the rear 4 rows on the left as you face the front. This is for anyone who wishes not to be recorded or streamed at any time. Those seated here are reminded that if they move further forwards, they may be captured online.

We will never include the name, age, postal address, e-mail address or telephone number of a child alongside an image.

In accordance with The Methodist Church guidelines, notices will be displayed prominently with the heading "**Photography and Livestreaming**" and stating:

*Photographs and Livestreaming takes place on these premises. These are for possible use in our church magazine, on the church website, on our social media channels, or in our publicity material. The Methodist Church will take all steps to ensure that these images are used solely for the promotion and celebration of the Methodist Church and its clubs and groups.*

If you become aware that these images are being used inappropriately, please inform a Church steward or officer as soon as possible.

If you would prefer that your child's photograph is not taken and used for these purposes, please advise the Minister in writing.

# Fire Safety Policy

## Responsibility

The responsibility for fire safety arrangements within the Church rests with the Church Council. The Church Council delegates the day-to-day management of the policy to the stewards, and members of the property committee.

## General Fire Safety planning

Each Venue in the Connexus Hub will have their own fire risk assessment, annually signed off by the Church Council.

Each venue has been equipped with a number of general features to improve fire safety:

- Adequate, well maintained fire safety equipment.
- Appropriately signage including marked fire exits.

The Property Steward will oversee the maintenance of the equipment in accordance with the required schedules, and report to Church Council.

The Church Council will ensure that a number of basic 'good housekeeping' procedures are followed:

- Waste bins will be emptied regularly.
- External bins, if applicable, will be housed in a suitable container and emptied weekly.
- All escape routes and fire exits will be kept clear and rooms kept tidy.
- Any flammable cleaning materials will be stored in a locked store.

Those hiring/making use of the premises will also be provided with information on the action to take on discovering a fire and to support the safe evacuation of the building.

## Fire Risk Assessment

The Chair of the property committee (or their delegate) will undertake the annual risk assessment taking account of the current legislation. Any significant findings will be reported to the Church Council and acted on.

This assessment will look at all aspects of fire safety and will enable the Church Council to identify any actions the Council need to take to improve safety. Those findings and any actions identified will be recorded in writing. This Fire Safety Policy will also be revised if required and will be reviewed annually.

### **Staff, Stewards, and other users**

Staff, Stewards, regular volunteers and other user group representatives will be given training and guidance to support the Council in the implementation of the Fire Safety Policy:

- i. The action to be taken on discovery of a fire
- ii. The evacuation procedure, including procedure for directing members of the public, and other occupants – paying particular attention to those with limited mobility or access requirements – to the exits and off the premises
- iii. The arrangements for calling the Fire Brigade
- iv. The location and purpose, and use, of fire fighting equipment
- v. The detail, and location, of escape routes, especially those not in regular use, as well as the importance of keeping access to escape routes clear.
- vi. The method of opening all escape doors, including the use of any emergency fastenings
- vii. The importance of general fire precautions and good housekeeping

### **Location of Shut off Valves**

Keyholders and those who regularly use the building will be made aware of the location of the main shut off valves for when the emergency services require this information.

- o The water shut-off valve is located xxxxxxxxxxxxxx
- o The main electrical switch boxes are xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

### **Fire Officer**

The Fire Officer is the named local Steward on duty, or the leader of an external booking.

Fire Officer prior to the meeting /service should check that:

- All Fire Exits – a minimum 1.5M corridor is maintained and clear of any movable obstructions: chairs, wheeled walkers and tables

At the beginning of the meeting /occasionally at a service The Organiser/Leader (Lead Church Steward) should announce and indicate that:

The main Fire Exit it is at the rear of the church

A secondary exit at the front of the church on the left hand side that can be used once the source of the fire has been located.

The assembly point:

- Codsall is in car park, in the marked area by the railway line fencing.
- Brewood is the car park to Brewood Middle School
- Coven is the Co-op car park
- Rakegate is the parking area to the rear of the building

In the event of a fire the fire officer will:

- Raise the alarm with the users in the building
- Call 999
- Check the area of the fire, to make sure people are safely using the appropriate exit routes.
- Direct people through to the assembly area
- Meet the fire crew on their arrival

## Fire Evacuation Procedure for those using the Church

We want everyone who uses our venues to be welcome, safe, and confident in responding in the unlikely event of a fire on the premises. In all things we ask for people to be vigilant, and to use their common sense.

Please take a moment to read and understand the guidance given below which outlines your responsibility with regard to fire safety and tells you what to do in the event of a fire.

### **Smoking**

Please note smoking nor vaping is not permitted on any part of our venues including car parking areas.

### **Exit Routes**

Please make yourself aware of the nearest fire exit and that your route to it is clear and unobstructed. Ensure everyone you are responsible for is aware of these arrangements at the start of each meeting/event.

Please be aware of anyone who is with you who will need special arrangements to exit the building and familiarise yourself with their exit plan. Do this in collaboration with the individuals – do not assume you know their requirements.

### **On suspicion or discovery of a fire or on hearing the alarm raised**

Leave calmly and quickly through the nearest fire exit.

Do not stop to collect your possessions

Assemble in the designated assembly point.

The Steward or Leader of your group will telephone the emergency services (there is a phone in the two offices in the building or use a mobile device when you are outside of the building.)

The leader of the group is responsible for taking a register and making sure that everyone is evacuated from the building quickly, calmly, and safely.

### **Location of Shut off Valves**

The location of the main shut off valves should the emergency services require this information.

Water shut-off valve is located xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.

Main electrical switch boxes are located in the room off the stage

### **Fire Drill**

All groups (including congregations) will have an annual fire drill. This will be reported to the Chair of the Property Committee.

Remember the motto: Get Out, Stay Out, Get the Fire Brigade Out.

Please familiarise yourself with the location of the fire exits

## **Benevolent Fund**

This is a dedicated fund to help alleviate poverty in our locality. It is our practice to ensure that there are always funds available to whomever needs it. We have a standing fund in our main accounts which is a discretionary fund for those in need. It is the minister's practice to always have one steward sign off the expenditure from this fund - keeping the recipient anonymous as far as possible but ensuring transparency and accountability wherever possible.

This year we have supported folk around our wider community including the following ways:

- \* chemotherapy survival kits
- \* counselling for an abuse survivor
- \* shopping for a family (referred from the health centre)
- \* flowers
- \* gas and electricity top ups

Please let Jo or a steward know if there are specific needs in our communities that we can support or meet.

## **Busy Bees Party Hire**

We continue to have a few folk utilising our party hire. We offer packs of 20 plates, bowls, cups, jugs, and food trays for a small fee. We can also add cutlery, mugs, a parachute, and decorations for an additional cost. These are all available in the small coffee bar area of the kitchen at Codsall.

Our partnership with St Nicholas School continues - whereby we provide all the partyware needed for their end of term parties and most recently, PTFA fundraisers. This includes glassware and use of our urns.

Not only does this endeavour prevent single use disposables entering landfills it also supports a local school.

One development for the coming year will be to include the availability of tableware as part of our ad hoc bookings. We hope that this will continue to improve awareness about the damage single use products do to the environment and extend our hire model still further.

## Funeral and bereavement care.

We believe that God cares for us in life and offers us hope for beyond life too. Death is a necessary, but difficult, part of our human experience.

We are able to support you through the process of preparing for a funeral, as well as in the longer-term experience of grief and bereavement - which you may never fully leave behind (and that's ok). Grief can creep up on us when we least expect (or want) it.

We offer a bespoke funeral service - in chapel, at the local crematoria, or at a graveside. Talk to your funeral director about referring your funeral needs to us, and we will meet with you to discuss everything that you want in the funeral for a loved one. The minister is also available should you wish to discuss your wishes and to plan your own funeral. This can be in conversation, or as part of your will.

We are keen to support grieving families and provide a bespoke resource 'The Gift of Grief' for all our bereaved families. Additional copies of this resource are available.

In addition to our funeral service, we hold an annual memorial service, so that you can take some time before Christmas to remember those whom you have loved and lost.

If you or a loved one has chosen a Simple Funeral (with a direct cremation without a service) we can offer thanksgiving or memorial services for family and friends, at any time.

We have started a Bereavement support café on a Thursday afternoon, and many folks in the congregations are now Bereavement Care Aware through the Care for the Family training.

All funerals are charged. It's the minister's discretion if their fee is donated back to the church or to a local charity or kept.

## Connexus Methodist Church

### Fees 2025-26

The Circuit have approved a policy of setting wedding and funeral officiant fees, based on the Church of England Parochial Fees.

#### **WEDDING**

Church	£200
Steward	£45
Organist	£142.40
Sound Desk	£45
Zoom link and recording	£45
Minister/Authorised person	£250
Wedding Blessing	£150

In addition, a Marriage Schedule and post-wedding production of certificates needs to be arranged with the Council Registrar.

#### **FUNERAL**

Church	£200
Steward	£45 per steward
Organist	£142.40
Sound Desk	£45
Zoom link and recording	£45
Minister fee (church or crem)	£234

[This will rise annually in January, in line with the CofE Parochial fees, so as to prevent there being local competition ecumenically or with colleagues.]

Scattering of ashes	£35
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## Room Hire

### Codsall

Hall - £24.00 for first hour, £19.00 for subsequent hours

Lounge - £22.00 and £17.00

Small mtg room - £20.00 and £15.00

Sanctuary £27.00 per hour for charities and community

At the discretion of the room booking secretary, a £50 refundable cleaning deposit can be required for children's parties.

### Brewood/Coven

£80 for a 3hour session, exclusive access