

**Annual Report 2018**

The Trustees present their Annual Report and financial statements for September 2017-August 2018.

**Main Events 2017-18**

This has been the first year in the ministry of Revd Kevin Price beginning last September. Consequently this has been a time of settling into a new pattern of ministry for all of us. We have been less reliant upon visiting ministers and lay preachers though we have remained integrated into the Methodist Circuit Plan with Kevin also leading worship elsewhere once a month. Whilst providing a solid base for weekly worship & preaching, new patterns are being developed with regular family focussed services now planned and a café style service on one Sunday afternoon each month. An openness to diversity in worship has continued to be a hallmark of Wellspring. *Wellies*, the Sunday morning children’s group, has consolidated with the few young people who attend confidently sharing what they have been doing and leading the congregation in prayer.

The dedicated minibus service has been discontinued and replaced by a rota of private car drivers for Sunday morning and this together with the passenger lift on the premises continues to assist less active people to participate in morning worship.

During this year opportunities for prayer and study together have been enhanced. *Prayer Zone* now meets weekly exploring various forms of prayer including a monthly ‘prayer walk’ around different parts of the town, which has proved enlightening. Seasonal times of reflection at Advent and Holy Week have taken place as important moments of reflection; and small *Home Groups* re-established. All have been well supported and beneficial to the spiritual well-being of the church.

Midweek activities continue to grow in significance and numbers;*Coffee Stop* remains popular and has attracted some new regulars. *Memory Café*, which celebrated its third birthday in August, and *Easy Meals* are now well established as Wellspring community events with numbers continuing to grow.*Crossways* drama and music group has rehearsed throughout the year and performed an original piece *‘Otherwise Engaged’* as well as carol singing at care homes, the library and *Intu* shopping centre, Derby. The group also led a reflective evening service before Christmas and worship at *Sudbury Prison*.

Our combined mid-week *Girls’ Brigade/Boys’ Brigade* has also enjoyed a good year attracting greater numbers of children and is increasingly supported by church members.*Jam Club,* a one-day-a-week drop-in with drinks and snacks runs in school term time. Fortnightly *Guild* meetings attract a good following with a variety of speakers and activities, andthe group also organised a holiday in Sidmouth - greatly enjoyed by all who went.

Our church and minister are fully committed to *Churches Together in Wirksworth and District* taking an active part in seasonal and civic events. Through this we are now represented in some of the local schools where Kevin leads regular assemblies.

The church has continued to take a full and active part in the town’s *Well Dressing, Carnival and Arts Festival.*This year ourWell Dressing was an abstract design inspired by the concept of Trinity, andmuch admired by visitors and local people. The Brigade Float had a *Disney* theme and once again all enjoyed being part of the Carnival procession.During the *Art and Architecture Trail* weekend, the church provided a venue for an exhibitor as well as a much appreciated ‘quiet space’ – *The Labyrinth of Life.*

One particularly encouraging feature of the past year has been our increasing engagement with the community by taking the church into other premises and public spaces. Beginning with a ‘Pop up’ Café held in a vacant shop for 3 evenings to coincide with late-night shopping before Christmas; then promoting *Fairtrade Fortnight;* holding a book-stall in a another vacant shop during the Carnival weekend; and taking a regular pitch at the weekly market, again as a book-stall. The twice weekly *Charities Plant Stall* run by one of our members remains very popular in the community and therefore able to make significant donations to many local charitable causes including Wellspring.

As some of our original Vision has been achieved in setting up the LEP and calling a minister, the Trustees have produced a revised *Vision Statement and Strapline* which is now recommended for adoption by the church.

All people working with children and vulnerable adults have received appropriate training, through the Methodist Safeguarding Scheme, with regard to the government’s Disclosure and Barring Service. The church has read the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit, and is satisfied that the activities outlined above clearly demonstrate that the charity is providing a benefit to the public.

More information on the life and history of the church is available on our website, [*www.wellspringchurchwirksworth.co.uk*](http://www.wellspringchurchwirksworth.co.uk).

**Looking to the Future - Achievements and Performance**

The Church does not measure success only in numbers, interms of people or finance, but also in less tangible areas like fellowship and encouragement. 2017-18 has been a positive year in terms of growing friendships, commitment and caring, for members and others in the community with our minister integral to this. Wellspring is clearly known and accepted in the town.

The Trustees are grateful for the trust and support offered by the congregationand continue to work hard to encourage the church in seeking to fulfil our focus of ministry in terms of Worship, Pastoral Care, Reaching Out and Property.

As groups thrive and there is an increasing need for community space within the town, we have, during this year, made significant progress towards achieving our vision to enhance our premises with a new annexe. Architects were instructed to prepare and submit a planning application to a design that met with the approval of the church. Planning Permission has now been granted and the issue of funding is being addressed. A substantial grant has been offered by the Methodist Circuit and we are grateful for this and other expressions of financial support large and small.

New GDPR legislation came into force in May and in connection with this the church has implemented appropriate policies and procedures, spearheaded by a co-opted Trustee.

Congregational numbers have remained stable with a couple of new attenders, though there have been no new members this year. One church member died during the year, and two transferredaway. At 31 August 2018, the membership stood at 53.Trustees believe that outreach should be a primary focus of our ministry in the coming years.

**Financial Review**

We have been operating financially as Wellspring for four years now and supporting a full-time minister, Kevin, for just over one year. It is a good time to take stock.

The figures below and the accounts summaries which will be presented at the Annual Congregational Meeting exclude what has been collected towards the cost of the annexe and what has been spent on it so far. Those two figures balance each other out at just over £6,000 apiece.

For the rest, there has been a shortfall of £3,671 over the last year. We no longer have the £6,000 a year we previously received from renting out the manse. And we spent £4400 on improving the manse, on top of what we spent in the previous year. In view of this, the shortfall is not alarming.

We cannot, however, be complacent: our finances are now quite tight.

Thankfully our weekly/monthly giving has almost held steady: down by just £236 amid the losses and gains in our membership figures. The obvious, if challenging, way to improve our income is to welcome new people into membership.

Looking to the year ahead, we have also taken a fresh look at the rules governing Gift Aid and consider that we may be able to recover tax on the many small donations made at events such as Easy Meals and Memory Café. We will also save around £400 by no longer hiring the minibus to get people to services. And there should be no more four-figure sums paid out from general funds to solicitors, whose future bills will form part of the annexe costs.

Funding the annexe is an enormous hill to climb. We have a target to raise £50,000 from our membership and we are grateful for the pledges we have already received and the fundraising events which are beginning to take place – but we are only half way there so far. On top of which, even with the £174,000 from the sale of the Baptist chapel, it leaves a further £276,000 to be raised by applying for grants. That represents a lot of forms to fill in, with no guarantee that every bid will be successful.

Our grateful thanks are due to Rob in his role as Treasurer; Barbara for counting the money every week; to Geoffrey for managing the Gift Aid scheme; and to Mike Sharpe for examining the accounts.

**Status**

The Charity is a Methodist/Baptist Local Ecumenical Partnership, governed by a Constitution approved by Churches Together for Derbyshire, as Sponsoring Body, and by the Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Methodist Church of Great Britain. It is exempted from registration under Section 30 (2) (b) of the Charities Act 2011.

The church has read the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit, and is satisfied that the activities outlined above clearly demonstrate that the charity is providing a benefit to the public.

**Charitable Object**

The principal purpose of the charity is the advancement of the Christian faith, including the advancement of education, community service and such other general charitable purposes in such parts of the United Kingdom and the world as the Church shall determine.

The Church occupies premises at 49 St John Street, Wirksworth, which are held by the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes, on Trusts which are entirely compatible with the above object.

**Organisational Structure and Decision-making processes**

Members of the Church are accepted in accordance with the Constitution which requires them to be or to have been publicly baptised as believers or confirmed as believers, professing their faith in Jesus Christ.

In accordance with the Constitution, the members appoint six of their number as Trustees, who together with the Minister and up to four co-opted Trustees are responsible for the day to day running of the church’s work and witness, and the financial and legal aspects of the charity. The Chair, Secretary and Treasurer are appointed by the Trustees.

Members Meetings take place four times per year to review the life and witness of the church; consider topics relevant to its witness; receive reports covering all aspects of its life; consider matters brought to the meetings by the Trustees; and generally help the church’s life, work and vision.

The Trustees have made an assessment of the major risks facing the church, and are satisfied that there are policies in place to minimise these risks.

All people working with children and vulnerable adults have received appropriate training, through the Methodist Safeguarding Scheme, with regard to the government’s Disclosure and Barring Service.

**Leadership**

**Minister:**Revd Kevin Price

Trustees: Bill Bowmer (until July 18), Jenny Few, James Hinnells, Paul Heppleston,

Ingrid Keith (from Jan 18), John Proctor, Peter Slack, Sue Watts, Barbara Wilson,

**Secretary**: Barbara Wilson

**Treasurer:** Rob Few