

United Church Dorchester

Annual Report

January to December 2022

Charity registration number:1137996

Location: 49-51, Charles Street, Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 1EE

1. The Charity: its constitution, organisational structure and governance.

1.1. Overview

1.1.1. The United Church Dorchester was formed in 1978 by the coming together of the former South Street Methodist and South Street United Reformed congregations as a formal Local Ecumenical Partnership under the sponsorship of “Churches Together in Dorset”, the county ecumenical forum. It originally received its charity status indirectly as a result of its membership of both the Methodist and United Reformed Churches, themselves both independent charitable bodies. However, following changes to Charity Law, the United Church Dorchester adopted its own written constitution and registered with the Charity Commission in 2010 as a charitable unincorporated body. (Registered Charity Number: 1137996).

1.2. The Purpose of the Charity

1.2.1. The purpose of the Charity is to advance the Christian faith in Dorchester and its surroundings in accordance with the principles and practices of the Methodist and United Reformed churches.

1.2.2. To achieve its purpose, the Charity will engage in a range of activities, either on its own or with others, including (but not restricted to):

- a. the celebration of public worship;
- b. the teaching of the Christian faith.
- c. mission and evangelism;
- d. pastoral work, including visiting the sick and the bereaved;
- e. the provision of facilities with a Christian ethos for the local community, including (but not restricted to) the elderly, the young and other groups with special needs;
- f. the support of other charities in the UK and overseas.
- g. maintaining the fabric of the United Church and associated buildings in order to facilitate all these activities.

1.3. Membership

1.3.1. Our current membership is 165. During the year, 6 new members were welcomed into the Church, 4 had their membership transferred to other churches, 6 members died, 2 former members, with whom we had lost contact, were removed from the list.

1.4. The Council of Stewards and Organisational Structure

1.4.1. The Council of Stewards is the trustee body of the church. This group constitutes the legally responsible body of the charity. Trustees, called Stewards, are elected from the membership by church members at the Annual General Meeting. A Steward is appointed for an initial period of three years; the period of office can be extended by a further year after which time the steward must stand down for at least one year before being eligible for re-election. The Ministers are ex-officio members of the Council. Policies and procedures for the induction and training of new trustees are in place and available in the restricted section of the church website, containing information on our constitution, the role of a trustee and the management structure of the organisation. All stewards

have up to date DBS clearance and have or are attending Advanced Safeguarding training.

- 1.4.2. The Council of Stewards meets approximately monthly. The chair of the Council, the Senior Steward, is elected from within the Council, along with the treasurer and secretary. (Currently the Treasurer's position is confirmed annually by a 75% agreement at the AGM since he has served longer than the standard 4 year term) The Council of Stewards (i.e. the Trustees) is responsible for administering and managing the Church in support of its Vision. It supports and advises the Minister in promoting the whole mission of the United Church and the wider Church in its teaching of the Christian faith and in its pastoral, evangelistic, social, ecumenical and charitable work. The Council is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the United Church buildings at numbers 49 and 51 Charles Street, Dorchester, which are owned by the United Reformed Church.
- 1.4.3. The Church meeting, which can advise the Stewards' Council, meets at least 4 times a year. Much of the day-to-day management of the church is delegated to eight major committees (Worship; Pastoral and Fellowship; Youth and Family; Community Service, Home and World Mission; Finance; Property; Lettings and Outreach) and their constituent subgroups, which report regularly to the Stewards' Council, and to Church Meetings. The committees have delegated authority to make routine decisions related to their remit and may have a budget allocated to such ends. Decisions requiring extra funding for any items outside the usual scope of the committee are referred to the Stewards who may decide to seek advice from the church meeting. The Minister, Senior Steward and Secretary meet regularly to review needs, progress plans and co-ordinate future date planning.
- 1.4.4. Our AGM was held on the church premises in April 2022.

The Council of Stewards (Trustees) who served during 2022 comprised (Years in brackets indicate the year of appointment)

Our Minister:

- Revd John Yarrien (inducted September 2020)

Stewards who served all year (Management Sub-committee membership shown in brackets)

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| • Colin Gannaway (2004) | Treasurer (Finance, Lettings) |
| • Maria Jacobson (2019) | (Community Service, Home & World Mission) |
| • Paul Smith (2021) | (Property and Finance) |
| • Brian Savage (2020) | (Senior Steward & chair of Council of Stewards) |
| • Jenny Mair (2021) | (Worship) |

Stewards who stood down at the AGM:

- John Parson (2018)

- Diana Leeming (2019)
- John Hilton (co-opted 2021)

Stewards elected April 2022

- Rev David Cuckson
- Michael Humphrey (Outreach committee)
- Elizabeth Martin (Youth & Family committee)
- Mary Martin (Pastoral Committee & Secretary)

Observer

- Sue Bird (representing the Dorset South and West Methodist Circuit)
- Catherine Welch (2021) Safeguarding Officer

Minute Taker: Di Lawrence (UCD Administrator) until June 2022

Ellie Minns (UCD Administrator) from September 2022

1.5. Staff members

- Minister: Revd John Yarrien
- Pastoral Visitor: VACANT
- Children and Families Outreach Worker: Mr Peter Jenner – part time (employed by the Circuit)
- UCD Administrator: Mrs Di Lawrence 11 hrs per week until June 2022; 2 hrs per week from June 2022. Ms Ellie Minns , 13 hrs per week from September 2022

1.6. Senior Volunteer Managers:

1.6.1. Although we have paid members of staff, the church is mainly managed by volunteers.

Key post holders include:

- Senior Steward – Brian Savage
- Secretary – Mary Martin
- Treasurer – Colin Gannaway
- Finance Committee chair– Paul Smith
- Pastoral Care chair– Wendy Hilton
- Youth and Family – Peter Jenner
- Property chair - Paul Smith
- Worship Secretary – Linda Gundry
- Lettings chair– John Hilton

- Coffee Shop Managers – Elizabeth Haynes, Sue Gannaway and Diana Leeming
- Church Shop Managers – Pat Smith, Pat Brown and Peter Jenner
- Wednesday Morning coffee – Sue Gannaway
- Safeguarding Officer – Catherine Welch
- World Mission – Maria Jacobson
- Outreach – John Yarrien (deputy chair – Peter Jenner)

1.7. Relationships with Related parties:

- 1.7.1. The United Church Dorchester and the Bridport United Church are both members of the Dorset South and West Methodist circuit and the Wessex Synod of the United Reformed Church. The two churches have been combined into a joint pastorate by the URC.
- 1.7.2. The United Church Dorchester retains its links to both parent bodies through the Wessex Synod of the United Reformed Church and the Southampton District of the Methodist Church. It is also an active member of Dorchester Churches Together and seeks to work closely with other churches in the community.

1.8. Governance issues:

- 1.8.1 The stewards meet regularly, usually monthly and discuss activities and revisited the United Church Vision discussion that was started before the pandemic.
- 1.8.2 The Council of Stewards began to look at the Committee structure, and work has commenced to revise this to improve cohesion and efficiency.
- 1.8.3 Following the adoption of the God in Love Unites Us report at the Methodist Conference in 2021, each Methodist Church (or those in a part Methodist LEP such as UCD) was required to hold a vote of members to determine if same sex marriages and /or blessings of same sex unions would be permitted in their Church. A 'Church conversation' was held where any member was welcome to express their own point of view and then a confidential vote was held at the Church Meeting in July. Under the UCD constitution, the vote to agree that same sex marriages could take place at UCD required a two thirds majority; at the meeting this threshold was not reached for same sex marriages. The blessings of same sex unions was agreed.

2. Public Benefit Statement, Achievements and Performance

2.1. Our Objective

- 2.1.1. When planning our activities for the year, the Ministers and the Stewards' Council have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion and our vision for the wider church. Our main

objective is to try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our church community through:

- a. the celebration of public worship;
- b. the teaching of the Christian faith;
- c. mission and evangelism;
- d. pastoral work, including visiting the sick and the bereaved;
- e. the provision of facilities with a Christian ethos for the local community, including (but not restricted to) the elderly, the young and other groups with special needs;
- f. the support of other charities in the UK and overseas;
- g. the maintenance of the fabric of the United Church and associated buildings in order to facilitate all these activities.

2.2. The celebration of public worship

- 2.2.1. As a Christian Community, the United Church welcomes everyone because God loves all people. We value our diversity. Whatever our age, background, culture, gender or race, we each have something special to share with others and the Stewards' Council is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our church. The Stewards' Council maintains an over-view of our worship and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within Dorchester and its surroundings. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.
- 2.2.2. UCD is extremely blessed to have a very skilled musician as our Musical Director – Heather Reed; she is an exceptional organist and accompanist and gives up a great deal of her time to ensure that the choir and music groups' contributions to worship is of an appropriate standard. Many new members comment on the standard of the music at worship.
- 2.2.3. Until March 2020, UCD provided a variety of worship styles at different times throughout the week. These included: 10.30 Sunday morning worship; 6.30 Sunday evening worship; 9.00 am communion on the second Sunday of each month and a short twenty minute service on Wednesday morning (the town's market day). Following opening up after Covid19 the pattern of services has changed.

The 10.30am service is the main act of worship; the services are led by our minister, retired ministers or lay preachers from both the Methodist tradition and the United Reformed Church. Numbers attending the 10.30am service are approximately 90 – 115. The 10.30 am service at UCD is regularly recorded and edited by Peter Robinson and available on the Churches You Tube channel. Evening services at 6.30pm have resumed usually twice a month with attendance between 8 & 30.
- 2.2.4. Starting last April, on one Sunday afternoon each month, instead of an evening service we now have Afternoon Tea and Favourite Hymns, known simply as Tea-Pot. People arrive from 3.30pm for a formal start at 4pm. We serve sandwiches and cake with cups of tea. At about 4.45pm we give out hymn books and have an informal time of hymn

singing, with the hymns chosen by those who are there. We finish at about 5.30pm. All are welcome. There is no charge or collection, but we welcome donations towards the cost of the tea. The numbers have gradually built up, and we now usually have between twenty and thirty attending. We meet in the hall so that we are well-spaced.

- 2.2.5. The short Market Day service has continued and regularly attracts 20-30 people.
- 2.2.6. Zoom Sunday services which were commenced during lockdown for COVID19 have been discontinued; printed services for those without appropriate technology are available weekly from the Dorset South and West circuit.
- 2.2.7. In November 23 Christmas shoe boxes were blessed and donated. They had been filled and wrapped for children living in poverty in South East Europe.
- 2.2.8. We were able to have our special services at Christmas: Quiet Christmas and Christingle services,

2.2.8 On Christmas Eve over 100 families crowded into the church for our Christingle service, and it was wonderful to see so many families enjoying a relaxed service that enabled them to make their own Christingles, as well as hear the Christmas Story, told very simply.

2.3. Teaching of the Christian faith

- 2.3.1. Seekers Course. During 2022 United Church Dorchester piloted a new Outreach course, designed to provide an opportunity for those seeking a faith or an understanding of faith to get a grounding in the basics of the Christian faith as expressed at UCD. Initially we ran a 10 week version where church members were invited to come and participate. Around 33 came to the initial session, and numbers maintained between 25 and 30 each week. Participants particularly found the small group opportunities helpful in exploring the content provided in the main session. However, when we reviewed the course, it was decided to look again at the course content and structure, with a view to reaching a cohort outside of our main worshipping community. In Autumn 2022, a new 5-week Seekers course, hosted at our local Coffee#1 shop took place. The focus was on us sharing with participants our lived experience of being a Christian, and tackling some of the big questions we often get asked about and why we go to church. The first week we had 3 participants, but by the end of the course we had 15; one even commented on the final session 'we have gone places far deeper than I could have imagined at the beginning-thank -you'
- 2.3.2. County Show. In September 2022, we were delighted to have a pitch at the Dorset County Show for the first time since 2019. A large team from UCD and across the Dorset South and West Methodist Circuit offered a 'Feed me, Change me, Love me' tent where families with very young children could take a few minutes of respite from the large crowds to feed or change their babies in a clean and safe space. Alongside this important offering, we ran a children's craft zone, served refreshments and offered games, which had a prize of a UCD stressball for taking part. Over the weekend, 70 families used the feed me, change me ,love me station and we gave away over 600 stress balls. We had a great location, lots of conversations with folk and a lot of fun being a visible Christian presence at the show.

2.3.3 Forest Praise. Our Forest Praise project, which is run in conjunction with our friends at St Georges Church, Fordington, has gone through a significant re-boot late in 2022. It was decided to take a slightly different approach and format to Forest Praise sessions. It remains a monthly event and has now been re branded as 'Forest Praise Cafe'. The number of activities at each session have been simplified around a core theme and a story and the 'Cafe' elements have been added where bacon rolls, toast, juice and tea and coffee are available.

2.3.4 A small team of volunteers welcome a number of children each week to Junior Church; they generally come in to the first part of the 10.30am service before leaving for their own activities.

2.4. Mission and evangelism

2.4.1 The 'Story-Tots' group, a weekly stay and play opportunity for babies and pre-school children has continued. The numbers attending vary from 10 to 25. Parents are offered a drink; there are plenty of toys for children to play with and usually a craft activity. We kept going through the School holidays (normally we close for a break) and made it Story Tots Plus so that parents could bring their older school-aged children.

2.4.2 Journey to the Stable, an interactive re-telling of the Nativity story, was held in 2022. Local schools were invited and three classes attended and enjoyed their time, giving positive feedback. When opened to the general public the overall attendance and positive feedback were encouraging.

2.4.3 In the week before Christmas, the church was open for a few hours each day for 'Christmas Joy' to allow people time to escape the busy rush to Christmas and view a range of Nativity sets.

2.4.4 On Easter Sunday we gave out Flowers and Sweets to the community. At Pentecost we had a well-attended Fun Day, which was all part of reaching out to the Community.

2.4.8 The South Street window is changed regularly to depict what is happening throughout the year, i.e. the different seasons, activities and events, local and world concerns.

2.4.10 We have an Outreach committee which looks at what is happening (events we are doing) and planning /suggesting other events for the future.

2.5 Pastoral work

2.5.1 Our Minister, Rev John Yarrien cares for spiritual and emotional needs. We hope to appoint a pastoral care assistant in 2023 to support the minister and pastoral committee.

2.5.2 The United Church maintains a system by which all members and adherents are assigned to a pastoral visitor, who tries to keep in touch with them and appreciates their concerns. Every pastoral visitor has their own pastoral visitor.

- 2.5.3 An annual welcome meeting is organised for all new people who have started attending UCD over the last year. This is an opportunity to meet other new members and learn more about the church. Twelve new adherents were invited to this year's welcome meeting. Each new adherent is also given a welcome pack.
- 2.5.4 Every new adherent is asked to complete a GDPR form explaining what information is kept and how it will be used. These details are kept on a church member's database.
- 2.5.5. The pastoral visitors usually meet twice a year for training and to share experiences. Only one session was held this year which was used to share experiences following Covid.
- 2.5.6 The Quiet Christmas service with refreshments was attended by 14 people and led by the pastoral committee
- 2.5.7 As part of our pastoral support to the local community we provide comfort and support to the bereaved. Ministers took 15 funerals this year and provided support to the families, not all the deceased were Church members.
- 2.5.8 Another component of our pastoral care is the "Prayer Chain" where those in need, are remembered in prayer by a number of Church members, including those who are housebound. The prayer chain keeps a confidential list of people for whom prayer has been requested both daily and weekly.
- 2.5.9 The Coffee Shop now regularly opens on Tuesday and Friday mornings and there is a Wednesday coffee morning in the hall. A welcome and a listening ear is given to all those who attend.
- 2.5.10 The Solos Group tried to restart after Covid but decided it was sadly no longer viable.
- 2.5.11 In the weeks before Christmas UCD members tried to spread the good news of the birth of Christ, the true meaning of Christmas. During the week before Christmas, the Action for Children group arranged Carol Singing outside the church, offering knitted angels to passers-by.

2.6 Serving the local community

- 2.6.1 With its central location in the town, the United Church Dorchester is ideally placed to offer itself as a reasonably priced venue for many events. Among others, the Regional Blood Transfusion Service runs well attended donor sessions regularly on our premises. Our local Alcoholics Anonymous group meets here three times a week, finding the lack of alcohol on the premises, a result of our Methodist roots, a positive benefit. These continued throughout 2022. Other lettings, such as the Country Market and a local amateur orchestra are also well established, along with country dancing and badminton, which are internal church groups.
- 2.6.2 The Church Shop remains open for four mornings a week. It is staffed entirely by volunteers. It provides a wide range of Christian books, gifts and cards, and fairly traded goods, including food from Traidcraft. As a Fairtrade Church and eco-congregation good practice is actively promoted within the Church and more widely in our locality. The shop window attracts passers-by into the church and customers come from a wide radius around Dorchester. When open, the shop also acts as an information point for the church. Ms Margaret Knighton resigned as the shop manager and a team of three of the buyers now manage the shop.

- 2.6.3 We continued to provide lunches for the homeless; these are organised monthly by members of the Church. We never throw anything away and those coming always take a second dinner away with them. It is a very rewarding experience. We have a small team of regular helpers (Sue Gannaway, Jean Janes, Roni Boyden and Diana Leeming); Peter Jenner and John Yarrien help as and when they can.
- 2.6.4 **Support of other charities in the UK and overseas** The United Church Dorchester has a continuing commitment to local, national and international charities through members working as volunteers and donations of goods and money.
- 2.6.5 Locally the Church has supported, amongst others:
- a) The local food bank continues to have a collection point at UCD. In addition, at Christmas, church members gave financial support to the Family Support charity, which provides Christmas hampers to families with children receiving free school meals.
 - b) The Dorchester Child Contact Centre provides a safe space for children of divided families to meet their non-resident parent for a few hours interaction in a controlled environment. It is an independent charity but the church offers free accommodation and many of the volunteers are church members. UCD also donated £1,000 from church funds.
 - c) Dorchester Alcoholics Anonymous Groups, who appreciate the “dry” status of our buildings, receive accommodation at a much reduced rate.
 - d) The church also made donations of between £100 and £600 to the following local charities: Dorchester Carers Hub (£400), Dorchester Family Support (£500), Dorchester Poverty Action (£700), Dorchester Volunteer Centre (£150), Dorset Mind (£200), Dorset Nightstop (£300), Dorset Race Equality (£200), Durnovaria Silver Band (£200), Home Start (£600), Methodist Homes for the Aged (MHA) (£200), NHS Foundation Trust (£300), Quiet Space (£150), URC Retired Ministers’ Housing (£250), Weldmar Hospice (£500) and Women’s Refuge (£400).
 - e) The Action for Children Fundraising Group raised a total of £2,284.90 from a range of events, including a garden party, carol singing, charity stalls, donations and several collections at church services.
- 2.6.6 Internationally, the Church is committed to relieving poverty and disaster and to funding development through the work of Christian Aid.

Because of the lack of very significant funding from house-to-house collections, the committee instigated the publication of a recipe book with contributions from members of Dorchester churches. It was sponsored fully by two generous supporters and we have so far sold over 500 for £10 each. Christian Aid significantly increased its fund raising in 2022 whilst maintaining the spread of activities it was forced to pilot the previous year and which seemed to be a piece of successful rescheduling.

Our Christian Aid Week Ecumenical service at Dorchester Baptist Church in May 2022 was another very successful event. Led by Rev James East, the guest speaker was the inspirational Katie Roberts, National Head of Strategy and Development at Christian Aid. We also held a highly successful collection in South Street. The response to house-to-

house collections and envelopes deposited in local shops was varied with by far the best response in the local villages.

In June and July the Dorchester Choral Society held three concerts at Upwey, Piddlehinton and in the Borough Gardens for the Christian Aid Ukraine appeal. It was a very well received programme of music and a substantial sum was raised. We are very grateful for their support.

The by now traditional activities of the 'River Jordan' walk and the Christian Aid Market took place in the autumn. In the middle of October a further street collection was held; combined with the Ploughman's Lunches afterwards, the latter raised over £1,000. The following day the Quakers ran a 'Big Brekkie' at the United Church which was a lovely way to begin a Sunday morning. Carol singing again took place on Christmas Eve and a substantial sum was raised. Lent Lunches, held at UCD were once again a tremendous fund raiser under the indefatigable leadership of Sue Gannaway and her team of helpers. Over £30,000 has been raised over the last two years by the various events.

The committee wish to offer their grateful thanks and appreciation to so many members of our Church for the tremendous support and encouragement Christian Aid continues to have in all it does.

2.6.7 Our World Church Project during 2022 was TWAM (Tools with a Mission); a Christian charity that collects unwanted usable tools, refurbishes them, sorts them into trade tool kits and sends them to the developing world for livelihood creation. We organised two World Church Sundays as well as our two World Church Coffee mornings and a number of smaller stalls throughout the year and raised a total of £2238.64 for the charity.

2.6.8 The Church contributes to world mission through the Methodist Overseas Mission fund and the Council for World Mission (CWM) in the United Reformed Church, contributing, a small amount to each from general funds.

2.6.7 In November, 23 shoe boxes were received and blessed in a Sunday morning service. They were collected for the charity FSCI (Foundation for Social change and Inclusion) for distribution to families in Eastern Europe.

2.7 Maintaining the fabric of the Church building

2.7.1. Architects Crickmay Stark produced the specification of works to replace a number of iron retaining rings with internal stainless steel rings in the Church spire. During the course of the works significant external cracking of the stonework was discovered, which if left would threaten the stability of the structure. The contract was extended to include the replacement of the affected stonework. All works to the spire were completed just before Christmas. Three submissions for grants were submitted, all of which are expected to be successful.

- 2.7.2 To improve the access to and through the loft space of No 51 Charles St, all the necessary approvals from the URC Listed Buildings Committee, and the Building Controls Officer has now been granted. Work is proceeding to obtain quotations from qualified companies for the work.
- 2.7.3 In early May 2021 high winds and heavy rainfall combined to dislodge a row of hip tiles from the church roof. In view of the general condition of the roof covering and insulation (straw) a decision was taken to strip and replace the whole of the east end of the church roof, which has now been completed. A successful claim was made on the Church insurance and the VAT was recovered from a grant making trust.
- 2.7.4 A defibrillator was purchased and installed in the South Street foyer. It is intended to mount this outside the church so as to be publicly available. Permission was refused by the URC LBAC for it to be fixed to the South Street elevation of the church therefore an application will be made for planning permission to fix it to the alley wall at the South Street end.
- 2.7.5 Plans to upgrade the ground floor toilet block at the Charles Street end of the church has developed such that only a refurbishment is now proposed as the provision of additional female cubicles has proved to be impractical.
- 2.7.6 A contract was let for the replacement of the floor covering in the main hall.
- 2.7.7 Research was also initiated into the updating of the church heating, this could include the use of heat pumps instead of gas firing and the installation of fans to circulate the hot air at ceiling level down to the seating area. The installation of secondary glazing within the church is being explored.
- 2.7.8 Members of the Property committee contribute a huge amount of time to the maintenance of the church premises. Ray Harris often assists in practical ways .

3 Ecumenical Relationships

3.1 Local Relationships

We continue to work closely with friends from various different churches and denominations across Dorchester and the surrounding area through Churches Together in Dorchester. This year a walk of witness was held on Good Friday, culminating in an open air service where over 200 people gathered for worship in the Borough Gardens, and broadcast on local radio.

In September, we had a 'Month of Mission', where Gavin Calver from the Evangelical Alliance came and gave some inspirational teaching on doing powerful mission to the town. As a part of our response to this project, UCD opened up a prayer space after our Market Day service each Wednesday in September. This coincided with the death of her late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II and meant that a large number of folks used the prayer space for their own reflections.

In November 2022, one of our Church members, Mr Anthony Boyden, became the lay chair for Churches Together in Dorchester for one year and we are prayerfully supporting Tony in this ministry.

The United Church Dorchester has good working relationships with other Christian churches in the town, in particular, Forest Praise is now carried out jointly at St George's Anglican Church. We are a member of Churches Together.

4 Staffing and Other Issues

4.1 Employed Staff

- 4.1.1 The Reverend John Yarren has continued as UCD's minister as well as superintendent and is proactive in moving forward UCD's Vision.
- 4.1.2 Mr Peter Jenner has continued to take a lead on key areas of Families and Young People's work within UCD, particularly, supporting the teams that deliver Forest Praise, Story Tots, Journey to the Stable, and "Feed me, Love me, Change me". Peter also chairs the Youth and Family Committee. As well as his work with the wider circuit, Peter has been working with a small team to develop a Saturday outreach project aimed at Families and young children, starting with a Family Fun Day at Pentecost.
- 4.1.4 Mrs Di Lawrence resigned as Church Administrator in May; The post was advertised and Ms Ellie Minns was appointed and commenced work in September helping the Stewards and Senior Management of the church with clerical work and managing the booking system for letting rooms in the church.

4.2 Volunteers

- 4.2.1 The majority of the work carried out by and in the United Church is done by volunteers. All aspects of church life require church members and friends to freely give of their time; from pastoral visiting, making sure services run smoothly, fundraising for the charities we support and practical help such as the coffee shop and the church shop. Although we cannot accurately estimate the time given, it must amount to several hundred person hours per week.
- 4.2.2 We continue to benefit greatly from the ministries of retired Ministers and lay leaders of many denominations who are part of our church and circuit.

5 Financial review

5.1 Reserves policy

- 5.1.1 The Church has a Reserves Policy, a requirement of the Charity Commission, to secure the future in case of unexpected or exceptional need. Although our expenditure in 2022 was higher than normal, there were one off expenses, eg Repairs to the main roof and refurbishing the Hall floor which will not recur for many years. Thus the figure of £82K will continue to be used as the target for the Reserves Policy.
- 5.1.2 Our reserves are held as unrestricted (freely available) funds which are ring-fenced from our budgeted annual commitments and planned expenditure. The Charity Commission suggests that we consider future planned expenditure, and possible risks and contingencies, including the possibility of a reduction in income of the Church. The Finance Committee has tried to strike a balance by taking the figure recommended by the Charity Commission, which is equivalent to six months' worth of our working capital to be held as reserves. Therefore it is necessary for us to hold an amount of at least 50% of the annual expenditure of the United Church as a sufficient reserve. Currently the general reserve is more than adequate to cover six months expenditure, normally, about £82k.

5.2 Restricted and Designated funds

- 5.2.1 Restricted funds and endowments, i.e. funds designated for a specific uses, are not included in the reserves:
- a) The Florence Fare Trust is an endowment; only the interest may be used and must only be spent on Youth and Family work.
 - b) An Outreach fund was created to ring-fence money from the Methodist Circuit to be spent on outreach at the United Church (now stands at £594).
 - c) The designated fund of £60K, held specifically for ensuring the Spire was put into a safe condition, has been fully used. The work carried out to stabilise the Spire has been successfully completed this year.

5.3 Investment Policy

- 5.3.1 It is our policy to invest our fund balances between the Charities Official Investment Fund (COIF), Senator House, 85 Queen Victoria Street, London. EC4V 4ET and the Trustees for the Methodist Church Purposes, Central Buildings, Oldham Street, Manchester. M1 1JQ.

5.4 Names and addresses of:

Bankers: HSBC 15, Cornhill, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1BJ.

Independent examiner – Mr Denys Hood, (address on application)

5.5 Risk Assessments

Several risk assessments were made throughout the year and used to develop safe systems of work which have been successfully applied.

6 Safeguarding

- 6.1** Safeguarding of adults at risk of abuse and children is taken very seriously by the Church Stewards. We now have two Safeguarding Officers at UCD, sharing the responsibility.
- 6.2** The church has a robust and comprehensive safeguarding policy which is displayed on the noticeboards of the church and on the website alongside the contact details for the two safeguarding officers. It is reviewed annually and updated as necessary. A programme of safeguarding awareness training is delivered regularly to all those in the church who work or volunteer with children, young people, and adults at risk of abuse.
- 6.3** We ensure staff and volunteers are aware of the Prevent Strategy and able to protect children and young people who are vulnerable or at risk of being radicalised. Training must be repeated every three years.
- 6.4** A Safer Recruitment policy and procedures are now in place. These require that new staff and volunteers complete an application form and have two references taken up, and those appointed to particular roles are subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service check.

United Church Dorchester

Summary of Accounts for 2022

Approval Process

- **Draft Accounts** examined by UCD Examiner Denys Hood
 - Signed as satisfactory on 7th February 2023
- Extraordinary Meeting of the Finance Committee
 - **Examined Accounts** agreed for Stewards to review on 6th March 2023
- Stewards Council
 - **UCD Accounts** fully approved on 9th March 2023

Expenditure (Payments)

• Church	£74,571
• Minor Items	£8,934
• Property	£122,128
• Charitable Giving	£15,368
• Music in Worship	£1,206
• Youth and Family	£1,564
• Church Administration	£5,164
• Total Payments	£228,906

Income £167,916

- Giving
- Donations
- Lettings
- Investments/Interest
- Grants
- Youth and Family
- Church Coffee and Shop Accounts
- Transfer £40,000 from Reserves

Assets at end 2022

• Investments	130,937	
• Debtors	13,500	
• Current Account	16,095	
• Deposit Accounts	128,194	
• Creditors	-45,328	
• Total Assets	£245,383	(down about £118K)

Assets represented as Funds

- Endowment £54,430 (Florence Fare Trust)
- Restricted £3,314 (Y&F, and Outreach)
- Designated £0 (Church Spire Emergency Reserve)
- Designated £296 (Minor funds)
- Unrestricted £177,344