Oundle Baptist Church

Report and Accounts

Year Ended
31 December 2025

Introduction

Oundle Baptist Church is a registered charity, charity number 1134043 which, as stated in the Charities Act 2011, is not required to produce a full annual report, but must submit a Trustees Annual Report and Accounts, the latter of which must be independently checked. The accounts have been compiled using the cash accounting method and the information provided here is for general purposes only.

The assets and liabilities of Oundle Baptist Church (reg no 1134043) were transferred to Oundle Baptist Church CIO (reg no 1212830) on 31 December 2025. These are therefore the final accounts of the church.

The trustees of the church during this year have changed and the current details are set out below.

Minister

The Rev Martin Hills was called to a new pastorate in Guiseley, West Yorkshire and ceased his ministry on 17 June 2025. The pastoral vacancy remained unfilled at the end of the year.

The Trustees

The following trustees were in post at 31st December 2025

Andrew Burgess as Administrative Trustee from 1 October 2025

David Gent

Jane McDonald

Katharine Simmonds from 1 October 2025

Juliet LaMar served as a trustee until 30 September 2025

Church Office

The church office is located at 1, St Osyth's Lane, Oundle PE8 4BG in premises which were purchased to serve as a community outreach centre, shared with the church office.

All correspondence from the charity's banks is currently addressed to the treasurer at 1, St Osyth's Lane, Oundle PE8 4BG

Affiliation

The church is a full member of The Baptist Union of Great Britain and is also a member of the Evangelical Alliance

Bankers

The church maintains two accounts with Santander plc, Bridle Road, Merseyside, L30 4GB and a deposit account with the Baptist Union Corporation Ltd, Baptist House, PO Box 44, 129 Broadway, Didcot, OX11 8RT

Independent Examiners

The church is required to have its accounts independently examined and for this purpose it has appointed Mr Graham Darbourne of TC Group, The Old Town Hall, Market Place, Oundle, Peterborough, PE8 4BA.

Reserves Policy

The trustees are aware that the income of the church is heavily dependent upon voluntary giving which can be variable. The trustees continually monitor the level of giving and expenditure and seek to try to maintain reserves that would equate to approximately two months of known expenditure. The reserves at the end of 2024 are in excess of the amount but the trustees consider it prudent to maintain reserves at a higher level as the regular income of the church is heavily dependent on members who are over 70 years of age

Mission Statement

The mission statement of the church is:

Connecting to: Jesus
Each other
Our communities

Overview of the year

Life in OBC in 2025 has been dominated by the departure of Rev Martin Hills. He announced to the church in February that he had accepted a call to become minister of Guiseley Baptist Church in Yorkshire. His ministry at OBC ended on the first Sunday in June. A farewell lunch was held after the morning service and thanks were expressed to Martin and Carita for all their service in the church since October 2016. A presentation of gifts was made to them. The induction service in Guiseley was in late July and a number of OBC members attended and travelled up to Yorkshire by coach.

The process of finding a new minister for the church operates through the Pastoral Vacancy List (PVL) which is run by the Baptist Union of Great Britain. This requires the church to compile a church profile which goes on to a restricted area of the BUGB website where it can be seen by ministers who are seeking a move from their current church. Ministers who may be interested in the vacancy can submit their profiles to the church to set in train a possible recruitment process. The church has put in place a small search team under the chairmanship of Andrew Burgess and it is the task of the team to draw up the church profile and then to identify possible applicants who can then be brought to the attention of the wider church.

The process was started in November when our Regional Minister, Rev Dr Nick Ashton, le a Focus Day at Polebrook Village Hall. This was attended by most of the membership and helped considerably in identifying key priorities in terms of the future ministry of the church and the type of person who would help develop that ministry. Following that day , the Search Team began the process of drawing up the Church profile and this was ongoing at the end of 2025.

The departure of Martin and Carita has meant that cover has been needed to continue the areas of work in which they were directly engaged. The Trustees are grateful to the whole church for the way in which members have responded to this situation.

A small group of members have taken responsibility for the Sunday services each week. The Trustees are grateful to Rev Philip Warburton for drawing up the preaching topics and to Alan Strange for organising the preaching rota. Both of these gentlemen have been involved as well in preaching and they have been joined by Stephanie Bradley, Mike Maconochie and Andrew Burgess on a regular basis as well as a number of other members on an occasional basis. Many other members have been involved in leading parts of the service as well as managing sound and visuals each week. Thanks are also due to the groups of members who diligently set up and take down equipment at OPC each week.

Special services were held over the Christmas period and OBC was heavily involved in the Christmas Eve carol service in the Market Place in Oundle which was attended by over 1,000 people.

The vitally important pastoral work of the church in providing support for members of the church and congregation with health or other problems has continued during the year. The group is organised by Jane McDonald and her team provides very practical support. Also during the year the church prayer chain, which enables information about prayer needs to be passed quickly, was reorganised into a WhatsApp group.

Carita Hills had been the unpaid children and families worker for several years and although it was not possible to continue all the work that she was doing, a decision was taken to continue the very successful Tuesday Tots group which attracts a good number of parents, carer and under 3’s at the Joan Strong Centre. This group is now being run by Judith Brashaw assisted by Myra Maconochie, Mandy Davies and Christine Burgess.

The primary youth activity which was run by Martin Hills was Engage which meets fortnightly and again a decision was taken to continue with this group which regularly attracts 15 girls. Jane McDonald and Juliet LaMar assisted by a small team of volunteers, including some former church members, have taken on this task.

Many members of the church and congregation meet regularly during the week in Connect Groups which are opportunities for Bible study and prayer as well as support for group members.
The work at No 1 St Osyths Lane has continued. The building is open every Thursday morning as a drop in and the Trustees are grateful to the dedicated team who provide hospitality and support to those who attend. The Stitchat group meets fortnightly on a Monday afternoon. Other ad hoc acti=vities take place but there is scope for more to be done.

Alongside all these regular activities carrying out the primary work of the church, the organisation has been going through a process of legal change. The decision was taken in 2024 to change the legal status of the church to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). With help from Antony Collins Solicitor, this process was formally completed in 2025 and took effect from midnight on 31 December when the assets of OBC were formally transferred to the CIO. The trustees are grateful to Andrew Burgess for leading the church successfully through this project.

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Oundle Baptist Church

I report on the accounts of Oundle Baptist Church, charity number 1134043, for the year ended 31 December 2025.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act), and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act); and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the Trustees have not met the requirements to ensure that:

- proper accounting records are kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
- accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Graham Darbourne
TC Group
The Old Town Hall, Market Place, Oundle, Peterborough, PE8 4BA

Date: ……

Statement of Financial Activities

Year to 31st December 2025

	Unrestricted funds	Designated funds	Total Funds 2025	Total Funds 2024
Income	£	£	£	£
Incoming resources from generated funds (Note 1)				
Donations and legacies (Note 1,3)	67,592	2,246	69,788	87,404
Gift Aid (Note 1,3)	12,684	783	13,467	13,381
Other income	4,884	1,800	6,684	1,727
Total incoming resources	**85,160**	**4,829**	**89,989**	**102,512**
Expenditure				
Ministry (Note 4)	29,954		29,954	49,076
No 1 building (Note 9)	3,111		3,111	5,102
Administration (Note 8)	20,064		20,064	20,844
Other Ministries (Note 7)	2,898		2,898	3,784
Worship (Note 5)	9,479		9,479	9,048
Giving To Others (Note 6)	8,846		8,846	10,438
Disaster Fund (Notes 1 & 10)		1,800	1,800	1,000
Fellowship Fund (Notes 1 & 11)		2,188	2,188	1,593
Buildings Fund (Notes 1 & 12)		2,550	2,550	8,695
Ukrainian Refugee Fund (Notes 1 & 14)		0	0	299
Equipment Fund (Notes 1&14)		38	38	8,345
Agency Fund (Notes 1 & 15)		1,815	1,815	2,350
Total expenditure	**74,352**	**8,391**	**82,743**	**120,573**
Net income / expenditure	**10,808**	**(3,562)**	**7,246**	**(18,061)**
Transfers between funds				
General fund (note 14)				**(9,000)**
Disasters Fund				**4,589**
Ukraine Fund				**(4,589)**
Equipment Fund				**9,000**
Net Movement in Funds				**-**
Net Income After Transfer	**10,808**	**(3,562)**	**7,246**	**(18,061)**
Total funds brought forward	**673,366**	**13,676**	**687,042**	**705,104**
Transfer of funds to CIO	**-684,174**	**-10,114**	**-694,288**	
Total funds carried forward	**0**	**0**	**0**	**687,042**

Balance Sheet

			2025	2024
			£	£
Fixed Assets	**Notes**			
	2	7 Wentworth Drive	340,000	340,000
	2	1 St Osyth's Lane	280,000	280,000
		Total Fixed Assets	**620,000**	**620,000**
Current Assets				
		Santander current a/c	12,492	2,340
		Santander savings a/c	38,692	42,287
		BU Deposit 3mth	23,051	22,367
		cash	53	48
		Total Current assets	**74,288**	**67,042**
		Net Current Assets	**74,288**	**67,042**
TOTAL ASSETS			**694,288**	**687,042**
Represented by				
Unrestricted				
General Fund			684,174	673,366
Designated				
Building			1,642	2,392
Disasters			5,104	6,001
Equipment Fund			1,617	1,655
Fellowship Fund			1,649	3,371
Restricted				
Ukrainian Refugees			0	0
Agency Fund			102	257
TOTAL			**694,288**	**687,042**
TRANSFER OF ASSETS TO CIO			**-694,288**	
TOTAL ASSETS			**0**	

These accounts have been approved by the Trustees

Andrew Burgess (Trustee) Date:

David Gent (Trustee) Date:

Fund Balances

	Opening	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers To CIO	Gains/losses	Closing
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted Funds						
General Fund	673,366	85,160	74,352	-684,174		0
Sub-total for Unrestricted Funds	**673,366**	**85,160**	**74,352**	**-684,174**		**0**
Designated and Restricted funds						
Building	2,392	1,800	2,550	-1,642		0
Disasters Fund	6,001	903	1,800	-5,104		0
Fellowship Fund	3,371	466	2,188	-1,649		0
Equipment Fund	1,655	0	38	-1,617		0
Agency Fund	257	1,660	1,815	-102		0
Sub-total designated and restricted funds	**13,676**	**4,829**	**8,391**	**-10,114**		**0**
TOTAL ALL	**687,042**	**89,989**	**82,743**	**-694,288**		**0**
TRANSFER OF FUNDS TO CIO						

Report and notes to the Accounts

1. Accounting Policies

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Charity SORP (FRS102) and the Charities Acts of 1993 and 2011. They have been based on a historic cost convention.

Incoming and outgoing resources have been recorded on a receipts and payments basis as at 31st December 2024.

The general fund operates to receive the general donations to the church and to meet the normal running expenses.

There are a number of designated funds as follows:

- **Disaster Fund** – this fund enables the church to make a rapid response to provide financial support in cases of national and international emergencies.
- **Fellowship Fund** - this fund has been available for a number of years to allow the Minister to provide funds to individuals for urgent needs within the wider church family.
- **Building Fund** – This fund is available to meet the costs of work on the two buildings owned by the church
- **Equipment Fund –** it was agreed that funds should be made available to fund the purchase of new sound equipment to enhance the worship at Oundle Primary School and the trustees therefore set aside £9,000 from the surplus accruing in 2023 for that purpose. In addition to the purchase of sound equipment the fund has also been used to purchase a new printer for the church office.

There is one restricted fund

- **Agency Fund –** from time to time members make donations to the church which are to be passed on to other charities. These pass into a restricted fund in accordance with HMRC guidance on Gift Aid. Where appropriate Gift Aid or GASDs is claimed on the donation and this is also passed on to the recipient charity.

2. Property

The church owns two properties – the manse at 7 Wentworth Drive and the community building at No 1 St Osyths Lane. These are both shown in the accounts at historical cost.

3. Donations

The church is entirely dependent on voluntary giving to fund its activities. It receives no funding from any external source. A number of members make regular payments by standing order and the Trustees are grateful to them for enabling a core of funding to be available. Many of the regular donors are taxpayers and the church is able to recover tax under the Gift Aid scheme.

Additional funds come from ad hoc donations from members and friends of the church and congregation and from the cash offering that is taken up as a part of weekly worship. A card machine was purchased in this year and this enables contactless payments to be made at Sunday services and other gatherings. The Government's Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (GASDS) has enabled a further sum to be received in respect of both the cash offerings and contactless payments of £30 or less.

The trustees are aware that many of the regular donors are aged over 70 and future income is by no means certain. The trustees are aware that new younger givers will be required by the church to secure financial security.

4. Ministry

Rev Martin Hills left the pastorate on 17 June 2025 to take up a new role as minister of Guiseley Baptist Church in West Yorkshire. The church expressed its thanks to Martin and his wife Carita for all that they had done in their work at OBC since 2016. A number of members attended the induction service at Guiseley.

The employer's NIC payments have been covered by the government's Employment Allowance.

Up to the date of his departure, the church paid pension contributions into the defined contributions scheme with The Baptist Union Pension Fund in respect of Martin, and he also made contributions each month.

Following the departure of the Hills family work was undertaken to carry our repairs and redecoration to the manse at 7 Wentworth Drive. Following advice received from local estate agents, it was decided to make the manse available for rent at a market rate. An agreement was made with Osprey Property Management (now Leaders) for them to manage the letting. A tenant was found at a monthly rent of £1,500 pcm

Whilst the Hills family were in the property the church was responsible for the council tax, water rates and building insurance on the manse. The church remains responsible for the buildings insurance but the other liabilities are those of the tenant.

Other expenses covers ministry related expenses since the departure of Martin Hills.

The expenditure under this head comprised the following:

Ministry Expenditure	2025	2024
	£	£
Employment Costs comprising:		
Salary	17,798	37,182
Employer's pension cost	1,872	4,479
Expenses	366	1,349
Manse expenditure	7,917	4,434
Training and conferences	0	1,032
Other expenses	2,001	600
TOTAL	**29,954**	**49,076**

5. Worship and teaching

Being able to meet together for regular worship is an essential part of being a church and is a key part of our mission statement in enabling us to connect to each other and to Jesus. We meet each week at Oundle Primary School and we are grateful to the Head Teacher for making this facility available.

Following the departure of Rev Martin Hills, services have been led by a number of church members and the church is grateful to them for this ministry. A number of external preachers have also led worship and fees and expenses have been paid to them.

Sunday worship is in person and also available online through Zoom.

Times of prayer are held before the service each Sunday. With few exceptions, we have been able to have a social time over coffee/tea, usually before the service. Once a month we also have 'soup Sunday' whereby we share some home-made soups and bread to fellowship together.

It is necessary to set up the hall before the service and set down afterwards. We are very grateful for the people who do this.

Most members of the church family also meet in 'Connect Groups' during the week for study, prayer and social times

The main areas of expenditure under this heading were as follows:

Worship and Teaching Expenditure	2025	2024
	£	£
Premises hire	5,486	6,449
Events	1,450	687
Equipment	0	180
Licences	779	840
Refreshments	400	467
Resources	615	425
Preaching fees	749	0
TOTAL	**9,479**	**9,048**

6. Giving to Others

The church is part of the Baptist family and provides support to the two main mission works of UK Baptists at home and overseas.

The church is helping to support The Souster Trust who reach out to young people locally and at schools.

The church has continued to provide regular financial support to Bethany Children's Trust for its work in Africa.

The church continues to support the work of the Leprosy Mission of which one of our members is the UK director.

Support was also given to a charity in Myanmar.

Giving to Others	2025	2024
	£	£
Baptist World Mission	2,250	2,530
Baptist Home Mission	2,250	2,630
The Souster Trust	600	740
Bethany Childrens' Trust	1,248	1,484
Myanmar	1,250	1,570
Leprosy Mission	1,248	1,484
TOTAL	**8,846**	**10,438**

7. Other Ministries (including children and young people)

We record, with thanks, the work of Mrs Carita Hills in developing the children and families work. The church was determined that the contacts with families, particularly through the Tuesday Tots group should not be lost. Mrs Judith Brashaw has taken on the leadership of that group with a dedicated team of volunteers. The Joan Strong Centre is full on a Tuesday morning with upwards of 25 young children plus parents and carers.

Rev Martin Hills had run a couple of groups for young people. Equip, which was a study session has ceased but Engage with a youth club type activity has been continued. Jane McDonald and Julet LaMar now run this group, again with a team of volunteers, and over 15 young people regularly attend each fortnightly meeting.

The pastoral care group continues to co-ordinate practical care and support for members in need.

Other Ministries	2025	2024
	£	£
Youth expenses	1,218	1,194
Families and Childrens' work	1,620	2,300
Pastoral ministry	60	290
TOTAL	**2,898**	**3,784**

8. Church administration

Mrs Judith Brashaw has continued to act as church administrator and manager of No 1 during the year. The Trustees are very grateful to her for all her work and in particular for the additional work she has undertaken since the departure of the minister.

A number of members are involved in producing a range of communications though our website, social media and two publications. The Trustees are grateful for all their labours.

Work was carried out in the year to consolidate the storage of church equipment in the container at the Primary School which meant that the storage container which had been rented at Polebrook was no longer required.

Administration	2025	2024
	£	£
Administration and finance software	916	1,278
Administrator's Salary	8,992	8,950
Computer support	3,429	3,275
Insurance	1,692	1,534
Subscriptions	777	414
Telephone	229	661
Professional Fees	1,750	582
Printing & Stationery	1,510	2,695
Rent	724	1,354
Training	45	100
TOTAL	**20,064**	**20,843**

9. No 1 Building

No.1 St Osyths Lane provides accommodation for a number of activities of the church and for the community projects as well as providing counselling and office accommodation.

No.1 Building expenses	2025	2024
	£	£
Utilities	2,332	2,830
Cleaning	540	870
Repairs	231	1,145
Sundries	8	184
TOTAL	**3,111**	**5,029**

10. Disaster Fund

This fund exists to enable a rapid response to be made by the church to financial needs arising from major disasters. Members are then encouraged to top up the fund with donations. Wherever possible donations are routed via recognised aid agencies. During the year donations were made in reaction to worldwide disasters through the following agencies.

Recipient	Cause	2025
For the One	Myanmar relief	£800
Tear Fund	DRC appeal	£500
UK Ukraine Aid	Ukraine relief	£500
TOTAL		£1,800

11. Fellowship Fund

The fellowship Fund has been in existence for many years to provide funds for the minister to help those in the fellowship, or further afield, when in need. Payments are made at the discretion of the Minister and Trustees.

12. Buildings Fund

The Buildings Fund exists to provide funds for significant building work at the two properties owned by the church. Storm damage to the guttering at No 1 had to be repaired and this involved some additional work on the roof. The total cost was £2,250 but £1,800 was recovered under our buildings' insurance.

13. Equipment Fund

A small balance remains in this fund which is used to purchase items of equipment. Expenditure in 2025 was on cables for the sound equipment.

14. Agency Fund

For many years the church has operated a restricted fund, known as the Agency Fund through which members can make donations to other charities. This is a restricted fund and operates in accordance with the guidance produced by HMRC and so gift aid can be claimed where appropriate and that gift aid is also passed on to the relevant charity. At the end of the year there was an item which had still to be paid over and so this fund appears in the accounts.

15. Reserves

At 31 December 2025 the total current assets of the church amounted to £74,228 of which £10,114 represents designated and restricted funds. The balance available for the general fund is £64,174 which is higher than would be necessary to meet the reserves policy. The trustees consider it prudent to hold this level of reserves as there is continued concern as to future levels of income give the age profile of the church.