Jesmond United Reformed Church

Registered Charity No. 1137613

Trustees' Annual Report for the financial year January 1st 2025 to December 31st 2025

This report includes information required by the Charities (Accounts and Reports) regulations 2008 and the Statement of Recommended Practice for Accounting by Charities 2005 as applicable to charities entitled to prepare accounts on the receipts and payments basis.

Administrative Information

Jesmond United Reformed Church Charity is a local church of the United Reformed Church in Great Britain and is a member church of the Northern Synod of the Church. It was registered on 26th August 2010 as Charity Number 1137613.

Jesmond United Reformed Church is situated at
Burdon Terrace,
Jesmond,
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE2 3AE
Tel: 0191 281 4676
Email: office@jesmond-urc.org.uk
The Church Office is normally open on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9.30am to 4.00pm, and on Fridays from 9.30am to 11.30am.

The Trustees during the period of this report were:

Revd Ryan Sirmons (Chair of Trustees)
Mrs Moira Copeland
Miss Jean Degenhardt
Mr Chris Hodder
Mrs Helen Hodder
Dr Alison Shiel

The appointed independent examiner is Mr David L. Kilner FCA, 7 Eldon Square, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7JG.

The church buildings and Haldane House (formerly the Manse) are vested in the Northern Synod Trust of the URC as trustees and held for the benefit of Jesmond URC in accordance with the trusts applicable to URC properties.

Structure, Governance and Management

The activities of Jesmond United Reformed Church are overseen by the Trustees within the Elders' Meeting of the Church, in accordance with the provisions of The Structure of the United Reformed Church determined by the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church and supplemented by the rules of the Church. The governing document of the registered charity is a statement adopted by the Church Meeting on 30th September 2010.

The members of the Elders' Meeting are the Minister in pastoral charge and the Elders, who are nominated and elected by church members at the Annual Church Meeting. The Church Secretary is appointed for twelve months, yearly at the Annual Church Meeting.

The Elders' Meeting is responsible for the spiritual leadership and pastoral care of the congregation. The Management Committee is responsible for the areas of Finance, Property, and 'Housekeeping'. The Church Meeting (of all members wishing to attend) gives general guidance on the life and work of the church and is invited to approve recommendations from the Elders' Meeting.

The Elders' Meeting met 11 times during the period under review. It assisted in the administration of the church and considered recommendations from the Management Committee concerning property matters. The Church Meeting met 3 times.

Objectives

As a local congregation of the United Reformed Church, Jesmond URC seeks to advance the Christian faith, through its activities and the facilities offered by its buildings, for the benefit of the public in accordance with the Scheme of Union of the United Reformed Church. This is described more specifically in its Mission Statement:

'To witness to the love of Christ in the community and to use all our resources to this end'.

The Elders' Meeting is aware of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in 'The Advancement of Religion for the Public Benefit' and has regard to it in the administration of the Church. The Elders' Meeting believes that the Church provides benefit to the public by:

- providing resources and facilities for public worship, pastoral care, and spiritual, moral and intellectual development, both for the congregation and for anyone else who wishes to benefit from what the Church offers
- promoting Christian values and service by members of the congregation to the community, for the benefit of individuals and society as a whole.

Review of Activities and Achievements during 2025

Introduction: Jesmond URC continues to follow its vision of 'being with' the Jesmond community, using Jesus' life as a model of approach for developing a ministry that starts with 'belonging' by being with people, sharing in their stories, and discovering what we want to do together as a community. We believe that there is almost nothing we should be doing in Jesmond that is not alongside other community partners, whether secular, ecumenical, and/or interfaith.

We approach the present moment with healthy reserves, sound facilities, and a good plan for continuing income. We have allocated our building assets in ways that both support our church's vision and provide strong income for ministry going forward.

Our activities are guided by 5 values prayerfully identified in our 2022 'Futures Literacy Lab':

Community, Contemplation, Creativity, Care, and Celebration

Ministry: Jesmond URC is part of the Newcastle Northwest and Central Joint Pastorate of the URC Northern Synod, with three other United Reformed Churches – St Andrew's Kenton, St James's, and West End. Our Minister since September 2021 has been the Revd Ryan Sirmons.

Membership: on 31st December 2025 the membership stood at 38, with 22 adherents.

Services: morning services were held each Sunday at 10.45am, with additional services at Easter, Christmas and other church festivals. Visiting preachers led a considerable number of services; their willingness to help is universally appreciated. A number of members of the congregation are also very willing to lead services, including some who conduct Communion services, in church and in members' homes.

Community Development Worker: in December 2025, Jesmond URC appointed a part-time Community Development Worker, to help the church identify the needs of the community, particularly in the areas of loneliness and isolation. The CDW started this process by holding many 1-to-1 meetings with members of the community and local organisations, with a view to developing an energy map showing areas of need.

Church-Related Community Worker (CRCW): Jesmond URC worked with our sister church, St James's URC, to develop a proposal to employ a church-related community worker, to address loneliness and isolation in city centre communities of students, service-sector employees, elderly people, and young professionals moving into the city centre communities. This position was approved by the URC Northern Synod, and we await a suitable applicant.

Teaching and learning: Elders and church members attended various online and in-person courses and talks provided by Northern Synod, including safeguarding courses.

Buildings and lettings: the church buildings comprise the church, large hall, Cuthbert Room, Aidan Room, Bede Room, foyer, kitchen, Session Room and caretaker's flat. All these spaces were let on a regular basis to various community groups, including Newcastle Musical Theatre Company, Northumberland Orchestral Society, The Glasshouse, Rock Choir, Piano Club, yoga and fitness groups, and meetings hosted by local councillors. They were also used for parties and social events. The former caretaker's flat continued to be let through an agent employed by the church.

The church itself is now a well-known venue for concerts by professional and amateur groups.

There are four further rooms and kitchen in Haldane House, a nearby property owned by the church. These are let to Tynemouth Nursery, providing very useful income for the church.

Haldane House Community Wildlife Garden: this garden, created from the former Manse Garden with the aid of a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, is now well-established. It is very rewarding to see the garden being so well used by local residents, in an area where few people have large gardens.

Giving to Others: the church donated 5% of its donated income to outside causes during 2025. These were Commitment for Life (Bangladesh), Operation Mobilisation, and Save the Children. It also supported two children through World Vision. The church also continued to support local food banks.

A reduced door-to-door collection was carried out during Christian Aid Week in 2025, but church members were encouraged to donate to Christian Aid by other means. The church is a Fairtrade Church.

Dementia Friendly: Jesmond URC is a dementia-friendly church and continues to develop links with local care homes in this regard. 'Singing for Fun', and monthly short services of worship, both led by church members, take place in a local care home.

Safeguarding: the church has a Safeguarding Policy which is reviewed annually. Safeguarding training is carried out as appropriate.

Church Prayers: prayer is an important part of the life of Jesmond URC**.** Members continued to pray together in their own homes at 9am or 9pm on Mondays, including any prayers received through the prayer circle, prayer tree or prayer request box. Some members of the church go on prayer walks in the local area.

Formation of 'Green Team': the pastorate-wide 'Green Team', formed in December 2022, continues to meet on a regular basis, considering ways in which the churches might become more sustainable and eco-friendly, and to work towards becoming an Eco Church.

The Wednesday Meeting: these monthly meetings, involving a talk by a visiting speaker, are attended by members of the community as well as church members.

Jesmond Sings: this community choir is led by members of the church and attended by church members as well as members of the wider community. Some of its meetings take place in a local care home.

Ecumenical links: Jesmond URC enjoys a growing link with St George's, Jesmond, a local Anglican church. This link has recently been strengthened by the 'Discover Jesmond 1888 Project' which the two churches are working on together, to promote the industrial heritage of Jesmond and to repair and restore the historic organs in both churches. A grant of £163,600 was received from the National Heritage Lottery Fund for Stage One of the project – the creation of a Heritage Trail between the two churches.

Tyneside Scottish Association: the church has a very fine war memorial by Walter Gilbert and is the Custodian of the Colour of the Tyneside Scottish 4th Battalion. With a grant received from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Colour was restored during 2017. This enabled the church to build a relationship with the current Tyneside Scottish Association, which now holds an annual Remembrance Ceremony in the church on Remembrance Saturday.

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The Future

The new initiatives which were started in 2024 continued and developed in 2025, with the addition of a series of very successful Repair Cafes, run by church members and local residents, which emerged from our series of Big Questions Cafes – another opportunity to strengthen our relationships with our local community, community organisations and partners, including Tyne and Wear Citizens.

We are confident that God is calling us into more vibrant and vital years in the future – something well worth investing in.

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Policies: Jesmond URC regularly reviews and updates its GDPR and Safeguarding Policies, and those associated with the church undergo regular DBS checks where appropriate.

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Financial Review

Copy accounts for period end 31 Dec 2025 attached.

Total receipts	£184492
Total payments	£162320
Surplus	£22172

Reserves Policy

It is the policy of Jesmond URC to hold funds in reserve in the unrestricted General Fund to cover the following items of expenditure in the event of unforeseen loss of income.

Six months running costs: 31 December 2025	£76873
Redundancy payments	£9743
Total	£86616

Unrestricted General Fund: 31 December 2025	£264004

Jesmond URC remains compliant with the agreed Reserves Policy.
This policy is reviewed annually.

Additional information

The charity's principal sources of funds are as follows:

- Charitable giving receipts from members, adherents and the general public
- Income from property rental
- Income from hire of church buildings to community groups

JESMOND UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1137613

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	This Year 2025 Total £	*Previous Year 2024 Total £*
RECEIPTS					
Fund raising and donations	31,934	1,914	1,460	35,308	*34,281*
Programme activity income	2,455			2,455	*1,540*
Monies raised for outside causes					*11,398*
Gift Aid tax repayments	7,705	517	834	9,056	*11,911*
Property: church/hall lettings	52,503			52,503	*53,961*
Property: church flat lettings	7,200			7,200	*7,200*
Property: Haldane House lettings	58,086			58,086	*56,124*
Grants and Reimbursements Received	2,430			2,430	*854*
Bank interest and investment income	17,454			17,454	*14,969*
Received from Manse Fund					
Total receipts	**179,767**	**2,431**	**2,294**	**184,492**	*192,238*
PAYMENTS					
Ministry & Mission Fund	20,320			20,320	*23,551*
Ministry/Group expenses	2,927			2,927	*2,435*
Church running costs	102,429			102,429	*88,010*
Haldane House running costs	1,534			1,534	*1,333*
Programme activity costs	3,941	3,800		7,741	*3,494*
Support of outside causes	10,863		3,780	14,643	*18,965*
Other expenditure		750			
Maintenance of church buildings	9,823	245		10,068	*6,122*
Maintenance of Haldane House	1,908			1,908	*1,148*
Total payments	**153,745**	**4,795**	**3,780**	**162,320**	*145,058*
NET RECEIPTS / (PAYMENTS)	**26,022**	**(2,364)**	**(1,486)**	**22,172**	*47,180*
TRANSFERS between funds	- 20	20	-	-	-
CASH FUNDS b/fwd 1 January	238,002	11,467	2,052	251,521	*204,342*
CASH FUNDS c/fwd 31 December	**264,004**	**9,122**	**566**	**273,692**	*251,519*

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	This Year 2025 Total £	*Previous Year 2024 Total £*
Monetary assets					
Bank and Cash Accounts	**264,004**	**9,122**	**566**	**273,692**	*251,519*
Other assets					
Investments at market value	102,224	-	-	102,224	*107,372*
Assets used for church purposes					
Buildings	Church buildings and Haldane House				
Contents	Organ, furnishings and equipment				
Liabilities					
Significant creditors	-	-	-	-	-

APPROVED by the Church Meeting on **and signed on its behalf**

by (name) (signature)

The notes on Page 2 form part of this financial statement

JESMOND UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1137613

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