

# THRIVING LIFE CHURCH



## VISION REPORT

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# Introduction

WE ARE SO EXCITED TO GET TO SHARE THIS REPORT. THIS REPORT IS OF GOD'S GOODNESS AND MERCY TO US. KEEPING A RECORD IS IMPORTANT, IT REQUIRES US TO SLOW DOWN AND THINK OVER ALL THAT GOD HAS AND IS DOING. IT ALSO GIVES US SOMETHING TO GO BACK OVER AND REMIND OURSELVES WHEN WE MISS IT.

IT WILL INCLUDE IN IT ALL WHAT GOD HAS BEEN DOING BEHIND THE SCENES AND OUT FRONT. IT WILL ALLOW YOU TO GLORIFY HIM AND GIVE THANKS TO HIM. THE BIBLE TALKS ABOUT THE NEED TO REMEMBER ALL THAT GOD HAS DONE AND TO TAKE TIME TO CELEBRATE. THIS IS WHAT THIS REPORT WILL HOPEFULLY ENCOURAGE YOU TO DO.

ENJOY READING.

NATALIE!

A photograph of two men standing outdoors, smiling. The man on the left is bald with a beard, wearing a grey corduroy jacket over a black t-shirt. The man on the right has short brown hair and a beard, wearing a tan corduroy jacket with a shearling collar over a black t-shirt. They are standing in front of a brick building with a metal railing in the foreground.

# Objectives and Activities

## Who we are?

Established in 2006, Thriving Life church exists to extend the kingdom of God as we worship God, love people, and make disciples of Jesus Christ.

## Our Vision

We exist to extend the kingdom of God, as we worship God, love people, and make disciples of Jesus Christ

## Our Values

God is central in my life.

My Life will produce the fruit of the Spirit as I disciple myself to Christ  
My mission is to represent Jesus to the World.

We want to build a community where people can learn more about God in a bible-based community and have the space to explore and understand who God is. We have Sunday services, for adults and Kids, Youth ministry on Friday evenings and our Compassion Centre which is there to support with Foodbank, Life skills and money management.

We have partnerships with other charitable organisations that help and aid us in our objectives as a charity e.g.: "Care for the Family", Abaana, Compassion UK, Home for Good, Christians Against Poverty and Trussell trust which are national charities which aim to promote strong family life and to help those hurting because of family circumstances, bereavement, poverty, and debt.

# Activities and Performance

2020 was the beginning of a new season for us. We carried out a full restructure of our organisation, it's Lead Team and different staff role changes in line with what the church needed. A new Board of Directors was put in place and a new Board of Elders were introduced, the laying of a foundation that was strong and could be built upon in the future.

**VISION & VALUES-** we worked through a process of refining our vision as to why we exist and created a statement based on who we believed God was asking us to be as a community. From there we developed 3 values, reflecting the life of being a disciple of Christ. The vision and values we created are imperative to how we will lead our church family and where we are headed.

**DISCIPLESHIP PATHWAY-**In response to our vision focusing more on our role as a church in the equipping of our church family in their discipleship journey, it felt only right that we would have discipleship as a major focus to our work as church leaders. I had the opportunity to guide a process of developing a discipleship pathway that will teach and grow every person who steps on the journey. We are currently creating and recording the material for each of the steps along the way which are primarily taught through our discipleship communities.

**DISCIPLESHIP COMMUNITIES-** If our responsibility is to disciple and equip our church in their discipleship journey then we had to create spaces where that discipleship could happen. Discipleship is more than just the absorbing of content, it's also the opportunity to grow alongside one another in community. To build each other up in prayer and walk-through life as a disciple of Jesus in connection. Our discipleship communities are new and young in being established but I see real promise in the role of discipleship communities in the development of faith in our church family.

**CHURCH ONLINE-** From the beginning of the pandemic we have been doing church services online. Church online though being no replacement for in person gatherings, maintained a space to provide content and hope to our church family in a very bleak time. We developed our skills and grew in understanding as to how to create an engaging service online. When we were able to begin in-person gatherings once more, we decided to keep creating online services that would be premiered at the same time as our church service. We continued to work in this way until 20th June this year when we launched our live streaming project. - We set up a recording studio in 222 to continue our effort in recording content and aiding all of our ministries to operate in our online & face to face world today.

# Activities and Performance

**CREATIVE SERVICES-** During the pandemic we had to find creative ways to present the Gospel message for our special event services such as Christmas, Easter etc. For these services we used creative elements such as recording of testimonies, dramatic poetry/spoken word with visuals and creative worship recordings with decor/design for aesthetic. We were able to outsource the mixing of our sound and some of the visual elements to a high quality of work. Our Christmas service 2020 received 1.3K views.

We hired Aaron in the Media & Video producer job role in January 2021. Since being in this job, Aaron has brought a level of excellence to our media platforms. He has added so much value to everything we create as a lead team and has ensured online access to our church services every Sunday. This role has been a necessary addition to the ministry of our church

After some research, it was clear that to maintain a hybrid structure of doing church services (online and in-person) we would need to move to live-stream. This became a large project that Aaron spent time planning... he requested a budget and executed the plan. It took a month or so to install all the equipment needed for the live-stream. Once we had a working system for live stream, Aaron set up a team of volunteers and trained them in the running of live stream. This team is still growing and undergoing training as we move forward. Live Stream has been very successful so far, with little hiccups and bumps along the way, and is providing an excellent method of engaging with church for those who can't make it to our in-person gathering.

**PRAYER AND FASTING** - we as a lead team felt prompted to have 21 days of prayer and fasting. To accompany this a 21 day journal and reading plan was written by Debbie and was a beautiful resource to use as we went on that journey.

# Activities and Performance

**COMPASSION CENTRE-** In this last year the department has increased its influence in our community, bringing God's love in a practical way. We participated in a steering group run by the Council aimed first at a response to the effects of Covid and then towards recovery out of the negative impact of Covid. We helped target the help towards those in financial and food poverty. We also represented the church in a 'Churches Together' group helping those in need in our church communities and in our town.

We ran a CAP Life Skills course with Include Youth a programme supporting 18–24-year-olds and another course run within The Link in the town centre for those in an addictions recovery programme teaching basic life skills and introducing them to God's way for their lives, these partnerships continue to be strengthened and developed.

Our foodbank was included in the Mayor's charity committee and got many opportunities to highlight the work of the foodbank and demonstrate God's heart for people with articles in the paper and presentations to agencies. Foodbank has fed 2374 in the last year including 900 children fulfilling nearly 1000 food vouchers. 38 tonnes of food have been received from 69 donor groups and then distributed to clients and agencies. The food bank has worked with around 70 agencies communicating our vision and working with them and their clients.

Our compassion centre has been playing a key part representing our church in a group that has set up a new CAP debt centre. The centre will operate through The Link with management from several local churches including TLC. The new centre manager was appointed in November 2021 and will have a CAP Debt session available for our foodbank clients during a Tuesday session.

# Activities and Performance

**FAMILY MINISTRY-** Created a pre-marriage support process where we care for couples and support them as they step into marriage right from the moment, we are approached to marry a couple to a year after the couple are married. This support looks like one-to-one meetings discussing the pre-marriage assessment, one to one budget support, 3/6 month check in after marriage and 12 months check in / celebration of their first year of marriage! We have had 5 couples this year start this process and 2 couples still to go through process in the next few months.

We had a parenting course that ran on zoom over lockdown and had 7 individuals sign up for that. I think we had 5 individuals make it through to the end of the course. Some struggled to stay engaged with the pressure of home learning at that time.

We had a bible study for mums that was held for 8 weeks where we had 9 mothers engage with study and developed support and connection during the pandemic. These 9 mothers remain a support to each other today.

One to one family support was given to two different families during last year. These were two families who were walking through exceptionally difficult circumstances.

We built a family ministry team from 0 to a team of 5

We had a parenting course running with 14 parents attending! This course ended in November 2021.



# Activities and Performance

## **New things ahead:**

- Marriage night that will run each term where we look at one topic together and create space for couples to date and have more in-depth conversation about their marriage.

- I would like to run a parenting courses in the new year called 'Around the Table' by Care for the family where we look at the helping families develop the faith at home.

- I would like to run the Foundations course by Home for Good in March time next year that is to raise the awareness and need for adoption / fostering within the church

- I also could like to run a 4 week support course for couples going through infertility and miscarriage that is similar to what HTB run. The aim of this course is to help them with some next steps.

Started Kids Church Online on Friday 4 December 2020. When we started, we had 74 views a week and by Easter episode we had 88 views on first week. We finished kids church online after our easter week to allow us to focus on in-person gatherings. In total, a church online service was offered for 39 weeks from Friday 4th Dec 2020 to August 27th 2021

We have grown our in-person service since starting back:

1st week back (18th April 2021) - primary age: 22 kids & pre-school age: 9 kids

Now (3rd Oct 2021) - primary age: 42 kids & pre-school age: 12 kids

When we started back to in-person gatherings we had 16 volunteers leave team (this includes those who had decided to take a break among covid)

We have added 18 new volunteers. We currently have a team of 44 volunteers:

- Current Pre-school team: 17 volunteers
- Current Primary team: 27 volunteers

We have had 7 new kids from new families join us since starting back to in-person on 18th April 2021. There are other new kids who have joined us I haven't included them in this number as their kids of TLC families who have been attending the church already.

Since starting back to in-person we have been able to have one big event for our kids ministry which was 'Move up Sunday' in June 2021 where we had 48 primary school kids attend and 15 preschool aged kids.

Youth Ministry -We ran zoom services from Sept 2020 until April 16th 2021 when we ran our first in-person gathering. In-person has stayed consistent with attendance from we gathered in April until finishing in June.

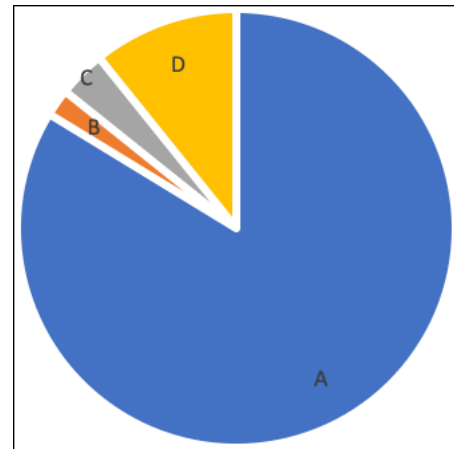
The team also stayed consistent during lockdown and in person. We have not lost team members nor added during this time. We were able to hold a summer event where we had 63 young people attend. We are recruiting at present for a new Youth Pastor.

**OTHER MINISTRIES:** throughout covid a lot of our other ministries have had to cease and still have not begun again but in September our Adult GCSE Maths started again with 30 attendees, this is a free course run by Olwen Kerr who has a passion for teaching and a love to use her gifting to reach others for Jesus. This is a real asset to those inside and outside of our church community who do not have the funds to access a course at a local college.

# Financial Review

## Income:

A. Donations & Legacies	£551,199
B. Room hire	£13,276
C. Rental income	£22,900
D. Covid grants	£70,965
	£658,340



Donations and legacies are down 10% on last year.

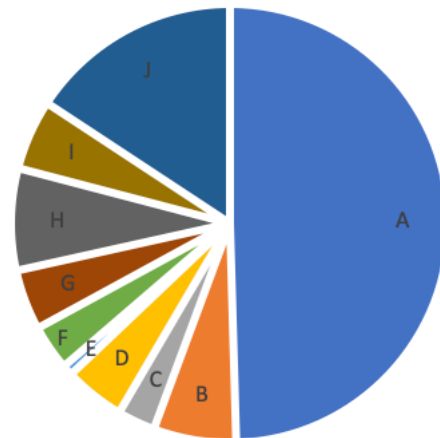
Our regular donors continue to form the majority of our income. The monthly average giving was £45,933 (£50,997 in 2020).

Our total income for 2021 was £658,340

## Expenditure:

A. Wages	£242,474
B. Blessing gifts	£29,941
C. External support	£13,663
D. Utilities	£21,930
E. Staff Development	£3,817
F. Church ministries eg TLC Kids, Worship etc	£16,448
G. Office expenses	£21,861
H. Building expenses	£36,796
I. Mortgage interest	£25,396
J. Depreciation	£77,088
	£489,413

Our total expenditure for 2021 was £489,413, a 3.8% decrease on last year.



10% of unrestricted income was given away in the form of Blessing Gifts to those going through trying times and to external agencies whose activities are in keeping with the ministries of Thriving Life Church.

# Road Ahead

I love to plan a trip! I like to know where we are going, where we will stop on the way, how long it will take us to get there and what we plan to do when we arrive. I cannot relate to the “sure we will figure it out when we get there”, “we will leave when we are ready” or the “sure the not knowing is all part of the adventure” brigade.....but there is something in my soul that longs for the freedom of discovery and adventure they experience around every unplanned corner.

Throughout the Bible, God repeatedly invited his people to go on a journey, to travel from where they were to where walking with him would lead them. Rarely did they know where they were travelling to, they learnt to travel without being clear where they were headed.

The disciples walked with Jesus, followed him, ministered alongside him....yet they had no idea that the journey they were on would lead them to a brutal cross followed by an empty grave.

Who in their right mind would have chosen that as a destination, but what an adventure they would have missed had they chosen not to journey with the Son of God! When I think about what the road ahead has in store for God's family at TLC, I don't want us to fixate on the details of a plan or on a preferred destination, I want us to together embark on a journey with our God.

As I focus on my destination I can miss so much beauty and richness on the journey. I'm not present with my travelling companion, I'm not taking in the sights and sounds of everything around me.....the joy IS the journey.

As a church family we get to journey our every day lives in the presence of the Living God, being in-dwelt by his Spirit, and every day holding the treasure of experiencing more of who he is and his mercies that are new for us every day.

So as we journey together as a church family through 2022, lets stay present in the journey... paying attention to God's presence and activity with us as we keep God central in our lives, as we live lives that are increasingly displaying the fruit of the spirit as we disciple ourselves to Christ and may our lives be an accurate representation of Jesus to the world that we live our daily lives in, resulting in others embarking on a journey with God!

I encourage you to remind yourself daily that what Moses said in Exodus 33:15 is still true for us today -

“For your presence among us sets your people and me apart from all other people on the earth.”

Let's travel together,

Philip

# Structure, Governance and Management

## **Governing Document**

Thriving Life church is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated in 2006. The company is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association which determines the objects and powers of the charitable company. In the event of the organisation being wound up, members of the charitable company guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1. The total number of such guarantees in 2021 was 9.

## **Recruitment and Appointment of Board of Trustees**

The board of Trustees at Thriving Life Church, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose of the Companies act, represent a group of individuals with a wide range of experience and skills. Furthermore, the Trustees of Thriving Life Church are committed to adding to the Board as and when it sees a gap in the skills and experience required.

All the board of Trustees give of their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the church. Details of all Board members can be found in the administrative information part of this document.

Trustees are recruited based on their experience for the role in line with the objectives of the charity outlined in its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

## **Trustee Induction and Training**

The church has a Trustee Induction pack which explains the duties of a trustee and provides facts along with sources of information on what a trustee is required to do.

## **Health, safety and wellbeing of staff, volunteers, and beneficiaries**

Provision of a safe environment to facilitate the health and wellbeing of staff, volunteers and beneficiaries.

We undertook an external audit of our Health and Safety compliance and will do this on an annual basis. In 2021, our Building supervisor undertook training on Health and safety and Fire Warden training to ensure day to day running is kept in line with current health and safety recommendations.

We have a Safeguarding policy which is embedded in our policies and reviewed regularly. Training is scheduled for all staff, boards members and volunteers attended in October and November 2021.

# Structure, Governance and Management

## Organisational Structure and Decision Making

Decisions on policy and governance are made by the Board of Directors, who are also the trustees of Thriving Life Church, consisting of 7 members. The members meet monthly and are responsible for the policy, governance, and financial management of the organisation. The Executive Pastor sits on the Board as a member who reports to the Board of trustees on operational running of the church and staff.

Decisions on Spiritual direction and policy are made by the Board of Elders, consisting of 8 members, this group meets monthly to pray, to seek God and ensure the spiritual wellbeing of the church is in line with the vision of the church. The Lead Pastor and Teaching Pastor are part of the Elder Board.

The day to day running of Thriving Life Church is delegated to the Lead Team, consisting of the Lead Pastor, Executive Pastor, Family Pastor, Worship Pastor, Compassion Pastor and Teaching Pastor and we then have our staff members of Kids Director, Administration, Finance and Media.

### Board of Directors and Trustees:

Natalie Porter

Chris Murphy

Grace Lamont

Darren Taylor

Olwen Kerr

Aiden Steensma

Julieann Brownlee

### Board of Elders:

Philip Allen

Debbie Martin

David Lyons

Nathan Roach

Linda Chester

David Chester

Benji O'Neill

Newland McKelvey

Lead Team:

Philip Allen  
Lead Pastor



Natalie Porter  
Executive Pastor



Lauren O'Neill  
Worship Pastor



Richard Porter  
Compassion Pastor



Mandy Taylor  
Family Pastor



Debbie Martin  
Teaching Pastor



Staff Team:

Shannon Martin  
Kids Director



Laura McGarvey  
Finance Officer



Debbie Taylor  
Administration



Aaron McAlpine  
Media



As in any church we could not do what we do without the army of volunteers who help us in the ministry of the church from administration, Kids, Welcome and Host, and the list goes on. But just because they are not named in this report does not lessen their immense value and gratitude we have for them each and every one.

# Thriving Life Church Limited

## Company Limited by Guarantee

### Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

#### Year ended 31 May 2021

#### 3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

##### Financial instruments *(continued)*

Other financial instruments are subsequently measured at fair value, with any changes recognised in the statement of financial activities, with the exception of hedging instruments in a designated hedging relationship.

Financial assets that are measured at cost or amortised cost are reviewed for objective evidence of impairment at the end of each reporting date. If there is objective evidence of impairment, an impairment loss is recognised under the appropriate heading in the statement of financial activities in which the initial gain was recognised.

For all equity instruments regardless of significance, and other financial assets that are individually significant, these are assessed individually for impairment. Other financial assets are either assessed individually or grouped on the basis of similar credit risk characteristics.

Any reversals of impairment are recognised immediately, to the extent that the reversal does not result in a carrying amount of the financial asset that exceeds what the carrying amount would have been had the impairment not previously been recognised.

##### Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

When contributions are not expected to be settled wholly within 12 months of the end of the reporting date in which the employees render the related service, the liability is measured on a discounted present value basis. The unwinding of the discount is recognised as an expense in the period in which it arises.

#### 4. Limited by guarantee

The company is limited by guarantee and has no authorised or issued share capital. The company has charitable status accepted by the Inland Revenue under reference XT 12090.

#### 5. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
<b>Donations</b>			
Church givings	378,692	10,265	388,957
New church givings	–	106,502	106,502
CAP & Foodbank Income	–	28,924	28,924
Academy Income	–	–	–
Compassion Centre Income	–	7,427	7,427
Donations for Compassion Centre	–	2,889	2,889
<b>Grants</b>			
Grants received	–	16,500	16,500
	<u>378,692</u>	<u>172,507</u>	<u>551,199</u>

# Thriving Life Church Limited

## Company Limited by Guarantee

### Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 May 2021

#### 5. Donations and legacies *(continued)*

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
<b>Donations</b>			
Church givings	421,850	24,824	446,674
New church givings	–	119,895	119,895
CAP & Foodbank Income	–	25,954	25,954
Academy Income	–	16,269	16,269
Compassion Centre Income	–	3,173	3,173
Donations for Compassion Centre	–	–	–
<b>Grants</b>			
Grants received	–	–	–
	<u>421,850</u>	<u>190,115</u>	<u>611,965</u>

#### 6. Other trading activities

	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Room hire	<u>13,276</u>	<u>13,276</u>	<u>14,353</u>	<u>14,353</u>

#### 7. Investment income

	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Rental income	<u>22,900</u>	<u>22,900</u>	<u>21,900</u>	<u>21,900</u>

#### 8. Other income

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets held for charity's own use	–	862	862
Other income	3	–	3
Covid Grants	<u>48,778</u>	<u>21,322</u>	<u>70,100</u>
	<u>48,781</u>	<u>22,184</u>	<u>70,965</u>

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets held for charity's own use	–	–	–
Other income	223	–	223
Covid Grants	–	–	–
	<u>223</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>223</u>