



Annual Report



Recording The Harvest Journey



2021-2022

A Time for Everything

A classic funeral reading (read in St Giles Cathedral at Queen Elizabeth's lying-in state), Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 reminds us all of the need to change, that change is inevitable, in the secure knowledge that the love of God is constant and salvation is open to us all through his Son. Sometimes it is good to change even when we are not forced to do so....at the top of the hill when the going is easier, rather than at the bottom when the ground is boggy and difficult.

Bridge Builders is in a reasonably good state, following the pandemic; schools still want to hear what we have to say and we have an excellent team of staff and volunteers who have successfully produced new material for use on YouTube. We also face challenges. Although the Trust's finances are stable the wider economic climate will be challenging for all concerned, especially the churches and volunteers on whom we depend.

During the year we have welcomed two new Trustees, Lynne Lee-Diep and Revd. Margaret McCarthy, which broadens the range of Christians represented by the Trustees. Sadly, Judy Brown resigned and has moved to Devon with her husband Revd. Dave Brown, who is now Rector of Newton Abbott. Dave and Judy made a lasting contribution to Bridge Builders, not only through their prayerful support but Dave wrote the Christmas Journey script and both Dave and Judy stepped up to write and record a new carol for the Christmas Journey in 2020, when for copyright reasons we could not use the original choice in the YouTube video.

We have also said farewell to Bishop Michael as a Patron as he moves to be Bishop of Bath and Wells. As the parent of young children, as well as Bishop of Hertford, he has been an encouraging supporter of the Trust's work.

Looking ahead, we already know that we will have to find a new building from which to work (St Paul's has closed and our lease will cease in July 2023), so our ways of working may have to change again. We would also like to recruit two or three new Trustees to continue to guide the work of the Trust in to the future.

Change is inevitable, but the need for our work is ever present, each year a new group of children is waiting to hear about the unending love of God and salvation of his Son.

Once again, on behalf of all of the trustees I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to all of the staff, volunteers and supporters who made 2021-22 a successful and innovative year.

Anthony Taylor
Chair of Trustees



Summary of our work

Christmas Journey 2021

3 churches
22 schools
1057 children
407 in person + 650 online



Easter Journey 2022

All online
26 schools
1091 children



Assemblies 2021 - 22

7 Schools
1800 children
Assemblies on Joy (Christmas assembly),
Peace, Patience, Kindness, Hope and
Easter



Fundraising

We rely on donations to keep our work going. We cover the £8 cost for each child who attends one of our journeys. There are many different ways in which you can support us:

ONE-OFF
GIFT ★



Shopping online, select Bridge Builders as your beneficiary and we will receive a donation for every £1 you spend

If you're a UK taxpayer completing a Gift Aid Declaration means your donation is worth 25% more.



giftaid



Director's Report

The year 2021-2022 has been bookended by uncertainty, with uncertainty in September 2021 – Would any schools book in-person assemblies? Would The Christmas or Easter Journey happen in-person, and if so how would they work with Covid restrictions? We also wondered if we would manage to appoint someone to work on our new project. While we had answers to all those questions, the uncertainty remained as it became apparent that we would not be able to remain in our current offices past July 2023. We were given one year to find a new space to work in.

Despite all that, I am delighted to say that Bridge Builders has navigated the year extremely well, supported by our donors, and the churches that we work with. In-person assemblies re-started in three or four schools, and that number gradually increased. The Christmas Journey went ahead, with about half the schools booking The Virtual Christmas Journey, and the rest opting to visit local churches. The churches and volunteers coped well with the various Covid restrictions, including face masks/shields, distancing from the children and cleaning everything between sessions. Thank you to them for all their hard work.

The Bridge Builder's diary tends to work months ahead as we look to the next project, so we were already discussing Easter before we got to Christmas. The Omicron variant was making its presence felt so we made the difficult decision, before Christmas, to only run an online Easter Journey. A few schools had pulled out of the in-person Christmas Journey, and it was impossible to know the impact of Omicron over the early months of 2022. That was a hard decision for us and for the churches.

In March we had the joy of welcoming Cathy Beach to the team! She has been a fabulous addition as she and Natalie work together on the REach project, with Cathy focusing on the writing and Natalie on the video editing. The Harvest Journey, for year 1, has already been filmed and is currently being edited. It should be ready for harvest 2023, and in the meantime do look out for short clips of it on our Facebook page. Many thanks to both the SMB Trust and The Verulam Trust who have given grants for the REach project. It is encouraging to find that we are doing something new and innovative!

Finally, we really appreciate your prayers, and please do pray for us as we start clearing out some of the office, and pray that the Lord will lead us to the right space in Stevenage, which will meet our needs in the coming years.

Steph Knell
Director



Volunteer

At Bridge Builders our volunteers are a huge part of our ministry. The time and skills of our volunteers are a valuable resource, helping us with a wide range of tasks throughout the year.

In particular, the REach project needs a number of volunteers, including one off roles such as appearing in one of the videos, to regular weekly volunteering preparing craft materials and other resources for the journeys.

Contact our office to find out more about our volunteering opportunities. We would love for you to be involved in our ministry work, helping to share the gospel of Jesus Christ to the children across Stevenage.



Introducing Cathy



I started work at Bridge Builders in March 2022. So far most of my time has been spent planning and writing the Harvest Journey for the REach project. I have also found time to help with some assemblies and other tasks around the office – there is always something to do!

I have a  BD(hons) Theology MA(Applied Theology) and PGDip (Information and Library Studies)	I am the mother of two children (age 6 & 12)	I attend St  Ippolyts Church and Christchurch in Hitchin
I am the chairperson for the North Herts branch of Sands (the national Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Charity)	I enjoy reading, walking and music (of any genre) 	I love archery and shoot a recurve bow 

Many Thanks

Allchurches Trust, Broadwater Fair Trading, Bunyan Baptist Church, Churches Together In Stevenage, Hertfordshire County Council, Holy Trinity, Knebworth Golf Seniors, St. Andrews Church Hertford, St. Hugh & St. John, St Ippolyts, St Martin’s Knebworth, St. Mary’s Graveley, St. Mary’s Shephall, St. Nicholas, St Paul’s Methodist, St. Peter’s, Sirius Digital Solutions, SMB Trust, Stevenage Borough Council, Stevenage Family History Society, Trinity Church Knebworth, United Reformed Church, Veralum Trust and individual donors for your generous support. .

It aims to provide one recorded “Journey” for each year of Primary school, introducing children to some of the different beliefs and messages of Christianity through a series of video clips and associated activities. All the journeys are linked to the Hertfordshire R.E. Curriculum. The Christmas and Easter Journey, which have been successful in-person events are now available in virtual form.

We are nearing completion of the Harvest Journey which is aimed at Year One children. In autumn 2023 Primary Schools in Stevenage will be invited to sign up to the Harvest Journey and we hope to reach children from as many diverse backgrounds as possible.

Estimated 44+ hours spent writing and editing the script	Approximately 10 hours sourcing costumes and props	4 hours ironing the green screen	4 hours setting up for recording
13 volunteers helping with recording	10 hours resourcing activities...so far	12 hours preparing accompanying booklets...so far	FILM NOW BEING EDITED

The Harvest Journey



The Harvest Journey is about feast and famine in the Bible, including stories of Joseph, Ruth and Naomi, Elijah and the widow of Zarephath and the feeding of the 5000. The children learn about the significance of harvest and being thankful to God for his provision.

THE REach

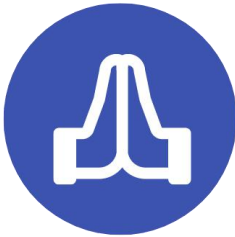


PROJECT



TARGET

We need your help to raise **£21,000** to support this three year project.



PRAYER

Please do pray for the work of Bridge Builders as well as for our local schools and children.



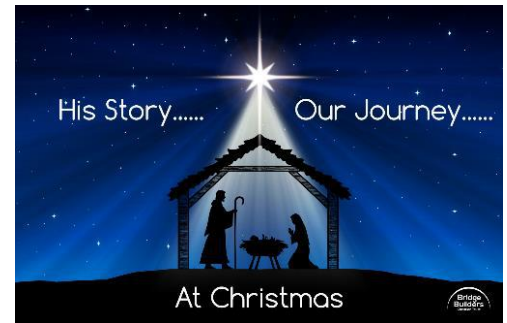
DONATE

Please consider giving a monthly or one-off donation.

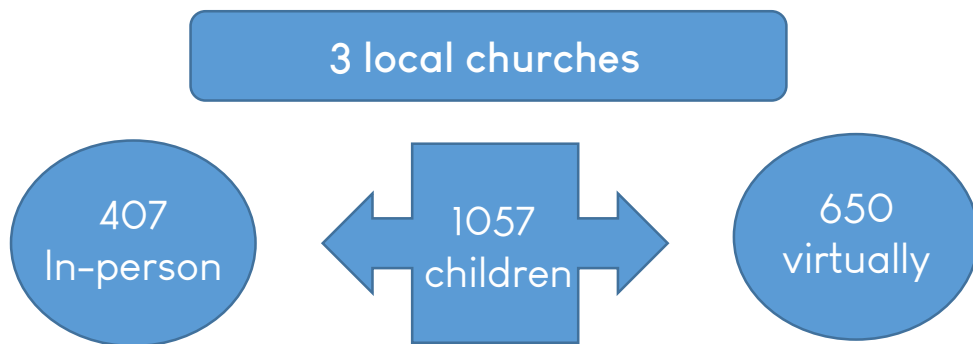
The REach project is an exciting opportunity to reach even more children, with the good news of Jesus, throughout Stevenage and surrounding areas.

Building on the success of the online Journeys, The REach project aims to produce an online interactive journey for each and every year group throughout primary school, reaching upwards of 10,000 children **EACH** year!

The Christmas Journey in 2021



Following the successful virtual pilot in 2020, in 2021 The Christmas Journey ran as a hybrid project for the first time; in-person in churches and online. Staff have told us how much they appreciate being able to choose which event format to attend.

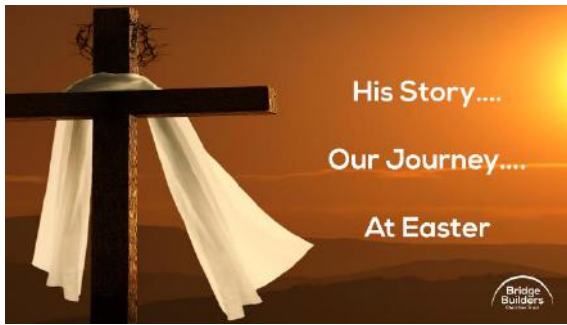


A local special needs school took part virtually, and we ensured that the schools who chose to deliver via the online option had the craft resources necessary. The resources were kindly funded by some of our local councillors from their Locality Budget purses.

Many thanks to all volunteers who helped with this popular and free event for local primary schools.

I just wanted to extend our thanks to everyone involved in the Virtual Christmas Journey. We have always enjoyed attending the event as a year group as the children have always got so much from it. We were so pleased that you were so creative and were able to deliver this in a different way this year. The children absolutely loved it! They were engaged with it throughout and the activities were thoroughly enjoyed by all. Thank you for providing all the resources too!

"Our year 2 teacher has asked me to send you all a massive thank you. The Christmas Journey was brilliant, the children loved it and were very engaged."



The Easter Journey in 2022

Just as the Omicron variant of Covid was rearing its head at the end of 2021, we made the decision to deliver The Easter Journey 2022 only as an online event, but that didn't stop schools booking. An amazing 1080 children from Stevenage and the surrounding areas experienced the interactive event.

Once again we worked hard to ensure that the school staff had all the information required to facilitate the Journey online – they each received a Teacher's Pack featuring links to the video clips, information supporting the questions asked in the clips, templates for the crafts and more.

"Thank you for sending the Easter pack. We thoroughly enjoyed it! We really enjoyed the booklets and loved how interactive they were. I personally, loved that every resource we needed was sent so that we were organised."

"Online has continued to work well and we are grateful for the effort which went into producing the materials; this has allowed flexibility in how we deliver as well as accommodating anyone who was unwell / needed to access online at home. We like the fact it is delivered before Easter as this fits in with our curriculum offer for RE."



If you wish to have a peek at our Journeys please visit our Bridge Builders YouTube channel.



Prayer Meetings & Fundraising Events

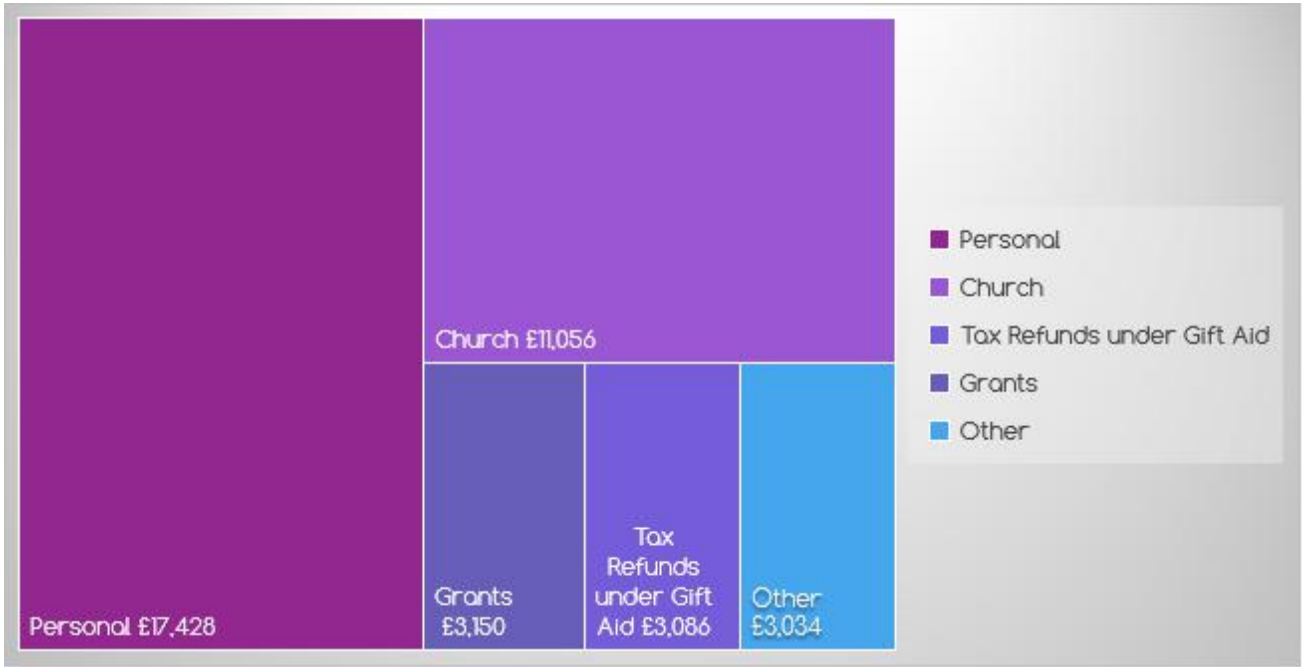
The friends of Bridge Builders meet regularly to support, fundraise and to pray for the work of Bridge Builders.



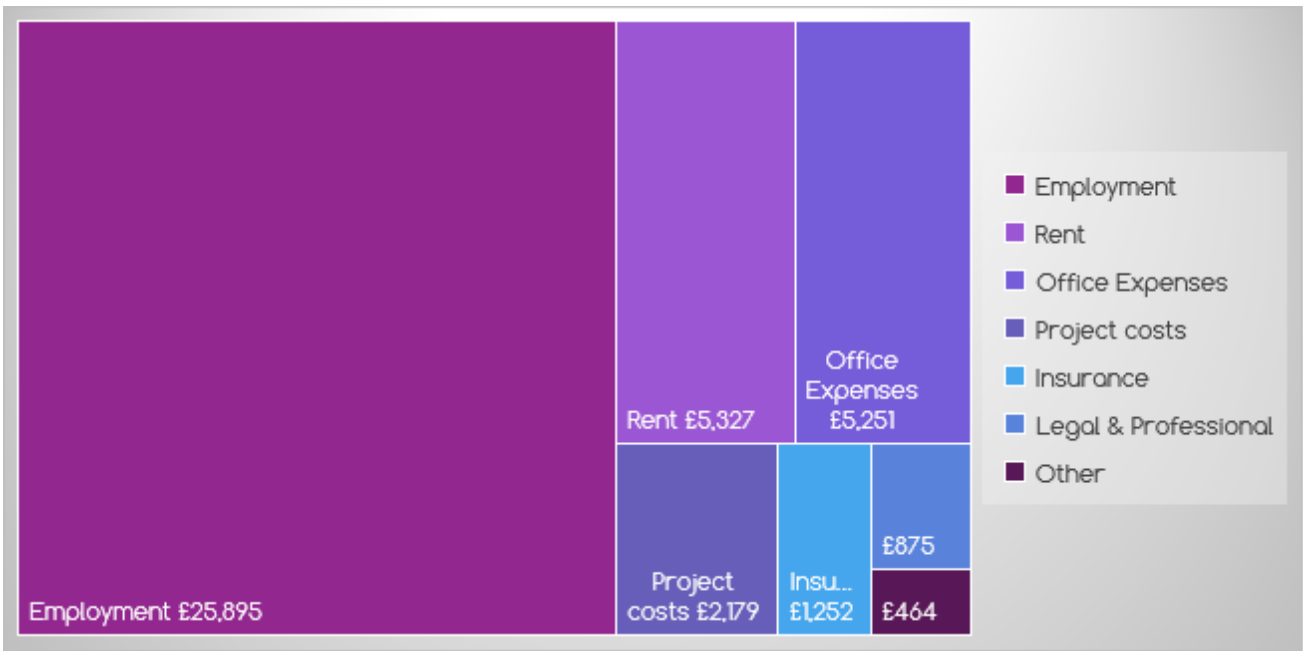
Accounts

Income and Expenditure (£) for the Year Ended 31 August 2022

Income



Expenditure



The Team

Staff Team

Mrs Stephanie Knell—Director

Mrs Janice Hawketts—Finance and IT Manager

Miss Natalie James—ExploRE Manager

Mrs Cathy Beach – ExploRE Manager (started employment 1 March 2022)

Mrs Amanda Bryant—Communications Officer and Administrator

Trustees

Mr Anthony Taylor (Chair)

Mr Peter Gordon

Mrs Penny Paton

Mrs Helen Gale

Mrs Judy Brown (resigned June 2022)

Mrs Lynne Lee-Diep (appointed September 2021)

Revd. Margaret McCarthy (appointed November 2021)



www.bridgebuilderstrust.org.uk



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