

Church Treasurer

encourage one another day after day

**Welcome
Pack**

Welcome

Welcome!



Congratulations on your appointment as a Church Treasurer. Thank you for being willing to serve your church in this way.

The role of Church Treasurer is a crucial one in the life of any Baptist church. The challenge you have taken on is to manage the finances of the church well so that it can fulfil its mission. This may sound daunting but Baptists Together are here to help you!

This leaflet explains the role of a Church Treasurer and the support that Baptists Together can provide. We recommend that you keep it somewhere safe so you can refer to it when needed.

Please get in touch with the Support Services Team if you have any questions or need help with anything. You can do this:

- by email to supportservices@baptist.org.uk
- by telephone on 01235 517700
- through our website at www.baptist.org.uk/supportservices

Thank you again for all you are doing for your church and for Baptists Together. We pray for you and hope you will pray for us as we seek to serve God together.

With every blessing

The Support Services Team



Your Main Responsibilities



Church Treasurer

Whilst the role of a Church Treasurer varies from church to church, there are some core responsibilities in overseeing the finances. In most churches the Church Treasurer directly does most of the work relating to finances, whereas in some larger churches there may be a bookkeeper to help. The next few pages explore some common tasks handled by a Church Treasurer.

Getting Started

As a new Treasurer, it is important to get a thorough handover of information from the previous Treasurer so that you know how any systems and processes currently work and where information can be found.

One of the most challenging things can be getting established as a signatory on the church bank accounts and accessing online banking. We suggest you contact your bank(s) to start this process as soon as possible as it can take some time.

You will also need to notify the change of Treasurer to a range of other bodies, such as HMRC for Gift Aid, the Charity Commission (for registered charities) and any suppliers and other partners. You may find it helpful to have a specific Treasurer email address for communications and any online user accounts relating to church business to simplify future handovers.

Banking

The Treasurer will need to make sure the church has appropriate banking arrangements in place such as a current account and deposit account. Sometimes a loan or other financing arrangement may be needed to support a property purchase or development project. We encourage churches to make use of the deposit and loan scheme offered by the Baptist Union Corporation. See www.baptist.org.uk/deposits and www.baptist.org.uk/loans

Keeping the books

The Treasurer must ensure there is a system to record financial transactions and to keep the relevant supporting information such as invoices, bank statements and offering tally sheets. For small churches a spreadsheet may suffice but for larger churches a specialised accounting system is likely to be more suitable.

Managing income

For most churches, the majority of income is in the form of giving via standing orders, but the Treasurer will need to ensure any cheques and cash offering are banked and that any other income, such as room lettings and grant funding is safely received.

Claiming Gift Aid

Gift Aid is an important part of the income for many churches and the Treasurer is responsible for ensuring this is claimed correctly. With the right record keeping in place, it is not difficult.



Insurance

The Treasurer is usually responsible for insurance. The most obvious requirement is buildings insurance for the church and any manse and other properties, but you will also need employer's liability and public liability insurance. The Baptist Insurance Company offers a church insurance policy specifically tailored to Baptist churches.

Managing suppliers

The Treasurer will often take the lead on managing suppliers for services such as energy, phone and internet and ensuring the church is getting good value.

Paying the bills

Churches have many bills to pay, such as utility bills, insurance and visiting speaker fees. The Treasurer needs to ensure that invoices are checked by the appropriate person and payments are made promptly.

Processing expense claims

The Minister, other staff and volunteers will often spend money in relation to church activities and you need to have a process in place for expense claims to be submitted, approved and reimbursed.

Operating payroll

Where there is a Minister, Church Administrator, Cleaner or other church staff, the church will need to operate a payroll system to ensure payroll taxes are calculated correctly and the correct payments are made to staff, HMRC and pension providers. Payroll can be done in-house using suitable software, or outsourced to a payroll bureau such as the West of England Baptist Payroll Company.



Financial reporting to Trustees and Members

The Treasurer needs to ensure that their fellow Trustees and the church membership are aware of the financial position of the church to inform the discernment and decision-making of the church. This will usually show income and expenditure and tracking against the budget for the year.

Annual Report

The Treasurer is responsible for overseeing the production of the annual financial statements that are a key component of any Annual Report. You need to ensure that these comply with the relevant accounting requirements. You may also be asked to oversee the production of the text of the report. If your church is a registered charity you will need to make sure your Annual Report is submitted to the Charity Commission. Templates for accounts and annual reports are available at www.baptist.org.uk/churchfinance

Financial controls

As Treasurer, you are responsible for making sure there are appropriate controls in place to safeguard the assets of the church. Important examples include having suitable procedures for handling cash to prevent theft, and dual authorisation of payments from bank accounts. You should also have a written policy explaining how financial commitments should be approved (eg a major purchase).

Being a Trustee of the church

Churches are subject to the requirements of charity law and therefore must have Trustees. As Treasurer, you are one of the Trustees, which comes with some important legal responsibilities. This may sound daunting but the Baptists Together team is here to support you with the smooth operation of your church in line with its legal obligations and constitution. We recommend that you read our guidance leaflet, *C15: Help I'm a Charity Trustee* (www.baptist.org.uk/resources/C15).

Budget

It is good practice for the church to have an agreed financial budget for the year. The Treasurer will take the lead in creating the budget for review by the trustees. It should then be presented for approval by the church meeting so it has broad acceptance.

The Baptists Together Financial Model

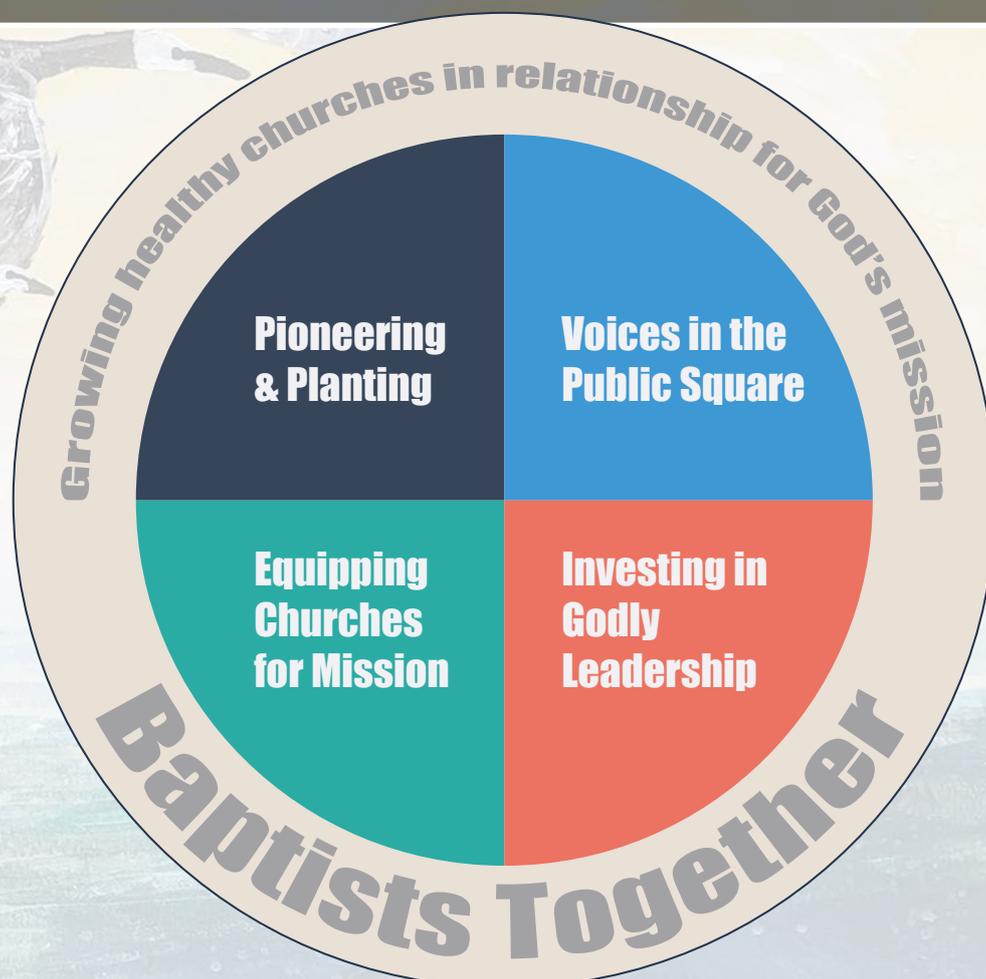
As a member of Baptists Together, your church has committed to play your part in the Baptist family alongside over 1,900 other churches and member bodies. From a financial perspective your commitment to Baptists Together comprises two elements:

- **Paying a Subscription**, which is calculated based on a rate per church member. The subscription is the minimum financial requirement of member churches and the rate increases in line with inflation each year. The current subscription rate can be found at www.baptist.org.uk/financialguidance. Around £500,000 is raised in subscriptions each year.
- **Contributing to the Home Mission Appeal**, which is a freewill offering to support the work of Baptists Together. All member churches are requested to give 5% of their general fund income to the Home Mission Appeal. The Home Mission Appeal raises around £3.5m each year.

The income from Subscriptions and the Home Mission Appeal, combine with income from investments, legacies and any surplus from the Baptist Union Corporation to make up the **Home Mission Fund**. This fund enables the work of the Baptists Together which comprises:

- Providing mission grants to churches and other organisations. These grants are distributed by the Regional Associations.
- Funding the Regional Ministry teams and other work of Regional Associations.
- Funding the national Specialist Teams who provide specialist expertise and enable our national expression of Baptist life.

For more details on the Home Mission Fund, please see www.baptist.org.uk/homemission



Tips for being a good Church Treasurer

Pray!

The Treasurer needs a positive and prayerful attitude to the life and work of the church. Alongside other leaders, pray for the work of the church and the people doing it.

Work as part of a team

A good Church Treasurer ensures everything is done in relation to the finances but they do not need to do everything themselves. You should collaborate with other people in the church, including the Minister, Secretary and other leaders, and pass on tasks to those best placed to do them. You may find it helpful to put together a finance team to share the workload and some churches pay suppliers to do some of the work, such as payroll or bookkeeping.

Be mission-focused

As a Treasurer it can be easy to focus on the finances above everything else, but that is not the priority of a church. The Treasurer should be concentrating on making the financial resources available to enable the church to play its part in God's mission.

Maintain good relationships

A good Church Treasurer will get to know the full range of people within the church and listen to what they have to say. This will help to ensure the whole fellowship is engaged in the work of the church and its finances and feel able to raise issues with you. It is also important to be aware of the activities going on within the church and the financial resources they might need to be successful.

Plan ahead

As Treasurer you will need to think beyond the short-term and consider the financial implications of any plans or initiatives being considered by the church and its leadership.

Get help when you need it

The role of Church Treasurer can be daunting at times with such a wide range of issues you might be called upon to handle. In particular, there are various technical issues such as accounting standards and tax where you may need to get specialist advice from experts. This is where Baptists Together provides a range of support to help, as outlined on the following pages.



Help is available

As a member of Baptists Together our teams are available to support you.

Your local Baptist Association team

Your local Regional Baptist Association has a team of Regional Ministers who are experienced Ministers able to offer advice on a variety of church issues and signpost you to other support available. Regional Associations offer support to churches with mission, including financial grants from the Home Mission fund. They also offer safeguarding training and support for member churches.



The Specialist Teams

We have four national Specialist Teams, based in Baptist House in Didcot who are available to support you.



The Support Services Team (supportservices@baptist.org.uk) offers practical support and advice to churches across a broad range of topics including finance and accounting, tax, property, legal issues, church governance and church trusts. They also operate the Baptists Together Deposit Accounts, Loan scheme and the Pastoral Fund.



The Ministries Team (ministries@baptist.org.uk) supports all forms of Baptist ministry. They maintain the list of Accredited Ministers, operate the settlement process which helps match Ministers with churches and provide a suite of guidance leaflets and other support relating to ministry. Of particular relevance to Church Treasurers are the recommended Terms of Appointment for Ministers, and guidance on ministerial remuneration.



The HR and Safeguarding Team (safeguarding@baptist.org.uk) provides advice on HR issues and oversees safeguarding across Baptists Together. They develop national safeguarding policy and the training framework, and support Regional Associations in dealing with complex safeguarding cases.



The Faith and Society Team (faithandsociety@baptist.org.uk) supports Baptists Together with resources and initiatives which enable mission, provide theological reflection and promote engagement with wider society. They are also responsible for communications across Baptists Together, which includes producing materials to explain the work of Home Mission (see www.baptist.org.uk/homemission).

Resources

Here are some key resources that you can access to support you in your role

The Baptists Together website, www.baptist.org.uk, is a great starting point for all things Baptist including the latest news through the *Baptist Times* online newspaper. The online Resource Library holds an extensive range of guideline leaflets, webinars, videos and other materials to support you and your church. There is a dedicated page for Church Treasurers at www.baptist.org.uk/treasurers.

Association of Church Accountants and Treasurers (ACAT):

Our group membership of ACAT means that Treasurers of Baptists Together churches are members and can access their website at www.acat.uk.com. ACAT provides a range of written guidance and runs regular training courses for Treasurers.

Baptists Together Treasurers Facebook Group: You are encouraged to join this Facebook group where hundreds of your fellow Treasurers share their questions and issues and help each other with the challenges of the role. www.facebook.com/groups/baptisttreasurers

Church Healthcheck, www.churchhealthcheck.org, is a simple self-assessment tool developed especially for Baptists Together churches to assess their operations against good practice and provide signposting to guidance for any issues identified.

Baptists Together magazine is our magazine for the Baptist family. It is published 2-3 times per year and is sent to every Church Treasurer. This will keep you up-to-date on developments across Baptists Together. You can download back editions from www.baptist.org.uk/togethermagazine.

Transform is published three times a year and provides specific guidance for church leaders on practical topics such as finance, HR, tax and legal matters. Previous issues can be downloaded from www.baptist.org.uk/transform.

Support Services Email: Each month the Support Services Team sends an email newsletter to every Treasurer and Secretary containing useful guidance and information to assist you in your role.

The Support Services Team: Please get in touch if you have any questions or need help with anything. You can do this via:

- email to supportservices@baptist.org.uk
- telephone on 01235 517700
- website at www.baptist.org.uk/supportservices



Our Services

Utility Aid is the UK's largest energy broker for the not-for-profit sector. Our team have extensive experience in helping hundreds of Baptist churches meet their energy needs.

Free Energy Audit

Our experts will check your bills to ensure that you are paying the right amount and reclaim any overpayments for you. You keep 100% of anything we recover and to date, we have reclaimed more than £58,000 for Baptist churches.

Finding the Right Energy Contract for You

Our Energy Specialists will help you find the best value supplier contract, centred around your requirements and appetite for risk.

Carbon Reporting & Planning for Net Zero

We can help your church to begin your journey to achieving Net Zero. Our Head of Net Zero & Energy Management, can guide you through the process to help you identify your current carbon emissions, set reduction targets and create a plan to achieve these targets.

0808 178 8170

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www.baptist.org.uk/treasurers

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