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Registered Charity No 1163078
www.kingstonmethodistchurch.org.uk

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

for the year ended 31 August 2023

The mission of Kingston Methodist Church (KMC) is to be a safe, welcoming and diverse community of God, where people of all ages and backgrounds are invited to learn and grow in the Christian faith.

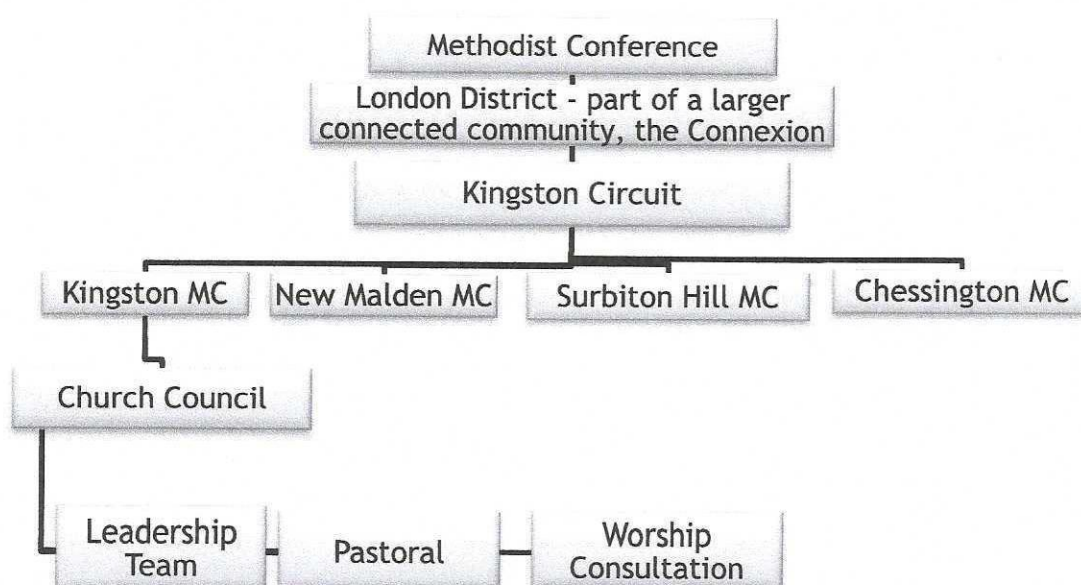
This mission statement reflects the **calling** of the Methodist Church: to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission through **worship, learning and caring, service and evangelism**.

Structure, administration and management of KMC

Kingston Methodist Church (KMC) is one of four Methodist churches within the Kingston Circuit, which in turn is part of the London District - we're all connected! KMC's trustees are its **Church Council**, which it elects from its church membership at its Annual Church Meeting in September.

Members are elected/appointed to the Church Council to ensure, wherever possible, that all areas of the church's life are represented. The Church Council generally meets quarterly and is *legally responsible for the management of Kingston Methodist Church, its work and resources*.

In addition, KMC's **leadership team**, appointed by Church Council, meets regularly to consider governance, policies, procedures and property issues, as well as to update its mission priorities. The leadership team reports its recommendations to the Church Council. Additional committees meet to consider the **pastoral care** of KMC's congregation and also its **worship life**.



Activities, achievements and performance

For Kingston Methodist Church the last year has been one of rebuilding both the spiritual life and the well-being of its church family following the Coronavirus pandemic. This began at the start of our church year in September with the resumption of our much-enjoyed annual church picnic in Bushy Park.

In January we were delighted to welcome six of our congregation into Church Membership, one of whom was also confirmed, and later in the year our newest arrival, Elijah, was baptised.

Other opportunities for bringing church folk together at KMC included pre-worship breakfasts and 'international' bring-and-share fund-raising lunches, as well as post-service activities: a talk from our local Police Community Support Officer providing crime protection and personal safety advice; informative talks from representatives of local charities we support through our sales and even 'back to exercise' classes!

Major property repairs to the flat roof and car park took place during the year as well as a rolling programme of maintenance. The leadership team and church council have been exploring options on the future of the church building and their implications. Another concern is the difficulty KMC is experiencing in filling all the roles that are required to maintain church life.

Throughout the year KMC continued to review and update its policies and procedures to meet the requirements of Safeguarding (including mandatory training), General Data Protection, Health and Safety and other regulations. A professional fire risk assessment was carried out, as a result of which KMC carried out a fire drill and offered Church Council members online fire safety training courses.

WORSHIP

"The Church exists to increase awareness of God's presence and to celebrate God's love."

Kingston Methodist Church continues to offer a range of church services over the course of the year to which anyone and everyone is welcome. We hope our community finds these beneficial and spiritually fulfilling. KMC's diverse, multicultural worshipping fellowship is growing and we have been delighted to welcome new friends, mainly from overseas, including several from Hong Kong who are settling in Kingston, to our Sunday morning worship. Our thanks, as ever, go to our music group who support our morning service every week. KMC is really blessed to have such a group that enjoys playing together and is such a great reflection of what makes KMC so special to everyone who belongs to it. There have been opportunities for café style services where the congregation is able to discuss the day's Bible passage and other issues, and 'local arrangements' too, where members of the congregation lead the worship. We have been especially pleased to continue offering a reflective, informal and intimate environment for a monthly evening service. In addition, KMC joins the wider church family in occasional evening services with our other three circuit churches.

Special and celebratory services over the course of the year are widely publicised to our local community and include Mothering Sunday, Harvest Festival, our Carol and Christmas services and much-loved no-rehearsal Nativity when, this year, we were joined by members of the Girl's Brigade and 'assisted' by enthusiastic congregational participation! During Easter Holy Week we joined with our neighbouring churches for a Palm Sunday joint procession and service, Maundy Thursday supper, Good Friday Walk of Witness and there were also online services leading to

Easter Sunday. Our Sunday School is gradually reforming (our thanks to the dedication of its staff).

Helping to plan and prepare for our services is the work of the Worship Consultation Group, which meets quarterly to plan any special services and related matters, such as church lunches or celebrations. This meeting, which is open to anyone attending KMC, also considers the many different aspects of worship.

For people in our congregation who are unable to return to physical worship and for many in the wider community, KMC continues to offer spiritual sustenance through an online worship series, "Windows on Worship", presented by its Minister, Karl.

LEARNING AND CARING

"The Church exists to help people to grow and learn as Christians, through mutual support and care."

In addition to weekly worship Kingston Methodist Church has in this year nurtured the spiritual life of its congregation by offering a five-week **Lent course**, live and online: 'How to make bread' - about reading the Bible in new and interesting ways. We also held an '**Exploring Membership**' day, looking at what becoming a member of the Methodist Church means, learning a little Methodist history and hearing from various people about what membership means to them.

Many of our young people attended **3Generate** - a national, Methodist, weekend youth event held in Birmingham - which they found a really valuable experience. They also took part in another Methodist youth gathering organised by the London District: 'Harnessing your Power' - an opportunity for young people to come together, share their experiences, hear other people's stories, and be encouraged to think about how they can harness the power they have.

Our well-established Tuesday morning **Reflection** group re-started post covid and has continued to meet fortnightly. Reflection offers talks, discussion and activities on varied topics and also provides a valuable pastoral function. It has been well supported by our Minister, Karl, by Circuit ministerial staff, a probationer minister, former staff and URC's minister as well as by a speaker from Healthwatch and material prepared by our own attendees, notably a Wesley quiz. Our membership varies from about 9 to 15 depending on other commitments and we have been pleased to welcome new members. We thank those who have provided our "snacks", our transport and occasional alternative venues.

Opening our doors on Thursday afternoons during the winter, as our response to the national call to provide "warm spaces" for people in fuel poverty, saw little local response, but we found that there was a response from within our own church community to the opportunity to spend some informal, unstructured time together. Consequently, this time developed into what became our "**Chat Room**", when we could chat, play board games, sometimes bring friends along - whatever appealed. It is our intention to develop this further in the coming year, so that some of our church friends who are housebound, and/or need transport to reach us, can come along and enjoy the companionship this time offers. As a spin off, and as many of the newer members of our congregation are from overseas, we set up "**English Chat**", led by two of our members, both of whom have experience in teaching English to people from overseas. These have proved popular, and through them we aim to help our friends improve their English language skills and gain a familiarity with life as it is lived in the UK, but also to offer friendship.

Our **weekly newsletter** keeps people in touch with what the church is doing.

The **Pastoral Committee** itself supports members of the church family when needed, and people participating in our **prayer chain** pray for and offer support to those of our congregation and wider community who are unwell or going through difficult times.

SERVICE AND EVANGELISM

“The Church exists to be a good neighbour to people in need and to challenge injustice. The Church exists to make more followers of Jesus Christ.”

Kingston Methodist Church tries to keep abreast of what is happening in its local community and to put faith into action by helping people in need:

- Over the past year KMC maintained its links with the **Whitechapel Mission** which now go back over 40 years. Our annual gift service before Christmas was well supported with gifts of food, clothes and toiletries, together with some gift-aided cash donations (around £200). We are invited to their annual thanksgiving service in November each year and attend when possible. The Mission continues to provide an amazing service to street homeless every day.
- KMC held three fund-raisers for **Action for Children**, one of our Methodist charities: the Christmas appeal raised £623 and Action for Children Sunday raised £205, with the sale of Christine Gibb's paintings bringing in a further £250. Church members also support AfC with online giving and indeed much of AfC's work is now conducted online to supplement their numerous projects and campaigning on behalf of disadvantaged children and young people.
- Two other Methodist causes supported by our congregation during the year were world-wide concerns **All We Can** (£130) and the World Mission Fund (through **Junior Mission for All** which has now been reintroduced to our children and young people - £282).
- This year KMC raised £787.94 for **Christian Aid** through its appeal in church (£428.52) and house-to-house collecting (£359.42). £560 of this total was eligible for gift aid. Some members, including our Minister, Karl, took part in other events in Christian aid week (unfortunately/fortunately no video evidence of him dancing the Macarena in the shopping area!) and contributed to the total sum raised by the Kingston churches Christian Aid group of over £8,500.
- Post-Covid, KMC has now re-established its two annual fund-raisers which involve the local community and the proceeds of which go to charities nominated by members of our congregation and agreed by Church Council. Following the 2022 Christmas Fair KMC sent £675 to **RBKares**, a local voluntary organisation supporting those in need across the borough by galvanising the community to respond to their needs, in this case providing 'warmer in winter' bags. An equivalent amount was retained for KMC's expenditure on property maintenance.

The 2023 Plant and Produce Sale raised an amazing £2,700 of which £100 was allocated to our local **Forest School** to help the children who attend and £1,300 each to two charities

benefitting Kingston residents: **The Kingston Domestic Violence Hub and Christians against poverty.**

- KMC's Church Council also agreed the Church's donation of £250 each to KMC-based youth organisations (**Girls'/Boys' Brigades**) and continued its policy of annual donations of £250 to local charities: **Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness (KCAH)** and **Refugee Action Kingston**.
- In addition, KMC maintains an internal **benevolent fund**, created by donations from our congregation at each communion service. This fund aims to support those from our local and church communities who seek emergency financial assistance and was this year accessed to support families over the summer holidays, as well as helping people cope with sudden and unexpected costs.
- Following last year's financial donation to the **Cambridge Road Estate Community Group Foodbank (CREst)** from our Plant and Produce sale, KMC has continued to support this, our most local foodbank, with food donations throughout the year.
- Our **Boys' and Girls' Brigades** are blessed with a team of dedicated leaders who give up much of their own time for the Brigades in planning, training and preparation for the many activities and awards they undertake, including assisting and participating in church events and services. This year several GB members had the privilege of joining a national group representing the Girls' Brigade at the Trooping of the Colour. The Brigades' programme of activities culminates in a joint summer camp with other companies from Kent and Devon, this year in Woolacombe, North Devon; a fun-filled week, challenged but not spoilt by storm Betty!
- We are very fortunate to have a great staff group at KMC's **Fairfield Playbox Preschool** who have worked well together to develop the service to meet the demands facing under-five provision nationally and the needs of local families. This meant from Christmas 2022 extending the daily hours and term length. Stay and Play, Playbox's associated Monday drop-in session for babies, toddlers and their carers, moved to a new base in the church to allow Playbox to operate 5 days per week. This made our provision a more attractive option for parents and has led to an essential growth in numbers of children attending, with a related increase in income which has thankfully more than covered the increased staff costs. Thanks to the managers and staff group for making this possible. Management of the Playbox groups is the responsibility of the Playbox Management Committee, which is appointed by the Church Council and has met regularly. It would be good to have another representative from the church; we have also missed having parental feedback at the meetings.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The highlight of the 2022-23 financial year was the receipt of two substantial bequests from former Church members: £110,472.99 from Sue (and Alan) Bennett and £92,124.54 from Douglas Wilde.

One consequence of these bequests was that the total income for which Church Council is responsible was greater than £250k. For income above this level, The Methodist Church of Great Britain requires accrual-based accounting instead of the receipts and payments, as

previously used by the church when total income was below £250k. Accrual-based accounting has meant that the accounts of our internal organisations (Playbox Playscheme and Stay & Play, The Boys' Brigade and the Girls Brigade) have been folded into one set of accounts instead of being separately reported.

These accrual-based accounts have been audited by a Fellow of the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants (FCCA), Mary Ryan, of Ark Accountancy.

At year end, the total of £291,617 carried forward into 2023/24 breaks down into:

- Main Church Account £275,711 (including £1,373 in the restricted Benevolent Fund used by the Minister to support individuals in financial difficulties)
- Boys' Brigade £1,957
- Girls Brigade £5,438
- Playbox £8,511

Reserves Policy

The current Reserves Policy, agreed by Church Council in October 2023, is that the Church should maintain the following financial reserves:

- a) A **General Reserve Fund**, containing an amount equivalent to half a year's ongoing running costs, ie excluding major property works.
- b) A **Property Reserve Fund**, containing a minimum of £10k, to which a minimum of £2k shall be added at the end of each financial year, for work on the development and/or maintenance of the property costing more than £3k.
- c) A **Playbox Reserve Fund**, containing an amount equal to the cost of staff wages and other essential costs for one term (for use in the event of Ofsted requiring Playbox to close whilst an investigation was carried out) plus the statutory redundancy payments due (based on an annual calculation) in the event of the Playbox Management Committee deciding to make all (in the event of permanent closure) or some staff redundant. This fund would only be called upon once all funds in the Playbox accounts have been exhausted.

Signed

Date 24/01/24

Rev Dr Karl Rutlidge, on behalf of Kingston Methodist Church Trustees (Church Council)

Report of the Independent Auditors to the Members of
Kingston Methodist Church

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Kingston Methodist Church, Girls Brigade, Boys Bridge and Playbox (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 August 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 August 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

I report in respect of my examination of the Church's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and, in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Charities Act 2011

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Report of the Trustees for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Trustees has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Report of the Independent Auditors to the Members of
Kingston Methodist Church

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustees.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Mary E Ryan FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Ark Accountancy
Chartered Certified Accountant &
Statutory Auditor
31 Cheam Road
Epsom
Surrey
KT17 1QX

Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) for the year ended 31 August 2023

	Notes to the accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted)	Designated Funds (unrestricted)	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	Total 2022-23
		£	£	£	£	£
Income						
1 Offerings		28,098		800		28,898
2 Donations (including bequests)		202,998		130		203,128
3 Gift aid		6,342		760		7,102
4 Interest and investment income		5,090				5,090
5 Income from investment properties						0
6 Lettings and donations from user groups		22,613				22,613
7 Internal organisations			71,702			71,702
8 Other charitable income		4,592		579		5,171
9 Total income		269,732	71,702	2,269	-	343,703
Expenditure						
9 Circuit assessment or share		24,500			-	24,500
10 Grants and donations		5,475		1,441	-	6,916
11 Property maintenance		30,149			-	30,149
12 Insurance, utilities etc		7,904			-	7,904
13 Depreciation					-	0
14 Office expenses		2,446			-	2,446
15 Other expenditure		2,041			-	2,041
16 Internal organisations			69,128		-	69,128
17 Total charitable expenditure		72,515	69,128	1,441	0	143,084
18 Gains/(losses) on monetary investments						0
19 Gains/(losses) on investment properties						0
20 Net income/(expenditure)		197,217	2,574	827	0	200,618
21 Transfers between funds						0
22 Other gains/(losses)						0
23 Net movement in funds		197,217	2,574	827	0	200,618
24 Total funds brought forward		75,578	13,332	1,088		89,998
25 Total funds carried forward		272,795	15,906	1,915	-	290,617

Balance Sheet as at 31 August 2023

	Notes to the Accounts	General Fund (Unrestricted) £	Designated Funds (Unrestricted) £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Totals 2023 £	Totals 2022 £
Fixed Assets							
Church building and other property		30,000				30,000	30,000
Investment properties						0	
Investments						0	
Total fixed assets		30,000	0	0	0	30,000	30,000
Current Assets							
Debtors and prepayments						0	0
Loans by the Churches						0	0
Investments with TMCP		232,268				232,268	25,118
Central Finance Board Deposits		4,008				4,008	9,056
Methodist Chapel Aid deposits		13,192				13,192	13,074
Cash at Bank and in hand		24,627	15,907	1,915		42,449	42,500
Total current assets		274,095	15,907	1,915	0	291,917	89,748
Current liabilities							
Creditors (due in under 1 year)		1,300				1,300	0
Grants payable within 2022-23						0	0
Total current liabilities		1,300	0	0	0	1,300	0
Net current assets/liabilities		272,795	15,907	1,915	0	290,617	89,748
Total assets less current liabilities		302,795	15,907	1,915	0	320,617	119,748
Long term liabilities (due after more than one year)							
Grants payable after 2022-23						0	0
Loans to the Church						0	0
						0	0
Net assets		302,795	15,907	1,915	0	320,617	119,748
Funds of the Church							
General Fund (Unrestricted)		302,795				302,795	
Designated Funds (Unrestricted)			15,907			15,907	
Total Unrestricted Funds						318,702	0
Restricted Funds				1,915		1,915	
Endowment Funds					0	0	
Total Funds		302,795	15,907	1,915	0	320,617	0

Signed

N.M. Spalding

Church Treasurer