

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st 2023

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Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Details

Life Community Church Bristol
The Vassalls Centre
Gill Avenue,
Fishponds,
Bristol BS16 2QQ
England

Life Community Church Bristol is a registered Charity, registration No. 1202324

Trustees

MR PHILIP RAYMOND MALCOLM (14-03-23 - ONGOING)
MR GARETH WYNFORD MATTHEWS (14-03-23 - ONGOING)
GEMMA LOUISE SELLARS (14-03-23 - ONGOING)
JENNIFER ESTELLE WARREN (14-03-23 - ONGOING)
NATHANIEL IAN CAMPBELL (14-03-23 - ONGOING)
JULIAN JONATHAN ONOCHIE OKOYE (14-03-23 - ONGOING)

Independent examiner

Joshua Kingston BSc, ACA
Burton Sweet Limited
The Clock Tower
5 Farleigh Court
Old Weston Road
Flax Bourton
Bristol BS48 1UR

Objectives and Activities for Public Benefit

The objectives are:

- a) To advance the Christian faith in accordance with the Statement in such ways in such parts of the United Kingdom or the world as the Church Council from time to time may think fit;
- b) To relieve sickness and financial hardship and to promote and preserve good health by the provision of funds, goods or service of any kind including though the provision of counselling and support in such parts of the United Kingdom or the work as the Church Council from time to time think fit; and
- c) To advance education in such ways and in such parts of the United Kingdom or the world as the Church Council from time to time may think fit.

Public Benefit

The Trustees believe that the facilities and services that are offered to the public by Life Community Church Bristol make available access to all, either as part of the congregation or the local community and as such believe that the charity is of benefit to the whole community. The Trustees have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

The Charity is a CIO Foundation, registered 14 March 2023.

Trustee Structure and Leadership

The trustees meet quarterly as a minimum. In these meetings decisions are made in relation to vision, budgets, finances, maintenance, and people. As laid out in the church deed, trustees are recruited and appointed by current LCB trustees. Philip Malcolm agreed to remain the Chair of trustees.

Trustees Annual Report

Welcome to our annual report that gives a brief snapshot of the last year here at Life Church Bristol. **We're excited to share this with you as we look back with thankfulness and as we look ahead with excitement at what God is doing.**

Last year I mentioned that we had reshaped the Trustee team, bringing on 4 new members. After a year of working together as a team (in this unique calling to serve God and the church), I can testify that I am genuinely delighted with the level of unity, professionalism and diligence I have witnessed with this amazing group of people I have been privileged to work with. What I love the most is the heart that each board member has for the Lord, which makes my role as chair so much easier! As a team we do not aim to 'put business before pleasure' but to 'do business with pleasure' but we also prioritise our spiritual mindset through prayer and scripture at the start of every meeting.

Over the last year, we have been busy behind the scenes reviewing and improving our policies and putting new procedures in place to help improve health & safety and safeguarding within the church as well as catering for the growth we have seen. We have also been involved in the oversight of the many transitions we have undergone and continue to do as a church. I'm still excited to be a part of the whole LCB team as we move forward into the greater things that God has in store for us. I hope you enjoy reading this report!



Phil Malcolm (Chair of Trustees)

philip.malcolm@lifechurchbristol.com

From Gareth (Senior Pastor)...

In January last year I preached a message encouraging us to 'get ready to move'. In that I shared my belief that God was getting us prepared for the next season and it was going to require us to be ready and willing to step into something that seemed uncertain and even a little crazy. Yet the Leadership Team and I believed that we needed to take a step of faith away from the past and into all that God has for us in the years to come. It's been an amazing year!

I'm so glad that God knew that 'getting ready to move' was going to mean that we moved our Sunday venue twice in one year from the building on Forest Rd, to the amazing space we have now in the Avanti Theatre (I'm so grateful for each of you that moved with us!!). I'm so grateful that God knew it would mean the relocation of our office from a small Portacabin, into a larger space in the Vassall's Centre. I'm so grateful that God knew that it would mean our Friday Kids and Youth clubs moving to the main meeting room at the Vassall's centre. I'm so grateful that God has made it possible for us to form a deep relationship with the team at Avanti but particularly at the Vassall's centre. I'm so grateful, because we have really sensed God's hand in preparing the places for us to be at just the time we've needed them.

As we've begun this journey of faith we've loved seeing new people come and be part of the amazing Life Church community. Our Sunday gatherings have grown to an average of 150 adults and children each week (that would have been impossible at Forest Rd!). Our Friday kids and youth gatherings see around 45-50 kids and youth

each week and we're excited that we have space to see those ministries grow as we see God move powerfully in people from this community and the surrounding areas.

It's great to look ahead to what lies before us, but I also believe that it is so powerful to look back and give thanks for all God's goodness to us in this past year. I hope you're encouraged as you read through this report and as excited as we are for what is next!



Gareth Matthews (Senior Pastor)

gareth@lifechurchbristol.com

Kids

Our verse for LCB Kids comes from Mark 10 where Jesus says 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.' It's an incredible honour to watch what God does in the lives of our children when we give them the space to meet with Jesus in their own way through our weekly programs.

In 2023 we saw a big increase in numbers both on a Friday night and a Sunday morning. We watched them plan and lead their own takeover service. They've invited friends to their groups and spent so much time delving into the Bible and learning all about who God says they are. We've even sent four of them off to Young Lions' Juniors to discover the leader inside of them. The children are amazing; they are kind, helpful and encouraging and are a huge blessing to us at LCB.

In 2024 we want to invest in this next generation by providing more opportunities for them to know who God says they are, more opportunities to share Jesus with their worlds and more opportunities to help them to be the leaders we know they already are.

I want to say a big thank you to the incredible LCB Kids team members, thank you for serving so faithfully and enthusiastically each and every week, I couldn't do it without you. I appreciate each of you so much.

If you'd like more information on what we do at LCB kids, or you'd like to be a part of one of our incredible teams, please come and see me or email me on the address below.

Gemma Sellars (Children's & Youth Coordinator)

gemma@lifechurchbristol.com



Gemma works part-time for the church as the Children's and Youth Coordinator and Operations Coordinator.

Youth

2023 was an incredible year for LCB Youth! We carried on our theme of community, joining up with other local youth groups at The Mix events four times a year in the centre of Bristol, which are great opportunities for worshipping together and hanging out with other young people. Our young people love these events and my heart for 2024 is that they will have opportunities to get involved in the programmes themselves and see that God can use them!

In 2023 we've looked at our identity in God and his promises for us that we are loved, enough and victorious. We've also looked at the armour of God and we are currently doing a series on LCB Youth at the Movies where each week we are looking at a film and seeing what God has spoken to us through it.

We've also had a lot of fun in 2023 – we held the first Versus event on Friday nights which saw the Blue team go up against the Red Team which lasted for a couple of months! Points were won through a lot of crazy games and challenges, we held a capture the flag night in Vassals Park and have had theme nights such as Alphabet Night where everyone dressed up as something beginning with the first letter of their name! I love how enthusiastic and willing to get stuck in our young people are! I've loved seeing their friendships grow over the past year and we've also had some great LCB Youth Socials including bowling, desserts, and glow in the dark golf!

We also made the move from our old building on Forest Road to the Vassals Centre in September and this move will give us the opportunity to keep growing and reaching out to the local community.

My heart for LCB Youth on Fridays for 2024 is that our young people will have more opportunities to discover who God is, what his plan for their lives is and to have even more fun! I also dream about seeing our young people more involved in the programme and leading and sharing with the rest of the group.



Steph Haberfield (Friday Youth Coordinator)

steph@lifechurchbristol.com

In January of 2024 we are launching a new branch to LCB youth ministry which focuses on the discipleship of our young people. This will be a monthly Sunday morning for our 11-18 year olds with a new team of volunteers who are passionate about youth ministry. We will be using Youth Alpha resources to explore what they believe about faith and life. We'll also focus on reading the bible themselves, both in sessions, in Church from the front and in daily bible studies at home too. We're working closely with Gemma for the year 6 transition up to Youth on Sundays and with the year 13 to transition well up to Young Adults in September 2024. This will include a discipleship course that will be done in a group alongside leaders from youth and young adults to build relationships and group identity before they transition into work, study or mission after they finish education at 18.

We are planning a series of socials over coming months to continue to build group identity and relationships with our young people, integrating in those who attend on Sundays but not on Fridays. This will include a weekend over the summer full of activities and opportunities for prayer ministry and learning about spiritual gifts.

16 of our young people currently volunteer either on a Sunday or on a Friday night at our kids and youth groups and we are thrilled that so many of them have decided to join a team and serve in church. We put on special training for them, thinking about safeguarding and how to conduct themselves in their roles well and safely as well as thanking them with a gift and encouragement for what they bring to those teams.

We have also been looking to grow young people's involvement in Sunday services, they were really involved in the Carol Service, hosting, leading games, reading and welcoming people and that has continued into Sunday morning services, setting a culture that our young people can learn leadership and become braver in using their voice for God.



Charlotte Cooper (Youth Discipleship Coordinator)

charlotte@lifechurchbristol.com

Young Adults

What a change we've gone through in 2023 as a group: from a change in our leadership to having up to 20 new young adults join our family at life church Bristol. It has been an honour serving the young adults since I took over from Jye in September and what an amazing journey our young adults have had to go through the last year.

We've seen an increase in attendance especially in our 18-22 age group which allows us the chance to start early with them in their faith journey as young adults who are learning what adulthood entails. We had such an amazing weekend away last March with more than 10 young adults going away just to seek God and form a community and I am glad to say we are going back again this year with even more young adults and very expectant for what God has prepared for us this time.

The vision for LCB young adults is to have young people on fire for Christ and I'm excited to see all that God has in store for us this year. We have been able to create a safe environment where young adults meetup, come together to grow, be ministered to, share life, form a community and learn from each other what life is like as young adults who've chosen to follow our saviour Jesus Christ amid the chaos around us.

We believe that life is better with friends supporting and praying for you, as we were not created to do life alone. So meeting up regularly allows for good relationships to be formed. To support this vision, we have Bible studies, worship nights, and simple face-to-face 'get to know each' other activities.

Our prayer is that from this Young Adult team, future leaders will rise that will follow the path of our current leaders and also forge their own paths according to all that God has placed in their hearts to do.



Miracle Ede (YA Coordinator)

youngadults@lifechurchbristol.com

Men's

Our men's group has grown considerably in the last year (now 57 members) and has been involved in some great men's group activities. As well as the traditional football watching and bowling we have also done some newer physical fitness challenges including monthly press-up and sit-up targets, charity steps (for Prostate Cancer UK) and bible reading (a chapter of Luke day during December). We have also had the privilege of getting together to focus on men-specific topics hosted by pastor Gareth and Tim at a number of 'teaching and takeaway' evenings.

The group continues to support one another practically and in prayer through our WhatsApp social media group. Which also results in a lot of lighthearted banter. It has been wonderful to see men feeling they can share their prayer requests with the group and the responses and answers to prayer received.

I am not one for complacency though, and I would love to see more people engaged in organising events and gathering and connecting our men's group.

If you think that could be you then I'd love to hear from you.

Stan Campbell

stan@lifechurchbristol.com



Women's

At Life Church our vision is to see Everyone Connected, Everyone Contributing and Everyone Growing. **I want every woman to know just how treasured and loved she is by our perfect Father**, and this last year has enabled me to lead the women of the church to know and grow in this knowledge. It's been a year of growth and change at Life Church with new people joining, and moving premises. In order to help the women build relationships with each other, we planned a few events. We had a great time bowling and I continue to welcome young women with food, laughter and deep conversations and teaching with pancake mornings. It's so encouraging to see the YA women grow in their faith!

One of the highlights for me, was the overwhelming support we had to the charity we support as a church, Beloved, who support women in the indoor sex trade in massage parlours throughout Bristol. We managed to plan, organise and implement Beloved's first live fundraiser! From the ticket sales and silent auction we raised over £1200. How God has blessed this into helping the women often forgotten in our city was just overwhelming. The other highlight has been the overwhelming support and connections developed through our WhatsApp Group. I'm so encouraged by women sharing their faith, talking about scripture and encouraging one another with God's word in this crazy thing called life. If you're not in the group, please contact me to be welcomed in!

We have had the joy of welcoming so many new mothers and families to Life Church. In 2022-23 we started an impromptu mums and tots meet. This time together was really great to see new friendships formed (for both big and small people!) and cherished fellowship.

Going into 2024, we are supporting the Vassall's Centre with a joint outreach to the families in the area. Tea with Tots officially launches in Feb 2024. How exciting it will be to have the opportunity to share our faith with women in the community and develop further relationships to support those who need it. If you'd like to be a part of this, or join any of the groups above, please do email me!



Tara Malcolm

tara@lifechurchbristol.com

Pastoral Care

At Life Church we aim to place a caring culture at the heart of all we do. The goal is to reflect God's care for us as his precious children, so that each one feels valued and loved. Pastoral care takes many forms with our community. In this past year we've been seeking to be proactive in reaching out to members at all levels of engagement with the church. With those who attend church regularly, we've been able to engage in conversation and offer encouragement both before and after the service, especially facilitated by our new foyer. Some people, particularly the elderly, can find it difficult to get to church and we've been coordinating transport where possible. For others it's been practical help, home visits or meeting up for coffee. Our ever-popular baby baskets have also been active this year and meal trains have been organised for the family when they return from hospital. It's always a joy to share in this special time in the life of our church family.

A significant proportion of those connected to Life Church can't always be present on a Sunday. We've been reaching out to them and offering prayer for particular needs. There has been a good response and we've seen answers to prayer and fellowship strengthened.

Our goals for the coming year include developing a more structured approach, especially when following up new people, so that, if possible, no one is overlooked in pastoral care.

We look forward to a great year of growing together, as we seek to demonstrate God's love in tangible ways.



John and Ruth Doherty

pastoral@lifechurchbristol.com

Missions

Life Church is committed to the Great Commission both locally, nationally and globally.

Jesus said 'Go into all the World' and we want to play our part in reaching men, women and children with the Gospel! Over the last year, we gave away just under £11k (that's an increase of 83% on last year!) to invest in various mission needs - equipping people on the ground to reach out with a demonstration of the love of Jesus and proclaim the good news!

This has included:

- Church planting & ministry in India (India Hope)
- Supporting young people & families in Brazil (Univida)
- Church planting in Aberystwyth - 'Freedom Church'
- Supporting rough sleepers in Bristol (Streetlife)
- Housing for the homeless (Hope into Action and ACT)
- Supporting the global charity Compassion through personal child sponsorship by members of Life Church and as a church.
- Church planting in Vienna - 'Life Church'. This is a new church plant that we're supporting in Austria.
- Support for women in the sex trade industry in Bristol, through the Beloved charity.
- One-off gifts to missionaries around the world, including All Nations for Christ in Benin City through contacts we have with AoG.



Continue to pray for India Hope working to provide food, clothing, education, shelter, medical assistance, love and hope to orphans and needy children.



Pray for the work of Univida in Forteleza, Brazil with street children from the nearby slums. Univida currently have a need of repair work to one of their main buildings. Pray for the finance they need to do this and an ease in completing this work.

Pray for Marvin and the worldwide work of Compassion that seeks to release children from poverty in Jesus' name.





Pray for our Ukrainian brothers and sisters who are in Bristol, fleeing the fighting at the moment. Pray for Pastor Igor and his team that they would be able to plant churches here that pastor and care for all those who've found themselves in the UK.



Looking ahead, we are planning some opportunities to visit some of our mission partners.

The team are visiting the new church plant in Vienna in April, with a view to a short-term mission trip in the autumn. We are also exploring the possibility of a trip to Univida in Brazil in early 2025. If you are interested in coming with us on one of these trips, do get in touch!

Tim Robertson, Marianne Matthews and John Doherty

marianne@lifechurchbristol.com

Looking Ahead to 2024

1 Cor 15:36-38: *When you put a seed into the ground, it doesn't grow into a plant unless it dies first. And what you put in the ground is not the plant that will grow, but only a bare seed of wheat or whatever you are planting. Then God gives it the new body he wants it to have. A different plant grows from each kind of seed.*



In addition to our Vision of seeing Everyone Connected, Everyone Contributing and Everyone Growing, the Senior Leadership Team have been prayerfully considering what we need to focus on in 2024. Specifically, what do we need to sow to allow God to begin to grow? They've identified three key things:

➤ The Next Generation

We intend to sow into the next generation by restructuring our Sunday youth program creating more space for discipleship and more opportunities for our young people to lead.

➤ Our Community

We intend to sow into our community by investing some of our finances into a new role that will focus specifically on reaching out to our community with the love of Christ and connecting them to our church.

➤ Our City

We intend to explore where God would have us sow what we have into our city, being prepared to give away what we have for His Kingdom in Bristol.

Financial Review

In 2023 the trustees of Life Church Bristol began the process of changing the charity from an unincorporated charity (charity reg. number 1166678) to this CIO (charity reg. number 1202324).

The decision was made to remove personal liability from the trustees, which was a hindrance to new volunteers joining the board of trustees.

This change will include the transfer of the unincorporated charity's assets and liabilities to this CIO. The transfer will be completed in 2024.

There will be no change to the charity's purpose and this unincorporated charity (charity reg. number 1166678) will be closed once the transfer has been completed.

The financial statements are included from page 20 of this report. At the year end, the charity's only receipts during the year was a transfer of £95,835 from the unincorporated charity (charity reg. number 1166678).

Reserves Policy

Setting the reserve amount

The Trustees will review the reserve target amount yearly at the start of each financial year.

Taking into account LCB's financial commitments this amount will be determined by:

- Calculating the monthly committed expenditure for which we have contractual obligations. This would include employee salaries, lease, rental or mortgage payments.
- Ensuring that a minimum of 3 months of finance is held in reserve.
- Holding this amount in reserve ensures that:
- In the event of a downturn in finance all employees will have at least three months of income.
- The Trustees and Senior Leadership Team have sufficient time to make spending alterations to the organisation to ensure future stability.

The reserve amount is not to be held in the 'current' account used for normal day-to-day financial activities.

The reserve amount is monitored monthly and a notification by email is sent to the Trustees if the amount of money in the bank comes within 50% of the reserve amount. (For example, if the

reserve amount is £5,000, this notification would be triggered if the bank balance went below £7,500).

There was no reserve amount for 2023.

Changing the Reserve Amount

The reserve amount can be changed by the Trustees at any time.

This should be done in line with this policy and minuted at a special meeting. Clear reasons for that change should be laid out that necessitate a change.

The Senior Leadership Team should be fully involved in this decision and give their consent.

In the event that the amount of reserves is being decreased, independent financial advice will be sought before making this change.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed/constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Signed by order of the Trustees

03 October 2024



Gareth Matthews

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Life Community Church Bristol

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Life Community Church Bristol (the Charity) for the year ended 31st December 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 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.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records


I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Joshua Kingston

Joshua Kingston BSc, ACA
Burton Sweet Limited
The Clock Tower
5 Farleigh Court
Old Weston Road
Flax Bourton
Bristol BS48 1UR


Date: 03 October 2024
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Receipts and Payments Accounts

 CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES	Life Church Bristol		1202324		CC16a
	Receipts and payments accounts				
	For the period from	Period start date	To	Period end date	
		01/01/2023		31/12/2023	
Section A Receipts and payments					
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations & Legacies	-	-	-	-	-
Charitable Activities	-	-	-	-	-
Investments	-	-	-	-	-
Trading Activities	-	-	-	-	-
Other - Transfer from previous Unincorporated Charity	95,835	-	-	95,835	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	95,835	-	-	95,835	-
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	95,835	-	-	95,835	-
A3 Payments					
Charitable Activities	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	-	-	-	-	-
Net of receipts/(payments)	95,835	-	-	95,835	-
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	95,835	-	-	95,835	-



Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Barclays - Current Bank Account	-	-	-
	Barclays - Savings Bank Account	-	-	-
	CAF - Current Bank Account	5,288	-	-
	CAF - Current Savings Account	90,537	-	-
	Petty Cash	10	-	-
	Total cash funds	95,835	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
	Details	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name		Date of approval
		GARETH MATTHEWS		03 Oct 2024