



# WESLEY AND KING'S SOMBORNE METHODIST CHURCH Annual Report 2024/25



## FROM THE MINISTER



This year, we continue to see a number of successes from the outcomes of our away day in the Autumn of 2003 but we have also faced a number of challenges in the life of our church. Some of the people who have contributed greatly to our church life have, for various reasons, needed to step back and we have all felt their absence. Before I write anything else I would like to take this

opportunity to thank them all for their contributions to our church community. In some cases, new volunteers have come forward and I would also like to give thanks to, and for them in their new roles. However, the loss of some long-standing volunteers has inevitably posed challenges to both individuals and to the church. I hope that the one of the lessons we can take from the past year is the need for us to seek to be more resilient in all areas of our church life. We must try to find ways of not becoming so dependent on particular individuals, however skilled those individuals might be. To help us to achieve this, the Stewards and the Church Council have been looking at all areas of our church life, both spiritual and physical, and looking to find how to make meeting these needs both more sustainable and less daunting. It is right that the Stewards and the Church Council should lead us in this but I hope that everyone understands that it is not a task just for them. For this church to flourish, everyone needs to play their part. We are all different and what part you are called to play is something to be prayerfully discerned but we can be certain that God calls each of us to be a part of the building of his Kingdom through his Church.

*Revd Peter Rayson*

## WORSHIP

The pattern of worship at Wesley and King's Somborne chapels have continued to follow our established pattern over the past year. At the request of the Church Council, a Worship Consultation was convened to review current worship patterns and to begin discussions about possible changes to our future worship.

This consultation concluded that our Sunday worship generally meets the requirements of those who attend it and it is important that any changes should not negatively affect those already attending. However, it is also recognised that, if the church is to have a future as a place of worship, then it is essential that we take steps to attract new worshippers, and hopefully new Christians, to join us. The consultation noted, "On appearance the congregation is very elderly and frail. This is not necessarily attractive to younger people with children. We may have to consider various alternatives to worship on the Sunday morning. Some alternatives were discussed and ideas shared ... We need to question what it is that would attract people to worship." This would necessarily include evaluation and review of our other worship activities including Messy Church, Lego Church and community services.

The consultation also recommended to the Church Council that it establish and on-going "Worship and Fellowship Focus Group" in order to explore and monitor the worshipping life of the church.

The Church Council received the report of the Worship Consultation and endorsed its recommendations.

*Revd Peter Rayson*

## DATA PROTECTION

Following last year's verification process we have now issued a new Directory for use by church members. We are now required to include only details relating to people who have documented permission for their inclusion.

*Gordon Dixon Sonia Craig (Administrator)*

## SENIOR STEWARD'S REPORT

At the start of the church year, I would never have expected to be writing this Senior Steward's report. Sadly, Fiona stepped down as Senior Steward and I took on the appointment. We all should thank Fiona for her time as a Steward, her commitment to the role and her drive to move Wesley forward to a spiritual and sustainable future. We look forward to Fiona and Kevin playing a part in the future of Wesley.

We have also during the last year had several people step down from key roles. Enitha stepped down as our Church Council Secretary, and we thank for her service. This is an essential appointment, and I am pleased to say that Jan has taken on the role for one year. Two other people have stepped from down significant roles within the Church. Firstly, Sandra, stepped down as our Pastoral Secretary and her coordinating role for funerals. Secondly, Richard has stepped down as the Chair of Property and this includes overseeing letting. Both have given fantastic service over so many years, we thank them for all they have done and pray that they enjoy some well-deserved downtime!

We have struggled to find replacements for several appointments including those mentioned above, and the Church Stewards were given the task by Church Council, to look at different ways to manage key functions within the church, given the reducing availability of people to take on responsibilities. At the time of writing this report we are introducing a working group structure that will help share the load and reduce pressure on one or two key individuals. More information will be given as we develop these ideas and initiatives. If you have a particular interest within the life of Wesley or King's Somborne, you may be willing to offer your service and time to one of these groups. Whilst on the subject of looking for new people, remember Wesley would like to have more than the current three Stewards, so if you are interested, please speak to Paul, Helen or Clever and find out more.

As a church family spread across two sites, we must continue to look for ways to share the good news with the communities we reside in. As you read the Annual Report in its entirety, you will see the range of activities that already take place at Wesley and King's Somborne, but what more could be done and how can we engage and enthuse others to share our faith? If you have ideas for trying something new, please speak to the Stewards or our minister, Peter.

I will end on a personal note. Thank you all for the support you have given me in the last few months. My job is made easier because of the encouragement you give to me. God Bless!

*Paul Yarrien (Senior Steward)*

## ECO CHURCH

We continue to make progress with our search for a Silver Award with A Rocha by:

- Investigating ways to improve the efficiency of our premises.
- Exploring the future of energy consumption.
- Refining the use of our land/gardens.
- Considering our ethical engagement with the community.
- Looking for ways to advertise our ethical credentials
- Engaging with Fair Trade issues.
- Maintaining a steady stream of tips to our congregation about their environmental activities.

*Nick Langham Jan Stanbury Paul Yarrien*

## SMALL GROUPS

We are fortunate that we have three small groups meeting at different times which enhance the life of the Church. Tuesday House Group (Evening) and Thursday Small Group (Afternoon) have both been following the same material for study.

Last year we studied Romans with the aid of an excellent course from the Bible Society and are now completing a course on the Fruit of the Holy Spirit which again has been very helpful, creating lots of discussion. The value of sharing, laughter, praying and discussing Bible truths is very liberating and helpful in developing our Christian life and following the Way of Jesus. (We are grateful to Brian and Libby, who have been leading the Thursday Group and are now standing down. It has been good to work closely with them. We thank them for all their care, knowledge and enthusiasm. R and M.)

*Richard and Margaret Rogers Brian and Libby Marriman*

### King's Somborne Small Group

We are currently engaging in the Methodist Sunshine and Showers, which is a collection of six-week courses that allow small groups to explore aspects of the Christian faith together.

- Prayer's beautiful messiness
- The Bible's beautiful strangeness
- Worship's beautiful elusiveness

Each course explores a series of paradoxes - ideas and beliefs we hold in our minds which contradict each other, and seemingly can't both be true, but somehow are. Like a weather forecast for sunshine and showers. Two types of weather, both valid, even when they don't go together.

It is a privilege to be able to find some time together to reflect on these paradoxes and how they can enhance our worship and fellowship and have the opportunity to explore our faith in a safe and trusting environment.

*Brenda Yarrien*

## OUTREACH

Outreach activities have continued to be how Wesley and the Church family interact with those around us as we share our faith through many ways. Activities have taken place in both Wesley and King's Somborne, the regular youth activities provide an opportunity where Wesley and King's Somborne can engage with the younger members of our community, their parents, their carers and other family members. In King's Somborne Messy Church goes even further where the team work ecumenically with members of the Parish Church.

Café Wesley has been revamped to work alongside Lego Church and both activities attract people from the community, in both conversation and the sharing of hospitality. This has meant that once a month, on a Saturday morning, both the Sanctuary and the Hall are full of activity. This year's plant sale also took place in conjunction with the other two Saturday activities and the interaction with passers-by, once again was a great opportunity to talk face to face with people, as well as raising money for some of our charities.

We have continued to try to be a visible presence in both Advent and Lent. In Advent we repeated the Light Display and the open house afternoon and carol singing. Although the numbers were low, (partially due to the cold conditions) those that attended enjoyed hospitality and the sharing of the Christmas Story. The lights were fantastic and a special thank you must go to Aden Craig for his expertise, ideas and time, thank you! The Advent Lights were such a success that Aden suggested a light show during Lent and this was well received and commented upon by the local community.

The various services during Advent brought many new faces into Wesley. A particular highlight was the Community Carols, where engagement with the local Winchester MP and the Mayor of Winchester, encapsulated the forging of community links and the benefit this brings to all.

As we look forward, both Wesley and King's Somborne will continue with those outreach activities that are working so well, but we will also explore new and exciting opportunities to share our faith through our interaction, conversation and hospitality. Thank you to all those who have enabled the above activities to be so successful.

*Paul and Brenda Yarrien.*

## MISSION GROUP

The Mission Group have been active in increasing our understanding of the three charities we support:-

### Brickworks

working in South Sudan, in the midst of a violent Civil War

### Basics Bank

working here in wealthy Winchester to support families and individuals who are affected by the cost of living crisis.

### Water Harvest

working to supply clean water in east Africa.

We have raised money for these valuable opportunities for the promotion of the Good News Of the Gospel of Jesus. Our prayers and understanding of the work are equally important.

So many workers in these overseas areas are often in danger and have to deal with terrible situations.

Café Wesley, on the last Saturday in the month, is equally active in raising cash for local charities. One the Winchester Hospice is dear to many people's hearts as many of the people of Wesley have had family or friends helped there in their final days by such wonderfully kind and caring staff.

*Lynne Atkin, Janet Cunningham, Hilary Honess, Sue Lightfoot, Richard Rogers, Eileen Scoggins, Chris Travell*

## PROPERTY

Wesley are blessed in the fact that the building is in good repair and we have a whole team of people doing their part to present a building which is conducive to worship and outreach to a whole range of people in our community. i.e. maintenance, gardening, housekeeping, catering details, posters outside and flowers in church.well. The Property group are overseeing all this work to ensure we are all safe and sound when we use the building. The Boiler caused us problems in 2024 but we have been able to produce a plan! Firstly we ensured that the boiler was likely to last for 5 years and now we are in the process of updating controls to be as efficient as possible. Church Council also ring fenced in our Church Reserves a sum of money to replace the boiler when necessary.

The regular cleaning of the building is expensive but also essential if we are to provide a healthy, safe and secure building for people to use every day of the week. The surrounds of the church are wonderful gardens and the Garden Team do a superb work. This year at Christmas and the Advent of Spring the illuminations in the trees and bushes were much appreciated thanks to helpful and generous people. The inside of the building continues to improve.

The recent installation of the large TV screens and other equipment all given generously by people in the church have enhanced worship in the building and those who worship at home on the live stream. Wesley is very blessed in this way of providing up to date systems to enable us all to worship God. Next years report will give details of the work being done this summer.

*Andrew Honess and Richard Rogers*

## WEBSITE

Since last year it's been a process of gradually improving things on the website. We've been busy working on the electronic posters for various events, as it really needed a big push to improve it from last year. This hopefully means that we can advertise what we're doing a bit better. At the plant sale this year it was nice to hear that someone who doesn't come to church had seen the poster and visited us as a result - so we're slowly getting out to the community!

We're also getting together (with other members of the church) a welcome booklet that reflects the website very closely, this is progressing well, and we're nearly there so look out for that too. On the general day to day running of the site, we've changed the system (from last year) for better communications in relations to what's happening around the church, and this makes things easier to keep up to date. We also have excellent communication from King's Somborne which makes things easier too. There are some more updates coming later this month and we continue to try to make the website as good as we can for the church community and non-church going community alike.

*Daivd Osgerby*

## TOGETHER THURSDAY

Sadly, we have lost a number of members over the last 12 months. However, this activity still provides good company for those that still come. Puzzles, games, knitting and the inevitable chat, as well as tea, coffee and biscuits are the order of the day. New members will be warmly welcomed.

*Faith & Nick Langham*

## YOUTH@WESLEY

### Mini Marvels

We continue to provide a much needed time for Toddlers on Thursday mornings. Our numbers can vary considerably from 6 to 26! This year the age group has been lower with the majority of those attending being under three. They are a very happy group and occupy themselves contently with the toys and craft. We have built good relationships with the mothers, grandmothers and child minders. Many thanks to all who make this possible and if anyone has an interest in helping, please contact either Eileen or Pauline.



*Telling the Christmas Story*

### Friday Fun Club

Since re-opening in January, we have numbers attending ranging from one to nineteen! It is hoped that we can secure a more stable attendance in the future. The Young People have enjoyed the range of activities based upon the stories of Moses, reflecting on the meaning of Lent, preparing for Mother's Day and the exploring the story of Easter. We have considered how the disciples felt when encountering Jesus after His crucifixion and what it must have been like to have breakfast on the Beach! During the second half of the Summer Term, we will have a Pentecost Labyrinth, Summer Activate, Summer Crafts, culminating in a Summer Picnic.

### Feel Good Friday

Over the last year we have been very much led by the young people on what activities they wanted during the club sessions. They chose a variety of different things to do ranging from a Christmas Party to Bingo nights (that included a themed Beetle drive), they also enjoyed Pizza making organised by Kevin who also brought along a Pizza oven for that session, movie nights, dodge ball and hockey games were also enjoyed. One of the real blessings with this group is the conversations that we have with the young people as they navigate their way through their teenage years. Many thanks to Brenda, Andrew and Kevin the leaders of Feel Good Friday (ably supported by Sam) for all they do to enable the young people to be the best that they can be. Please do continue to hold the young people and leaders in your prayers, asking that through conversations held in the club that the young people feel God's presence in their lives and that the leaders are equipped to help the young people through the trials of teenage years.

### Easter Is

This was once again very successful, providing over 100 primary school pupils with the opportunity to explore the Easter Story through a series of interactive experiences.

## Lego Church

This has returned in its original guise and sits well alongside café Wesley.



*The Last Supper -- Lego Style*

## Messy Church

Messy Church at King's Somborne continues to thrive and is an excellent example of working ecumenically, with valued input from members of the Methodist Chapel and the members of the village Parish Church.



*An example of the work at Messy Church in Kings Somborne  
Eileen Scoggins and Brenda Yarren (Youth@Wesley Leaders) with  
Sam Barnes (Circuit Youth Worker)*

## MULTIMEDIA

After a long period of thought and enquiry this was the year when a major upgrade of Wesley's multimedia systems has been planned and partially completed. The following are the main considerations which have guided our planning:

- The large centrally located screen was recognised by many to be uncomfortable to view from the front rows of seats and the only solution was recognised to be mounting lower screens on both sides.
- At certain times of the year sunlight would fall through the roof windows, sometimes obliterating the material on the high screen.
- Although the projector is a very powerful one the image on the screen was relatively dull compared with that provided by modern TV type screens.
- It was highly desirable that the two operators (program content and live-stream) should be seated next to each other and they should both be seated higher to see over the congregation's heads.
- The control desk had long since become inadequate to contain two seated operators, an advisor's seat and the necessary equipment. A new desk design now exists and installation will take place shortly.

P.T.O.

- An upgrade from an analogue to a digital audio board will provide a number of improvements. These will include new facilities and superior control, also with potential for improvement in sound quality.
- The digital board, together with limited access to the inside of the desk, will provide much needed security. This would not only protect our assets but will provide defence against the 'unknown knob-twiddlers'.
- There is a need for casual users with relatively simple requirements to be able to access facilities for sound and vision without the services of a member of the multimedia team.

The work is in two major phases. The first phase was completed on 15th December 2024 and this provided the new screens and all the upgraded wiring from them to the new desk position. The second phase, which is much more complex technically, will commence in early July 2025. The equipment is currently being assembled in the supplier's premises.

*Gordon Dixon (Multimedia Team Leader)*

### **KING'S SOMBORNE CHAPEL**

We have had another encouraging year here at King's Somborne with several of our outreach people coming to some of our services.

#### **Attendance to Sunday Services**

Numbers in the congregation can vary, anything from 2 to 10 people. Special occasions have been well attended such as the Advent Carol Service with a congregation of 36 and this year we hosted the World Day of Prayer which was written by the women of the Cook Islands. It was a particularly good, thought provoking service, followed by tea and was attended by about 20 people. Our Good Friday service, followed by tea, had a congregation of 30. Once again, this was a very special time for us to gather together and remember Jesus' death on the cross.

#### **Drop In coffee mornings**

These continue to be popular and we can have any number up to 24. There's always lots of chat and people enjoy coming for the company and the happy atmosphere. Since the last annual report, we have celebrated two 80th birthdays where each family has treated us all to a wonderful selection of savoury and sweet food. We have been able to give money to various charities again, including £100 to the Leprosy Mission, £50 to MHA and £50 to the Countess of Brecknock.

#### **Epworth Lunches**

These continue to be popular. We cater for 24 diners and have an excellent team of helpers who enable the occasion to run smoothly. We continue to be very grateful to a team of very good cooks who kindly take turns to provide the meals. The quizzes at the end of the meal are enjoyed and can be quite competitive! The charities we have supported over the year have been Guide Dogs for the Blind, BOAZ, Andover Food Bank, Countess of Brecknock and Jane Scarth, raising a total of £796 for them from our charity tin. All these charities are local to us. Once again, for our annual inspection, we received a 5 star award for hygiene.

#### **Women's Fellowship**

We have a possible 20 ladies attend our Women's Fellowship, depending on their availability and the subject matter! Once again we have had a varied programme with some open meetings where we invite anyone to join us. On May 28th, we shall be having such a meeting when a representative from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance will be coming to speak to us. This talk will be followed on Saturday 7th June, by a sale to raise more money for its worthy cause. In June of last year, we had a sale for Guide Dogs for the Blind, following an excellent talk from a representative. On this occasion, including donations, we raised a total of £900.

#### **Messy Church**

Messy Church continues to cater for approximately 30 people, including adults and children. The leaders of the activities consist of Anglicans and Methodists. Two young people who were members of Messy Church and who became Junior Leaders had to stop helping us due to pressure of school work and exams. Josie is sitting her GCSEs as we write and we wish her well! The activities are well prepared and organised and a write up about the afternoon appears in our village Gauntlet magazine.

*Marilyn Bolton and Marion Downing*

### **FINANCE REPORT**

The report covers the period from 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024.

Figures in this report are from the annual accounts that have been examined by the Independent Examiner, Kimball Smith Limited.

The figures are from the Standard Form of Accounts submitted to the Circuit.

| Receipts                                       | £             | £             |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| Offerings and Tax recovered                    |               | 47,877        |
| CFB interest & investment income               |               | 6,430         |
| Lettings (Use of buildings)                    |               | 19,573        |
| Other receipts                                 |               | <u>10,152</u> |
| Total Receipts                                 |               | 84,032        |
| Payments                                       | £             |               |
| Circuit Assessment                             | 41,305        |               |
| Donations                                      | -             |               |
| Repairs and Maintenance                        | 21,687        |               |
| Utilities (insurance, water, gas, electricity) | 12,275        |               |
| Other payments                                 | <u>14,111</u> |               |
| Total payments                                 | 89,378        |               |
| Net receipts/payments for the year             |               | (5,346)       |

NB A copy of the fully audited accounts is available at request.

The year-on-year Circuit Assessment increase continued the trend, a situation that requires increase in receipts which is currently diminishing. Deficit net receipts do not reflect as negative bank account balance but are accruals. Funding for such expenditures is obtained through arranging withdrawals from Central Finance Board.

The marginal decrease in utilities expenditure is a trend that is being pursued by the Property Group through various initiatives that also seek to lower Repairs and Maintenance expenditure.

This is an endeavour to keep regular giving and offering, which had been the main source of receipts, sufficient to service expected payments. Looking into the future, the Finance and Property Working Group is encouraging the membership to make donations, a means of receipt that had no contribution in the year under review, a departure from previous years.

Please receive the report and may God stir appropriate response in our hearts.

Remain blessed.

*Clever Safurawu (Church Treasurer)*

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