



# Wesley and King's Somborne



## Methodist Church

### Annual Report 2025/2026

#### From the Minister



I would like to begin by thanking all those who have given and continue to give so much time and effort in supporting our church community and enabling us to gather and worship in this place and, through technology, beyond. We have been gathering in this place for some time and, in October, we will be marking a significant event in the life of our church; its founding seventy years ago. This will be a time of celebration and of reflection as we look back at all that has happened over those seventy years. This is not just significant to us here and we will be welcoming The Secretary of Conference, The Revd Jonathan Hustler, to help us in our celebration. Over those seventy years, there have been many changes in our church and in the community around us. Some have moved on to

other places; some have moved on to glory but throughout we have continued to seek ways of supporting the community and spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ to the people in Weeke. Although many of the things we have done in the past have now ended, these endings do not mean that we have failed in our calling. As the book of Ecclesiastes (or The Byrds) reminds us, "For everything there is a season."(i). It is good to look back and reflect on what we have done but it is also important to look forward and seek to find what God is calling us to do now and in the future. As we see so many needs in our communities within the church and beyond, we will sometimes struggle to know the right things to do but as long as we keep faith and hope in God and in his promises, we will be able to continue in our service to him. As some of you will know, an exciting possibility we are currently exploring alongside St Barnabas and Winchester's retail chaplaincy is to bring chaplaincy support to those working in the shops in Weeke. Alongside this, we continue to seek ways in which we can make our own building more welcoming and more flexible for both community use and outreach.

Will this church still be here in another seventy years? Of course, I do not know but what I do know is that what matters is whether we, Jesus' followers, continue to seek to faithfully serve our God in the place he has called us to be and I also know that to fulfil this calling, we must all seek to work together in his name.

"Teach me, my God and King,  
in all things thee to see,  
and what I do in anything,  
to do it as for thee."(ii)

i. Ecclesiastes 3:1 NRSV

ii. George Herbert (1593-1633)

*Revd Peter Rayson*

#### Governance

We thank all those involved in ensuring our governance through GDPR and Safeguarding, remain compliant. These underpinning requirements ensure that Wesley and King's Somborne Methodist Church, protect and support all those engaging in any activities across the two sites. Thank you to all who give of their time and support to undertake the necessary training to meet these requirements.

## From the Senior Steward

This is my second Senior Steward's Report, and on many fronts, this has been a really positive year. It has been great to have many new people join our congregation and get involved with the life of the church. The church family has risen to the challenges of reducing numbers and a reduced ability to take on roles and responsibilities. The introduction of the working group structure has tried to share the workload and limit the pressure on a small group of people. As a reminder the groups are as follows:

### **Worship and Fellowship; Mission; Outreach and Evangelism; Property and Finance; King's Somborne**

The work of each group is fully explained and reflected throughout this Annual Report. A massive thank you to all involved and remember, you do not have to be a Church Council member/Trustee to be part of a group. If you are interested in getting involved, please speak to the Church Stewards.

We as a church family have continued to enjoy collective hospitality, through activities such as the Harvest Lunch, Advent Lights, Christmas Meal and the Easter Tea. All these activities provide a fantastic opportunity to come together, to talk and to share food, thank you once again to all those involved in organising these events. The various light shows have acted as a beacon to people in the area, and their impact have created many positive comments. A huge thank you to David Osgerby and the expertise and time of Aden Craig (see pictures in Outreach and Evangelism Report).

We have continued to only have three Church Stewards this year and this has presented a real challenge. If you feel you would be interested in becoming a Steward, please speak to Peter, our Minister or any of the current Stewards, myself, Helen and Clever. As a Stewards Team we really appreciate your prayers and support.

As we look forward to the coming year, as a Church we should be very positive. We will be celebrating a significant church birthday. We are working towards being part of a local retail chaplaincy in the Weeke area in partnership with the City Centre Chaplaincy Team and working with St Barnabas. It is also a significant time for Peter as he, together with Maggie, discern what God has in store for them. Please pray for Peter and Maggie during the coming weeks and months.

Finally, a big personal thank you from me, for the encouragement and support you give to me and Brenda. I pray that I can continue to repay that support and faith in me.

Blessings

Paul

## Worship and Fellowship

We are pleased to contribute this on behalf of the Worship and Fellowship group set up by the Church Council. Worship has always been an important part of the structure of Wesley since its foundation in 1956.

We are served well by the Ministers and Local Preachers of the Circuit and are blessed to have resident at Wesley, one retired Minister, three local preachers and 4 worship leaders. With the advent of more local arrangements this is important so that the Church Stewards have such a team to turn to when this appears on the Circuit Plan.

We equally are delighted that we have three musicians and the excellent multimedia which can provide videos to sing to when appropriate.

Worship and Fellowship is the centre of our Christian life and the effectiveness of these is evident in the life of the church. We aim to live our lives following the Methodist Way of living. To sustain us there are varieties of ways – weekly worship and regular Holy Communion, fellowship groups such as the House Group, Together Thursday, the Methodist Prayer Hand book and the meeting for fellowship such as Lego Church and Café Wesley. Wesley aims to be a welcoming church open to all. Our building is welcoming, warm when needed, comfortable and accessible. The people are the important addition who make the church come alive and share the grace of the Lord Jesus to all who are present. The live stream of worship services is important for those who cannot attend and we encourage those who cannot come to ask friends or relatives to ensure they have the right equipment to tune into the live stream and enable them to be part of the worshipping community. We must also acknowledge the fortnightly Wesley and King's Somborne Link, this excellent production keeps us all up to date with things happening and also some very helpful reflections. Well done Brenda and Paul.

*Richard Rogers*

## Mission

Following the reorganisation of working groups from September 2025, the Mission Group has continued to meet as the Mission Working Group and organise activities as previously. Since the last Annual Church Meeting in June 2025 three Mission Services, focusing on the three main charities we support, have taken place. The Mission Services provide an opportunity for Church and congregation members to be informed of the charities' activities, thereby enhancing prayer support, as well as an occasion to support them financially. In June 2025 we had a visit from John and Poppy Spens who updated us on the situation in South Sudan and the work of The Brickworks charity. The service in November 2025, led by Nick Langham, focused on Water Harvest, and most recently, in April 2026, we were assisted by Mary Alveyn, a Director of the Winchester Food and Basics Bank, who led us in a discussion regarding poverty, and how Christians might respond to this. Also, in September 2025 generous donations of food and money were collected and distributed to the Food and Basics Bank after the Annual Harvest Service, which was led by Revd Dr Howard Mellor.

Café Wesley has continued to run monthly, now alongside Lego Church on the fourth Saturday of the month, and donations to a different charity each month have been received and distributed. A total of £2573.50 was distributed to charities during the Church Year 2024-2025 as a result of these and other activities such as the collection for the Methodist Church World Mission Fund, All We Can. Further details can be obtained from the Church Treasurer.

We regularly review our mission activities and wish to ensure the Church and congregation are happy with what we are doing. In particular, we have considered whether the three main charities we support should remain the same, or change. As the Water Harvest charity has refocused its activities over the last couple of years, and because now Nick Langham is not so closely associated with it, we think it might be time to change to an alternative one. We would therefore welcome any suggestions regarding what other charity we might support, our main criteria being that, if possible, it should be a Christian charity that focuses on work in a foreign country/countries, and that we can establish a local connection with it.

**Update** – Since this report was originally drafted, Water Harvest has announced it will close at the end of this year. It will therefore be a priority for the Mission Working Group to advise on whether an alternative charity should be sought for the Church to support, and if so, which it might be.

We are also open to suggestions regarding which charities we should support through Café Wesley (a current list is on the notice board in the church foyer).

Please contact Chris or any member of the Mission Working Group with your thoughts on the above, or any other aspect of our mission activities.

Finally, we are sorry that Eileen Scoggins has taken the decision to leave the Mission Working Group. We have been very grateful for Eileen's support over a considerable period of time, and will miss her input. Thank you Eileen!

*Lynne Atkin, Janet Cunningham, Hilary Honess, Sue Lightfoot, Richard Rogers, Chris Travell (chair)*

## Small Groups: Bramshaw Close Housegroup

The Bramshaw Close Group is working well with 12 members of diverse age and background. Half of the Group have taken the opportunity to lead a session which is stimulating for all concerned. Our study material this year have been Bible Society courses on "Romans" and then the new "Bible Course" which were excellent. The importance of fellowship, prayer, bible study, and sharing in a safe place are of paramount importance in the aims of the group.

*Margaret Rogers*

## Property and Finance

Firstly, on behalf of the whole Church, we would like to give a great big thankyou to Richard and Jan for all their hard work and their years of service within the group. It really has been greatly appreciated by all.

The report covers the period from 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2026. This is the first report of the Property and Finance Working Group following the stepping down of Richard Rogers and Jan Stanbury, who had spent years managing the affairs of the church finances and buildings. The working group expresses gratitude to Richard and Jan for sharing their experience and guiding the newly established team. This team is entrusted with looking at developmental building projects, application of grants to boost project funding, attending to call-out responses, managing lettings, day to day management of finance, budgeting, returns, and Statement of Accounts.

The Property and Finance Working Group initiated a programme that has looked at keeping repairs and maintenance low. This programme has looked at proposed plans of altering the church building to meet the perceived future needs of the church and its missional imperatives. Review of plans and missional needs are still ongoing.

The finance part of this report summarises accounts checked by Kimball Smith Limited. The accounts were independently examined by the appointed Independent Examiner, K.J. Stratton.

The key figures of the Standard Form of Accounts are:

<b>Receipts</b>	<b>£</b>	
Offerings and Tax recovered		44 605
CFB interest & investment income		4 914
Lettings (Use of buildings)		28 891
Other receipts		7 614
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>86 024</b>
<b>Payments</b>	<b>£</b>	
Circuit Assessment		41 305
Donations		-
Repairs and Maintenance		20 829
Utilities (insurance, water, gas, electricity)		12 597
Other payments		41 064
<b>Total payments</b>		<b>115 795</b>

**Net receipts/payments for the year (29 771)**

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

The amount reflecting as nett deficit is not a negative bank balance. The large contribution of the amount came from payments for the Multimedia Project and in additional expenditures the annual income cannot cover. Funds availability is a result of generous giving from several members of the church family.

## Multimedia Update

The multimedia system has been a great addition to the Church, and thankyou to everyone involved in getting it set up. It's not only being used for Sunday services (its main function) but has been used by other various groups, from leadership courses to choir practice. We are dealing with a particular shutting down issue that has occurred, the engineer will be visiting the Church at the end of May to address this. We are now looking forward to completing the lighting part of the project, we have just this last week, had a quote through and are starting to look at all the options available. This quote includes looking at an additional speaker near to the organ to assist hearing in this area of the Church, which isn't currently adequately covered by the sound system.

On the website, we've gradually made some improvements (mostly in the background), we've upgraded the monthly poster system to make it more professional and are now collecting photos to start changing the pictures around on the main page. We had intended to update the pictures more frequently, but I'm getting round to it now and should have some changes in May/June of this year!

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

Remain blessed

Property and Finance Working Group Secretariat

## **King's Somborne Chapel**

We have continued to have an encouraging year here at King's Somborne with some of our outreach people coming more regularly to our services. We have an additional member join our Chapel membership.

### **Attendance to Sunday Services**

Numbers in the congregation can vary anything from 4 to 10 people. Special occasions have been well attended such as the Advent Carol Service last year with a congregation of 15. Our Good Friday service, followed by tea, had a congregation of 19. 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 company and the happy atmosphere. Since the last annual report, we have enjoyed visits from 4 generations of a family, as described in an article for the Link on 15th May. We have been able to give money to various charities again, including £50 to Dementia UK (in memory of Gladys Foyle). £30 to House of Opportunity (this was made up to £200 from other funds). £50 to Cancer Research (in memory of Anne Oram who had begun to come to chapel on a more regular basis). £50 to the Stroke Association (in memory of Rosie Baker) and £50 to Romsey Young Carers (after their visit to our Women's Fellowship).

### **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 Emmaus, Andover Young Carers, Naomi House and Jackspace and Romsey Foodbank, raising a total of £866 for them from our charity tin. All these charities are local to us.

### **Women's Fellowship**

We have up to 20 ladies who attend our Women's Fellowship. Once again we have had a varied programme with some open meetings where we invite anyone to join us. On May 28th, we had a representative from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance come to speak to us. This proved to be an excellent talk and was followed on Saturday 7th June, by a sale which, with donations, raised £1187.97 for its worthy cause. We have also been very pleased and grateful to have Barbara Hillier, Su Parsons, Rosie Mellor and a representative from Romsey Young Carers join us, on different occasions, to lead very interesting and thought-provoking afternoons.

### **Messy Church**

Unfortunately, numbers at Messy Church have fluctuated a lot this year and fewer families have been attending. The team, consisting of Anglicans and Methodists have worked hard planning activities to cover the stories of Joseph, Moses, Christmas and Easter and the children's work is displayed on a board in the hall. The fun activities are followed by a time of worship, and the afternoon ends with a yummy tea!

### **Laughs and Crafts**

By popular request, this craft session has been reintroduced at a more convenient time and now takes place on the second Wednesday of the month at 2:30pm in our hall. To date we have any number up to 10 people coming along, with an item of craft work of their own, be it knitting, sewing or crocheting. An enjoyable time is had by all and there is plenty of laughter as well as refreshments!

### **Property**

This year has been a very busy and successful one.

The stream finally dried up sufficiently to enable us to have the repairs done to the brick work.

Andrew Honess worked incredibly hard to complete several outstanding repairs to the Chapel and hall. He fitted guttering to the Chapel porch to enable rainwater to flow away from the porch walls. This enabled him to repair, water-proof and redecorate the interior walls of the porch which had been damaged by damp. He also repaired, treated and redecorated the walls in the Chapel itself which had been affected by damp. He put a varnish coat on the floor. He then redecorated the hall and treated areas for damp.

We are now totally up to date with all we planned to do and, hopefully, will not have any further big expenditure for the foreseeable future. In addition to the work planned, Andrew also replaced all our hall strip lights and passage lights for LED. This should make some savings on our electricity bill. We are very grateful to Andrew for all his hard work and for taking such care in making such noticeable improvements to our Chapel and hall.

We are very grateful too for the support and hard work of David Osgerby, who very kindly fixed our sound system and had it up and running again.

Marilyn Bolton and Marion Downing

## Pastoral Report

I extend my sincere thanks to the team of pastoral visitors. They maintain regular contact with those in their care, providing me with any significant changes in their circumstances. News about members is also regularly announced in 'Sharing Time' in our weekly services. All this strengthens our church family.

In our meeting I will remind everyone of those members who have sadly passed in the last 12 months.

Nick Langham

## Eco Church

We continue to keep members aware of a wide range of 'Eco Tips' in the Wesley Somborne Link. These are opportunities for all of us to play our part in the stewardship of the natural environment, showing our concern for the way that God's world is under threat.

Our church services have on several occasions focused on the natural world. This has significance for us as Christians, helping to reinforce our commitment to a role of stewardship. Last month's Plant Sale was a tangible way that we engaged with the local community and showed our environmental credentials.

This year's Circuit Environment Event received our support, and we continue to gather and record information which will be used as evidence when we apply for a Silver Award in future

Nick Langham

## Together Thursday

This group continues to meet on a regular basis. Puzzling, scrabbling, colouring, knitting and chatting, not to mention tea and biscuits help to foster a warm and friendly atmosphere. Those who attend find this a highlight of their week. Still room to welcome newcomers!

Faith & Nick Langham



## **Youth@Wesley**

### **Mini Marvels**

Mini Marvels continues to provide a much needed time for toddlers and their care givers on a Thursday morning. Numbers this year have varied from 10 to 26 and those attending are mainly 3 years and under. They are a happy group and occupy themselves with the play equipment and craft activities provided by Margaret and Eileen, and the occasional singing session. The children especially enjoy their 'healthy snacks' time, and we're very grateful to Chrysh for preparing the food and clearing up afterwards. We are building good friendships with the mums, grandparents and childminders. Last Christmas we took the children into the sanctuary and Sam showed a short nativity film which was well received by both children and adults. Many thanks to all who make this group possible. If anyone has an interest in helping please contact Eileen or Pauline.

### **Friday Fun Club**

Friday Fun Club continues to meet twice a month, with 20 or so Young people on roll. Unfortunately, mainly due to other commitments, numbers are often low, and attendance is irregular. However, we all benefit from our time together and enjoy sharing in a range of activities. Lower numbers have however, enabled us to spend more quality time with the youngsters listening and chatting. This year we have focused on the OT through characters such as David and Jonah, then on to Easter and Pentecost, and ECO activities.

We ventured into the Wesley Wild World for a new look for Holiday Club this year, focusing on a one day event. This proved successful and was well attended. We made animal masks, paper bag puppets, door hangers, eco posters, imaginary animals and woven whales, all very much enjoyed.

We look forward to an active year to come and pray that we may touch more primary aged children.

### **Feel Good Friday**

A wonderful thing to report from the last year of Feel Good Friday is that we have grown in numbers, this has been growth in both younger and older age ranges which is a real blessing. The things we do within the sessions are still very much directed by the young people and we have had a variety of planned sessions along with nights that the young people just chill, chat, play basketball, board games and manhunt (which is a cross between tag and hide & seek). Some of the themed activities have included Nerf battle, Spotify disco, Pizza Making (organised by Kevin who supplied the oven and ingredients), film night, Easter Bingo, Dodge ball and hockey challenge are just a taste of the things requested by the young people. In today's world young people face many challenges, especially those currently going through their GCSE's, so it is a real privilege to walk alongside them as they navigate their way through those challenges, by being a listening ear in their time of need. Many thanks to Brenda, Andrew and Kevin the leaders of Feel Good Friday for your continued commitment to the young people and encouraging them in all they do as they grow into adulthood.

Please do continue to pray for Feel Good Friday; pray that young people feel Jesus presence in their lives, that his love surrounds and comforts them. Also pray for the leaders that they feel equipped as they walk alongside the young people during their growth into adulthood.

### **Easter Is**

This is an opportunity to engage young people from primary schools to explore the Easter Story in an interactive way. The children and their teachers are invited to take part in a variety of activities and chat to the people involved in playing a range of roles, such as the moneylender, the foot washer, the Pharisee, Peter, Mary, a roman soldier, the servants in the Upper Room and the keeper of the cross. About one hundred children were engaged across the morning and all the schools invited Sam to lead follow-up sessions back in their classrooms. Many thanks to all of those who gave up their time to enable this important outreach work to happen.

### **Lego Church**

Lego Church continues to offer intergenerational worship in a different way; we ask those attending to create a scene from the Bible Story set for the session. There are also Refreshments and Bacon Rolls on offer whilst people are building up their scenes. The session is closed in a short act of worship which includes a reflection, the story being told (using Lego films when possible), a song sung and prayer. Although the numbers are currently low those who attend enjoy the different way in which they start to think about the passage, as they build a scene they consider the different aspects of the story, what to include that captures enough of the scene that people will recognise what the story is. Some of the bible stories that we have covered are Parable of the Sower, Jonah, David and Goliath, Easter and Breakfast on the beach.

Many thanks to all who enable Lego Church to happen, from cooking the Bacon to setting up tables, from signing people in to having conversations with those present. Please do pray that people are encouraged to come along and that seeds of faith are grown within the session.



## Messy Church

This is an ecumenical monthly activity, with valued engagement from members of the Methodist Chapel and members of the village Parish Church. See Marilyn's report for further detail.

## Outreach and Evangelism

We were delighted with the response from church members and the wider local community to the Advent Lights Saturday where we were able to open the church and welcome people for some festive fayre, to join in some carol singing and to see our Lights display in the garden. The Wesley Sanctuary looked welcoming to all those who were able to be engaged with the Triangle Nativity Service and the Mini Marvels Reflection, The Scouts' Service, the Community Carols and our intergenerational Nativity service the Three Trees.

Since then, we were once more graced with a beautiful Easter Lights display, a wonderful Holy Saturday Tea and a very moving Easter Day Service.



We are looking forward to exploring the possibility of a Summer Extravaganza in August, offering indoor and outdoor games and activities, refreshments and the presence of an ice cream vendor! Sitting alongside all these community outreach activities, we are engaging with Winchester City Centre Chaplaincy (WCCC), to develop an ecumenical venture to bring retail chaplaincy to the Weeke area. We need your prayers to help discern what God has in store for us in the next few years.

Pauline, Eileen, Sam and Brenda