



11-12 Fairfield South
Kingston upon Thames
Surrey KT1 2UJ

020 8546 3213

Registered Charity No 1163078

www.kingstonmethodist.church

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT for the year ended 31 August 2025

Jesus Christ lived out God's unconditional love. Kingston Methodist Church is a community of people worshipping, learning and growing together in response.

This revised mission statement reflects the **calling** of the Methodist Church of Great Britain: 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**. Kingston Methodist Church's Annual Report is therefore based on these four key areas, giving an overview of the various ways it has lived out this calling in the year beginning September 2024.

Structure, administration and management of Kingston Methodist Church

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.

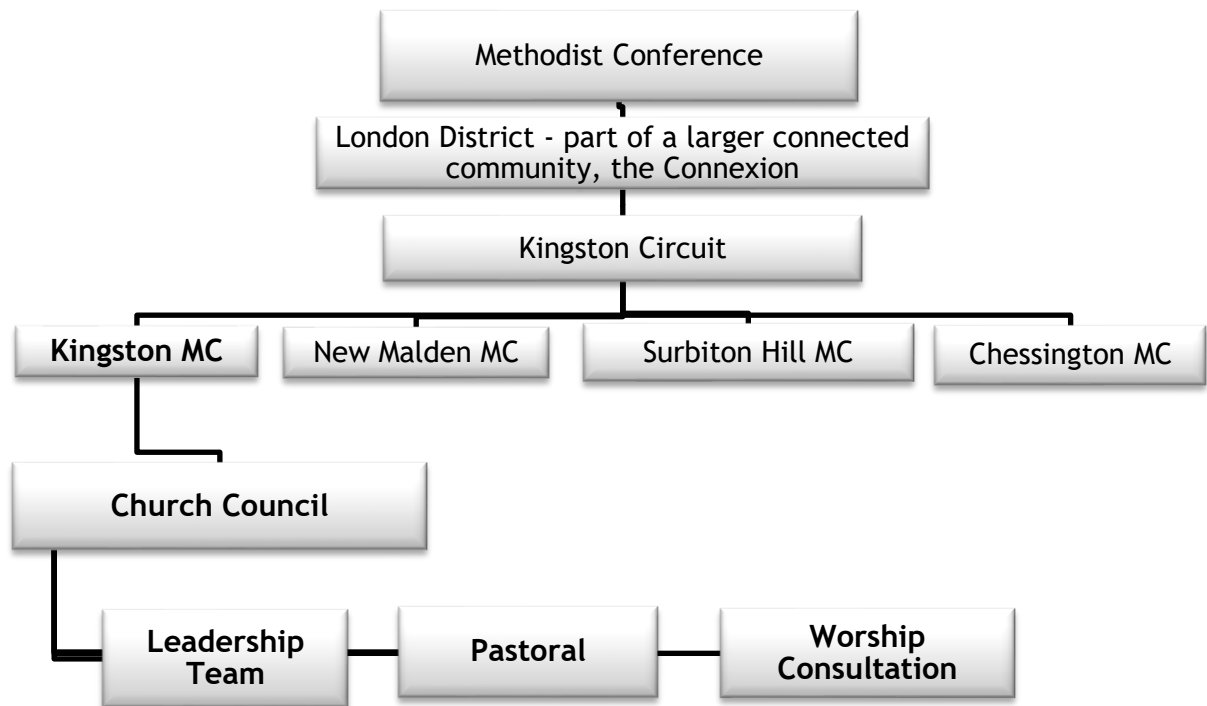
2024-2025 appointed Trustees/Church Council members:

- Rev Dr Karl Rutledge (Chair)
- Charles Abedi Boafo
- Alan Clatworthy
- Steve Dawson
- Maggie East
- Ruby Esson
- Val Hayden
- Ahmad Mortazavi
- Mike Park
- Alexander Ritchie
- Sang Hun Shim
- Nigel Spalding
- Mike Stockbridge
- Liz Taylor
- Matthew Taylor

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 mission, ministry, governance, policies, procedures and property issues, including discussions on the future use of our building. 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**.

We confirm that our trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission’s guidance on public benefit when considering KMC’s activities for the year, as well as its supplementary guidance on the advancement of religion.



Activities, achievements and performance

The new Methodist Church year has always been marked at KMC by a picnic, whenever possible in the beautiful Bushy Park, and this year was no exception. Other opportunities for bringing our church family together included ‘international’ bring-and-share fund-raising lunches, e.g. for harvest, for JMA and Christian Aid, as well as the occasional breakfast before a service. We also shared some interesting post-service talks on the work of Playbox (KMC’s preschool), on energy saving and on cybercrime awareness for faith groups.

KMC is blessed with a lovely space in which to gather, and has, this year, established the Worship Area Advisory Group to explore how we can better use it to connect with our local community, including progress towards reducing our carbon footprint.

Throughout the year KMC continued to review and update its policies to ensure it meets the requirements of Safeguarding, General Data Protection (GDP), Health and Safety etc. There have been online bite-size GDP training sessions from The Methodist Church, mandatory Safeguarding training for those working with children and vulnerable adults and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion/Unconscious Bias training for the Church Council and Leadership Team.

WORSHIP

“The Church exists to increase awareness of God’s presence and to celebrate God’s love.”

At the heart of KMC’s life is worship, and we offer a range of services including informal morning worship, café-style services, and local arrangements where congregation members take the lead. We also continue to offer a reflective, informal and intimate environment for our monthly evening service, as well as joining the wider church family in occasional evening services with our other three circuit churches. The church hosts special and celebratory services, such as Mothering Sunday, Harvest Festival, and Christmas services. During Easter Holy Week KMC joins its neighbouring churches for a Palm Sunday joint procession and service, Maundy Thursday supper and Good Friday Walk of Witness. A highlight this year was Easter Sunday, when KMC welcomed 15 new people into membership of its church.

For people in our congregation who are unable to worship with us physically and for many in the wider community, our Minister is able to offer spiritual sustenance through an online worship series, “Windows on Worship”.

KMC’s dedicated Sunday School staff ensure the inclusion of our children and young people in the worship life of the church, while our committed Music Group plays a vital role in leading and enhancing the quality of our worship.

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.

KMC continues to enjoy a warm relationship with Hanbeet Korean Church who fill the building with worship and song on Sunday afternoons. The leadership teams of our two churches meet socially every few months over a shared meal.

LEARNING AND CARING

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

Our Bible month morning services in June featured an in-depth study of St John’s Gospel and in café church and other services the congregation learnt about ‘A Methodist Way of Life’: twelve practices which help to encounter God.

In addition to weekly worship Kingston Methodist Church has in this year also nurtured the spiritual life of its congregation by offering a well-attended ecumenical five-week Lent Course organised by the Circuit using material from ‘On the Third Day’.

An important event we support is the annual gathering for children and young people in the Methodist Church, 3Generate, which was held this year at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham and where everyone camped indoors together. We are

proud that the group coming from KMC was one of the largest, with a lively and diverse mixture of volunteers and attendees.

Caring for one another and opportunities for fellowship are at the heart of KMC's shared life. Integral to this is the work of the Pastoral Committee, which supports church members and the wider community, and the Prayer Chain offers support to those who are unwell or going through difficult times. Our regular newsletter keeps people in touch with what the church is doing.

The fortnightly Reflection Group provides opportunities for fellowship, support and learning, with guest speakers and activities. An ongoing feature of KMC's life is the Thursday afternoon Chat Room, which offers an informal get-together time for KMC friends.

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 has maintained its long tradition of financial support to specific charities:

- **Action for Children** - £810 from both a Christmas appeal and a service on AFC Sunday.
- **Whitechapel Mission** - £370 The cash donations for Whitechapel are secondary to donations of food items, clothes and toiletries.
- **Christian Aid** - £885 The figure for Christian Aid was enhanced by having the ecumenical Christian Aid service at our church this year and also includes some money raised by our two house-to-house collectors, as well as proceeds from our CA lunch.
- Other global Methodist causes supported by our congregation during the year are **All We Can**, which is the Methodist Relief and Development Fund - an international development and emergency relief organisation - for which KMC raised £250. The second is the Methodist World Mission Fund through **Junior Mission for All (JMA)** where some of our children and young people held a lunch and collected monthly donations amounting to £306.32 to support JMA projects, helping children in the UK, Ireland and around the world.

Most of the funds raised also attract gift aid.

- KMC's two main fundraising events, the Christmas Fayre and our Plant and Produce sale, involve the local community and the proceeds go to charities nominated by members of our congregation and agreed by Church Council. This last year we decided to concentrate all our efforts on one local charity we continually support but which is always grateful for much-needed funds - **Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness (KCAH)**. They are currently trying to support and house 10+ new people each week. To help with this KMC raised an amazing £4,112.23 which we know will make a difference. In addition, KMC makes an annual donation of £250 to KCAH.

- KMC's Church Council also agreed the Church's donation of £250 each to KMC-based youth organisations **The Girls'/Boys' Brigades**. 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. The Brigades' programme of activities culminates in a joint summer camp with other companies from Kent and Devon, this year again on the Isle of Wight.
- In addition, KMC continued its policy of annual donations of £250 to another local charities: **Refugee Action Kingston**, and this year also added **Oxygen** who are facing significant financial pressure yet are still making an impact on the 100+ referrals each year for young people in crisis.
- 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 as well as helping people cope with sudden and unexpected costs.
- KMC has continued to support Cambridge Road Estate Community Group Foodbank (CREst), our most local foodbank, with food donations throughout the year. CREst is currently helping over 150 people a week, from 102 different countries.
- KMC's building is used by a wide range of community groups during the week, ranging from Al-Anon and Gamblers Anonymous to Danceforce and Good Life Gymnastics. Our user groups are much valued, and we are happy to be able to share the gift of our extensive premises with others. The **Playbox Preschool**, which is owned and managed by KMC, continues to provide a valuable service for local families, with a strong record of staff retention and support for children with additional needs. One of the highlights of the year is always welcoming animals from a local urban farm.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The church accounts for the year were prepared on a Receipts and Payments basis and are presented in the format required by The Methodist Church. The accounts were independently examined by a Fellow of the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants (FCCA).

The church accounts for the year 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 show:

- Receipts £87,220
- Payments £84,182

The receipts of £87,220 came from:

- General offerings from the church congregation - £27,317
- Gift Aid from HMRC - £6,197
- Money given to the Benevolent Fund - £243
- Interest from monies held with the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes, Central Finance Board and Methodist Chapel Aid - £11,834
- Room Hire, the Licence with Hanbeet Church and a donation by Playbox Pre-school for use of the premises - £36,259

- Other receipts - £5,370 including money raised at the Christmas Fayre and Plant & Produce Sale (see below)

The payments of £84,182 is broken down as follows:

- Payments to The Methodist Church for the ‘Circuit Assessment’ - £30,930
- Repairs and maintenance - £30,225
- Insurance and utilities - £9,854
- Donations - £5,362, including £4,112 donated to Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness from the two Sales (as above)
- Benevolent Fund payments - £885
- Other payments - £6,927

The following groups are part of Kingston Methodist Church and had their accounts independently examined by their own examiners, as appointed by the Church trustees:

	Receipts	Payments
Fairfield Playbox Pre-School and Stay & Play	£88,371	£97,761
14th Kingston & Merton Boys' Brigade Company	£1,344	£1,293
1st Kingston Girls' Brigade Company	£8,252	£7,602

Reserves Policy

In October 2025, Church Council agreed that the following financial reserves should be maintained (the figures in brackets are the amounts applicable as at 1 September 2025):

1. A **General Reserve Fund**, containing an amount equivalent to half a year's ongoing running costs, ie excluding major property works and equipment purchases (£32,000).
2. A **Property Reserve Fund**, containing a minimum of £50k, for work on the development and/or maintenance of the building costing more than £3k (£221,032).
3. 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 (£35,000).

Signed Date

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