



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

# CONTENTS

- 
- 04** MESSAGE FROM PASTOR  
STEPHEN DERBYSHIRE
  - 06** OPERATIONS  
MICHELE NGABONZIZA
  - 08** CHILDREN'S MINISTRY & GIRL TALK  
SIOBHAN CUNNINGHAM-RAPLEY
  - 11** CITY GATES CONFERENCE CENTRE  
LUKE DERBYSHIRE
  - 12** CITY WOMEN & PASTORAL CARE  
JULIA DERBYSHIRE
  - 15** CONNECT GROUPS  
STEWART LEE
  - 16** FACILITIES & SECURITY  
DEREK WILSON
  - 17** FINANCE  
FUMI POPOOLA & KANTA WILSON
  - 25** GROUNDED COFFEE
  - 26** ILFORD COMMUNITY GROCERY  
JACKIE OLADIMEJI
  - 28** MEN'S MINISTRY  
ROB HARRIS
  - 30** RELATIONSHIP & MARRIAGE MINISTRY  
ROB & SONIA HARRIS
  - 31** WORSHIP, PRODUCTION & ALPHA  
JOSEPH PERRY
  - 32** YOUNG ADULTS  
PASTOR ORE ADEYEMO
  - 33** YOUTH  
PASTOR ORE ADEYEMO

## MESSAGE FROM PASTOR STEPHEN DERBYSHIRE

This is the final time I am writing the Senior Pastor's Report, and I look back with gratitude over the past 32+ years, amazed at what the Lord has done in building this incredible Church, both spiritually and aesthetically. However, I want to clarify that I am not retiring from ministry but from leading City Gates Church which has been an immense privilege.

When I first mentioned my retirement to the Elders it came as a huge surprise to them because this was something that had never needed to be considered in City Gates Church for over 30 years. I, therefore, do understand that the announcement I made on the 6 of October to the wider church was unexpected.

It has been a difficult task for the Elders to find the right person to follow our ministry and lead City Gates Church. Earlier this year, the Regional Superintendent presented Pastor Harold Afflu's name to the Elders who subsequently accepted him as Lead Pastor. Pastor Harold has led Ipswich International Church for 12 years and he will be inducted into CGC on Saturday 23rd November 2024 so please keep him and his wife, Florence in your prayers.

Following our leaving announcement so many people have shared their stories with us, and we have been overwhelmed by testimonies of how lives have been changed, marriages saved, and relationships restored. Numerous people have also shared that since coming to CGC and hearing the Good News of Jesus they now have a personal relationship with Him. It has been incredible to hear the stories of transformation that have taken place through the Gospel and the Power of God. I am aware, and thankful, for many others who have also been involved in discipling people within the Church, enabling them to live the abundant life Jesus promises to all who follow Him.

### Departmental Reports

You can see from the AGM department reports the church is in a very healthy and financially secure condition, for which we thank God. The Staff have done a remarkable job this year and, again, many lives have been impacted through their faithful service.

### City Gates Academy

Earlier this year I visited City Gates Academy in the Philippines to take part in the 18th year Anniversary Service and celebrations. Whilst there, Pastor Glenn and Nadette organised an alumni of all students who had been educated at City Gates Academy. It was inspiring to see many of those students now working in good professions and many serving at City Gates church. I will remain as Chairman of the board and President of the Academy for the foreseeable future.

### City Gates Conference Centre

The Conference Centre continues to excel. During his employment Luke Derbyshire, as Centre Manager, has taken the Centre to the next level by improving our customer service, putting new contracts in place, and elevating the marketing. During 2023/24 the Centre income increased to around £300,000 which is a significant achievement. Luke has now returned to teaching, so we place on record our thanks to him for making this important contribution to the witness of CGC in Redbridge.

It is important that we continue to keep standards high at the Conference Centre enabling CGC to remain influential in our town as has been confirmed by clients' feedback. Running costs of the building are extremely high and the Centre helps to fund this. Once again, at time of writing, we are looking to recruit a new Conference Manager.

### City Gates Grocery Store

The Grocery Store continues to flourish within Ilford. Supported by a faithful team of committed volunteers, Alvaro and Jackie never lose their zeal for the mission of the store which is to share the love of Christ and also help with the present cost of living crisis. Jackie is constantly being innovative with wrap around services and is now a lifestyle coach for CAP. Last year the Grocery Store won the prestigious Redbridge Cost of Living Award.

### Final remarks

Much has been accomplished throughout our journey together for the kingdom of God. There have been very exciting as well as challenging times, but the future is something to look forward to in anticipation of what God is going to do. Please continue to pray for the Staff Team because due to our departure and the appointment of a new Lead Pastor, they are having to navigate a period of transition, along with you all. This is natural but will create a level of uncertainty as everyone adapts to the change in Leadership.

As I close, I really want to thank everyone from the bottom of my heart. I could not have dreamt of what we have accomplished together. The past has been an exciting adventure even through the trials and, at times, disappointments. However, I believe the future is bright because you are Kingdom People. It is important that you all make Pastor Harold and Florence welcome as they settle into the East of London and City Gates Church.

God bless you all now and in the days ahead,

**Pastor Stephen Derbyshire**

*Lead Pastor*

## OPERATIONS & HR

### HR & Operations Department Overview

The HR & Operations Department oversees all human resource management and day-to-day operational functions for City Gates Church. This includes office coordination, Church event planning support, staff recruitment and development, policy implementation, and health and safety compliance. The goal is to ensure that all operations run smoothly and that the staff team is fully equipped and empowered to serve the church's mission and objectives.

### Key Achievements of 2023

#### 1.1 Staff Recruitment and Retention

- **New Hires:** This year, we successfully recruited three staff members for administration, the Conference Centre and Coffee shop roles. Notably, we onboarded an administrative assistant, the Conference Centre Manager, the Coffee Shop Manager and Baristas to strengthen our team.
- **Retention:** We continued our efforts to improve staff retention. Our administrative team is comprised of:
  - Kanta Wilson: Finance Officer
  - Derek Wilson: Facilities Manager
  - Leila Lindsay: Graphic Designer
  - Luke Derbyshire: Conference Centre Manager
  - Precious Oladimeji: Administrative Assistant
  - Michele Ngabonziza: HR & Operations Director
  - Donald Rankins: Facilities Assistant
  - Jackie Oladimeji: Community Project Coordinator

#### 4. Challenges Faced in 2023

While 2023 was a successful year, we faced some challenges:

- **Recruitment Difficulties:** We experienced challenges in finding qualified candidates for some positions, particularly for the Coffee shop.

### 5. Goals for 2024

Looking ahead to 2024, the HR & Operations department has outlined several key goals:

- **Recruitment:** Increase efforts to attract high-quality candidates for vacant roles, with a focus on administration and church operations.
- **Staff Development:** Expand our training programs to include more professional and spiritual development opportunities for all staff.
- **Volunteer Engagement:** Implement a volunteer recruitment and retention strategy to strengthen our volunteer base and ensure smoother ministry operations.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Continue upgrading our facilities and exploring more cost-effective ways to manage operational expenses.

### 6. Conclusion

2023 has been a productive year for the administrative department at City Gates Church. Our team has worked tirelessly to ensure that the church's operations run smoothly, providing a safe, welcoming, and well-maintained environment. I would like to thank our dedicated staff team, volunteers, and church leadership for their continued support and commitment. Together, we look forward to making 2024 another successful year, building on these achievements to further the mission of City Gates Church and provide a supportive and effective environment. Thank you for your continued support and trust.

**Michele Ngabonziza**

*Operations Director*

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

### Summary

City Gates Kids (CGK) is the children's ministry here at City Gates. This is a place where children can build a strong relationship with Jesus and their peers in a safe environment. We believe that discipleship starts at home and our mission is to partner alongside parents to make Jesus known to children! We have a seamless structure for children aged 2 years old through to 11 years old (when they move to City Gates Youth).

Each class has a basic structure of worship, Bible stories and prayer with a mixture of games, arts and crafts, discussions, and movie clips. These classes are available every Sunday during both morning services and are staffed by committed Christian volunteers who are all DBS checked. Our aim is to help every child discover their God given potential.

### SEND Ministry

In 2019, we established our own SEND Ministry for children with additional needs.

This ministry exists to support special needs children in all aspects of their spiritual growth, including learning Biblical truths, fellowship and identifying their giftings.

### They provide the following:

- 1 to 1 and small group sessions
- Visual aids and multi-sensory resources to facilitate learning
- Training for teachers and parents in the church to provide a better understanding of the needs of children and young people with additional needs.

## 2023 MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

### Kids Team Social (January) –

As the Christmas period is busy and many team members/families travel, we host our Christmas Social in the new year to celebrate as a whole team. We share ministry wins, praise reports and also cast vision for the upcoming year.

### Movie Day Outreach (February) -

We hosted a movie day during half term and invited our guest speaker from City Church, Swansea, Naomi Nelson. We thank God for the young people who responded to the Gospel.

### Ashburnham (June) -

We took a group of young people to Ashburnham for our church retreat. The kids had great sessions and the theme was Unbelievable Faith Occurrences (UFO) and how all things are possible with God...as long as we have faith.

### Friday Fun Holiday Club (August) –

We hosted our outreach holiday club called FRIDAY FUN. This runs every Friday in August and gives the children an opportunity to explore their creative gifts, have a time of fellowship and fun during summer at church. We had guest speakers come in and new children from within the community.

### Transition to youth church (August – September) -

Both Pastor Ore & I work closely to ensure any child moving up to youth church and secondary school feels supported! We held a graduation ceremony for all the young people starting Secondary School. Each child was presented with a gift, some useful resources and met their new youth leaders. The main service also joined us in prayer for the young people during the encounter prayer meeting!

### Oxygen Training (October) –

LIMITLESS OXYGEN regional training day coordinated by the Limitless Kids/Youth team hosted at City Gates. These days are designed for the whole youth and children's ministry team to gather for fresh input at the start of the new academic year.

### CGK Light Party (October) –

We hosted our Christmas party with the kids! The theme was 'Ugly Christmas Jumpers' and every child went home with a gift! Following from this, the children were invited on stage on Christmas day to showcase their gifts to the church.

### CGK Christmas Party (December) –

We hosted our Christmas party with the kids! The theme was 'Ugly Christmas Jumpers' and every child went home with a gift! Following from this, the children were invited on stage on Christmas day to showcase their gifts to the church.

### CGK Christmas Nativity (December) –

We led a Christmas Nativity and hosted a family service. The children had the chance to sing songs, act and share the story of Christ's birth and Shiv brought a message to conclude the service.

**Upcoming Training / Conferences (2024)**

Limitless Leaders Training (*January*)  
 Team Enrichment Days (*Quarterly*)  
 Special Educational Needs (SEN) Training  
 Regional Safeguarding Training (*April*)  
 Elim Leader's Summit (ELS) (*May*)  
 Belong - SEND Conference (Coventry Elim)  
 Limitless Oxygen – Kids/Youth Worker Training  
 (*October*)

**Plans for the new year (2024)**

Annual Safeguarding Training (*March*)  
 Mother's Day & Father's Day Services (*March & June*)  
 Easter Outreach (*April*)  
 Holiday Club (*August*)  
 Transition to City Gates Youth (*September*)  
 Join A Team Day - Volunteer Recruitment (*September*)  
 Christmas Party (*December*)  
 Christmas Nativity (*December*)

## GIRL TALK CONFERENCE

Girl Talk is City Gates' annual girls only youth conference for ages 11-19. This event is an opportunity for teenage girls to know their worth, receive wisdom and prayers from older women in Christ and have amazing fellowship.

We were joined by 400 girls from across the UK. The theme was Be Bold.

The conference was a jam-packed day filled with great speakers including our guest artist, Tofunmi Adorna and guest speaker Beki Nicholls from Luton Christian Fellowship, as well as break-out sessions for both young people and their youth leaders.

Our aim is to reach other regions with the support of the National Aspire women's team!

We praise God for the girls that asked Jesus into their hearts for the first time and those that made recommitments. Every girl who attended left feeling well fed, impacted and encouraged. Next years conference is Saturday 2nd November 2024 and the theme is Embrace.

**Siobhan Cunningham-Rapley**

*Children's Ministry Leader*

## CITY GATES CONFERENCE CENTRE

**Increased profit margins**

After an evaluation of rates, we made the decision to increase the prices of our room hire alongside introducing package pricing for the auditorium hire. Further to this, we introduced a wider range of refreshment packages which we upsold significantly. We also renegotiated rates with current suppliers and established relationships with new ones, which again, increased our profit margins.

**Customer diversification**

As a result of the implementation of new marketing strategies and improved customer service, we have seen our customer base both expand and strengthen over the year. We have had the privilege of hosting new organisations such as UK Power Networks, The National Residential Landlords Association, Avon Cosmetics and Coffee & Prayer to name a few. Further to this, we have seen our regular customers make a significant increase in bookings as a response to the improved high-quality service we have worked hard to be able to offer.

**Future Growth**

The year ahead promises to be an exciting one. We have taken a record number of auditorium bookings and continue to see increased room hires from our ever growing customer base.

**Luke Derbyshire**

*Conference Centre Manager*

## CITY WOMEN & PASTORAL CARE

**CG Pastoral Care** continues to be provided in the main via Connect Group and Ministry Leaders as well as Pastors, Elders and Staff members. During 2023 CG Counselling became an independent ministry although funding, along with signposting, remains available as required.

Over two evenings during the summer 2024 Pastoral Care Training was delivered by ACC to approximately 30 leaders on the subject of Caring for Ourselves and highlighting the importance of self-care.

### City Gates Prayer Support provided through:

<b>PRAYER MINISTRY TEAM:</b>	SUNDAY SERVICES
<b>CW PRAYER MINISTRY:</b>	REQUESTS VIA CORE EVENTS
<b>URGENT/CRISIS NEEDS:</b>	VIA CHURCH OFFICE
<b>INTERCESSORS MINISTRY:</b>	VIA CHURCH OFFICE

My sincere thanks to all those involved in the Pastoral Care Ministry as well as the Sunday Prayer Ministry Team.

My deepest thanks also to the Intercessors Prayer ministry which continues to meet weekly during term time. Led by a committed team of ladies whose faithful ministry provides invaluable support. Feedback received confirms that it is very much appreciated and valued. God bless you all.

**Prime Time** has continued to meet regularly and those attending enjoy fellowship with many Guest Speakers from City Gates and beyond.

Some highlights were a joint PT and Youth Event, Summer and Christmas lunches, and special guest ministry from Pastor Ian Moore and his wife, Carol. An added blessing is that the group is growing in numbers with more retired people attending. Thanks to Hazel Mckenzie along with others who helps preparing and serving refreshments at these events.

Also, in September **Hymns We Love** outreach was launched led by Diane Salmon and Team. The Outreach is aimed at older people and this first event was very positive. A Christmas event is planned for December 2024.

My heartfelt thanks to all who serve the older people of our Church in many and varied ways; your ministry makes a huge impact more than you can know. Thank you.

### CITY WOMEN:

Core Team: Julia Derbyshire, Deborah Baidoo, Laura Parker, Jennifer Small and Sonia Harris.

Sadly, during 2023 we said goodbye to Velveta Thompson as she and her husband Steve relocated to the Midlands. Velveta was a huge part of City Women over many years and her spiritual insight, enthusiasm and ability to hear from the Lord was held in high regard by myself and the team. It was a special, although bittersweet moment, as we said goodbye to Vel, sending her into a new season with our love, prayers and thanks. I would like to place on record my deepest thanks and appreciation for Vel's love and support and hard work towards CW over many years and, also, to me personally. Thank you, Vel.

Over the last couple of years City Women has refocused on issues women face, inviting women from within CG to share their stories and wisdom gained. We have also hosted a number of special guest events. Together these have proved life enhancing and hugely impacting for those who attended. My thanks to all the special ladies who invested in sharing their stories and testimonies which has inspired and encouraged many others in their spiritual walks.

Sonia Harris came on team during Covid where she proved an immense help with the planning and technical aspects of the ministry. Over the past 18 months Sonia has come alongside me in leading CW, and it has been a joy to work more closely with her throughout that time. I wholeheartedly recommended to the Elders that Sonia should take the lead of the women's ministry within CGC as she has already been co-leading, and I am delighted to share that they were happy to endorse Sonia's appointment.

### ASPIRE:

An ongoing highlight for CW has been the annual Aspire Regional Day, which is Elim's National Women's Ministry. This amazing day is led by Laura Parker and team and supported by Jem Chesman, Core Team member of Aspire. Last year Shiv Rapley also became part of the National Aspire Team and so joined the Regional Team, and her presence and input has proved to be a huge asset and blessing. Special thanks to Shiv for heading up Girl Talk, the annual conference for Teenage Girls that has been running for over 20 years. Over recent years Shiv and her committed and enthusiastic team have taken GT Conference to another level through their hard work and vision. Despite

the longevity of this ministry there remains a freshness and vibrancy empowered by the Holy Spirit to reach and input teenage girls within Redbridge and beyond.

Fabulous refreshments are a special part of every women's event so huge thanks go to Nike Adenegan, Kanta and the Hospitality Team for blessing us above and beyond every time. Thank you! We value and appreciate you so much.

#### CW CONNECTS:

<b>Mentoring Project</b>	Estelle Bonney-Andrews / Helen Owusu
<b>Ministry Prayer Team</b>	Patricia Olagunju
<b>Flourish Made for more/Flourish Boardroom</b>	Deborah Baidoo
<b>Alabaster</b>	Anthonia Obi
<b>Walk and Talk</b>	Yvonne Lamothe
<b>Mums Brunch</b>	Sonia Harris – launched 2023

CW Connects are a vital part of the women's ministry at CGC. They are an extension of the Core Events providing opportunities for fellowship and ministry on a more specific and personal level. Again, sincere thanks and appreciation to the Connect leaders.

So, for the final time, my deepest thanks go to the Core Team and Connect leaders for your faithful ministry over many years. As true Proverbs 31 women your value is beyond measure and your enthusiasm and dedication to the women of CGC never fails to astound and bless me.

It has been an absolute joy to serve the women of this incredible church alongside you all. My prayer is that my ceiling will always prove to be your floor as you move into all the Lord has for you in the future.

#### ***Titus 2: Teach the older women ... to train the younger***

Thank you! And God bless you always.

Your sister in Christ,

**Julia Derbyshire**

*City Women / Pastoral Care*

## CONNECT GROUPS

At the start of 2023, the Connect Groups ministry had 3 key objectives:

- Minimise the risk of errancy during Connect Group Bible studies
- Expand the number of spaces available for people to join Connect Groups
- Increase congregational awareness regarding the Connect Group Ministry

With our second year of synchronised Bible studies, our second annual "Great Big Small Group" and regional leader visits to the Connect Groups, we have been able to ensure that sound Biblical teaching is taking place and have been able to make clear our beliefs to those attending groups.

We successfully selected and trained a cohort of new Connect Group leaders in order to accommodate demand and, as a result, we hoped to open 7 new groups in 2024. The expectation, based on requests for group allocations, is that these new groups would quickly be filled.

Congregational awareness of the ministry has increased as the Church has seen the invitation for new leaders to come forward. Our Great Big Small Group was attended by just under 100 people and a number of them were able to join a Connect Group as a result. Going into 2024, we hope to not only fill the new and existing groups, but encourage more members of the congregation to consider joining a group and integrating into the wider Church community.

Our objectives for 2024 are:

- To establish and fill the 7 new groups, embracing, encouraging and monitoring the new leaders
- To reinforce Elim's foundational truths amongst the Connect Groups to prevent confusion and errancy in teachings taking place
- Establish a regular Connect stand after Church services where members of the congregation can promptly join a Connect group.
- Continue to create study guides and materials for use by Connect Group leaders
- Establish stronger links between the Connect Groups and other City Gates ministries.

We are still encouraging Connect group members to attend physical meetings as often as possible.

**Stewart Lee**

*Connect Groups*



## FACILITIES & SECURITY

### PPM PLANNED PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE

Managing of the safety and maintenance of City Gates Church ensuring that the building is compliant with all applicable regulations. Co-ordinating improvements to the premises when the need arises and maintaining an appealing environment.

In addition to this the responsibility of maintenance and repairs of equipment as well as overseeing plant equipment maintenance ensuring the building remains maintained to a high standard for all our church members and visitors alike to experience.

Regular and routine maintenance and inspection measures include:

- Regular inspections of the building
- PAT testing of appliances
- Review of any electrical damage to wires and bulbs
- Inspections of plumbing system fixing any leakages
- Regular maintenance of the HVAC systems and filters
- Maintaining a safe environment with suitable lighting, signage and disability access
- Overseeing security, fire prevention and other safety

### Safety Team

We ensure that there is always one member of the team that holds Security Industry Authority (SIA) accreditation. The team has been structured so that each team member positions themselves correctly throughout the building, covering the front and back doors, the auditorium and the stairs ensuring public safety at all times. Safety team members have access to earpieces allowing them to communicate well in the event of any emergency.

#### Derek Wilson

*Facilities & Security Manager*

## FINANCE

### FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

The Financial Report has been prepared in line with standard accounting practice using the categories that Elim Headquarters have recommended. The accounts summary is for the period 1 October 2023 to 30 September 2023, the same financial year used by all local Elim Churches.

There are a number of variations this year as it includes the Lockdown period, where the building was initially closed, and then, once we were permitted opened to members. In order to open there were numerous deep cleans required as well as hand sanitisers provided around the building, screens and various other safety measures.

In producing the accounts and extracting the summary, we have consistently applied the Local Church Accounting Scheme (LCAS), which is the system wherein Elim Headquarters supervise our accounts under the supervision of Andy Sandford (Elim Local Accounts Manager). He oversees all local church accounts. As part of the larger Elim Charity, we also have to provide a full audit trail for all income and expenditure.

The church's accounts, together with all the church's financial practices and procedure, comply with charity law and accounting standards. City Gates Church is part of the Elim Foursquare Gospel Alliance, a registered charity (registration number 251549). For full details, please visit [www.elim.org.uk](http://www.elim.org.uk).

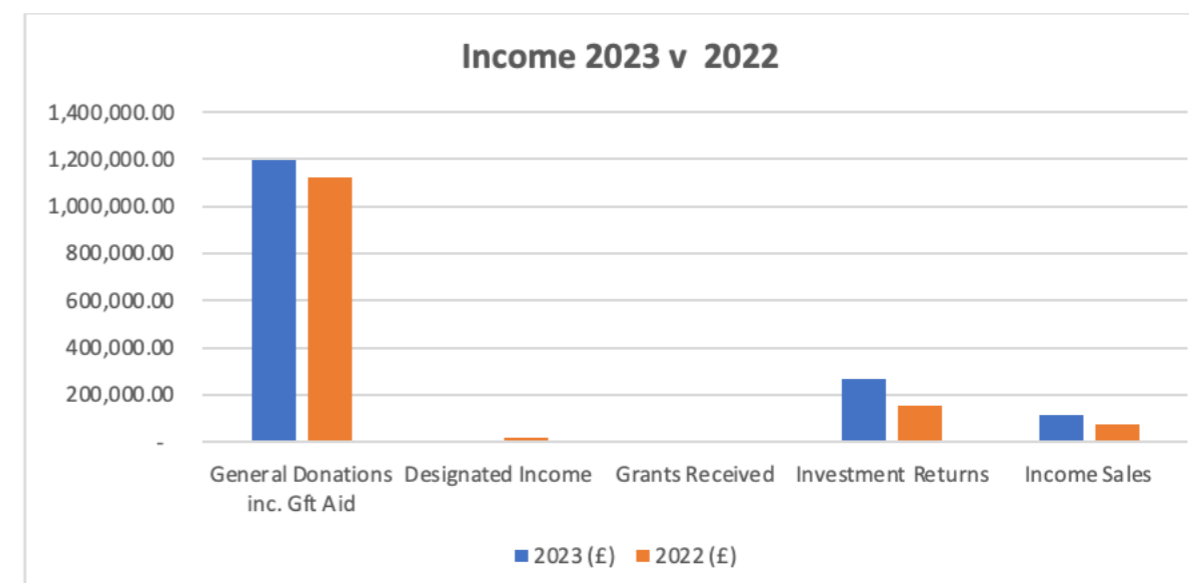
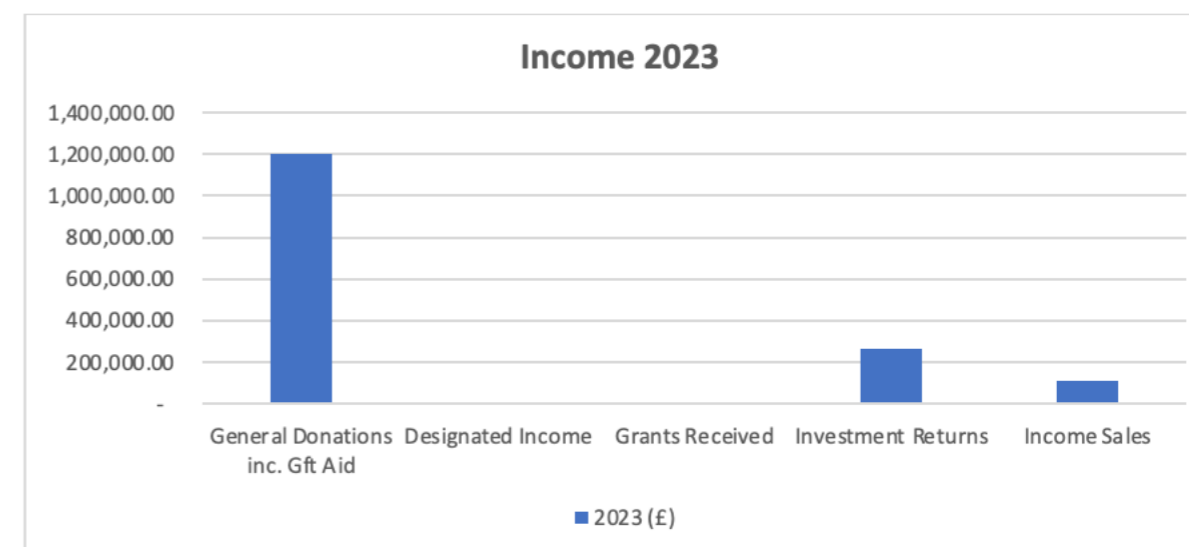
The Consolidated Accounts for Elim Foursquare Gospel Alliance for the year ended 30 September 2023, incorporating the City Gates Church accounts, were submitted to the Charity Commission on 20 June 2024.

## CITY GATES CHURCH

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended  
30 September 2023

Income	2023 (£)	2022 (£)
General Donations inc. Gft Aid	1,199,711.00	1,123,834.88
Designated Income	2,648.00	19,459.80
Grants Received	3,000.00	n/a
Investment Returns	265,889.00	155,492.42
Income Sales	113,866.00	77,332.97
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,585,114.00</b>	<b>1,376,120.07</b>
Expenditure	2023 (£)	2022 (£)
Personnel Costs	541,858.00	460,210.91
Travel & Committee Costs	20,766.00	24,232.71
Equipment Costs	46,950.00	94,811.77
Telephone, Post & Stationery	60,371.00	49,372.92
Event, Ministry & Worship Costs	147,516.00	109,806.52
Travel & Vehicle Costs	3,997.00	985.90
Promotion & Advertising	15,770.00	16,582.00
Activities Sundry Costs		2,347.00
Gifts & Grants Made	112,993.00	99,387.08
Missions	30,379.00	40,835.50
Cost of Sales	44,396.00	19,429.99
Heat & Light	111,861.00	100,195.47
Property Costs	132,942.00	135,618.26
Professional Fees	5,103.00	2,568.80
Payments made to Elim HQ	94,684.00	92,146.23
Bank Charges and Interest	5,479.00	5,040.79
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1,375,065.00</b>	<b>1,253,571.85</b>
<b>SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>210,049.00</b>	<b>122,548.22</b>

## INCOME

**General Donations, including Gift Aid**

The General Offerings for the year ended 30 September 2023 were £1,199,711 which is in line with the previous year (£1,123,835 – 30 September 2022). Despite the ongoing cost of living crisis, member have remained faithful with their giving. This is a blessing as we know that many members are going through very challenging situations and have continued to give in spite of their personal situations.

The offerings could have increased if more people signed up to the Gift Aid scheme. The amount received under Gift Aid was £51,683 this year compared to £101,913 last year. This is a significant reduction in Gift Aid donations, especially when considering that the overall offerings did increase for the year.

There are a number of reasons why this could be the case, including the fact that new members may not be aware of the benefits of Gift Aid to the church and to certain individuals. In order to ensure everyone is making an informed decision, we will aim to continue having Gift Aid presentations during the year.

If you would like to sign up to the Gift Aid scheme, please contact the Church Office for a form.

### Designated Income

This represents income that has been donated for a specific purpose. The amount shown is for the Building Fund, and is used for the maintenance and enhancement of the building.

### Investment Returns

This represents income from the Hire of the Premises of £159,022 (£96,393 – 2022) and interest received on the funds in the savings account of £72,571 (£59,099 – 2022). The hard work building a solid foundation for Conference Centre and ensuring it has a good reputation continues to pay off. The income increased by nearly 65% this year and continues to be an important source of income to support the running of the building.

The interest income increased by nearly 23% and this was largely the continued prudent investment of funds along with the higher interest rates that we were able to take advantage of.

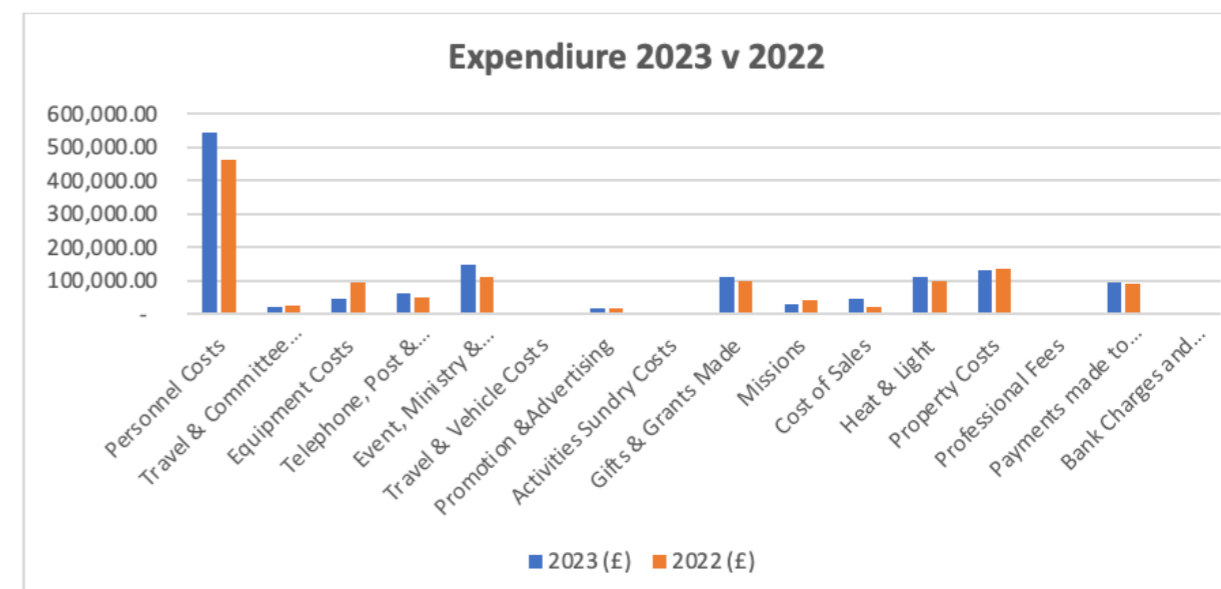
There was also an insurance claim of £34,296 as a result of the loss of income during Covid.

### Income from Sales

This represents income from the Café, which increased by 47%. The café continues to be an important community hub and there is always activity there during the week. This in turn has helped the café sales.

It is an important source of income as well as a good means of reaching out to the community. It has also become much busier since the Community Grocery was opened.

## EXPENDITURE



### Personnel Costs

Staff costs increased by nearly 18% this year. This increase is partly as a result of the increase in the activity during the year, as well as increase in the rates of pay.

There are currently twelve members of staff working for the church on a full time and part-time basis.

### Equipment Costs

These costs were about half compared to the previous year. However, last years costs were unusually high as a result of equipment purchased to fit out the Sensory Room in the Children Church. The costs this year are more in line with the regular costs for previous years.

### Telephone, Post and Stationery

These costs increased by about 22% this year. This is in line with the additional church activities.

### Event & Ministry Costs

The cost of events and ministry costs increased by 34% to £147,516 (£109,806 – 2022). This is a reflection of the increased activity both within the church and in reaching out to the community.

**Gifts and Grants made**

This represents amounts paid to other charities and individuals in need. The ministries we support include Teen Challenge, the Salvation Army, Hope for Justice, Tough Talk, Compassion UK, Christian Education Project. The cost increased is a reflection of the churches desire to support other ministries.

**Missions**

These represent the funds paid to various Missions through the ELIM International Missions, as well as other missionary activities.

**Heat & Light**

As a result of the general increase in utility costs, the overall cost increased by nearly 12% (from £100,195– 2022 to £111,861 – 2023).

**Property Costs**

The property costs were similar to the previous year. The costs are quite high as a result of the level of cleaning and general maintenance required to maintain the building at a high standard.

**Professional Costs**

The Professional costs represent Audit and Accountancy fees, Legal fees, DBS checks etc. These costs doubled compared to last year as a result of the increased number of checks carried out as the number volunteers increase.

**Balance Sheet**

The Balance Sheet as at 30 September 2023 (fig 2) shows the assets (things that the church owns) and liabilities (things that the church owes) as at that date. There has not been a lot of movement during the year as, since the acquisition of the building we have not acquired any new major assets, nor do we have any liabilities.

**Balance Sheet**

	2023 (£)	2022 (£)
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Church Property	8,927,539.00	<u>8,927,539.42</u>
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>8,927,539.00</b>	<b>8,927,539.42</b>
<b>Current Assests</b>		
HQ Deposits	2,942,315.00	2,869,744.07
Balance balances	630,760.00	<u>493,282.39</u>
<b>Total Current Assests</b>	<b>3,573,075.00</b>	<b>3,363,026.46</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Loans from Individuals	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>12,500,614.00</b>	<b>12,290,565.88</b>
<b>Reserves</b>		
Reserves brought forward	8,554,702.00	8,432,153.64
Reserves Management	3,735,864.00	3,735,864.02
Surplus for year	210,049.00	122,548.22
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>12,500,615.00</b>	<b>12,290,565.88</b>

**Property**

The church premises are shown under Fixed Assets as Building Projects. The cost of the building reflected in the accounts has reduced at £8,927,539.

**Sundry Deposits**

This represents the funds received in respect of the Insurance Claim which is held in a deposit account by Head Office, Funds are transferred to our local church account as and when they are required for various projects. Interest is earned on this account, which is why the interest received this year amounted to £72,571.

**Bank Balances**

This represents the funds held in our various church accounts to meet the ongoing church running expenses.

**Reserves**

This represents the cumulative net value of the church's assets.

**Moving forward...**

We want to take this opportunity to thank everyone that has given to the church over the past year, both financially and in other ways. Your giving has made a considerable difference to the running of the church, and your generosity has enabled various missions and different areas of ministry to grow within the church.

The church is in a very strong position financially and we trust God to continue to keep the church strong so that we can continue to serve the community and those in need.

We look forward to another exciting year ahead with new challenges and new opportunities to reach the lost for Christ.

**Fumi Popoola & Kanta Wilson**

*Finance Team*

## GROUNDED COFFEE

**Commitment to Excellence**

Grounded continues to be the favoured meeting place for individuals seeking a warm, comfortable environment to enjoy a coffee. We are happy to share that our dedication to quality and stringent operational oversight has been recognized with an exceptional 5-star rating from the Redbridge inspection team.

**Future Enhancements**

In our pursuit of maintaining these high standards, we will be implementing additional measures for quality control and establishing further feedback mechanisms to capture our customers' insights.

**Grounded in Love****Ephesians 3:17 (ESV)**

*17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love. Everything we do, we want to do in Love, just like Christ. This is more than just a coffee shop, this the Mission Field! Let's show people from all walks of live the love of Christ.*

**Grounded in Coffee**

We have a great passion in serving great quality coffee that makes people smile. Every cup we serve we serve it with LOVE, and with the help of our coffee supplier 'Kingdom Coffee' we can serve coffee with a conscience.

**Grounded in Serving**

The mission is to serve everyone better than anyone else. We genuinely care about people and the goal is to build a culture of taking care of our community. It's about keeping our eyes, hearts, and time open for divine appointments.

**Philippians 2:3-5 (NIV)**

*3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, 4 not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. 5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:*

## ILFORD COMMUNITY GROCERY

Iford Community Grocery was established in March 2023, it exists to support families feeling the financial impact of the rising cost of living.

The Community Grocery bridges the gap between the food bank and the supermarkets. It is being run by the national award-winning charity- The Message Trust in partnership with City Gates Church with support from Redbridge council.

There are a range of food options from local supermarkets, individual and church donations, Felix projects, City harvest and local supermarkets.

Anyone can become a member of Iford Community Grocery . A £5.00 annual membership fee is required, and members can shop multiple times a week.

There are different types of shop:

- Small shop (£5.00 for 12 items).
- Medium shop (£7.50 for 18 items).
- Large shop (£10.00 for 24 items).
- Extra-large shop (£12.50 for 30 items).

Members can select items from across the following section: bakery, shelf items, fruits and vegetables, non-food, fridge and freezer items.

As well as affordable food shopping, members are invited to attend free courses offered by the partners which are also available to non- members.

Currently, we run a free arts and crafts session every Thursday with close to 27 members on the platform, a free Toasty Friday with Toast, tea or coffee which is well attended by members, as well as Christians Against Poverty (CAP) Life Skills course which is hosted by City Gates Church.

3 members from the Grocery have started attending City Gates Church.

Iford community grocery is staffed by 1 full time manager, 1 part-time assistant manager and dedicated volunteers.

## CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY LIFE SKILLS COURSE

CAP Life Skills course was launched at City Gates in April 2024. Life Skills is an eight-week course run by CAP, the course is interactive and covers practical topics such as dealing with pressures, making your money go further and cooking on a budget. CAP Life Skills offer hope and equips people with ways to live that will give them a brighter future.

The Group meets once a week and is run by CAP Life Skills manager, trained coaches and dedicated volunteers. Meetings are set up in a friendly and inclusive environment that provides members with a taste of church family.

There are 3 parts to the Life Skills group:

**Course** - 8 weeks course designed to teach members practical ways to save money, organisational skills, protecting mental wellbeing and building positive relationships.

**Community** - a relaxed place where members meet, support and encourage each other along the way.

**Coaching** - one to one informal coaching from dedicated Life Skills coaches. Coaches spend time helping members set goals, identify and tackle any area they are struggling with.

The 1st Session commenced in May and ran every Friday for eight weeks with 10 members in attendance.

Practical cooking took place in one of our sessions with one of the members testifying that the practical cooking was her first time back at cooking since Covid-19 and was grateful for attending the course and having her confidence back.

We are currently halfway through the second course which commenced in September with one member already attending the church.

**Jackie Oladimeji**

*Community Project Coordinator*

## MEN'S MINISTRY

At the start of 2022 we launched first men's only connect group taking place bi-weekly based at the church after prayerfully exploring how we can create a pathway for men to build consistency in fellowship. This was in response to the lack of men attending the numerous groups that we already taking place in the life of the church. Our desire for 2023 was to draw closer to God and create a space for the Holy Spirit to have access to the men in a more meaningful way and increase the consistency in general attendance.

We now celebrate a strong community of men meeting with Aaron A leading this arranging the topics and members of the men's community sharing scripture and facilitating these gatherings. In addition to this we introduced a men's prayer and fasting on the 1st of each month, this has been an overflow from our connect meetings and we are seeing fruit in both areas with many individuals and gifts being developed and sharpened.

In March we had our first larger gathering of the year. At this men's breakfast our theme was a greater level of intimacy with the Lord. It was a great time and we continue to see new attendees and men visiting from other churches, which was encouraging, as we had over 100 men coming together to seek God.

In June breakfast we were blessed have Noel Robinson lead worship and bring the word, again numbers increased and most importantly Noel brought a word in season for us as men. It was an encouraging and challenging time for us all and there was an invite for prayer and to recommit ourselves to the disciplines of a godly life.

October, we hosted our first Rooted for men, those who attended were able to engage in real conversations about the highs and lows of being a single male Christian. The content that was delivered was an encouragement to men to live for Christ and do the practical things they can to be as prepared as you can be for the person that God delivers into your life at the appointed time. The feedback was refreshing as many of the men were able to ask questions and receive an opinion from other men and also from the female host.

In November we held our final gathering for the year, this was an opportunity for the team to share the vision and purpose for the year ahead, we spent time in prayer for each other whilst discussing

future plans and preparing us all for what we feel that God wants to do with the ministry in the coming months and years, also promoting the weekend away coming in 2024.

For the coming year we plan to remain consistent and push towards closer relationships with each other and building our lives on Christ.

### **Rob Harris**

*Men's Ministry Leader*

## RELATIONSHIP & MARRIAGE MINISTRY

2023 started with a gathering of single women (January 2023) meeting together to reflect on the previous year and set the vision for the year ahead. As we testified about what God had done in each of our lives we lay some foundations for the year ahead.

In March, we hosted a singles event for men & women focusing on preparation for relationships and marriage with God at the centre.

Raising Marriage Champions was held in April with married couples that have a desire to mentor other couples. We spent time encouraging and empowering these couples and equipping them for the task ahead!

In May we had the visit of Dr Gary Chapman, author of the 5 Love Languages. This was an incredibly insightful evening with many coming from afar to receive the wisdom and insight Dr Gary had to share with us all.

We had a request from Ps Steve to follow up on the Dr Gary Chapman visit with an in-house session. This was held in July as was well attended and well received. The feedback from attendees was positive and encouraging.

Also in July, we hosted the ROOTED for Relationships course again. The course is for single men and women wanting to prepare for relationships and marriage. As always, it was well attended. We received some feedback that prompted conversations about hosting the same course but for men only! We took this to the Lord and sought advice. We felt led to go with it! So, in October we hosted the men's version of ROOTED!

Also, in October we hosted the Pre-Marriage Course for couples in committed relationships and those preparing for marriage.

We rounded off the year with a Christmas meal for a group of single women – a wonderful celebration and acknowledgement of God's goodness and favour!

**Rob & Sonia Harris**

*Relationship & Marriage Ministry*

## WORSHIP

In 2023, the Lord invited us as a team to lean into a season of going deeper in Him. We made an intentional step to focus our song choices on the character and nature of God, and as best we can to limit the amount of songs that are about us. In 2023, we further defined the roles of the worship core team, with Deborah Oso, Josiah Oyekunle, Jermaine & Velisha Lynch taking much greater levels of responsibility in helping to lead and shepherd the team. We welcomed many new people to the worship team, and also said goodbye to a few too. A huge thank you to all worship team members, past and present. As always it is a great joy to serve Jesus together and lead the Church in worshipping Him.

## PRODUCTION & MEDIA

In 2023 we saw rapid growth in the Production team, with the team more than doubling in size. All of this was managed and stewarded by Matthew Burrows, our Production manager. The team functions week to week at a very high capacity, managing industry-level equipment and I want to place on record my huge thank you to every Production team member who so diligently serves the Church. We also introduced both regular photography and videography within the church services, as well as an increased presence on social media, and I want to say a big thank you to Rachel Ichaba and the team for the way you have risen to the task and absolutely given it your all.

## ALPHA COURSE

In October 2023 we re-launched the Alpha Course and placed a huge emphasis upon inviting people who were far from God or who had questions. As it was the first time in many years we had run the course, the team were excited but equally apprehensive. However, we found it was such an incredible time as we journeyed with our Alpha guests over 11 weeks. Some of who made commitments, and others seeds were sown in their life. I'm thankful that Alpha is quickly becoming an integral part of the way we reach people with Jesus as a Church. Again, a huge thank you to each and everyone who is and has been a part of the Alpha Team - I'm excited about how the Lord will continue to use this gift of a course.

**Joseph Perry**

*Creative Director*



## YOUNG ADULTS

The Young Adults ministry is a space for people aged 18-30(ish) to Connect with each other, and with God; to Grow in their discipleship to Jesus; and to Go and be sent out into the world to advance God's Kingdom. We meet twice a month on the

This year, our focus was building community around Jesus, and so our gatherings consisted of socials (such as our rooftop picnic) and nights of worship and prayer. We also had a Young Adults Weekend Retreat, with worship, guest speakers, and significant encounters with God.

In 2024, our aim will be create more intentional spaces for intentional discipleship and releasing Young Adults in evangelism.

**Pastor Ore Adeyemo**

*Youth Director*

## YOUTH MINISTRY

City Gates Youth is a place where young people can find a place to belong and grow in their faith. Anyone from year 7 to year 13 is welcome to join us on a Friday evening, and during our Sunday morning services. Our sessions are run by a dedicated team of Christian volunteers who are all DBS checked.

This year, we've been able to run outreach events like games nights and movie nights for young people to invite their friends, and we've been able to equip and empower some of our older young people to take a lead in planning events, and even preaching.

We were also able to take the young people to Limitless Festival again, and this year we took 44 young people with us to worship, hear from God's word, encounter the presence of God, and enjoy lots a fun activities along with 4000 young people from across the country!

Out of the 28 people baptised this year, 11 of those were members of City Gates Youth – that's an increase from 2 young people out of 21 in 2022! We are expectant to see more baptisms in 2024!

### PLANS FOR 2024

**Baptism** – We hope to see more young people take the next step in their faith and be baptised!

**Camp** – We plan to take our Young People to Limitless Festival in August 2024 and run our own weekend away.

**Equipping Young Leaders** – We plan to develop a pathway for young people to grow in leadership, taking ownership of parts of the youth ministry and helping to shape City Gates Youth. Young people are the best people to reach other young people.

**Pastor Ore Adeyemo**

*Youth Director*



## ANNUAL REPORT 2023

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