



American
International
Church

At the Whitefield Memorial Church
79A Tottenham Court Road, London W1T 4TD

020 7580 2791 | www.amchurch.co.uk
A Congregation of the United Reformed Church

2022 Annual Report



Church Council President's Report

It has been a busy and exciting time at the American International Church. Here is some of what I see when I look back at our church year for 2022.

As we continue to emerge from the COVID pandemic, church programs have returned with enthusiasm and momentum lead by our outstanding pastoral team.

Our efforts to make AIC inclusive, accessible and open to all has borne fruit with the finalisation of our new inclusivity and welcome statement. It recognises that AIC is a community of many races, languages, cultures, faith traditions, nationalities, ages, genders, abilities, financial circumstances and sexual identities.

Our finances continue to improve from the challenging times during COVID and as we now face increased inflation pressures, our financial health remains solid and our behaviour prudent.

We continue to grow our ministries through new offerings such as Jazz Vespers.

We have finalised the restructure AIC and the transition to our new structure to comply with both UK charity law and US tax requirements.

We successfully resolved matters with our insurance provider on the business interruption clauses related to the COVID lockdown and cessation of activity at our trading and rental subsidiary Latchcourt.

Our marketing team continues to work on getting the messages of AIC out in the community including work on our logo, website and social media presence.

Our work in the community including the Soup Kitchen, Cold Weather Shelter and our new Refugee Befriending Program provide vital community support.

You will see in the report below more detail on what is going on with music, teaching, missions, faith formation, community activities and the vital working parts of our church family here. On behalf of the whole church council, I can only say how thankful we all are for how God's presence in our own lives is leading all of us to work to show God's presence in our community.

Stephen Howard
Church Council President

Membership and Outreach

This year we have found new and renewed ways of reaching out to our neighbours and neighbourhood, and it has made 2022 an exciting time for the expansion of our community.

Near the beginning of the year, our efforts to become a more inclusive congregation enabled us to invite more people into our community with a deeper and more holistic welcome. Some new visitors found us and members joined us because they had been searching for a spiritual home where they were fully embraced and affirmed without qualifications based on sexual identities. You'll now find our new statement of welcome & inclusion on the back of every bulletin that represents who we are becoming together, "You can belong here, without exception or condition. Your whole self matters to God and to us."

We have also expanded our worship ministry with Jazz Vespers services that began in September and have become a key event to invite newcomers. Each month in the autumn, we welcomed around 40 people with about half that number attending without any prior connection to AIC. Whether they saw our sign on the pavement, found us on Eventbrite, or simply hear the music during rehearsal, it has been a terrific way of welcoming the surrounding community into participation in our spiritual life.

We should note that our membership numbers have been maintained throughout the year and our regular attendance recovered throughout the year from our low during the COVID-19 pandemic. We hosted multiple luncheons to welcome newcomers, we added 28 new attenders and we returned to our historic pattern of sending off some of our people who are moving across the world with our blessing. Our community continues to be a lively and growing place where people of various backgrounds find home together.

Emily Dema
Church Council, Membership & Outreach

Rev. Jared Jagers
Associate Minister of Faith Formation

Senior Minister's Report

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen. –Ephesians 3:20-21

The American International Church has “accomplished abundantly” during 2022, but only by the power and grace of God at work within us. Looking back on the year, it’s hard to remember that we started still under strict COVID Plan B guidance. While we were allowed to gather, our community chose to proceed with caution, continuing to wear face coverings, avoid indoor social gatherings and keep most staff working from home. Only after Easter did we begin to approach a new normal in planning activities. The Soup Kitchen waited until June to resume their dining-in service. The rest of the year rebuilt after a two-year disruption.

Even so, we did not wait out the pandemic in idyll. Not only did our relationships deepen and our worship flourish (even if sometimes only online), we moved forward with major efforts to help our church grow and reach out to better serve our community. Together, we can look back on 2022 as a year of “abundant accomplishments,” even as we continue the work in 2023.



Worship

It’s odd to talk about worship as an accomplishment, because the object is to open our hearts before God. The effort is ours, but the accomplishment and the glory belong to God. Even so, I am proud of the extra effort of our worship team (Jared, Jonathan, Scott and I) this year, always offering our best to God and to the AIC community. Our themes this year unfolded from the experience of regathering and rebuilding, and the importance of worship and music in our faith.

The year began with a series on the meaning of worship itself, “Shape of Worship, Shape of Our Lives.” This led into Haydn’s “Mass in Time of Anxiety,” the Nelson Mass, led by our choir and appropriate to our anxious days living with COVID and the start of war in Ukraine. Lent began with Ashes-to-Go and outdoor worship on Ash Wednesday, then “Gathered by Grace,” contemplating stories of forgiveness, welcome and hope as we began to reflect as a community on our work around inclusion. During Eastertide, the choir and City Bach Collective shared a Bach Oratorio. Our summer series invited people to share their favourite hymns, with one chosen each week as the subject of the Sunday sermon.

With the autumn, we saw the launch of our first full program year in two years, and added in some significant new offerings designed to reach more people in our community. In mid-September, our online worship got an upgrade for livestreaming, with new equipment installed to make this ministry sustainable for the future. Jared Jagers led this project, with support and help from Scott Stroman, Monty Strikes, Andrew Nartey and Michael Brantley. September also launched a new monthly Jazz Vespers service, led by Jared and Scott, which has attracted many new people from the neighbourhood.

The autumn had foreboding news of the cost-of-living crisis, inflation and heating prices skyrocketing. We looked at the book of Numbers with a series on “In This Together,” inviting us to work together whatever crisis we might face. The year ended with a celebrated return to St. Paul’s Cathedral, to the Nativity Play, and Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services.

Community

The end of the long season of social distancing created a need to reconnect. Many new people began attending AIC during the pandemic, and we needed to help them form friendships and a sense of community. Jared Jagers and Nicole Joffe led this work, organising fellowship events every month in the summer and autumn. The summer picnics attracted larger groups than ever before, and the after-church lunches created a sense of community connection we had all been craving.

At last in the second half of 2022, we were able to host gatherings at the manse again. We hosted garden barbecues for the AIC choir and young professionals groups, opened our family table for Thanksgiving with 13 in attendance, and had 80 people come for Christmas at the Manse. My special thanks to my family, Josh and Benjamin, who worked very hard to make these gatherings possible at our home.

Facing Outward

In the corporate world, we might think about this as marketing, branding or advertising. In the church world, we can still use those terms, but to them we add evangelism (extending the love of Christ to all), invitation (asking people to be a part of our community), and witness (speaking publicly about justice and faith). I’ve grouped all these together under the heading “Facing Outward,” because I think they represent some of our most significant accomplishments in 2022.

Welcome and Inclusion

In the autumn of 2021, public conversations began about taking a clear and bold step of welcome and inclusion, including race, nationality, gender, culture and the LGBTQ+ community. Led by Elodie Lasserre with Jared Jagers and Jonathan Miller, the Council and congregation considered the critical step of a vote to authorise same-sex as well as opposite sex weddings. However, consensus

emerged that this decision should arise from our wider commitment to being a diverse and welcoming community, in the way of Jesus. Along with Elodie, Jared and Jonathan, a new team including Megan Staley, Shirley Reyes, David Aisa Miller, Laura Chase, Elisabeth Paulson, Oliver Lewis, and Stuart Brown met to think through a faithful expression of our values. I worked with the team to turn their ideas into a draft and facilitate an editing process. The Welcome Statement and vote to authorise same sex weddings both happened at the AGM in March, and passed with overwhelming support.

Throughout this process, I engaged in multiple one-on-one and small group meetings with individuals who had concerns about this process—both those passionately in support and firmly against. While we did have a few members decide to leave AIC as a result, we were able to reach a decision without rancour and hold one another in love.

While we have not yet booked our first same-sex wedding, the Welcome Statement has made a significant impact. At the American School in London open house, more people talked to us than ever before, because they saw our statement. When people visit events in the sanctuary, they take copies with them and talk about feeling seen and recognised for the first time. Latchcourt clients initiate conversations about what it means to be a church with this kind of welcome.

Marketing & Branding

Our outstanding Marketing Team of Anne Beitel Thomas, Nicole Joffe, Zena Martin and Hannah Jagers accomplished a great deal this year. The group drafted a creative brief, based on 2021 survey results, then researched and interviewed prospective firms before choosing Speed Marketing Agency to develop a new logo, branding and web design.

In July, I helped organise two teams to meet with Speed to provide input and feedback to shape our brand and website. Many thanks to all who participated in these meetings: Oliver Lewis, Serge Ramin, Rob Thomas, Catey Gans, Beth Reyes, Jono Evers, Emily Dema, Sam Toney, Andrew Nartey, Myra Bernardi, Daniel Aisa Miller, Hannah Jagers, Jonathan Miller and Jared Jagers. Speed received input from 17 individuals from 15 households, across a wide array of AIC programs and communities.

The new logo was shared publicly with the AIC congregation in September, and we worked throughout the autumn to change all of our print materials, interior signage and online communications. The website content, design, site map and overall look were agreed in November, with delivery of the final site templates in 2023.

Death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

I made plans for this sad occurrence in 2020, which meant we had items on hand and we were prepared to respond in ways appropriate to our place as an international community. We opened the sanctuary for prayer and hosted a public condolence book signed by people from AIC, Chinese Lutheran Church, Soup Kitchen and Latchcourt. I sent a pastoral letter and adapted the Sunday worship service. I also served as a “Chaplain to the Queue” during the period of national mourning when the Queen rested at Westminster Palace. This included multiple international media interviews. I also represented AIC by speaking at a multi-faith remembrance service at Southwark Cathedral.

Keeping Our House in Order

The administrative work at AIC continued apace.

While we launched our new UK charity and bank accounts in autumn 2021, there was still significant migration work to happen. In mid-2022, we finally received confirmation from the IRS that our new status and classification had happened, the final step in the approval process. We worked with a solicitor to shift the manse ownership, transferred regular banking tasks and credit cards, moved Latchcourt ownership, closed and re-opened our Home Office Sponsors License for visas, created policies and MOU for the AIC Foundation and completed our first grant application. Huge thanks to Chris Omaweng, Scott James, Melissa Janssen and Stephen Howard for their work in this endeavour.

Our new charity status required numerous additional policies to confirm to Charity Commission best practices. Working with Tangy Morgan and Serge Ramin, we drafted a Reserve and Investment Policy and an Internal Financial Controls policy. I drafted a new security policy for sanctuary use by outside groups, and created appropriate forms and infrastructure. Nicole Joffe and I began the review process for our Personnel Policy and staff handbook. I also drafted a set of wedding guidelines. All have been reviewed and approved by Council, and I have created a schedule for all policies to be reviewed annually.

In addition, I worked at length to secure the COVID business interruption claim, with Monty and the Thames North URC to draft new leases for our market traders, and with Serge, Tangy and the Thames North URC Resources Committee to negotiate a new structure for our payments related to occupying their building.

Looking Ahead

Turning to 2023, I am hoping our message of welcome and inclusion expands to be one of bold invitation, as we reach out to invite others to be part of AIC. I trust that our work of organising and administration positions our ministry to be sustainable, transparent and full of integrity. I pray that God will send us yet more people looking for community, connection and Christ through AIC.

Faithfully,

Rev. Jennifer Mills-Knutsen
Senior Minister

Associate Minister's Report

2022 was my third calendar year here with you at AIC and this was the year in which the pace of our ministry together quickened significantly. I've written to you before about the deepening of relationships and the growth of our faith and connection as a community. Those deep roots enabled us to grow visibly in our expanded ministries together and in our expanding community of people. Below I want to reflect with you about some of the most significant developments this year that not only reflect my ministry as a staff member, but the shared ministry that we are called to and committed to together.



This year began with the continued momentum of our discussions about inclusion, sexuality, and marriage. I led our Bible Study through discussions of hospitality, gender and sexuality, and Christian marriage. I also joined with some of you in our book group and our discussion forum. These churchwide conversations led us to vote together at our AGM to register as an equal marriage congregation, legally allowing us to solemnise both same-sex and opposite-sex marriages. And in the process, we clarified that we are a church where you can belong and you can have doubts and you can disagree. I'm proud of this work we're doing to boldly proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to many of us who have felt pushed to the edges of faith for too long.

In May, we quietly but pointedly observed Mental Health Awareness Week here in the UK and we send out a call to attend free suicide awareness training. Honestly, I don't think this was a momentous week for us at AIC, but there were subtle ways that it opened conversations with some of our members and others who are in our building and connected to the church. Some of you attended the training and others felt they were granted permission to speak with a minister for support while dealing with challenges to their mental health. I'm proud of us for doing big and small things to support people through adversity.

In the summer, our youth led the church in worship on Youth Sunday and, in December, all our children led the church to remember the significance of Christmas through our Unrehearsed Nativity Play. These Sundays reflect the efforts to coordinate multiple people, to become unified in hearing the Spirit's guidance for worship, and they reflect the Kingdom of God as we are all led into the Divine Presence through the gifts and graces of our young people. I'm proud of our children and youth, and I'm proud of the grown ups for hearing the voice of God through them.

In the autumn we began our monthly Jazz Vespers services, an evening service centred on music and reflection through the improvisational work of the Spirit. In some ways this belongs in the report on music ministry, but I have taken the lead in offering the reflection and prayers in each service. My goal has been to make these services a way for anyone, from any faith background, to be able to slow down and reflect on life in the presence of God. We have heard from AIC members, guest musicians, and visitors that we have succeeded in that goal. I'm proud of these efforts to open our doors even wider with new ways for people to engage in spirituality at AIC.

We also devoted significant time and effort to improving the experience of our online worship. I worked with an external consultant and Andrew Nartey to improve our livestream audio quality that previously made it almost impossible to hear the sermon. Like so much of our life together, there is still more work and growth to be done, but I'm proud of us for prioritising the ability for people to continue to worship from afar.

I also want to express so much gratitude for the gifts of 2022. I've continued to preach regularly and have grown in that meaningful aspect of ministry. Hannah and I have received a new visa and will remain with you here in the UK for the foreseeable future. And most joyful of all we are now expecting our first child! Our daughter will be born in late April 2023 if all goes to plan.

I look forward to even more life and growth that will enhance our ability to reach out and welcome the neighbours around us into the love of Christ through AIC. We are well poised for strengthening our outreach and expanding our partnerships and relationships beyond the walls of our church. I'm grateful to be here with you, learning to follow Jesus in London together.

Rev. Jared Jagers
Associate Minister of Faith Formation

Community Minister's Report

My work at the church—like the church itself—has always been multi-faceted, responding to the needs of any particular season or project. In 2019, I became your full-time Community Minister, but the Covid-19 pandemic meant that the year we are reflecting on now, 2022, is really my first year working in this community-facing role full-time. While this was still colored by the gradual return to in-person activities and interactions post-lockdown and pandemic-related restrictions, looking back at the past year, it is quite extraordinary to see what we have been able to achieve together in this new mode of working. I hope that you read this report with that same sense of amazement and pride in all that we have achieved.



Expanding our Welcome

In my 2021 report, I detailed how we had begun to evaluate as a congregation how we could be ever-more inclusive and welcoming to all who entered our space and how we might better communicate with those around us what our values are. At the start of 2022, that was taken forward by a working group which was tasked with developing a welcome statement for the church. After a number of dedicated sessions, the group came up with a strong statement of welcome and inclusion that spoke directly to individual people. It was an invitation that stated what we believed to be true about our community, but it was also aspirational in outlining what sort of community we wanted to become.

This statement was unveiled at our annual general meeting in March to an overwhelmingly positive response. Many commented on how fitting it was for our community and how good it was to hear the words of the statement read aloud in our sanctuary. As such, I must give space here to thank the members of that group: David Aisa Miller, Stuart Brown, Laura Chase, Elodie Lasserre, Oliver Lewis, Elisabeth Paulson, Shirley Reyes and Megan Staley.

As a first step towards becoming a more inclusive congregation and after much conversation and discernment, we also voted at the AGM to register for equal marriage, allowing us to conduct both opposite-sex and same-sex weddings at the church. Once our registration was finally approved in August, we became one of just 30 religious institutions in all of London to offer this sort of welcome. Many people were involved in the planning and discussions around this, and many of you will have participated in some way as well. Principally, however, thank you to Elodie and to Jared Jaggars for working with me to lead this conversation on behalf of the church as well as to the Church Council for having open, frank discussions every month as we journeyed together. This is truly one of my proudest moments at the church, and I hope you felt equally proud and energized by it.

Building on this work, we have worked to expand our welcome in various ways throughout the year. The *Being Inclusive* book group continued their conversations through various studies, including reading *Not Guilty* and *The Backwater Sermons* for LGBTQ+ History Month, *10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World* and *At the Gates: Disability, Justice and the Churches*. The discussions on disability/ability have been particularly fruitful, and they have led us to work on obtaining quotes to undertake a new access audit of our building in order to ensure our physical premises are as inclusive as other aspects of the church aim to be. We are hopeful that funding for this will be forthcoming in 2023.

We also joined *Inclusive Church*, a network of like-minded churches, by adopting their mission statement and providing a financial contribution to their work. This will allow us to become more visible to those looking for inclusive, welcoming congregations like ours. In a similar way, I began exploring other ways we can expand our welcome by attending the Open Table Network annual meeting in June.

Finally, we were excited to have our first group at London Pride this year in July. A group of six people from the church attended the march with the Christians at Pride group to support all those who marched, led by Elodie, Jared and Hannah Jaggars, and a few others joined the ecumenical service afterwards. I played a key role in helping to organize the service hosted by our neighbors at Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, and our own communion-ware dating from the Tottenham Court Road Chapel of the 1800s was used to serve communion to all who attended. It was a great example of our deepening welcome and role in the community.

Growing our Role

As our work during Pride shows, over the past year, we saw years of work and representation at a grassroots level in the communities around us blossom into multiple opportunities to take on leading roles in the life of the city.

While we have been formally involved in Churches Together in Westminster for a number of years, we began engaging in a more robust way when I was asked to join their Executive Committee. Following that, Jared and I hosted a "Meet the Neighbours" event at the church in May; I wrote letters on behalf of CTiW to Westminster Abbey and to Royal Family upon the passing of Queen Elizabeth II; I participated in the annual ecumenical Advent Carol Service; and I took a lead role in planning and chairing this year's AGM, with a theme on "Coping With A Torn Safety Net: The Church's Response To Increasing Need."

In response to our work with refugees and asylum seekers, I was asked to speak at an extraordinary meeting of Camden Council in April, in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. There, I spoke about the work that we were doing to support new arrivals in our area but also challenged the council to go further with specific actions. As well as providing testimony to our work and building strong networks with the local authority, I was glad to hear that at least one of the proposed actions was taken forward, with Camden recently moving to become a registered Borough of Sanctuary as a part of the Sanctuary City movement here in the UK.

This involvement opened up new opportunities to engage with the local authority as well, including regular meetings convened by Camden to discuss ongoing support for Afghans who arrived to the area in 2021 and Ukrainians who began arriving in 2022. I also participated in a roundtable discussion on the Cost of Living crisis, organized by the Leader of the Council and attended by key individuals in the local authority, in our local MP's constituency offices and in frontline charities. Finally, all of this work has led to positive publicity and social media campaigns, most notably through a photoshoot organized by Camden Giving in partnership with a local company which you can find on their Instagram page.

Developing New Programs

While all of this work was (and still is!) exciting enough, much of the energy of the past year came from launching and developing new programs and initiatives across multiple areas. COVID-19 meant that the cold weather shelter and our work with refugees took a very different shape for a while but last year, we were able to launch both anew. For the cold weather shelter, this meant transitioning from the hotel accommodation earlier in the year to welcoming the shelter back to the church in November for a full 20-week season. Thank you to everyone who responded to this enthusiastically by volunteering at the shelter, giving of your resources or washing a load (or ten) of laundry. Your support—along with the support of a number of corporate, community and congregation-led volunteer groups—has meant that it was a real joy to welcome the shelter back.

In the beginning of the year, we were presented with the opportunity to reenergize our refugee work with West End Welcome by helping to support an Afghan couple who were living in a local hotel for over six months. With enormous thanks to Holly Howard for organizing the furnishing of a new flat and a special thank you to the youth group for assembling much of the furniture and all of you who donated or purchased items, the couple are now able to focus on their studies and rebuilding their lives while getting to know London a bit better as well.

Building on this work, in May and June, we submitted a grant application to Camden Giving's Equality Fund, which I heard about via my work with Camden Council. The fund, set up in 2020, was designed as a community-first scheme which ensures that "Camden communities are still able to access vital services that may not be replaced if not urgently funded," and after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the fund was expanded to include organizations "who bring together refugees and Camden communities."

While the funding comes as no-strings attached, we applied for funding with the expressed interest that it would be used to sustain and grow our current work with refugees. In July, we were excited to hear that we were awarded a grant of £30,000 over two years! Since then, I engaged with other local partners to assess what the current needs are in our area and how we might use this funding to bring communities together in new ways. This has led us to develop a new mentoring and befriending program where supported volunteers will meet with recently resettled refugees over six months as they build independence and form community. A steering group has been established to further develop the program and launch it to the wider community later in the year: Robin Ableby, Jonathan Ho, Holly Howard, Preethi John and Natalie Tikhonovsky. Thank you to all of them for their passion for taking this work forward.

At the same time, we were awarded an eco-audit by the City Bridge Trust in order to better understand our impact on the climate crisis and how we might become more sustainable. Led by Donnachadh McCarthy from 3 Acorns, the audit covered the church, Soup Kitchen and food market and served as a first step before any further work could be undertaken. It produced a detailed action plan, covering our environmental performance and providing a series of recommendations to take forward. Thank you to Monty Strikes for helping me lead the audit team and for all of those who have urged us from conversation into action over the past year.

Continuing Existing Work

Of course, on top of all of this new and exciting work, many of our existing programs and activities continued apace over the past year. To name just a few: we continued conversations with Mary Crowley and Laura House about better understanding and preserving our archives; I regularly sang in the choir and helped Scott with Thanksgiving preparations; we reintroduced existing partnerships with International Justice Mission and Oli and Constance Smith through focused moments in Sunday services; I regularly attended meetings of various local faith leaders' forums; we had regular fellowship opportunities, including a special Fitzrovia Tour led by Laurence Summers; and I attended the annual HeartEdge conference in Leeds. Administratively, we wrapped up work on the new bank accounts, I updated my safeguarding training and we began building a new church website.

There were some big life moments as well, not only in our congregation but for me personally. Along with supporting you through many of these moments—from baptisms and birthdays to appointments and everyday happenings—I was excited to finally be granted Indefinite Leave to Remain in October, after living in London for eight years!

Finally, with the turning of the year came the news that I will be leaving my role at the church after eight and a half years together. I hope you indulge me then, when I reflect on not just what a genuinely remarkable year it has been but what an incredible journey the past few years have been too! This was indeed the year in which we truly hit our stride, but without a doubt, this was only made possible by the many years we spent intentionally growing our impact: within the congregation and in the community.

As I said in my announcement, it is difficult to say goodbye after all these years. However, I am grateful for all that we have shared, proud of the ways in which we and our ministries have grown and looking forward to the journeys that lie ahead. I am sure you will continue to build on what has come and continue to achieve remarkable things together. Until we meet again, thank you for all of the moments in which we have shaped each other's paths over these last eight and a half years together.

In Service,

Jonathan Miller
Community Minister

Fellowship

One aspect of Christian fellowship is forging a community where we can reflect to each other God's love for us. This happens when we share elaborate meals like Thanksgiving as well as when we share a humble cuppa.

We are very thankful to the many people who played a role in our Fellowship activities throughout the year. We're especially pleased that many people volunteered for their first time over the course of 2022! For some, this meant hosting a weekly coffee hour (or even more than one!), while others cooked or baked for one of our luncheons. Of course, we are also grateful to the many people who continued their tradition of hosting coffee hour and sharing food with us in 2022, as they have done for the past years or decades. And we appreciate the help our youth provide every time we call on them to support our fellowship through setup and cleanup!

Over the course of 2022, we held weekly Sunday Coffee Hours after worship, along with an increased number of congregational luncheons. Together we marked Maundy Thursday with a shared meal and communion around the table. We celebrated Pentecost with an international potluck-style meal, featuring foods from many of our home nations and neighbourhoods. Across the summer months, our pastors and local hosts met up with small groups in parks and greens in multiple regions of London where we are scattered. For Homecoming Sunday in September, we celebrated with a congregational chili luncheon. And we hosted a special festive coffee hour in December with hot chocolate, mulled wine and Christmas treats.

In November, our Thanksgiving Lunch was back, better than ever. Once again, we give special thanks to Elodie Lasserre and Josh Mills -Knutsen for their delicious and dedicated efforts in the kitchen, preparing the turkey, potatoes and stuffing provided by the church! And thanks to everyone who brought dishes to contribute to the meal – we had a fantastic feast featuring traditional American standbys alongside traditional dishes from India, multiple island nations, the Philippines and others!

Looking back on 2022, it is clear that our cup (and table) runneth over: we are indeed thankful!

Nicole Joffe
Church Council, Fellowship



Faith Formation

Much of 2022 was shaped by our efforts to continue the calling to deeper inclusion that we discerned in the previous year. You will hear about these efforts in multiple reports and from various perspectives, but a crucial aspect has been the ways in which our faith has been stretched, strengthened, and sustained through the study and conversations that we have had together. In many ways, we are a community that is growing together in faith and faithfulness.

Children

Some of our 2021 experimentation children's ministry continued to evolve in early 2022 as we retired the PrayGround at the back of the sanctuary in favour of including all ages in Sunday morning worship during a wave of increased COVID-19 transmission in London. We provided children's bulletins and crayons for our youngest members. By March, our experimentation led to a renewed and familiar pattern of Sunday School led by our wonderful volunteer teachers during the morning worship service.

We had several wonderful events that gathered our families with children throughout the year, including an Easter Sunday Egg Hunt after worship, with our youth hiding the treats, and an autumn Harvest Party alongside the Homecoming Sunday fellowship lunch.

In March we celebrated Monica Watson and the 40 years she dedicated to caring for our little ones in the creche. We held a luncheon in her honour and compiled videos that were submitted from children and adults around the world whose earliest faith family was shaped by Monica's care. Thank you, Monica, for the decades of service to this community and our children. We have welcomed two new creche workers who have taken up that ministry of care.

Youth

Our youth group returned to Zoom for a brief period due to a wave of increased COVID-19 transmission, but by February we were back to some in-person events together. We began the year with a tour of the Soup Kitchen and a guided "footsteps of the homeless" walk with director Alex Brown.

We had our second annual Youth Sunday in June with 7 youth participating in the planning and leadership of our service with 4 of those youth preaching our sermon in conversation with me. In the context of police brutality in the U.S. and war in Ukraine during 2022, our youth chose peace as the theme for the service and offered hopeful prayer and reflection that swords might be made into pruning hooks in our world today.

In the autumn, our youth gatherings increased with an All Saints Sunday visit to Charles Wesley's grave, serving at the Thanksgiving Lunch, and joining in the Nativity Play. We also had one of our youth, David Aisa Miller, receive the Lundie Memorial Award from the United Reformed Church. The award recognises children and young adults for their contributions to the church and the gospel, and David was nominated for his work on the Inclusion Working Group and his leadership in our youth group.

Children & Youth Together

In December, children of all ages came together for our Unrehearsed Nativity Play. Participants included 10 children, 6 youth, and at least 8 adults. This light-hearted and festive Sunday was an important moment because it includes all ages in leading worship, the spiritual benefit of laughing in worship, and the joyful fellowship that followed. These are key elements of spiritual and communal growth for AIC.

Adults

Our adult Christian education focused on topics around inclusion and sexuality in the autumn of 2021, which continued into 2022 as our Inclusion Working Group was formed to draft a statement of welcome and inclusion that would serve to guide our church forward into the calling that we have to continue grow in our hospitality and our welcome to all. That diverse group studied together and discussed the vision and identity of our church and drafted the welcome statement that you will now find on the back of our bulletin every Sunday. The statement was presented to the church at our AGM.

Sunday morning Zoom Bible study continued to be the backbone of adult faith formation with a group of 6-12 who consistently attended. We also organised some "church day out" events that involved an educational element alongside fellowship – Jared led a group to the Tate Modern and facilitated a discussion about immigration and identity through art, and Jonathan organised a way to ground us in our neighbourhood through a Fitzrovia Walking Tour.

I'm very proud of our church that is continually listening to the Spirit and seeking ways to grow as individual Christians and also as a community that is learning to follow Jesus together.

Rev. Jared Jagers
Associate Minister of Faith Formation

Annual General Meeting

Sunday, 20 March 2022

The meeting was quorate as at least 20 members were in attendance.

I. Call to Order

A. Council President Rob Thomas called the meeting to order at 12:10 pm.

1. Rob gave thanks to our exceptional ministry team. The Annual Report testifies to the amount of work behind the scenes not just spiritually but operationally to achieve huge accomplishments especially during the pandemic.

Change to Agenda: First review Treasurer's Report then vote to approve Annual Report

II. Financial Matters

A. Treasurer's Report

1. Council Assistant Treasurer Serge Ramin summarised the 2021 financials which resulted with actual (123K) loss from revised June forecast of (120K) loss. The main drivers of the loss are largely due to receiving the insurance payment in 2022 not 2021, reduced giving and increased expenses/urgent maintenance. This shortfall was funded by cash from the balance sheet and the sale of 80K of investments.
2. He reminded the congregation that 2/3 of the church's revenue is from Latchcourt rentals. Their Q4 was weaker than forecasted but the earnings from Jan/Feb 2022 vs Jan/Feb 2021 are up 6x.
3. Members asked questions and reflected on the financial trends, including the management of the endowment/ investment account and where the insurance payout should go into income or into the investment account. Rob said we would be prudent and continue to monitor the financial situation before reinvesting into the account. The Council plans to follow-up with those who raised questions about our investments, their history and current status.

Rob asked the congregation to vote to approve the Annual Report and this was approved by a congregational show of hands vote.

B. 2022 Budget

1. Council Assistant Treasurer Serge Ramin walked the congregation through the movement from 2021's 123K loss to 2022's expected 20K surplus. This improvement is largely due to increased giving, increased Latchcourt revenue, the received insurance payment, savings on maintenance offset by increased personnel with an additional pastor and expenses on Missions. The 2022 budget assumes no further covid restrictions and no receipt in 2022 of the residual insurance payment.
2. Members asked questions about showing a repayment into the Investment Account in the budget and expressed concern about a perceived continued decline. Rob stated that the Council is working on an updated investment policy which ties into this concern and this work will be shared in the near future. Serge commented that it's important to also consider how we invest in the church and its growth, not just the investment account. [A subsequent review following the AGM confirmed that the original investment fund was £750,000, which has appreciated up to £852,821 as of 28 February 2022.]

Rob asked the congregation to vote to approve the 2022 Budget and this was approved by a congregational show of hands vote.

C. Charity Status Changing

1. Scott James reminded the congregation that there are tax benefits to AIC due to charity laws in the UK and US. Before it didn't matter where you were a taxpayer but now we have two accounts depending on where you pay your taxes and these details were provided.

III. Election of Council and Nominating Committee Members

A. Nominations Committee member Melissa Janssen thanked those council members and fellow nominating committee members rolling off and moved the Slate of Nominees for Council, Nominating Committee and Facilities. This was approved by a congregational show of hands vote unanimously.

IV. Diversity and Inclusion at AIC

A. Welcome Statement from Inclusion Working Group

Oliver Lewis, Elisabeth Paulson and Shirley Reyes represented the Inclusion Working Group, who explained their process in writing the new Welcome Statement before reading it aloud to the meeting, where the congregation received it with warmth and enthusiasm.

B. Resolution to Register for Same Sex Weddings

Elodie Lasserre spoke to the resolutions and background information about registering to become an equal marriage congregation, and how this emerged as an action step from AIC's desire to be a welcoming congregation. There was only one comment in the discussion, which was moving testimony that those who disagree with this step are still part of the AIC community.

The congregation then moved to approve the following resolutions:

1. As the governing authority of the United Reformed Church in relation to consent to marriages of same sex couples in the American International Church, Tottenham Court Road, London, the Church Meeting resolves to give such consent.
2. The Church Meeting requests the trustee of the church building at the American International Church, Tottenham Court Road, London to apply for the church building to be registered for the marriage of same sex couples.

These were approved by a congregational show of hands vote with nearly 90% approval.

Note: Six additional members were in attendance by Zoom and were invited to voice their perspectives on voting matters, although not counting for our constitutionally allowed votes, and they unanimously supported these resolutions.

V. Closing Prayer and Adjournment

JMK closed the meeting in thankful prayer at 1:15pm.



Congregational Meeting

Sunday, 2 October 2022

The meeting was quorate as at least 20 members were in attendance. This is an informal meeting solely for sharing updates. There are no pending votes or decisions to be taken.

I. Call to Order

- A. Council President Stephen Howard called the meeting to order at 12:20 pm.

II. Presentation of new AIC logo and branding - Nicole Joffe

- A. Nicole provided an update on behalf of the marketing committee (herself, JMK, Hannah Jagers, Anne Beitel and Zena Martin) about the work they have been doing particularly around branding. It started about a year ago with a survey to the congregation which led to talks with multiple vendors discussing how we want to project AIC to the world and what the scope of the project should be.
- B. They chose the agency Speed which has turned out to be a perfect fit. They are helping to redesign the AIC website, overhaul our appearance and also give us the tech and tools behind the scenes to make it easier for staff to use. Speed has spent time getting to know us, talked with staff and the Soup Kitchen folks and market traders, held panel discussions with 17 members from 15 households, talked with Monty about Latchcourt activities and thoughtfully reviewed our Welcome statement.
- C. Taking into account everything we do and who we are, Speed said we should project AIC from a combination of three branding personalities (Everyman, Caregiver, Creator) given our impact on different people looking to AIC for different needs.
- D. Speed took inspiration from our Welcome statement for the strapline/tagline which is "Open. Kind. Space." Nicole showed our new logo (rainbow shards in a circle) and gave several representative examples of how it could be used to project ourselves out onto the world. She also introduced the concept of "@" which we'll see more of in our materials as we are more than just a sanctuary on a Sunday (Hire space, World Food, etc).

III. Financial Update - Serge Ramin, Treasurer

- A. Thanked the congregation for their continued support. He addressed four topics: current financial performance, insurance, investment account and policy, and giving to AIC.
- B. Financial performance
 - 1. At the last congregational meeting there was some genuine concern regarding our financials as we conservatively forecasted GBP15K profit after getting GBP100K from insurance so one could interpret that as a GBP85K loss. We had thought to be very cautious as we were unsure about how giving and Latchcourt income would recover. It has turned out that giving has had a modest recovery which is on track per budget but Latchcourt is doing much stronger than anticipated. In the first eight months of 2022, they have already generated the full year's forecast which results in a current surplus of GBP135K taking into account the GBP105K insurance proceeds.
 - 2. Therefore, we are making investments in areas such as branding and audio visual equipment which address another challenge that was raised previously which is what steps can we take to help grow and invest in AIC.
- C. Insurance
 - 1. We received GBP105K total from two claims and that process is now exhausted. There was a huge amount of team work and effort to put forward our claims. These payments represent the majority of our surplus and we can decide how to invest it going forward effectively.
- D. Investment Account & policy
 - 1. There was a concern at the last congregational meeting about the evolution of the investment account. The history of the account is summarised as follows.

Date	Position (GBP '000)	Comments
2013	+ 750	Initial allocation
2013-2021	341	Capital appreciation
2019	(136)	AIC Property Maintenance and Repairs
2020	(30)	AIC cash injection
2021	(80)	AIC Church Maintenance and Repairs

Date	Position (GBP '000)	Comments
2022	(80)	
Current Position	765	as of 23/09/2023

GBP750K of the proceeds from the sale of the property were placed into an investment account at its inception. There have been surpluses over time from capital appreciation which were retained in the account. Surpluses have been used three times (two property refurbishments and a cash injection to cover a shortfall in a difficult year). Even with recent market turmoil we still have a surplus compared to the original amount with a current position of GBP765K.

2. We have also finalised the Investment Policy called the Investment, Reserve and Use of Investment Funds Policy to tie all these things together. AIC continues to invest in responsible funds. The council continues to be updated monthly on the investment position and AIC's liquidity position. We have formalised the ways the investment account can be used to fund operations/cover shortfalls. Serge outlined two scenarios. One is a planned cash shortfall and the second is an emergency, unplanned cash shortfall.

E. Giving to AIC

1. Reminded members of the two options they have for giving to AIC.

A) The simplest way to make a gift is via bank transfer.

Beneficiary; American International Church
Sort Code: 20-41-50
Account Number: 53035123

B) If you are a US taxpayer or a dual US/UK taxpayer and would like your giving to be registered with both authorities:

Beneficiary: American International Church Foundation Limited
Sort Code: 20-41-50
Account Number: 53985954

IV. Ministry Report

- A. In JMK's absence, Stephen reflected on our ministry - where we've been and where we're headed. We began conversations in 2018 about what we are doing and how to use our unique advantage. He described the iceberg analogy in which the piece we see above the water is our Sunday service but there is lots more going on underneath like the Soup Kitchen, the rentals, etc. Then came Covid and we adapted to put things online but it also expanded opportunities for outreach and how to take inclusion seriously.
- B. What's next for us and our ministries? Creating micro communities like the soup Kitchen, Book group, Bible study, choir, etc. Organising fun and welcoming events like picnics, jazz vespers. Expanding into new opportunities to serve like Cold Weather Shelter, helping refugees and others in the community. Along with our staffing changes with Jonathan and Jared's positions, all of this is moving AIC to a new platform. This is not necessarily a growth strategy. It's us doing what Jesus did, following his example and moving all of us along on our faith journey.

V. Closing Prayer and Adjournment

Jared closed the meeting in thankful prayer at 12:45pm.



Treasurer's Report

2022: full reopening of AIC implemented

American International Church		
Consolidated Income Statement (AIC + Latchcourt)	2022 Actual	2022 Budget
Total Giving	99,746	116,516
Gift Aid / Deed of Covenant Income	20,540	25,839
Latchcourt Revenues	446,603	304,042
<i>Market Stalls</i>	142,500	111,850
<i>Rooms</i>	304,103	192,192
Grants - Unrestricted	15,000	
Soup Kitchen - Contribution	4,271	4,200
Parkhill - Service Charge Contribution	7,339	
Investment Income	20,570	12,000
Insurance Payouts	105,799	100,000
Total Income	719,868	562,597
Expenditures		
Worship, Education, Youth, Missions, and missions-like spending	24,682	23,442
<i>Worship + Flowers</i>	7,649	2,500
<i>Music & Children Choir</i>	1,830	1,942
<i>Christian Education</i>	621	1,300
<i>Youth Ministry</i>	694	0
<i>Outreach - Soup Kitchen</i>	0	
<i>Outreach - Pastoral</i>	1,245	1,700
<i>Outreach - Shelter</i>	1,998	2,000
<i>Fellowship and Membership</i>	788	3,000
<i>Scholarship & Conference Expense</i>	2,035	2,000
<i>Missions</i>	7,822	9,000
URC - Missions & Ministries Fund (Rent)	21,420	21,420
Marketing & Communication	14,295	3,000
AIC Personnel Expenditure	281,966	213,893
Latchcourt Operating Costs (Primarily staff costs for Latchcourt director + Receptionists)	91,183	87,520
Gross Profit/Loss	286,321	213,322
Facilities, Admin & Finance	131,598	151,823
Office Expenses	35,922	17,000
Travelling	6,977	9,570
Church Insurance	10,583	12,500
Office Equipment Maintenance	2,087	0
Bank Charges	1,358	2,780
Depreciation amortisation	0	0
Net Surplus / Loss	97,795	19,649

2022: The strong recovery of Latchcourt, and giving, paved the way for a full re-opening of the AIC and for the investment in staff and marketing

The 2022 AIC budget was marked by caution, due to concerns over the reopening of the economy. We are happy to report that the budget was overly cautious, and that AIC recorded a strong performance in 2022, reporting a GBP 98K surplus, after taking into account significant investment in staff and marketing, against the GBP 20K surplus forecast in the 2022 Budget.

On the revenue side, the key drivers were the strong performance of Latchcourt, improvements in Giving, and GBP 105K in Covid-related insurance proceeds:

The strong recovery of Latchcourt. Sales of GBP 446K were c. 50% ahead of the GBP 305K budget. Latchcourt expenses are largely fixed, so the higher sales were reflected almost 1 for 1 in a higher Latchcourt surplus – GBP 355K vs. GBP 217K budget.

Giving also continues to recover. Giving for 2022, including Gift Aid, came in at GBP 121K, within line of sight of the GBP 141K budget which would have taken Giving back to pre-Covid levels. We are happy to report that the AIC Foundation is now operational, enabling US taxpayers to give to AIC in a tax-efficient way. The AIC Foundation collected gifts of GBP13K in 2022, and GBP18K for the first three months of 2023.

Insurance pay-out: in the end, AIC secured c. GBP 105K in total Covid-related business interruption indemnity payments from its insurers, all received in 2022. Pastor Jennifer, Council Chair Stephen Howard, former AIC Treasurer Nancy Rafanelli, all played a crucial role in the negotiations with the insurers.

Finally, AIC secured a GBP 30K unrestricted grant from Camden Council to support the refugee programme. The grant is payable over 2022-2023; AIC received the first instalment of GBP 15K in 2022.

On the cost side, 2022 saw controlled investment in staff and discretionary spending, reflecting the resumption of AIC's normal activities. The main drivers of the 2022 costs are as follows:

Personnel

Including pastoral staff, music staff, security and administrative staff, Personnel represents the single largest item of expenditure in the AIC budget. Personnel expenditure came in at GBP 282K in 2022, vs. GBP 214K budget.

Firstly, AIC maintained its commitment to supporting staff, with all staff on hourly contracts receiving the London living wage.

The GBP 68K overspend vs. budget reflects the decision to invest to support AIC's reopening: AIC hired an administrator to support operations. Chris Omaweng who joined in September 2021, has already made a significant contribution in implementing new procedures to track the activity at Latchcourt, working with the Latchcourt director Monty Strikes. The AIC now has much better visibility of booking, invoicing and collection activity at Latchcourt, a key element in helping manage the AIC's budget.

Finally, AIC invested in its music program, including launching jazz vespers, resulting in higher spend on the music staff.

Marketing

Beyond Personnel, AIC also made discrete investments in Marketing – GBP 11K above the GBP 3K budget - to strengthen communication around the AIC's "brand", i.e., our set of beliefs and values. The Marketing Team (Nicole Joffe, Zena Martin, Hannah Jagers and Anne Beitel Thomas) led the work with Speed Agency to guide the AIC through the process of creating a new visual identity that encompasses the full breadth of AIC's activities. The marketing and communication investment will continue into 2023, with more work is underway around the social media strategy and signage.

Our final extraordinary expense was an investment of c. GBP 6K to upgrade our sound system in the autumn of 2022. This not only made the online worship experience via livestream high quality and sustainable to manage but also improved the sound quality for worshippers in the sanctuary. The final piece of this work, related to music recording, will happen in 2023.

Facilities, Admin expenses came in GBP (20)K below budget, at GBP 131K, largely due to lower maintenance spend following the spike in spending in 2021.

Office expenses

Less satisfactory, office expenses came in at GBP 36K, vs. GBP 17K. After the squeeze during the "Covid" years, a bounce back of these expenses was to be expected. Nonetheless, we are tightening controls, so that office expenses can be reined back somewhat in 2023.

URC resolution

As a reminder, AIC contributes to the URC mission fund in exchange for the use of the Tottenham Court Road building where the AIC church is situated. In 2022, AIC contributed GBP 23K contribution.

During the past 12 months, AIC resolved outstanding issues with the URC around the level of the mission contribution. The URC agreed that the level of past AIC contributions was fair, having applied the URC basis for mission payment calculations for previous years, and having compared past payments against the results of the calculations.

Going forward, we have agreed with the URC the basis for future mission payments, giving AIC better visibility over a large item of expenditure. We expect the level of the AIC contribution to remain at current levels – GBP 23K – in 2023. AIC council also agreed to repay the emergency GBP 30K covid loan received from the URC, and this loan will be repaid in the current year.

Surplus for the year

Based on the above, the AIC recorded an operating surplus of GBP 97K, well ahead of the GBP 20K surplus forecast. Excluding the GBP 105K Covid insurance proceeds, AIC was near breakeven, after the considerable investments made in 2022.

Liquidity

Reflecting the strength of underlying operations, AIC ended the year with c. GBP 115K in available cash on balance sheet, excluding the investment account.

Council agreed to use the AIC cash balance to repay the GBP 30K emergency loan granted by the URC. The payment will occur in the current year.

Investment account

Finally, AIC ended the year with GBP 801K in its investment account (23/1/2023 valuation), ahead of the GBP 750K initial capital allocation when the investment account was established.

A new investment and working capital management policy was adopted by Council in 2022. The new policy provides for careful investment of the AIC investment account, the close monitoring of the AIC cash reserves and operating buffer, and a structured procedure to tap the investment account in case of a financial emergency.

The investment account represents AIC's main reserve, and currently represents the equivalent of nearly 3 years' worth of AIC personnel expenses, which puts the AIC in a comfortable reserve position.

2023 Budget: protecting staff and continuing investment

American International Church			
Consolidated Income Statement (AIC + Latchcourt)			
	2023 Budget	2022 Actual	2022 Budget
Total Giving	119,695	99,746	116,516
Gift Aid / Deed of Covenant Income	22,594	20,540	25,839
Latchcourt Revenues	482,174	446,603	304,042
<i>Market Stalls</i>	178,072	142,500	111,850
<i>Rooms</i>	304,103	304,103	192,192
Grants - Unrestricted	15,000	15,000	
Soup Kitchen - Contribution	4,200	4,271	4,200
Parkhill - Service Charge Contribution	3,670	7,339	
Investment Income	20,570	20,570	12,000
Insurance Payouts	0	105,799	100,000
Total Income	667,903	719,868	562,597
Expenditures			
Worship, Education, Youth, Missions, and missions-like spending	21,931	24,682	23,442
<i>Worship + Flowers</i>	3,000	7,649	2,500
<i>Music & Children Choir</i>	1,976	1,830	1,942
<i>Christian Education</i>	662	621	1,300
<i>Youth Ministry</i>	694	694	0
<i>Outreach - Soup Kitchen</i>	0	0	
<i>Outreach - Pastoral</i>	3,000	1,245	1,700
<i>Outreach - Shelter</i>	1,134	1,998	2,000
<i>Fellowship and Membership</i>	650	788	3,000
<i>Scholarship & Conference Expense</i>	1,814	2,035	2,000
<i>Missions</i>	9,000	7,822	9,000
URC - Missions & Ministries Fund (Rent)	21,420	21,420	21,420
Marketing & Communication	21,000	14,295	3,000
AIC Personnel Expenditure	308,432	281,966	213,893
Latchcourt Operating Costs (Primarily staff costs for Latchcourt director + Receptionists)	100,301	91,183	87,520
Gross Profit/Loss	194,820	286,321	213,322
Facilities, Admin & Finance	141,199	131,598	151,823
Office Expenses	28,000	35,922	17,000
Travelling	7,000	6,977	9,570
Church Insurance	13,224	10,583	12,500
Office Equipment Maintenance	2,192	2,087	0
Bank Charges	1,426	1,358	2,780
Depreciation amortisation	0	0	0
Net Surplus / Loss	1,779	97,795	19,649

2023 Budget

Income statement

In summary, the 2023 budget assumes a continuation of the initiatives started in 2022 – Marketing & Communications, Music, Community – and an effort to reach a settlement with staff that recognises the significant pressures placed on them because of the cost-of-living crisis. The 2023 budget also assumes that the position of Community Minister will continue as a full-time role. Work is under way to agree the appropriate job specification to best support the AIC in the fulfilment of its mission.

Income: GBP 668K budget, vs. GBP 720K in 2022, which included GBP 105K of insurance proceeds

On the income side, the surplus is underpinned by continued strong performance from Latchcourt, and growth of giving which, encouragingly, caught up to 2019 levels in 2022.

Latchcourt – GBP 482K forecast vs. GBP 447K actual in 2022 - is going strong in terms of market rentals; the rehearsal room business is a little soft, but Monty is completely focused on it.

Giving – GBP 142K forecast vs. GBP 120K actual in 2022 – is projected to increase by 15% y-o-y. The AIC Foundation is now in operation, with GBP 18K collected for the first 3 months of 2023 – although some of it is at the expense of gifts previously collected by AIC directly.

Costs: GBP 666K forecast, vs. GBP 622K actual in 2022

On the cost side, the budget provides for i) room to give more than 5% in annual raises to staff; ii) allow for inflationary pressures across most cost categories, apart from energy-related costs which are expected to ease; iii) continue the crucial investment in marketing.

Personnel expenses

(AIC Personnel Expenses + Latchcourt Operating Costs, which comprise mainly Staff Costs) – GBP 409K – vs. GBP 373K actual in 2022. The main driver of the increase in personnel expenses is inflation. The budget assumes that the position of Community Minister will continue as a full-time role.

Other

The budget assumes that marketing spend remains elevated as AIC completes its marketing and rebranding programme. Other expenses are forecast to grow in line with inflation, except for Office expenses where tighter controls have been introduced after the 2022 overspend, which we expect to lead to a 20% reduction in spending.

Surplus

In summary, we are forecasting that AIC will generate a small surplus of GBP 2K, completing its full recovery from the COVID disruption.

Liquidity

Excluding the URC emergency loan repayment which is going to be funded by drawing down on the cash balance, we expect AIC to be at cash breakeven in 2023, with the cash balance projected around GBP 85K, after the GBP 30K URC loan repayment.

Investment account

We are forecasting no drawdown from the investment account in 2023. As of 27/3/2023, the AIC investment account stood at GBP 795K.

Special mentions

The AIC's accountant, Munish Khanna, deserves a special mention in the Annual Report. For more than 15 years, Munish has served as the AIC's reporting accountant, overseeing the preparation and filing of the annual accounts of the AIC and the gift aid returns. Since 2020, Munish has contributed all his efforts for free, and this continued and unconditional support deserves special recognition.

A special recognition should also be afforded to the AIC Council secretary, Michelle Miller, who, thanks to her diligence in scheduling the AIC council meetings, collecting and sharing supporting material, taking and sharing minutes, provides the indispensable structure for the effective operation of the AIC Council.

Conclusion

AIC is in a strong financial position, with a forecast for a moderate surplus, and financial reserves in working capital and investment account representing c. 3 years of operating costs. This provides a strong platform for the AIC to continue its operations and invest in growth.

Serge Ramin
Treasurer

2022 Leadership Team

Ministry Team

Jennifer Mills-Knutsen, *Senior Minister*
Jared Jagers, *Associate Minister*
Jonathan Miller, *Community Minister*
Scott Stroman, *Director of Worship and Music*

Church Staff

Monty Strikes, *Business Manager*
Chris Omaweng, *Office Manager*
Alex Brown, *Soup Kitchen Director*
Munish Khanna, *Accountant*
Monica Watson, Gul Erdogan and Fatima Kammiri, *Crèche*
Clive Munro, *Security*
Malina Metodieva, *Cleaning*

Receptionists

Rosie Armstrong
Amanda Bellamy
Orlando Brooke
Sophie Brooke
Michelle Buttery
Manuel Cervantes
KD Choi
Sabine Jorge
Rachel Rowland

Church Council

Stephen Howard *President*
Michelle Miller, *Secretary*
Serge Ramin, *Treasurer*
Emily Dema, *Membership and Outreach*
Elodie Lasserre, *Missions*
Nicole Joffe, *Personnel and Fellowship*
Tangy Morgan, *At Large*

Nominating Committee

Oliver Lewis
Shirley Reyes



American International Church

You are welcome here.

You can belong here, without exception or condition. Your whole self matters to God and to us.

The American International Church is a community of many races, languages, cultures, faith traditions, nationalities, ages, genders, abilities, financial circumstances, and sexual identities.

Following Jesus, we work to be inclusive, accessible, and open to all.

Here, you can

- form friendships
- serve others
- search for truth and meaning
- work for justice
- cultivate compassion
- find forgiveness
- share grace
- grow in faith
- and in all things, discover God's love.

You can join in a little or a lot,
for a day or a lifetime,
with abundant faith and abundant doubt.

You are welcome here.

79A Tottenham Court Road
London W1T 4TD
020 7580 2791

www.amchurch.co.uk | info@amchurch.co.uk
A Congregation of the United Reformed Church