lcf
lawyers' christian fellowship

2023-24 Annual Report

faithful & fruitful: learning and serving together as lawyers for Christ

"...the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped...makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love." Eph. 4:16



The LCF brings together and supports lawyers who trust Jesus as Saviour and follow him as Lord, so they make a gospel IMPACT in the legal world.

Inspiring legal mission around the world

Mobilising legal talents to help the wider church

Prioritising prayer in the legal world

Applying Biblical truth to lawyers' realities

Cultivating Christ-centred relationships in the legal profession

Talking to lawyers about Jesus Christ

Update from the Chair



Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!
Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!
Psalm 34 v 8

Our AGM in York in November 2023 saw us fighting with giants. Our annual conference in June 2024 found us in the Lake District contemplating beauty and the law. On the one hand we gather our courage to face powerful foes. On the other we see the victory of Jesus achieved by sheer loveliness. It has been quite a year.

Your trustees found themselves challenged by a mundane shortage of funds at the close of 2023, only to find themselves at the beginning of 2024 giving thanks for God's marvellous provision. We have been greatly blessed by Steve's organisational skills in rationalising our membership systems. Moni, our membership secretary, has been the vital link to keeping us well informed. This year has also been one of a sense of connection with brothers and sisters around the world, particularly through Mhairi's work. We have enjoyed continued fellowship with German friends at Christ und Jurist, Juves in Rwanda and Gichohi in Kenya to name but a few. We had a wonderful moment while in the Lake District when our sponsorship licence for Felipe's continued employment to work with students and young lawyers appeared in the nick of time. Felipe has promoted growing enthusiasm for regional student hubs to study God's word and continued commitment to the LCF mentoring programme. It was great to see Jon, our regional director, at the Scottish conference, "A Time to Speak" in April 2024 and encouraging that regional events from the Liverpool Carol Service to the East Kent prayer meetings have carried on. So many things, these and more, to be thankful for.

Prayer remains the sustaining and driving force of the Lawyers' Christian Fellowship, supported this year by the publication of *faithful and fruitful, 365 daily devotions written by lawyers for lawyers*. Grateful thanks to Mark for his wise and committed leadership of the LCF for another year.

Praise and thanksgiving most of all to our Saviour, who is both our giant slayer and our happy refuge.

Janys Scott KC
LCF Chair of Trustees

Inspiring legal mission around the world

In the past year, our partners, as part of the CLEAR Network, continue to encourage their members to engage with access to justice initiatives, as an opportunity to share Jesus. It has been a joy to walk with our partners in Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda, as they pray with clients, share the gospel in prisons and community gatherings and to see the continued impact, particularly for those most vulnerable like E*.

... her husband's brother ... told her she had to leave ... or else she would be killed.

E's husband sadly died when she was 8 months' pregnant with their child. Shortly afterwards, her husband's brother D* told her she had to leave her home and small area of land or else she would be killed. She fled and D moved into her property. E, and her young daughter, approached Advocates Burundi to ask for help. A pro bono lawyer agreed to assist, winning the case at first instance. Despite her brother-in-law appealing twice, E, with the help of the pro bono lawyer, was successful in confirming her ownership of the property and the land. Today E and her young daughter live peacefully in their home.

Within a civil legal system, such as in Burundi, it is harder for individuals to represent themselves in court and so the need for advocates to assist is key. Advocates Burundi, like Lawyers of Hope and other partners, are also working with local church and community leaders to provide legal education and advice, to raise awareness of the laws, and to support them when disputes arise. Through these interactions, they also share the gospel, and have seen many come to faith, and be strengthened in their faith.







A growing area of support for our partners is capacity building. Unpacking topics such as roles and responsibilities of a board, management of risk, employees, and change, and financial sustainability, from a biblical perspective are all useful in strengthening one another as we serve our fellowships and teams and provide a faithful witness. If you are interested in assisting with some of these virtual workshops, we would love to hear from you!



If you would like to spend time with one of our partners, why not consider joining a mission team or serve as a volunteer? Our mission teams are only possible through our partnership with UFM, who bring wisdom, experience and prayer to every detail, facilitating the teams and allowing us to serve alongside our local partners. In 2023, our international team (including members from Germany and Australia) spent two weeks in Rwanda and Kenya, spending time with the community paralegals initiative, hearing beneficiaries' testimonies, fellowship, prayer and bible study with the partner team, and wider membership and skills sharing.
Our next mission team is planned for 2025. For more details email: international@lawcf.org.

*Names anonymised to protect identity

Above: community legal education in Rwanda
Left (left to right): Discussions with partners in Burundi, Burundi team, Burundi staff and board

> *Tuesday lunchtime prayer is a special time in the working week where I can come apart and pray with my fellow brethren ... I find it to be an oasis of strength and blessing.*
>
> *– Ovril Tomlinson, Solicitor*

Prioritising prayer in the legal world

Prayer is fundamental to the work we do. Starting out as the Lawyers' Prayer Union over 170 years ago the original rules of our Prayer Union were – individually and collectively – to "seriously" pray. It's where we do our best work. Seriously! Our staff team pray for and with our members most days. Please let us know how we can pray for you. We also co-ordinate regional, national and international prayer meetings.

Tuesday Lunchtimes

Every Tuesday at 1pm for 30 minutes LCF members join the staff team for a Bible reading and prayer. There have been encouragements from God's word and many answers to prayers.

Regional Prayer Meetings

A number of regional groups meet either monthly or bi-monthly to pray together and be encouraged by God's word. We are thankful to God for the Scottish and East Kent groups who have been meeting regularly.

European Prayer Networks

Prayer connects us across geographical, linguistic and jurisdictional borders and provides space to explore collaboration and offer encouragement. Currently LCF members are involved in several country prayer groups (including France, Spain, Poland, Italy and the Balkans) where they gather with two or three from that country, along with a friend from Germany, to pray, to share scripture and to encourage one another.

International Prayer Meetings

Once a month on a Thursday morning (8am), we meet with our international partners to share God's word and pray together. Its a great way to start the day, gathering with brothers and sisters from around the globe for fellowship, and prayer.

For more information about any of our prayer meetings, or to get involved, please email us at prayer@lawcf.org

Mobilising legal talents to help the wider church

Our heart is to serve, and we recognise that our members serve the local church in numerous ways. As a Fellowship, we seek to mobilise our different and shared gifts to help the wider church.

Our Find a Lawyer scheme has been running for 9 years. In the 12-month period ending 31 August 2024, 44 people used the LCF's Find a Lawyer scheme each month to find a Christian lawyer to help them; currently 216 members are signed up to the scheme.

In April our Scottish group held a day conference "A Time to Speak", to think about why Christians should speak up ... and how the right to do so should be defended.

We enjoy strong relationships with many para-church and Christian mission organisations, working in the UK and internationally. Recently two of our specialist groups (our Access to Justice and Immigration Law groups) have been working with Welcome Churches to help refugees seeking asylum in the UK.

Our Speak Up and Living for Jesus at Work resources, published in collaboration with the Evangelical Alliance, have been widely distributed, and our Employment Law group has begun work on a new resource 'Living for Jesus in Education'.

In a fast-changing world, we seek to encourage Christians in the UK to speak about and live for Jesus everyday – in April our Scottish group held a day conference "A Time to Speak", to think about why Christians should speak up, particularly about the Good News about Jesus, and how the right to do so should be defended.

"A Time to Speak" conference, Scotland



Applying Biblical truth to lawyers' realities

Each term at the LCF, we run a different teaching track to help lawyers and students connect their faith with their roles in the legal world. Last autumn, the *Resourced* track explored biblical perspectives on vocation, focusing on how to live for Jesus in the workplace. The track culminated in the National Conference in York, which featured profound teaching on the theme "Fighting Giants" and a special time of fellowship.

This summer, *Rooted* focused on the theology of law and justice. We had 7 lunchtime sessions, delving into the new edition of the LCF's book Law & Justice Bible Studies. Each week, attendees received a chapter of the book along with discussion questions, allowing for deep reflection and preparation. By the end of the series, participants had access to the complete book.

We are also grateful for the wonderful National Conference in the Lake District last summer, where we explored the theme "Beauty and the Law". The event featured insightful talks, Growth groups with fruitful discussions, and opportunities to connect with God's creation through a lakeside walk, boat trip, and other outdoor activities.

"Beauty and the Law" National Conference, Rydal, UK





We continue to develop resources to equip lawyers and students to be both faithful and fruitful in their legal work.

Our online library continues to expand, offering a wide range of articles, videos, and book reviews. The UCCF Law Network website (maintained by the LCF) remains a key resource for students, helping them think, live, and speak for Jesus both at university and beyond.

A revised and updated version of the LCF publication *Law and Justice Bible Studies*, which has been the core of the *Rooted* teaching sessions, has been completed, and we're excited about plans for new foreign language translations of this key resource.

In the last year our most popular resource, *Word for the Week*, Bible messages written by lawyers for lawyers with prayer points, was published as a 365 daily devotional 'faithful & fruitful'. Since its release, *Faithful & Fruitful*, has sold almost 350 copies (plus e-versions), and has been purchased by Christian legal fellowships in Germany, USA, and Australia, supporting countless lawyers in their spiritual growth.

> ***When God's Word goes out, it doesn't return void (see Isaiah 55:10-11). It's been a joy to be involved in the WfW Daily Devotional and to know that God's Word will be at work in all the lawyers who read it.***
> ***– Dominic Hughes, Barrister***

Cultivating Christ-centred relationships

Law students

The LCF mentoring scheme plays a key role in building a strong, Christ-centred community where every member is encouraged to be the very best lawyer for Christ that they can be.

... a space for law students to deepen their understanding of how the gospel shapes both their studies and their future legal work.

Since its pilot launch in 2021, approximately 70 members have participated in the scheme. We have received encouraging feedback from both mentors and mentees, many of whom have found the experience deeply rewarding. Another mentoring round is set to run from this Autumn, for which 38 people have already signed up.

Complementing this initiative are the Law Network hubs, which provide a space for law students to deepen their understanding of how the gospel shapes both their studies and their future legal work. By fostering meaningful connection, discipleship, and growth, the hubs offer another layer of relational support within the LCF. We currently have active hubs in York and Cambridge and, excitingly, we have plans and willing student leaders to expand to new locations during this new academic year.



Relationships across Europe

Intentional Christ-centred relationships are key in encouraging Christians in the law to serve faithfully and fruitfully, both in the UK and internationally. This year we have seen a deepening of relationships and engagement across Europe, including times of prayer in country and regional groups, a regional conference hosted in Switzerland, and Christ und Jurist Austria hosted their first overnight conference, with around 30 delegates.

... we will be unpacking how we ... can be deeply rooted in Christ, and be faithful and fruitful within the firms, courtrooms and communities that the Lord has placed us.

Looking ahead, building on our two previous international conferences in Berlin and Cambridge, we are excited to announce our next European gathering, "Oaks of Righteousness: Rooted in Christ, Planted across Europe". Drawing from Isaiah 61 v 1-5, we will be unpacking how we as Christians in the law can be deeply rooted in Christ, and be faithful and fruitful within the firms, courtrooms and communities that the Lord has placed us. With a focus on intentional fellowship, around God's Word, we invite you to save the date and plan to join us in Horn, Austria, 24-27 September 2026.



Specialist groups

Members working in different areas of law can face unique challenges. Our specialist groups provide the opportunity to meet with others who understand the particular issues that you face. In the last year we started four new specialist groups for Charity, Criminal, Commercial and retired lawyers in addition to existing groups for Access to Justice, Corporate Members, Employment Law, Family Law, Immigration Law, and Legal Academics.

We recognise too that for many of you the past year hasn't always been easy. As a fellowship, we want to be intentional about walking with one another through the highs and lows of legal practice. Whether it is an intentional chat over coffee, or a longer series of calls, it is a joy and a privilege for our staff team to be invited to walk with different members and international partners, to listen and to pray together, inviting God into those tricky situations. Please let us know how we can be of help or encouragement to you.

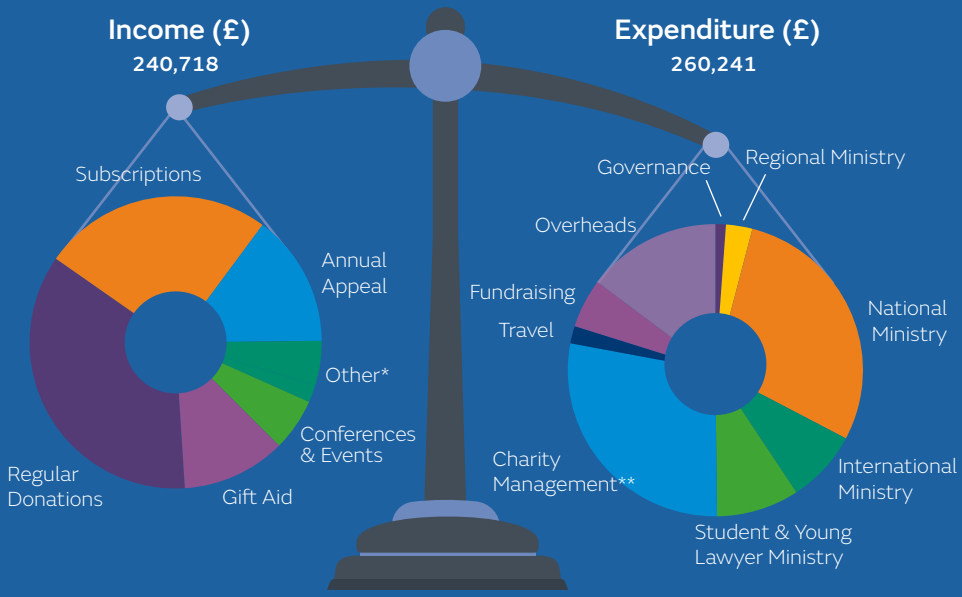
Finances

Our heartfelt thanks to every member for your generous support of LCF ministries and mission this year – it has been a great encouragement ...

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever. 1 Chr 16:34

Income

Our heartfelt thanks to every member for your generous support of LCF ministries and mission this year – it has been a great encouragement to us. In January, when our reserves were particularly low, the loving response of members and supporters was a wonderful answer to prayer. Compared to the previous financial year, we are thankful to the Lord for an increase in our income; regular giving (mainly standing orders), and subscriptions have increased. Income levels are significantly lower than budgeted and, overall, are comparable to the 11 month point in 2018 and lower than 2019 figures when subscription rates were last increased.



Financial information from end of year management accounts, subject to independent examination.
*Other donations/ad hoc receipts
**Salary costs are attributed 40% to management of the Charity, 10% (ED, International Director and Operational roles) to fundraising, and the remainder to our different ministry areas.

To assist financial planning we have, in recent years, focussed on payment of subscriptions. Consequently subscriptions income is 213% greater than at the end 2019. However, it still represents only 25% of our charitable income leaving us dependent on our annual appeal and ad hoc donations which, last year, were down 31% compared to 2019.

Expenditure

Cost of living has risen sharply (by approximately 24.5%) since 2019 when our subscription rates were last increased. We have worked hard to reduce expenditure while investing the money that you give us in the ministries, mission and resources that you value. We have therefore been able to save £22,161 (8%) on budgeted expenditure, in part by not increasing staff salaries as planned, by not recruiting staff to key roles, and by delaying investment in our website and other member resources.

Staff salaries are our major expenditure. The staff team are heavily engaged in ministry to Christian lawyers (1-2-1, mentoring relationships, leading Fellowship meetings, writing and curating resources, Bible studies and talks), as well as in Gospel outreach to the legal profession and law students. They also provide Charity Management (operational and organisational) support that maintains our identity and work as a Fellowship. In relation to salaries we spent £4k less than in 2019. For the current financial year we plan to spend £2.5k more than in 2019 however, in real terms (allowing for CPI) this is £43.7k less.

Investing for future growth

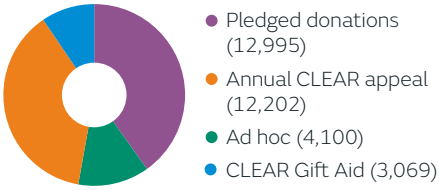
We want to invest for growth – in discipleship, in regional hubs, improved member systems and resources, and in support for new / fledgling Christian legal fellowship groups across Europe. To do this we need your help. Looking forward we therefore propose to raise subscription levels this year and, thereafter, on an annual basis to reflect cost of living rises.

Christian Legal Education Aid and Research (CLEAR)

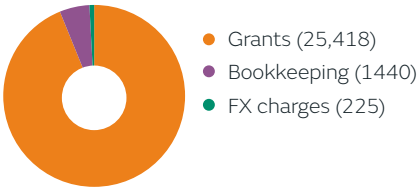
For more than 20 years we have worked in partnership with Christian legal fellowships in East Africa to support their justice mission work.

Please note: The CLEAR expenditure total only shows new grants agreed within the 2023/24 financial year; actual grants paid include those agreed in 2022/23.

CLEAR income (£): 32,366



CLEAR expenditure (£): 12,082



Talking to lawyers about Jesus Christ

We are committed to sharing the good news of Jesus Christ within the legal community. Our recent and upcoming events reflect this passion for engaging with law students and professionals, offering them opportunities to hear the gospel and explore the Christian faith.

Last year, we attended the University of Law Moorgate Freshers' Fair connecting with many students, offering resources and information about the LCF. Through conversations and distributing literature, we introduced students to how faith can impact their studies and invited Christian students to join our membership. In February, we participated in a Mission Week in Manchester, promoted by the local Christian Unions. This week-long event was a valuable opportunity to explore justice through a biblical lens and to share the powerful message of Jesus' work in satisfying God's justice on our behalf.

This Autumn it was a privilege to run stalls and to meet with law students at Freshers' Fairs at Liverpool John Moores University (1280 law students) and City University London (2,490 law students) reflecting the heart of our Fellowship, to encourage Christian law students to live for Jesus and to reach law students with the Gospel.

The LCF carol services are a highlight of the LCF calendar and at the heart of our fellowship's desire to reach fellow lawyers with the life-changing news about Jesus' life, death and resurrection. In Liverpool last year lawyers, court staff and members of the CPS filled Liverpool Parish Church for carols accompanied by the Liverpool Brass Band and a message from HHJ Andrew Mennary KC about the Wonder of Christmas. In London, the LCF Carol Service was hosted at Gray's Inn Chapel, with musical accompaniment by the Odyssey Ensemble, when Stephen Shaw KC unpacked the Christian claim that God has visited planet earth. Copies of the LCF's *Bible verses for lawyers* were given away at both carol services.

> ***"For me to be part of the LCF community is a blessing … When the world sees the church and our community in action, people see the true love of Jesus and perhaps find themselves attracted to Christ, too."***
>
> ***– Jo Brindle, Legal Executive***



Keep the date free

Initiative

An annual 1-day conference to shape the direction and programme of the LCF. Free to LCF staff and volunteers.

22nd March 2025, St Nick's Cole Abbey

We need you

We hope that you are encouraged by the many different ways that we as a Fellowship have served in the last year.

As we review 2023/24 we are grateful to God for all that He continues to do in and through us. The harvest is plentiful and there's much still for us to do. We therefore need you. In 2024/25 we seek to better support the initiative of our members in the different regions where God has placed us, by forming Regional Hubs led by teams of lawyers with responsibility for prayer, member support, evangelism, events, students, and global reach.

Please pray to ask God to provide the labourers we need for this work. If you can donate your time (a few hours each month) for a period of 12 months or more, please contact mark.bainbridge@lawcf.org.



fathful & fruitful in 2023-24

44 average per month
Find a Lawyer referrals
Over 200 LCF members participate in this public service provided by LCF (August 2023-August 2024)

4 CLEAR partners
provided vital legal help to the most needy in Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya and Uganda

9 specialist groups
meeting on a regular basis

365 daily devotions
written by lawyers for lawyers in our new book

3 conferences
Fighting Giants (Nov 2023)
A Time to Speak (April 2024),
Beauty & the Law (June 2024)

70 prayer meetings
Tuesday lunchtime, regional groups, and international

2 teaching series
Wellbeing (Autumn 2023), and Rooted (Summer 2024)

7 outreach events
2 carol services, 1 start of the legal year service, 1 mission week, 1 city-based Easter event, 1 freshers' fair

15 mentoring relationships
plus 27 new mentoring relationships for 2024/25

7300 paper copies of 'Living for Jesus at Work'
produced with the Evangelical Alliance, ordered and distributed, plus over 500 downloads