

Chinese Gospel Church Oxford

(formerly Oxford Chinese Students and
Scholars Christian Fellowship)

Report and Accounts
Year ended 31 March 2023

Stewardship 
Active generosity

1 Lamb's Passage, London EC1Y 8AB
www.stewardship.org.uk

CHINESE GOSPEL CHURCH OXFORD
LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

WORKING NAME	Oxford Chinese Gospel Church
ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE	11 Arlington Drive Marston Oxford OX3 0SH
GOVERNING DOCUMENT	Constitution for a CIO Association dated 1 November 2021
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER	1151974
TRUSTEES RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGING THE CHARITY	Dr Kai Wing Norman Lee Mrs Shan Wai Ms Jing Xiao
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER	Ajay Rajani FCIE Stewardship 1 Lamb's Passage LONDON EC1Y 8AB

INDEX

Page 1	Legal & Administrative Details
Pages 2-6	Trustees' Report
Page 7	Independent Examiner's Report
Page 8	Receipts and Payments Account
Page 9	Statement of Assets & Liabilities
Page 10	Notes to the Accounts

The Trustees present their report and the charity's financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2023.

Summary of the charity's main activities and achievements

29 August 2021 marked our transition from a Christian fellowship to a church. While the transition was smooth and organic, we recognise a change deep inside us. That is our identity. Forging a new identity, a new sense of self, has been a gradual process. We find ourselves contemplating the question "What kind of a church do we aspire to be?"

First, **we aspire to be a church shaped by God's Word.** As such, strengthening the pulpit has remained a top priority. In December 2022, we concluded the sermon series "We are a Gospel Church – Understanding, Experiencing, Living, and Sharing the Gospel." We commenced 2023 with a new series "Exile, Return, Rebuild and Restore" focusing on the Old Testament books of Ezra and Nehemiah in the first half of the year. Like the returnees of the Babylonian exile, many of our members have left their home and replanted themselves in new soil. As we learned how the returnees' overcame challenges in rebuilding Jerusalem's Temple, city walls and their own identity, we gained valuable insight in building God's new Temple – the church, the body of Christ, here in Oxford. However, just as in the case of the Jewish returnees, our efforts to establish a new life in a new world will not bear fruit if we fail to recognize that only Christ can restore our hearts. Before "doing," our "being" must first be transformed by the power of the cross. Therefore in the second half of 2023 we will study the Gospel of Mark as we seek to discover and rediscover who Jesus is and the incredible difference He can make in our lives.

We aspire to be a community of the Lord's day. Sadly, attending church on Sunday has become just one of several options vying for the attention of many Christians today. But for us, Sunday means happily going to school (!) as we head to the music hall at Oxford High School where we have our Sunday services. We are now blessed with over 130 regular attendees, equally split between Mandarin service (10am–11:30am) and Cantonese service (12pm–1:30pm). Sunday becomes the highlight of our week as we gather to meet with God through worship, prayer, scripture and Communion. We are sent forth afterwards – "go in peace to love and serve the Lord" – as we return to our everyday lives, drawing near to God and bearing witness to His truth, goodness and beauty.

With children and youth comprising one third of our church, Sunday school and youth ministry are of much relevance. The children have been learning from the Gospel Project, a Christ-centred curriculum covering the Bible in 3 years. The Mandarin/English youths finished Matthew and began Acts earlier this year. The Cantonese youths, launched about 8 months ago, studied Jesus' parables before moving on to Youth Alpha. The two youth groups would come together occasionally for games and pizza. For the first time the Mandarin/English youths led a Sunday service, inspiring the adults with their humility and unity in serving.

We aspire to be a community united in the Lord. Since drinks and snacks were introduced in the dining hall late last year, people have thoroughly enjoyed the time of fellowship between the two services. Once a month the two congregations hold a combined Holy Communion service followed by lunch and badminton at the school. In addition to cultivating unity in the Spirit through the sharing of Communion and an Agape meal, we also foster unity in the Word by ensuring that the same sermon is preached across both services. While we have heard of Mandarin believers in some Chinese churches feeling neglected upon the recent arrival of new immigrants from Hong Kong, our church has firmly resolved to "...make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace"

(Ephesians 4:3). We acknowledge and address language and cultural differences but refuse to be divided along political lines, for "there is one body and one Spirit...one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all" (Ephesians 4:4-6). We learn to forbear and love one another as one family.

We aspire to be a life-sharing community. Small groups are a vital part of our church life. Each group operates autonomously, tailoring its activities to meet the needs of its members. Activities may include bible study, sharing, prayer, book study and using the Alpha course for outreach. Presently we have a total of 12 groups, some meeting weekly and others monthly. Most are physical gatherings, with a few taking place online. Among Mandarin groups, Abingdon, Bicester, Monday Sisters, Rainbow, and Students/Young Adults have been active for several years. Additionally, 3 new Mandarin groups were formed in the past year. One of them, aptly named "Brightest Pearl," serves as a gathering for mothers to encourage and support one another. The other two cater specifically to men: one meets monthly on Zoom to study Tim Keller's "Every Good Endeavour." The other, a men's breakfast gathering, has proven to be an excellent platform for outreach. For Cantonese speakers, three new groups now meet monthly in Witney, Bicester, and Summertown. Moreover, a majority of our Cantonese congregants gather on Sunday morning to study scripture, pray and fellowship. Finally our online prayer warriors meet monthly on zoom to intercede for the world, our church and one another.

We aspire to be a gospel-sharing community. Over the past year, the efforts of many brothers and sisters have been fruitful. In June 2023, after completing baptism classes, 3 Mandarin and 2 Cantonese brothers and sisters were baptized. In addition, 6 newcomers from Hong Kong were invited by their friends to our Sunday service and small groups. They learnt about our faith, asked questions and keenly observed our lives. Finally they too decided to give their lives to Jesus! This has been most encouraging as they are all eager to learn and grow in the faith. We started new believers classes for them. Praise be to God!

We aspire to be a serving community by following Jesus' example. A well-run church requires the tireless efforts of many individuals. When we celebrated Christmas last year with a special service "Embracing the true Light", a joint choir was established with members from both Mandarin and Cantonese congregations. After practising for 2 months they led us in welcoming the birth of our Saviour through music. Reflecting on Christ's sacrificial love for us, brothers and sisters are greatly encouraged, aspiring to follow His example. They serve in various capacities within the church, each playing a vital role. We have Sunday service leaders, pianists and song leaders; a group of dedicated Sunday School and Youth teachers and helpers; coworkers looking after venue arrangement, supplies and logistics; those who lovingly prepare monthly Agape meals and weekly refreshments; small groups leaders organising and caring for their members; IT experts who set up and operate AV systems; stewards who faithfully attend to the Fellowship House; Pastoral Team members and Elders who diligently teach and nurture the flock; Deacons and coworkers handling Safeguarding, managing church finances and human resource matters, as well as those serving in other capacities who may not be listed above. May the Lord remember all these efforts. In Paul words, "Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain." (1 Corinthians 15:58b)

We bid farewell to our pastoral worker Frances who returned to her home country last November. The Lord sent us Caleb, a pastoral worker who arrived Oxford in June this year with his family from Hong Kong. All members of our Pastoral Team are fluent in both Mandarin and Cantonese which is a real blessing as pastoral resources can be shared across the congregations.

Our transition to an independent church has been a journey of growth and discovery. In 2021 when we decided to step away from denominational affiliation, we recognized that it meant forgoing the comfort of established traditions and theological guidance. We were willing to embrace uncertainties, including our unresolved stances on infant baptism and ordination. Over the past two years, unbeknownst to us, the Holy Spirit was leading us toward the answers to these unresolved issues, even though we had not consciously pursued them. The divine will has unfolded in ways that surpassed our expectations. We are humbled and grateful for the revelation and guidance received on this journey.

In planning the activities the Trustees have applied the guidance on public benefit issued by the Charity Commission.

Governing Instrument

The charity, Chinese Gospel Church Oxford, also known as Oxford Chinese Gospel Church (OCGC), is a Charity Incorporated Organisation (CIO). Prior to its conversion to a CIO on 1 November 2021, OCGC existed as a company limited by guarantee incorporated on 5 November 2012 and registered as a charity with the UK Charity Commission on 10 May 2013. OCGC is governed by a Constitution filed with the Charity Commission. Its Organisation Rules, first approved by members at the AGM on 29 August 2021, provides guidance to its operations.

The charity's principal objective is to advance the Christian Faith in accordance with the Statement of Faith stipulated in the Constitution primarily but not exclusively among people of Chinese descent in Oxfordshire through:

- praising and worshipping God and carrying out his will for the Church;
- preaching, studying and following the teachings of the Bible;
- nurturing the spiritual life of Christians;
- promoting Christian fellowship;
- spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ;
- caring for those in need;
- sending missionaries and supporting mission work; and
- cooperating with other Christian churches and organisations who share our general aims and beliefs to carry out God's work.

Corporate Governance

The Trustees have adopted 31 March as the end of OCGC's financial and reporting year in 2023, and for the future. An Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday 9 July 2023.

According to the guidelines of the Charity Commission ([CC3 – The Essential Trustee](#)), the Trustees are responsible for the overall management of the Church as a charity, including but not limited to financial governance and legal compliance. While the Trustees bear the legal responsibility for the Church, spiritual leadership, ministry and pastoral care etc. are delegated to the Board of Elders in accordance with the Organisation Rules.

The Trustees, supported by the Board of Elders, Pastoral Team and the Coworkers Committee, administered the charity during the period covered by this report.

Risk Management

The Trustees regularly assess the risks associated with OCGC activities and annually review insurance coverage. The two venues where meetings and activities are held namely, Oxford High School (Belbroughton Road, Oxford OX2 6XA) and the Fellowship House (11 Arlington Drive, Oxford OX3 0SH) are insured. OCGC has also procured public liability insurance as well as employee liability insurance.

The Trustees have put in place policies and procedures to meet legal and regulatory requirements and to ensure OCGC can operate effectively under proper guiding principles. These include Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, Complaints Handling Policy, Conflict of Interest Policy, Disciplinary Procedure, Donation Acceptance Policy, Grievance Procedure, HR Procedure, Paying Staff Policy, Privacy Policy, Reserves Policy, Risk Management Policy and Volunteer Management Policy.

On Safeguarding, a 3rd party service provider, Christian Safeguarding Service, has continued to support us in the development of our Safeguarding Policy and Procedures as well as training to our Designated Safeguarding Officer, Trustees and volunteers working with our children and youth.

The Trustees have taken steps to ensure that adequate management and internal control procedures are in place to reduce the Charity's exposure to financial and operational risks.

Financial Review

As OCGC is a charitable incorporated organisation, it has elected to present receipts and payments accounts.

Overall income has increased by £6,000 to £104,000. The charity's income from its usual activities increased by £26,000 and income to help with the purchase of Fellowship House fell by £20,000 (the appeal was closed following the purchase of that property).

Overall expenditure has decreased by £295,000 to £87,000. The charity spent an extra £18,000 on its usual activities but nothing was spent on the purchase of Fellowship House, which in the previous year cost £313,000.

The overall the surplus this year was £17,000, which comprised a surplus of £14,000 on usual activities and gift aid of £3,000 received this year on previous donations for Fellowship House.

As a result the cash held by the charity has increased by £17,000 to nearly £90,000, which includes restricted cash of £1,000 held in the Mission fund.

Reserves Policy

The level of reserves is determined by the Trustees in order to safeguard the operations of OCGC in meeting its charitable objectives, taking into due consideration such risks posed to OCGC, and the possible need for reserves to meet cash flow difficulties, as well as statutory laws and regulations.

The Trustees have determined that the charity should aim to hold free reserves (which they define to be unrestricted cash) of no less than £24,000, which equates to about 3 months' of projected unrestricted expenditure. At year-end the charity held unrestricted cash of just under £89,000 and the charity is complying with its policy for holding reserves.

Coronavirus Pandemic

Throughout the year the Trustees continued to closely monitor COVID 19's impact. Since returning to physical meetings on 12 September 2021 after conducting a detailed risk assessment and putting in place mitigation measures, OCGC has continued to meet physically. However, should circumstances warrant additional precaution or even discontinuation of physical meetings, our backup plan to move back to online (Zoom) meetings can be re-activated. OCGC has complied in full with measures introduced by the Government to control the spread Coronavirus and to protect individuals.

Responsibilities of Trustees

Charity law requires us as Trustees to prepare financial statements for each accounting year which record the receipts and payments of the charity for the year.

We are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable us to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011.

We also have a responsibility to safeguard the assets of the charity and to take reasonable steps to prevent fraud or any other irregularities.

Approval

This report was approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Kai Wing Norman Lee

Dr Kai Wing Norman Lee

Trustee

Date: 19 June 2023

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO THE TRUSTEES OF
CHINESE GOSPEL CHURCH OXFORD

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Chinese Gospel Church Oxford ('the charity') for the year ended 31 March 2023 on pages 8 to 10 following.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Ajay Rajani

Ajay Rajani FCIE
Stewardship
1 Lamb's Passage
LONDON
EC1Y 8AB

Date: 24 July 2023

CHINESE GOSPEL CHURCH OXFORD
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2023 £	2022 £
Income receipts					
<u>Donations and related gift aid</u>					
Donations		81,825	-	81,825	61,912
Gift aid received		9,685	-	9,685	8,586
Donations received for Mission Fund		-	3,260	3,260	4,970
Gift aid received for Mission Fund		-	253	253	25
Donations received for Fellowship House (Building Fund)		-	-	-	14,900
Gift aid received for Fellowship House (Building Fund)		-	2,660	2,660	7,478
<u>Income from other sources</u>					
Income from food and hospitality		3,967	-	3,967	-
Income from letting Fellowship House		2,269	-	2,269	-
Interest		-	-	-	35
Total receipts		<u>97,746</u>	<u>6,173</u>	<u>103,919</u>	<u>97,905</u>
Payments					
Payments in relation to charitable activities undertaken directly	2	81,536	-	81,536	64,669
Grants paid in support charitable activities undertaken by others	3	1,000	4,600	5,600	4,100
		<u>82,536</u>	<u>4,600</u>	<u>87,136</u>	<u>68,769</u>
Purchase of Fellowship House		-	-	-	311,826
Loan repayment		-	-	-	1,140
		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>312,966</u>
Total payments		<u>82,536</u>	<u>4,600</u>	<u>87,136</u>	<u>381,735</u>
Net of receipts / (payments) before transfers		15,210	1,573	16,783	(283,830)
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		<u>15,210</u>	<u>1,573</u>	<u>16,783</u>	<u>(283,830)</u>
Cash funds as at last year end		73,550	(790)	72,760	356,590
Cash funds at this year end	A	<u>88,760</u>	<u>783</u>	<u>89,543</u>	<u>72,760</u>

The notes on page 10 form part of these accounts.

CHINESE GOSPEL CHURCH OXFORD
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 £	2022 £
A Cash funds				
Cash at bank with immediate access	88,760	783	89,543	72,760
	88,760	783	89,543	72,760
B Other monetary assets				
Gift aid due to charity	14,496	50	14,546	12,597
	14,496	50	14,546	12,597
C Liabilities				
Fee for Independent Examination	1,140	-	1,140	1,260
Other creditors	173	-	173	773
	1,313	-	1,313	2,033
D Assets retained for charity's own use				
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost £	Current value £
Fellowship House		Unrestricted	313,206	496,000
Fixtures, fittings and equipment		Unrestricted	5,570	-
			318,776	496,000

The trustees have used the bottom of the range of values quoted by Zoopla on 23 May 2023 to estimate the current value of Fellowship House.

F Guarantees and secured debts

The charity has not given any guarantees and has not provided its assets as security for any liabilities.

The accounts were approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Kai Wing Norman Lee

Dr Kai Wing Norman Lee

Date: 19 June 2023

The notes on page 10 form part of these accounts.

CHINESE GOSPEL CHURCH OXFORD

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1 Accounting policies

The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis and comprise a statement that shows the charity's receipts and payments, a statement that summarises the charity's assets and liabilities and related notes. The accountancy profession have determined that only accounts prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards present a 'true and fair' view and, as these receipts and payments accounts have not (and cannot) be prepared in accordance with accounting standards, these accounts do not present (and are not intended to present) a 'true and fair' view of the charity's financial activities and state of affairs.

Unrestricted funds are funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity. Restricted funds are donations which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors; they include donations received from appeals for specific activities or projects.

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
2 Payments in relation to charitable activities undertaken directly				
Staff costs	44,567	-	44,567	47,918
Hire of premises and facilities	13,684	-	13,684	3,693
Ministry expenses	7,289	-	7,289	4,407
Food, hospitality and related supplies	6,381	-	6,381	-
Fellowship House expenses:				
Non-letting expenses	3,840	-	3,840	2,557
Letting expenses	1,573	-	1,573	-
Speakers honoraria	2,090	-	2,090	1,513
Examiner's fee for preparing and examining the accounts	1,260	-	1,260	1,620
Legal and professional fees	853	-	853	2,962
	<u>81,536</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>81,536</u>	<u>64,669</u>

3 Grants paid to support charitable activities undertaken by others

Grants to other charities engaged in mission				
Chinese Overseas Christian Mission	-	1,600	1,600	1,600
Open Doors	-	1,500	1,500	1,500
OMF International		1,500	1,500	-
Grants to help individuals training for ministry	1,000	-	1,000	1,000
	<u>1,000</u>	<u>4,600</u>	<u>5,600</u>	<u>4,100</u>

4 Movement on restricted funds

	Opening balance £	Receipts £	Payments £	Closing balance £
Mission fund	1,870	3,513	(4,600)	783
Building fund	(2,660)	2,660	-	-
	<u>(790)</u>	<u>6,173</u>	<u>(4,600)</u>	<u>783</u>

The **Mission** fund was created from donations received to support mission.

The **Building** fund was created from donations received to help purchase Fellowship House and this property was purchased in the previous year. The overdrawn balance on the fund at the beginning of the year (which was £2,660) represented gift aid due on donations to the Building fund and this gift aid was received during the year. The Building fund has now been closed and the charity does not expect to receive any further donations for this fund.