

26th November 2024

## Message from the Pastor

This year has been a year of opportunities and growth. We moved into a new location, St Thomas' Church. This is a 199 year old Anglican building with beautiful architecture and plenty of space. The nature of the building has meant that there were no natural spaces for children and youth. So we've had to be fairly creative with how we use the building and have also relied on the goodwill of other local organisations. Sharing this building with a aging traditional congregation has had challenges. However, we have been so overwhelmed with your generosity and hospitality of St Thomas' church.

It has also been great to see the youth work, stabilise and grow. The weekly sessions and monthly youth groups make such a massive impact on our young people and are invaluable. We have found new people turning up to discover who God is and how to follow Jesus. We wonder if this is because of the location you're simply because God is reaching people in our town. There is a real sense of optimism and excitement as people encounter Jesus often for the first time and see the life changing impact that he has for them.

This year, we also clarified our vision and values, setting out a plan to reignite our apostolic heart by fixing our foundations and building structures to develop new leaders and eventually plant new churches.

We look forward into the coming year with hope and excitement feeling more stable than we have since the pandemic and able to dream and scheme once more.



**Ben Jeffery**

## Objectives and Activities

The purpose of soulcity church is for the public benefit the advancement of the Christian faith in the Stockport, Greater Manchester area, the United Kingdom and the World as the trustees may from time to time decide.

The trustees and spiritual leadership of soulcity church work hard to make the church a place where as many people as possible may come to grow in the Christian Faith.

## Impact Overview

### Moving venues

It has felt like we have gone from venue to venue over the last few years. We have to tell the church that we're more like a tabernacle than a temple. In April 2023, Cineworld started to increase their film quota for Sunday mornings. They began to show more and more films for families, but this meant that we would lose our screens often very short notice. We decided to ask them how many films they would forecast in the coming year and they predicted that we could lose as many as 13 Sundays, which was unviable for us.

During this time of instability, we explored other venues and were offered a long-term solution at Saint Thomas' church, which we decided to accept. The space is grand and Majestic, but not particularly family, friendly or welcoming. This has meant that we have had to search for an alternative space for the children's work and have had to invest quite a lot to make the area work for us. However, this really does feel like the kind of location where we can settle and grow over the next couple of years.

### Youth Work

In the last year are used to leader, Gordon Cree was unable to continue due to health challenges. His heart focus and care for our young people has been exemplary, and it was with heaviness that he decided he needed to step back so that they could have the investment that he knew that they deserved. Joe Barrett, who also works for the Message Trust, a charity with an exceptional track record of working with young people, offered to step up and took on the leadership of the youth. Since then, they have started weekly home groups, whilst also building on the Sunday work and investing in the town, wide youth drop ins that happen monthly on Friday.

### Strategy and Focus

In 2022 to 2023, we spent a lot of time refining and visiting our mission this year. We continue that work and have put into place an exciting three-year strategy to take us from a place of uncertainty and turbulence to planting new churches in new communities, that will see people far and wide find and follow Jesus. This strategy has three focuses in the first year we want to look at our foundations, our roots. In the second year we want to look at our fruits and the new growth that we expect to see in healthy Christians. Then finally in the last year we went to see new shoots church plants which could grow in their own right.

## Roots

We defined the roots of the church as being in the following areas:

- Leadership
- Prayer
- Community
- Systems

Each of these areas had a member of the leadership team who develop strategy and focus on making sure that each was healthy. This led us to starting Base Camp, leadership evenings, where we could invest more in our teams. We re-ignited our Thursday morning prayer times, and invited more people into them. Our community coordinator, Rachel Dowd, invested many hours into community lunches, walks in nature and opportunities for people to connect. Mark Osborn, the chair of our leadership team helped us to develop the robust systems to bring greater clarity to the church.

# Financial Review

This year has been full of challenges for the church.

Income was at £53k and our outgoings was £43k. This was due to the decrease in rent through moving to St Thomas' Church, allowing us to build up our reserves once again. This is encouraging in that we are operating sustainably, however, the income has dropped by around £5,000 when we had targeted growth.

## Reserves policy

Our reserves policy was set at £8,000 for 202/2024.

## Structure, governance and management

The trustees met monthly throughout the year. Flexibility for adhoc meetings and decisions has been important and appreciated from all of the trustees. The trustees have worked hard to ensure that soulcity is a safe and healthy community for all who may decide to attend.

## Trustees

The trustees who served from April 2023 to April 2024 are:

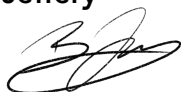
Mrs Lucy Engels

Mr Benjamin Jeffery

Mr Christopher Clark

Mrs Ruth Barrett

**Approved by the trustees on 26th November 2024 and signed on their behalf by Ben Jeffery**



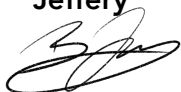
# Financial Statement for the year ended 5 April 2023

5 April 2020 to 4 April 2021	
<b>Income</b>	
External Hire	0
General Giving	44,306
Gift Aid Reclaim	7,900
Grants	0
Offering	440
<b>Gross Income</b>	<b>52,646</b>
<b>Less Operating Expenses</b>	
Salaries	12735
Staff Costs	3014
Rent	6422
Operating Costs	12144
Equipment	113
Subscriptions and software	3717
Advertising	169
Accountancy	36
Interest	15
Membership fees	273
Bank Feesd	39
Giving to Charity	903
Bless Fund	2150
SoulKids	45
Youth	63
Outreach	1064
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>42901</b>
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>9,746</b>

## Accounts:

Opening Balance 5th April 23:	£13,810
Closing Balance 4th April 24:	£18.009
<b>Total</b>	<b>£4,199</b>

Approved by the trustees on 26th November 2024 and signed on their behalf by Ben Jeffery



## **Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees/ members of soulcity Church**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **04/04/2024**.

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

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

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

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- 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.

**Joe Brady**

Address: 6 longford Close, Oldham, OL9 7EA

Date: 10/12/2024