

Charity number: 1190396

Discovering Prayer CIO

Trustees' Report and Financial Statements
For the year ended 31 August 2023

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Discovering Prayer CIO

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 August 2023

The trustees are pleased to present their report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2023.

Principal office

Suite 261
266 Banbury Road
Oxford
OX2 7DL

Status of Charity and Governing Document

Discovering Prayer CIO was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 14 July 2020. The organisation was previously incorporated as a private limited company called Discoveringprayer.com Ltd (Company number 09177881) from 15 August 2014 until its dissolution in 2021. The charity registration number is 1190396.

Trustees and Office Bearers

Management of the charity remains with the trustees. The constitution requires a minimum of three trustees and a maximum of 12 to serve at any time.

The trustees who served during the year are:

Michelle Eyre
Robert Eyre
Daniel Heyward
Kate Jefferyes
Timothy Pottle

Apart from the first charity trustees, every trustee will be appointed for a period of three years by a resolution passed at a trustee meeting. Any person retiring as a charity trustee is then eligible for reappointment.

Objectives

Our objects, as laid out in our governing document, are:

‘To advance or enlighten others about the Christian faith by encouraging people to explore prayer and spirituality in their lives, to deepen their relationship with God, but not limited to:

- The development and promotion of prayer resources, educational training materials and courses;
- The hosting and/or facilitation of prayer meetings;
- The hosting and/or facilitation of retreats; and
- The teaching of ancient practices of the Religious Life of Anglican and other Christian denominations in the UK and worldwide.’

Vision

Our vision is for everyone to have a joyful and fulfilling relationship with God.

Our goals are to:

1. *Help people to deepen their relationship with God through prayer*

Many people want to pray, but don't know how to get started. There is a wealth of experience and guidance available in prayer through the lives of Christian monks and nuns, and we aim to help people benefit from this daily.

Discovering Prayer CIO

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 August 2023

Vision (continued)

2. Research and teach the best ways to help people learn to pray

We hope to glorify God in our teaching on prayer and that means learning the best, most evidence-based ways that we can help people to flourish in their walk with God. We will continue to develop best practice in researching what we do and teaching those in the church who are keen to learn more about fostering prayer in their communities.

3. Give generously to the worldwide community

We believe that prayer is always linked to action, in our homes, our communities and throughout the world. We pray for others and take action that supports communities that care for those in need.

Activities and achievements

Over the course of the year, we are delighted to report that over 2,300 people registered for our new Still Small Voice: 10 Ways to Go Deeper in Prayer course (rated 'excellent' by 66% per cent of those who responded to a post-course survey and 'very good' by 29 per cent).

Participants learned how to practise Lectio Divina – including slow reading, meditation, contemplation and silence – and Ignatian-inspired imaginative prayer. Asked to give a rating on a scale of 1-10 (where 10 is 'Strongly Agree') for the following statements, their average scores were:

- 'Still Small Voice has had a positive impact on my prayer life' 9 out of 10
- 'During Still Small Voice I became more aware of God's presence in my daily life' 8 out of 10
- 'Still Small Voice has had a positive impact on my mental wellbeing' 8 out of 10.

Over one hundred individuals wrote to say what a difference the series had made to them, including:

Helena – *'I have been praying for God to help me with my disbelief. I joined this series for that very reason. I have found your contemplative prayers very useful. Connecting with God in the twenty-first century, particularly, in the midst of everything that is going on, has been a struggle for me. Yet at the core of me, is Jesus. Therefore, I will continue to strive for a deeper understanding. Thank you so much for keeping my curiosity going.'*

David – *'I stumbled on Discovering Prayer at a time when I truly needed God. I wasn't sure how God spoke or answered prayer. I now understand there is a time and a place for all prayer. I have got more out of this than the three years I have been on this journey. I now know my God is truly alive and listening to me, and me to him.'*

Mandy – *'I found the Still Small Voice series so wonderful. It brought me closer to God and to listen to his voice. Thank you for Discovering Prayer and providing such valuable resources – they are such beautiful treasures.'*

We also:

- Wrote and recorded 27 new guided prayer times, of which 15 were meditations on passages from the Gospel of St John
- Provided a library of 250+ guided prayer times and interviews with nuns and monks that draw on the treasures of Christian monasticism
- Raised the funds needed to launch Phase Two of our app project – turning the designs into reality.

The trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and all our activities are undertaken to further the charity's purposes for that public benefit.

Discovering Prayer CIO

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 August 2023

Future plans

In the year to 31 August 2024, we want to help more people find greater peace, strength and communion with God through prayer, even in demanding or difficult circumstances. To achieve this, we are aiming to:

Develop a transformational new prayer app

- We will soft launch the new app to a selected number of users, collecting feedback in order to refine it so the final version is as effective as possible.

Record new guided prayers

- We plan to record at least 60 new guided prayer times for Lent, plus 11 blessings and interviews with Anglican nuns and monks, to provide fresh ideas about prayer.

Introduce more people to the riches of monasticism

- Enabling participants to ask nuns and monks questions about prayer and to benefit from their insights
- Inviting people to go on retreats hosted by a range of religious communities
- Equipping people to adopt a regular rhythm of prayer through morning, midday and evening guided prayer times
- Encouraging individuals to consider the religious life and the testing of vocation.

Financial review

Results for the year

The financial statements for the year are set out on pages 5 to 7. The Receipts and Payments Account on page 5 reflects a surplus for the year of £6,296 (2022: £10,345). Total reserves, including restricted funds, amounted to £31,038 (2022: £24,742).

Reserves policy

The trustees aim to maintain free reserves in unrestricted funds at a level which equates to approximately three months' unrestricted charitable expenditure. They consider that this will provide sufficient funds to respond to applications for grants and ensure that support and governance costs are covered. We are pleased to report that we have maintained reserves of £21,732 and carried over £9,306 in additional funds for the building and launch of our new app.

Thanks

The trustees are immensely grateful for the generosity of the religious communities, trusts, churches and individual donors who funded us during the year, and would specifically like to thank:

- Community of St Mary the Virgin
- Community of St John Baptist
- Community of St Francis
- Pershore, Nashdom and Elmore Trust
- Christ the Saviour Monastic Trust
- Diocese of Oxford
- Souter Charitable Trust
- Gladiator Trust
- An anonymous religious community
- Individuals who gave generously to our app appeal

We would also like to extend deep thanks and appreciation to the volunteers who provide invaluable support for Discovering Prayer's website development, administration, script editing and recordings.

The accounts were approved by the trustees on 29 November 2023 and signed on their behalf by:



Michelle Eyre
Trustee

Discovering Prayer CIO

Report of the Independent Examiner to the Trustees for the year ended 31 August 2023

I report to the trustees on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2023 which are set out on pages 5 to 7.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011. 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 Act. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's statement

My examination is carried out in accordance with the Charities Act 2011. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

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 respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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

Alison Franks

Alison Franks CA
Director
Cornerstone Accounting

11 Erngath Road
Bo'ness
EH51 9DP

Date: 29 November 2023

Discovering Prayer CIO

Receipts and Payments Account

For the year ended 31 August 2023

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2022 Total £
Receipts						
Subscriptions						
One-off	165	-	165	600	-	600
Annual	6,555	-	6,555	7,860	-	7,860
Monthly	1,311	-	1,311	1,549	-	1,549
Bursary	180	-	180	213	-	213
Donations						
Major donors	6,643	-	6,643	-	-	-
Diocese and church donations	1,500	-	1,500	-	-	-
Personal donors	124	1,220	1,344	568	2,593	3,161
Gift Aid	109	-	109	-	-	-
Grant income	52,220	7,280	59,500	43,539	12,858	56,397
Fundraising income	-	-	-	-	13,933	13,933
Total receipts	68,807	8,500	77,307	54,329	29,384	83,713
Payments						
Fundraising costs						
Marketing and social media costs	3,777	-	3,777	2,303	1,685	3,988
Donation collection fees	299	-	299	369	-	369
Fundraising dinner	-	-	-	-	720	720
Charitable activities						
Salary costs	35,369	-	35,369	32,274	3,856	36,130
Contractor costs	14,999	-	14,999	15,524	-	15,524
Other staff costs	249	-	249	-	-	-
Personal customer service	1,100	-	1,100	1,465	-	1,465
Conferences and retreats	330	-	330	442	-	442
Expert Reviewer costs	-	-	-	-	-	-
Recording costs	2,731	-	2,731	663	-	663
App design/development costs	-	7,500	7,500	-	7,500	7,500
Resources	65	-	65	280	-	280
Travel and subsistence	182	-	182	393	-	393
Insurance	319	-	319	319	-	319
IT and website costs	1,415	-	1,415	3,491	-	3,491
Equipment costs	69	-	69	-	-	-
Business address	383	-	383	435	-	435
Administration costs	439	-	439	434	-	434
Charitable donation - Christian Aid	1,020	-	1,020	-	-	-
Bank charges	57	-	57	33	-	33
Accounting costs	108	-	108	482	-	482
Independent examiner's costs:						
Accounts production	300	-	300	400	-	400
Independent examination	300	-	300	300	-	300
Total payments	63,511	7,500	71,011	59,607	13,761	73,368
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	5,296	1,000	6,296	(5,278)	15,623	10,345
Transfer between funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Surplus/(deficit) after transfers	5,296	1,000	6,296	(5,278)	15,623	10,345
Total funds brought forward	16,436	8,306	24,742	21,714	(7,317)	14,397
Total funds carried forward	21,732	9,306	31,038	16,436	8,306	24,742

The notes on page 7 form part of these financial statements.

Discovering Prayer CIO

Statement of Balances

As at 31 August 2023

	Notes	2023			2022		
		Opening balance £	Surplus for year £	Closing balance £	Opening balance £	Surplus for year £	Closing balance £
Cash at bank and in hand							
Current account		24,742	6,296	31,038	14,397	10,345	24,742
Total cash at bank and in hand		24,742	6,296	31,038	14,397	10,345	24,742
Represented by:							
Unrestricted fund	2						
General fund				21,732			16,436
				<u>21,732</u>			<u>16,436</u>
Restricted funds	3						
App fund				9,306			8,306
				<u>9,306</u>			<u>8,306</u>
Total funds				<u>31,038</u>			<u>24,742</u>
Statement of assets at 31 August 2023				2023			2022
				£			£
Staff salary overpayment				751			-
Reclaim due from HMRC				339			-
				<u>1,090</u>			<u>-</u>
Statement of liabilities at 31 August 2023				2023			2022
				£			£
Accounting and independent examination fees				600			600
Pension payable				247			247
App design fee due				-			7,500
Charitable donation to Christian Aid (due for 2022)				-			1,020
PAYE payable				-			266
				<u>847</u>			<u>9,633</u>

The financial statements on pages 5 to 7 were approved by the trustees on 29 November 2023 and signed on their behalf by the undernoted:



Michelle Eyre
Trustee

The notes on page 7 form part of these financial statements.

Discovering Prayer CIO

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 August 2023

1. Accounting policies

Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, on a receipts and payments basis and in accordance with the Charities Act 2011. The trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit.

Receipts and Payments Account

For the purpose of the Receipts and Payments Account as shown on page 5, funds are defined as follows:

Unrestricted funds comprise donations, grants and other income received for the objects of the charity without further specified purpose and are available as general funds.

Restricted funds comprise income which has been received for the objects of the charity and specified for a restricted purpose within these objects by the donor.

2. Unrestricted funds

	Balance at 1.9.22 £	Receipts £	Payments £	Transfers £	Balance at 31.8.23 £
General fund	16,436	68,807	(63,511)	-	21,732
Total unrestricted funds	16,436	68,807	(63,511)	-	21,732

Explanation of funds

The *General fund* represents all income and expenditure relating to the primary focus activities of the charity, other than those for which funding is restricted.

3. Restricted funds

	Balance at 1.9.22 £	Receipts £	Payments £	Transfers £	Balance at 31.8.23 £
App fund	8,306	8,500	(7,500)	-	9,306
Total restricted funds	8,306	8,500	(7,500)	-	9,306

Explanation of funds

The *App fund* represents funds received towards the development of a new mobile application for guided prayers.

4. Donated facilities and services

We are grateful for the office space at St Andrew's Church, Linton Road, Oxford, which allows us to be at the heart of this prayerful community. We also acknowledge the contribution of an amazing team of volunteers who contribute to audio design, editorial guidance, bookkeeping as well as our wonderful trustees who contribute their expertise in prayer, website design, finance, HR, marketing and fundraising.

5. Trustee and related party remuneration and expenses

Michelle Eyre, who is a trustee, is employed by the charity as Chief Executive. The remuneration paid, including pension costs, in the financial year was £34,013 (2022: £34,070).

Robert Eyre, who is a trustee, maintains the website as a volunteer. This represents a gift in kind of £5,000 per annum which the charity would otherwise need to outsource.

There were no remuneration or expenses paid to any of the other trustees or their related parties during the period ending 31 August 2023 (2022: nil), other than the reimbursement of direct costs paid on behalf of the charity.