

Discovering Prayer CIO

Trustees' Report & Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

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Report of the trustees

The trustees are pleased to present their report, together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2024.

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 - Director
- Robert Eyre - Technical Business Consultant
- Revd Daniel Heyward - Vicar of St Andrew's, North Oxford
- Kate Jefferyes - EMEA Microsoft Lead at Tanium
- Timothy Pottle - Development Director at Regent's Park College, Oxford

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.

Additionally, the board of trustees benefits from the expertise of our advisory board, which includes: Shumi Kupara, Operations Coordinator for The Relay Trust, Brother Stuart OSB from Mucknell Abbey and Tamasin Went, former Head of Commercial Intelligence at Vodafone Business Group.

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PRINCIPAL OFFICE

Discovering Prayer CIO, Suite 261, 266 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7DL

OBJECTIVES

Our objectives, 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, including 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
- 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:

01 HELP PEOPLE TO DEEPEN THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD THROUGH PRAYER

Many people want to pray, but don't know how to get started. We work with Christian nuns and monks and other experts in prayer, who record guided prayers and teaching on prayer. We aim to help people benefit from their wisdom each day.

02 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.

03 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

We are delighted to report that over 2,000 individuals joined us in prayer throughout 2023–2024 and our reach continues to grow each year. As a small charity with a big heart, we have dedicated time to developing a platform to allow Discovering Prayer to connect with many more people.

CREATION OF POCKET ABBEY

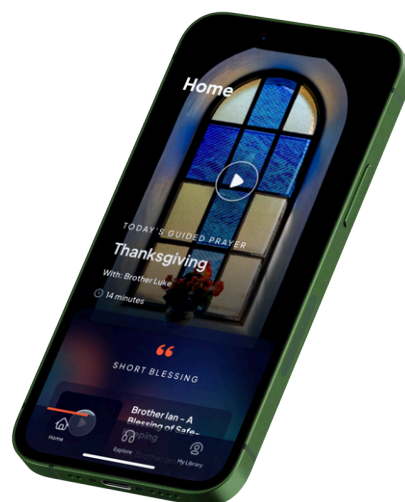
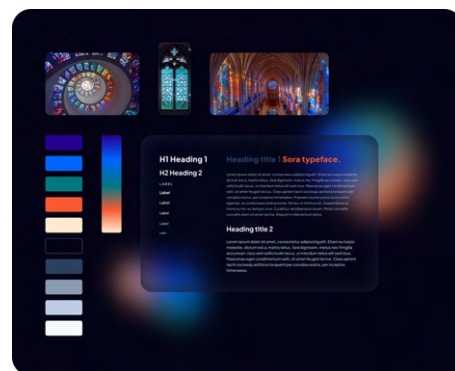
We are delighted to announce the successful development of our transformational new app, which has been tested by 200 participants. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with nearly 80% of participants rating it as either 'Excellent' or 'Very Good'.

This project was made possible through the collaboration of 12 dedicated people, including developers, UX/UI professionals, copywriters and designers from Discovering Prayer, Amperative, Fruto and Signpost Creative.

Participants have particularly praised the app's sound quality and intuitive design. We're thrilled with the positive responses received for this foundational work, which we're building on for our public launch.

'Firstly, and most importantly, the app's sound quality is excellent and much appreciated. Secondly, the simplicity of the layout is beautiful, making navigation entirely intuitive. I think the Holy Spirit has definitely been with you in this work. Well done everyone. It promises to be a thirst-quenching resource.'

– Josh, Pocket Abbey participant



DESIGNED A UNIQUE USER EXPERIENCE WITH DAILY BLESSINGS

Taking inspiration from a community member, we developed a unique feature that offers a daily prayer, followed by a blessing from a nun or monk. This has been especially well-received, with feedback such as,

‘I have particularly enjoyed the daily blessings :)’

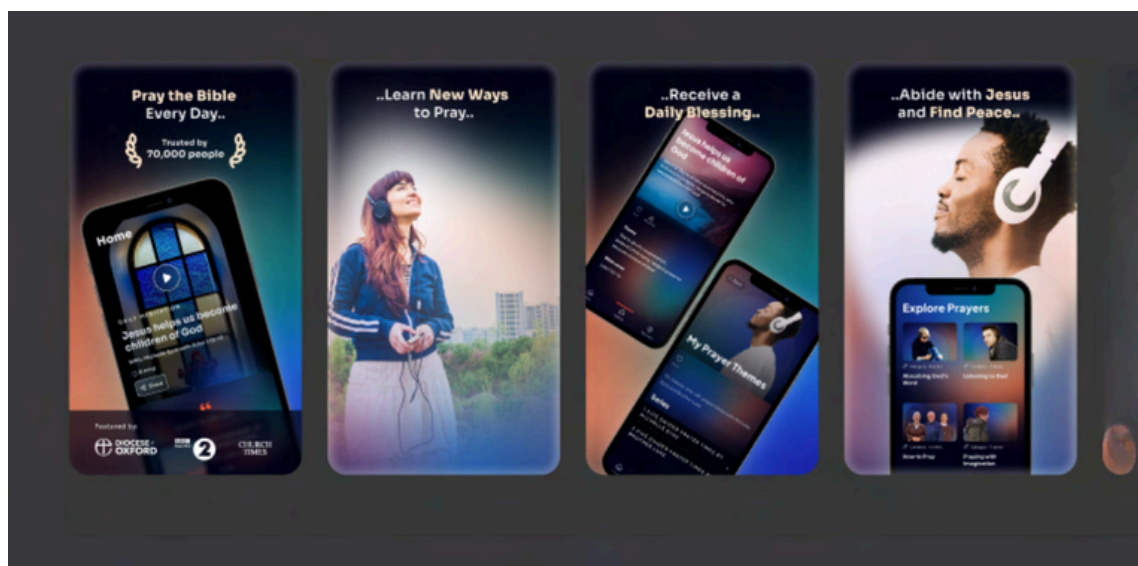
– Amy, Discovering Prayer app participant

EXCEEDING OUR TARGET FOR RECORDED BLESSINGS

The generous support of funders also enabled us to exceed our target of 25 recorded blessings. We recorded **37 blessings** and **six in-depth interviews** from **10 nuns and monks** from four religious communities.

‘I experienced a deep sense of homecoming, which was incredibly moving and something I haven’t felt before.’

– Olivia, Discovering Prayer app participant





Anglican nuns and monks who made recordings to inspire participants this year

In addition, we:

- Wrote and recorded 20 new prayer times based on St John's Gospel
- Created 12 guided meditations for Christmas Day to Epiphany
- Recorded a further 33 prayer times for Lent
- Enhanced our praying presence at St Andrew's Church, Oxford by welcoming a small group of 'Friends of Discovering Prayer'
- Provided a placement for an ordinand from a local church of England training college as part of their development, training and exposure to a breadth of Christian spirituality.

We continue to be inspired by the heartfelt feedback from our community:

'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.'

– David, Discovering Prayer participant

'Just what I needed, having felt "lost" and rudderless through significant life changes. Learning how to draw closer to God and exploring new ways of praying has been a priceless gift.'

– Adam, Pocket Abbey participant

Future plans

In 2024—2025, we aim to help even more people discover peace, strength and communion with God through prayer, particularly during challenging times. These plans are contingent on future fundraising. Our plans include:

01 PUBLIC LAUNCH OF THE DISCOVERING PRAYER APP — TO HELP TRANSFORM PEOPLE'S RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

We are excited to work towards the app's public launch for Lent 2025, with a brand new series called 'Prepare the Way for Easter'. We will gather feedback from members to see the impact of the app on individuals and communities. We will also refine the app based on user feedback and collaborate with a digital agency, Amperative, to develop a roadmap for new features, such as the ability to 'Share a Prayer'.

02 CREATE 'PRAYER FOR ALL SEASONS' —TO REACH OUT WIDELY INTO THE COMMUNITY

Following what we hope will be successful fundraising, we will launch 'Prayer for All Seasons', a calendar of prayer courses available throughout 2025 and 2026. The aim will be to provide individuals and groups with seasonal courses of prayer and teaching on Lectio Divina, contemplative/listening prayer, Ignatian prayer and daily office (short prayers throughout the day). The aim is to address the crisis of quiet in our time and allow people an opportunity to be still and know God more deeply.

03 PREPARE NEW COURSES, SUCH AS JOURNEY OF THE HEART — TO HELP PEOPLE TO BE STILL AND HEAR GOD'S VOICE

We are exploring partnerships with external organisations to create resources that connect the app with physical events such as retreats and pilgrimages, as well as engaging with religious communities. We also want to pilot groups within the app that enable prayer triplets to be created.

Financial review

Results for the year

The financial statements for the year are set out on pages 11 to 14. The receipts and payments account on page 11 reflects a surplus for the year of £13,725 (2023: £6,296). Total reserves, including restricted funds, amounted to £44,763 (2023: £31,038).

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 £29,736 and carried over £15,027 in additional funds for the building and launch of our new app in February 2025.



Thanks

The trustees are immensely grateful for the generosity of the religious communities, trusts, churches and individual donors who funded us during the year. We 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 10 March 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

Michelle Eyre, Trustee

Report of the independent examiner to the trustees

I report to the trustees on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2024, which are set out on pages 11 to 14.

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.

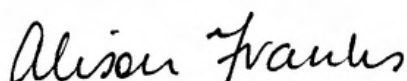
Independent examiner's statement

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.

SIGNATURE



Alison Franks CA

Director

Cornerstone Accounting

Date: 18 March 2025

11 Erngath Road, Bo'ness EH51 9DP

Receipts and payments

for the year ended 31 August 2024

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 total £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 total £
Receipts						
<i>Subscriptions</i>						
One-off	535	-	535	165	-	165
Annual	5,130	-	5,130	6,555	-	6,555
Monthly	1,195	-	1,195	1,311	-	1,311
Bursary	180	-	180	180	-	180
<i>Donations</i>						
Major donors	1,800	1,000	2,800	6,643	-	6,643
Diocese and church donations	-	-	-	1,500	-	1,500
Personal donors	568	1,391	1,959	124	1,220	1,344
Gift Aid	36	433	469	109	-	109
<i>Grant income</i>	48,900	17,610	66,510	52,220	7,280	59,500
Total receipts	58,344	20,434	78,778	68,807	8,500	77,307
Payments						
<i>Fundraising costs</i>						
Fundraising contract costs	12,092	-	12,092	14,999	-	14,999
Marketing and social media costs	1,752	-	1,752	3,777	-	3,777
Donation collection fees	266	-	266	299	-	299
<i>Charitable activities</i>						
Salary costs	28,888	5,900	34,788	35,369	-	35,369
Other staff costs	-	-	-	249	-	249
Personal customer service	1,672	-	1,672	1,100	-	1,100
Conferences and retreats	535	-	535	330	-	330
Recording costs	-	3,217	3,217	2,731	-	2,731
App design/development costs	-	5,596	5,596	-	7,500	7,500
Resources	15	-	15	65	-	65
Travel and subsistence	562	-	562	182	-	182
Insurance	321	-	321	319	-	319
IT and website costs	2,808	-	2,808	1,415	-	1,415
Equipment costs	-	-	-	69	-	69
Business address	411	-	411	383	-	383
Administration costs	329	-	329	439	-	439
Charitable donation – Christian Aid	-	-	-	1,020	-	1,020
Bank charges	9	-	9	57	-	57
Accounting costs	72	-	72	-	-	-
Cornerstone Accounting costs:						
Independent examination	500	-	500	600	-	600
Payroll fees	108	-	108	108	-	108
Total payments	50,340	14,713	65,053	63,511	7,500	71,011
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	8,004	5,721	13,725	5,296	1,000	6,296
Transfer between funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Surplus/(deficit) after transfers	8,004	5,721	13,725	5,296	1,000	6,296
Total funds brought forward	21,732	9,306	31,038	16,436	8,306	24,742
Total funds carried forward	29,736	15,027	44,763	21,732	9,306	31,038

Statement of balances

as at 31 August 2024

	Notes	2024			2023		
		Opening balance £	Surplus for year £	Closing balance £	Opening balance £	Surplus for year £	Closing balance £
Cash at bank and in hand							
Current account		31,038	13,725	44,763	24,742	6,296	31,038
Total cash at bank and in hand		31,038	13,725	44,763	24,742	6,296	31,038
Represented by:							
Unrestricted funds	2						
General fund				29,736			21,732
				<u>29,736</u>			<u>21,732</u>
Restricted funds	3						
App fund				15,027			9,306
				<u>15,027</u>			<u>9,306</u>
Total funds				44,763			31,038
Statement of assets at 31 August				2024			2023
				£			£
Expenses refund due				45			-
Staff salary overpayment				-			751
Reclaim due from HMRC				-			339
				<u>45</u>			<u>1,090</u>
Statement of liabilities at 31 August				2024			2023
				£			£
Fundraising costs due				1,416			-
Charitable donation due – Salvation Army				970			-
Accounting and independent examination fees				600			600
PAYE payable				560			-
Pension payable				278			247
Staff expenses				150			-
				<u>3,974</u>			<u>847</u>

The financial statements on pages 11 to 14 were approved by the trustees on 10 March 2025 and signed on their behalf by the undernoted:



Michelle Eyre
Trustee

The notes on pages 13 to 14 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

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's guidance on public benefit.

Receipts and payment account

For the purpose of the Receipts and Payments Account as shown on page 11, 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 1.9.23 £	Receipts £		Payments £	Transfers £	Balance at 31.8.24 £
General fund	21,732	58,344		(50,340)	-	29,736
Total unrestricted funds	21,732	58,344		(50,340)	-	29,736

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 1.9.23 £	Receipts £	Payments £	Transfers £	Balance at 31.8.24 £
App fund	9,306	20,434	(14,713)	-	15,027
Total restricted funds	9,306	20,434	(14,713)	-	15,027

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 invaluable contribution of our volunteers and trustees who lend their expertise in various areas, including audio design, editorial guidance, finance and fundraising.

Robert Eyre, who is a trustee, maintains the website as an unpaid volunteer, representing a gift in kind of £5,000 per annum. This year, Robert has also played a pivotal role in developing and maintaining the app, representing a generous in-kind gift of at least £35,000.

5. TRUSTEE AND RELATED PARTY REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

Michelle Eyre, who is a trustee, is employed by the charity as Chief Executive. Remuneration paid, including pension costs, in the financial year was £36,469 (2023: £34,013). Michelle also attended two retreats paid for by the charity at a cost of £535.

There were no remuneration or expenses paid to any of the other trustees or their related parties during the period ending 31 August 2024 (2023: nil), other than the reimbursement of direct expenses and mileage incurred on behalf of the charity.

6. TITHING TO CHRISTIAN CHARITIES

We tithe 10% of the income received from individual donors to Christian charities that are consistent with our charitable aims. This year, our donation was processed after the financial year-end and will therefore be reflected in the 2025 accounts.