

New Zion Christian Fellowship

Report and Accounts

Year ended 31 March 2024

Stewardship 
Active generosity

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

NEW ZION CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE	140 Cole Green Lane Welwyn Garden City Hertfordshire AL7 3JE
GOVERNING DOCUMENT	CIO - Foundation registered 12 November 2020
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER	1192292
TRUSTEES RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGING THE CHARITY	Susan Brown Santosh Chacko Peter Eldridge Caroline Reeves Gillian Whitcombe
BANKERS	The Charity Bank Limited The Co-operative Bank
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER	Jaimée Young Stewardship 1 Lamb's Passage LONDON EC1Y 8AB

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INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO THE TRUSTEES OF
NEW ZION CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of New Zion Christian Fellowship ('the charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024.

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.

J. Young
J. Young (Jan 6, 2025 09:00 GMT)

Jaimée Young

Stewardship
1 Lamb's Passage
LONDON
EC1Y 8AB

Date: Jan 6, 2025

NEW ZION CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>		Restricted Funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
		General Funds	Designated Funds			
		£	£	£	£	£
Income receipts						
Donations		81,650	-	23,965	105,615	117,643
Gift aid receipts		-	-	-	-	-
Grants		5,790	-	13,000	18,790	7,407
Interest		2,222	-	-	2,222	920
Other		865	-	-	865	675
Total receipts		<u>90,527</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>36,965</u>	<u>127,492</u>	<u>126,645</u>
Payments						
Payments in relation to charitable activities undertaken directly	2	52,454	-	30,350	82,803	62,510
Grants paid in relation to charitable activities undertaken by others	3	24,643	9,500	6,292	40,435	38,396
Total payments		<u>77,096</u>	<u>9,500</u>	<u>36,642</u>	<u>123,238</u>	<u>100,905</u>
Net of receipts / (payments) before transfers		13,431	(9,500)	323	4,254	25,740
Transfers between funds	5	(9,149)	9,089	60	-	-
Net movement in funds		<u>4,282</u>	<u>(411)</u>	<u>383</u>	<u>4,254</u>	<u>25,740</u>
Cash funds as at last year end		114,574	60,665	50,810	226,049	200,309
Cash funds at this year end	A	<u>118,856</u>	<u>60,254</u>	<u>51,193</u>	<u>230,303</u>	<u>226,049</u>

The notes on pages 5-6 form part of these accounts.

NEW ZION CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
AS AT THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
	General funds	Designated funds			
	£	£	£	£	£
A Cash funds					
Cash at bank with immediate access	34,468	60,254	51,193	145,914	143,881
Notice deposits	84,327	-	-	84,327	82,104
Petty cash	62	-	-	62	63
	<u>118,856</u>	<u>60,254</u>	<u>51,193</u>	<u>230,303</u>	<u>226,049</u>
B Other monetary assets					
Gift aid due to charity	42,557	-	-	42,557	18,000
	<u>42,557</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>42,557</u>	<u>18,000</u>
C Liabilities					
Falling due within one year:					
Fee for Independent Examination	1,380	-	-	1,380	1,320
	<u>1,380</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,380</u>	<u>1,320</u>
D Assets retained for charity's own use					
			Fund to which asset belongs	Value 2024	Value 2023
				£	£
Equipment			General	53,193	49,436
				<u>53,193</u>	<u>49,436</u>

The trustees have used insurance values for contents and equipment as the trustees are unable to reliably estimate current values; insurance values may differ materially from current values.

E 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 Caroline R Reeves date Jan 3, 2025
Caroline R Reeves (Jan 3, 2025 14:46 GMT)
Caroline Reeves

The notes on pages 5-6 form part of these accounts.

NEW ZION CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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.

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity. Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes. 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.

	<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>		Restricted	Total	Total
	General funds	Designated funds	Funds	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£	£
2 Payments in relation to charitable activities undertaken directly					
Staff costs	23,103	-	-	23,103	21,600
Rent	10,000	-	-	10,000	10,000
Repairs, maintenance, equipment and utilities	10,080	-	-	10,080	5,891
Foodbank ministry	-	-	30,350	30,350	14,247
Church activities, support and administration and misc.	4,173	-	-	4,173	4,404
Visiting speakers	2,700	-	-	2,700	2,665
Insurance	1,077	-	-	1,077	1,038
Governance and legal fees	1,320	-	-	1,320	2,665
	<u>52,454</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>30,350</u>	<u>82,803</u>	<u>62,510</u>

3 Grants paid in relation to charitable activities undertaken by others

Organisations:					
Iris Ministries	3,600	-	-	3,600	2,400
Friends of Charity Organisation, Pakistan	-	-	-	-	2,390
The King's School	-	-	-	-	1,000
Isabel Hospice	-	-	-	-	1,000
Tearfund	-	-	1,620	1,620	1,430
Samaritan's Purse	2,000	-	1,760	3,760	5,210
Great Lakes Outreach	4,600	-	-	4,600	2,400
Gideons UK	-	2,000	-	2,000	-
Salvation Army	-	1,000	280	1,280	-
Community Bible Study	-	-	-	-	1,000
Liberations Ministries [Elim]	-	1,000	-	1,000	-
Organisations < £1,000	100	500	2,547	3,147	3,358
Individuals	14,343	5,000	85	19,428	18,208
	<u>24,643</u>	<u>9,500</u>	<u>6,292</u>	<u>40,435</u>	<u>38,396</u>

NEW ZION CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

4 Transactions with related parties

Peter Eldridge and Caroline Reeves served as church leaders and were paid £7,701 and £7,701 [2023: £7,200 and £7,200] respectively for serving in that capacity, not for serving as trustees.

A relative of trustee Caroline Reeves was paid £100 [2023: nil], for speaking fees.

The governing document supports all above payments.

5 Movement of funds

	Opening balance £	Receipts £	Payments £	Transfers £	Closing balance £
General funds	114,574	90,527	(77,096)	(9,149)	118,856
Designated funds					
Tithe	10,665	-	(9,500)	9,089	10,254
Contingency fund	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
	<u>175,239</u>	<u>90,527</u>	<u>(86,596)</u>	<u>(60)</u>	<u>179,110</u>
Restricted funds					
Foodbank	47,990	31,098	(30,350)	-	48,738
Special offerings	2,820	5,867	(6,292)	60	2,455
	<u>50,810</u>	<u>36,965</u>	<u>(36,642)</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>51,193</u>
Total funds	<u>226,049</u>	<u>127,492</u>	<u>(123,238)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>230,303</u>

The Foodbank grants and donations are given specifically to provide food for those struggling to make ends meet. The council grants have been used in full during the year.

Special offerings relates to collections for specifically supported charities and full-time Christian workers (e.g. missionaries).

Trustees Annual Report

Summary

New Zion Christian Fellowship was approved as a Registered Charity 1192292 on the 12th November 2020. This report provides a review of the charity's legal purposes, objectives, activities, financial performance, and financial position during the period April 2023 to March 2024. Examples are provided of the results that have been achieved.

Charity Purpose

- The purpose of the charity is as defined in the Governing Document (also known as the Constitution). New Zion Christian Fellowship operates for the public benefit, the advancement of the Christian faith in Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire and such other parts of the United Kingdom and the world as the charity trustees may from time to time decide.
- To deliver this Purpose, Trustees make all financial and operational decisions by having regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Vision and Values

The Church advances the Christian faith in accordance with Biblical teachings which include clear and ethical guidelines recognised over a very long period of time. These include the requirements of the Ten Commandments and the teachings of Jesus that are often summarised in his commands to "love the Lord your God and love your neighbour as yourself".

Objectives

- To advance the Christian faith by providing a safe and loving place of worship for any member of the public who comes to the church genuinely seeking God.
- To deliver public benefit by serving the local and wider community through prayer and practical support. Our Foodbank, that has operated continuously for the last 14 years, is one example of this.

Activities and Achievements

1. Providing a place of Worship

New Zion Christian Fellowship (operating as a CIO) is an Independent Church, located in an extensive residential area and close to an NHS Trust Hospital. We are open weekly for main public worship, bible study groups and prayer meetings. Specifically:

- Sunday mornings 10.30
- Monday prayer meetings 19.30 (except bank holidays)
- Tuesday early prayer 07.00
- Friday bible study 10.30 (except bank holidays)
- Friday evening prayer and praise 20.00 (twice monthly)

Meetings are available to all members of the public and are advertised via word of mouth, church notices, our website. Typically, Sunday morning worship is attended by approximately 50-60 people, with approximately 6-10 additional people connecting via our Zoom link.

Our use of video conferencing means that worshiping together as a church is not limited by geography, health, or personal situation. Rather our extended church family from all over the UK and the world, as well as people who are unwell, or have long term health issues, can continue to connect, and participate in our Sunday worship.

Having worship and prayer at different times of day, and on different days of the week, gives everyone the opportunity to participate in our activities, regardless of their other commitments. Our website also contains a library of audio recordings from our Sunday meetings that enable people to access God's message as shared by our speaker, at any time of day or night that works for them.

Building Improvement Plans

In October 2023 the Leadership and Trustee teams began to discuss making specific improvements to the church building that would enable us to deliver a better service to the church and wider community.

Our current, 24 years old kitchen, now has some significant structural issues that are beyond a simple repair. A leader was therefore appointed for the "Kitchen Refurbishment Project" and was then asked to canvass opinion from church members on what improvements were needed and to obtain 3 quotes for the work. Following a review of these findings, the Leadership and Trustee teams have now approved both the budget and the kitchen supplier for the project.

It became apparent when planning the kitchen that lack of space was a major issue, both in terms of the safety of those working there and in terms of restricting the catering services that can be offered to a church that has steadily grown in membership over the years. It was also apparent that the Foodbank storeroom (next to the kitchen at the back of the church) had the same issues with lack of space.

In January 2024 therefore, the decision was made to temporarily halt the Kitchen Refurbishment Project to allow time to determine whether a small extension to the back of the church was feasible in terms of Planning Permission and costs. This work is ongoing.

2. Working as a Church Family

New Zion Christian Fellowship operates as a "Church Family" where no one is excluded and all family members are respected, valued and precious in the sight of God. We believe this is central to both our Values, and to delivering our Purposes as a charity in a modern and diverse world.

The principle of working as a family comes from our Faith that as Christians, we are all one body in Christ. Individual family members are just like the different parts of a human body; we all look different and we all have very different functions, but none of us can claim to be more valuable than the other.

Some examples of how being a church family delivers benefits are given below:

- The church has both regular attendees and "walk-in" visitors who come from nations all over the world and who are from very different social and economic backgrounds. We extend the same love, respect and welcome to everyone who comes through the door seeking God, regardless of their race, age, gender, physical or mental ability etc.
- Children and young teenagers have an area at the side of the hall with bean bags and books etc. In that way they stay with the church family during the Sunday Worship (rather than having a separate "Sunday School") and can participate and be prayed for at every opportunity. We also sing "Happy Birthday" to everyone – regardless of age – when their special day is near!

- Help is always on hand for families with young children and for our less mobile family members. Aware of individual needs, at our meetings we provide facilities such as cushions and more comfortable seating, a dedicated mother and baby room and a fully accessible cloakroom
- This year the Leadership and Trustee teams have made the decision to invest in two specialist chairs (cira. £1000 each) to replace the very old, second-hand arm chairs that were in use. This will result in our church building being more accessible to those with severe back pain and will allow these church members to attend our meetings with a much greater degree of comfort.
- We positively *celebrate* our international diversity! For example – individuals are free to sing and pray in whatever language feels right to them. People can share a testimony about issues affecting their family and ask for prayer for a need anywhere in the world. In common with many families, we often eat together as a church – typically a bring and share lunch after the Sunday meeting - and on these occasions, people are usually encouraged to cook their national dish so we all enjoy different cultures.

3. Helping those in Need – Foodbank

The New Zion Christian Fellowship Foodbank was started in November 2009 and has continued to be open every week to provide food to those in need. We are the only foodbank service in Welwyn Garden City and hold on to the original vision that, for people who are struggling to make ends meet, an emergency food parcel can be a gift from God at just the right time.

Operation

We operate by providing our food vouchers to organisations across Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield who work with those in need. These include health visitors, the Citizen's Advice, mental health workers, community centres, schools, doctors' surgeries, parent support workers and many more. These organisations give out vouchers to those in need, regardless of race, gender, age, or religion. This ensures there is no discrimination and our vouchers reach those who are most vulnerable.

We are willing to provide vouchers to any organisation who work with people in need. In addition, since we are seeing a growing number of church members fall into food poverty, the New Zion Christian Fellowship Leadership Team are able to assess need against a documented set of criteria and where necessary ensure the family or individual receives a foodbank voucher.

Vouchers can be exchanged for a parcel of food, normally on a Wednesday morning at our fellowship building. Food parcels are made up of non-perishable items such as tins of meat or fish, cereals, pasta, rice etc. and fresh food including fruit, vegetables and bread that have been gifted by local supermarkets. The individual chooses 20-25 items which provides enough food to last 3 days. The Food Bank is run by a team of approximately 9 to 12 volunteers.

We have partnered with another local charity – Welwyn Hatfield Community Voluntary Service (WH CVS) - who collect food parcels from us and deliver them to our customers who are unable to travel to the foodbank to collect food for themselves. Typically, WH CVS distribute 10 food parcels per week and they have our grateful thanks because this helps us tremendously.

Donations

We are incredibly thankful for all the food donations that we receive from the general public and, in response, we provide the guarantee that everything that is given will reach people in need within the community. We also receive financial donations and grants for the foodbank that are classed as Restricted Funds for this purpose only. These again are spent entirely on the Foodbank and providing for the needs of those in food poverty, because all other major costs involved in our operation (e.g., labour, building premises, administration) are provided by the Fellowship.

In common with many other foodbanks, we have seen the level of food donations decrease over the last 2 years. However, we are still blessed by financial donations, that have remained constant. We continue to have sufficient to provide for those in need and sometimes even have an excess of specific products that we can donate to other local foodbanks.

Achievements

Over the last twelve months there has yet again been a significant increase in the cost of living; and our customers are typically individuals and families in very desperate situations.

We believe our role in the local community has never been more important and therefore we continue to seek God about how we can improve and extend the support we give our clients. Here are some examples from 2023 / 24:

- During 2023, we provided a record number of 2777 food vouchers to the various organisations in the Welwyn Hatfield area who distribute them. This is an increase of nearly 20% when compared to the 2320 vouchers that we supplied in 2022. In addition, we also give emergency food parcels to those in significant need, who have been unable to obtain a voucher in time for our Wednesday opening
- Typically, the Foodbank has 60 clients every week that will receive either one food parcel or double amounts if they have a large family. This is an even more remarkable achievement given that *each* client could be collecting food for a family of up to 8 people.
- Given our expanding client base and the duty of care we have when vulnerable people come into the church building, the Foodbank Leaders felt it was appropriate to arrange a Safeguarding refresher training webinar for all foodbank volunteers. The event, "Safeguarding Adults at Risk of Harm" was delivered by the "thirtyone:eight" training organisation
- We have been truly blessed to receive Grants from Welwyn Hatfield (WH) Council, specifically to help those who are in food poverty and struggling with their winter fuel bills.
- In 2023, we combined a £2000 fuel Grant (received from WH Council during the previous financial year) with £2900 of Foodbank funds and used this money to provide 16 families with approximately £300 each towards their fuel bills.
- In January 2024, we received a further £9000 from WH Council, who then asked for the funds to be distributed as follows:
 1. £6000: The Council referred 40 clients to us, all of whom were struggling with rent arrears. They asked us to provide this group with a food parcel and help them with £150 each towards their winter fuel bills.
 2. £3000: The Council then asked our Foodbank Leaders to identify a further 20 different Foodbank clients and, in the same way, help them with £150 each towards fuel costs.
- In all cases, fuel bill payments have been paid directly into the individual's energy account by our charity. This ensures that the money is used for the correct purpose.
- The 2023 Christmas Foodbank on Wednesday, 20th December was our busiest ever, with a record number of 113 clients (very many of them collecting for a whole family). We were able to provide Christmas Food hampers, turkey crowns, wrapped Christmas gifts for children, the normal food basics, as well as an extended range of household goods e.g. toilet rolls and washing powder. The generosity of those who donate to us is overwhelming and allows us to make a difference in so many people's lives.

By God's Grace, we are not a "struggling foodbank" but rather one that continues, as its always done, to serve the local community as a provider of food. More than this though, we encourage, we listen as people share their difficult situations, and we pray with, and for, our customers. We have the privilege of seeing the impact of our work and individuals changed by God's love.

4. Helping those in Need – Prayer

We believe in the power of prayer and therefore it is fundamental to every aspect of how we deliver benefit to both the local and world-wide community. We believe in the need for both individual prayer and for prayer as a fellowship “body” (the whole church united in faith for a specific outcome).

We have several approaches to prayer which include:

- Prayer during any of our regular meetings
- Specific healing and intercession prayer
- The “Prayer Chain” – individual prayer requests can be sent to an administrator, who then shares the request via Text and WhatsApp with all participating members of the church.

Individuals within the church can request prayer for themselves, their family and the people they come into contact with in their daily lives. As a body we come together to pray for local issues, for hospitals and schools, for governments, and for whole nations.

5. Providing Premises for Baptism, Marriage, and Memorial Services

While this is a very much smaller part of our activities, it is none the less an intrinsic part of both advancing the Christian faith and delivering public benefit. The church building is licenced for the purposes of marriage and a member of the Spiritual Leadership team holds the pastoral responsibility for conducting both marriage ceremonies and funerals. In addition, we hold special services where infants / babies can be dedicated to God and where new Christians who have come to know Jesus as their Saviour, can be Baptised.

Grants and Donations

The church charity also achieves its stated Purposes of delivering public benefit and advancing the Christian faith by giving financially to charities, organisations, and people around the world whose work aims to achieve these same goals.

Examples of the types of organisations who receive our donations include numerous local churches and local community volunteer groups (e.g. Herts Welcome Refugees; Hertfordshire Communities 1st; Christchurch WGC) as well as larger charities such as Tear Fund; UCB (a Christian news website and radio station); Christian Schools Trust; and Samaritans Purse.

In cases where money is gifted to an individual rather than their charity or organisation, it is done so on the basis that the individual will use the funds to support their missionary work and in full alignment with the New Zion Christian Fellowship Charity Purpose as defined at the beginning of this report.

Typically, we have three different approaches to funding for Grants and Donations:

- **Monthly Missions Donations.** This funding comes directly from the charity’s income and is used to support a missionary in Pemba, Mozambique and to give regular monthly donations to Iris Ministries (who provide support to communities in crisis in Africa); and to Great Lakes Outreach (GLO), Burundi. In 2023-24, our total donations were increased from £1350 to £1550 per month as a result of increasing our gift to GLO by £200 per month. We also made additional payments to our Pemba missionary to cover basic health insurance and travel expenses back to the UK, both for her and her son (for whom she is the sole parent).
- **Church Charity Tithe.** In accordance with the Biblical principle of “tithing,” 10% of the charity’s total income is put into a designated fund within the church accounts. At regular intervals during the year, the Spiritual Leadership Team then seek wisdom from God as to where portions of the fund should be “sown” (given, donated) in order to achieve the charity’s purposes. For this reason, we believe we are

small shareholders in the success of very many diverse, world-wide Christian ministries. For example, in 2023 / 24, the list of charities that received a gift from the Tithe include, Good News UK (formally The Gideons); Derek Prince Ministries; The Eternal Wall of Prayer; and Liberation Ministries.

- **Monthly Offering.** Every month, church members are given the option of contributing money to a specific charity, Christian ministry, or individual. These causes always share our goals of advancing the Christian faith and delivering public benefit, so supporting them is a key element of our work.

Volunteers and Employees

Unpaid volunteers deliver most of the church charity's work and therefore we can provide public benefit with minimal overheads. Volunteer roles include the leadership, management and administration of the charity, the foodbank, the meetings, and the finances. The speakers at our Sunday Morning worship are typically ordinary members of the church, as are the people who run our Bible study groups and who lead prayer and healing meetings.

In addition to volunteers, the charity also has three employees.

Volunteer Documentation and Training

- All volunteers are required to complete an application form and provide a Reference.
- Any volunteers working in the church building are made aware of the fire evacuation procedure.
- Volunteers working at the Foodbank, or any role involving children, young people, or adults at risk of harm, are required to have a DBS check and to sign / comply with New Zion Christian Fellowship's Code of Conduct. In addition, these volunteers are made aware of the church's own Safeguarding Policy and are encouraged to undertake a formal 2-hour Safeguarding Training Course.
- We have volunteers formally assigned to key roles such as Safeguarding Coordinator, Fire Warden and Treasurer who undertake any specific training required for their role.

Review of Employee Contracts of Employment

- Since November 2020 when the charity was established, our employees have been paid at a rate equivalent to £7200 per annum.
- In November 2023, the non-employee Trustees met and agreed to update the Contracts of Employment for all three of our employees to include a statement saying that as a working principle (subject to annual confirmation by non employee Trustees) salaries will be increased every year in line with the September (CPI) Inflation rate.
- Non-employee Trustees also agreed that this increase should be applied retrospectively for 2021 (2.9%) and 2022 (10.1%) as well as for that current year 2023 (6.7%). The overall, resulted in an increase from £600 to £725.30 per month, and this was paid from the 1st December 2023.

Financial Review

1. Review of Financial Position

The charity is in a strong and stable financial position. The income and outgoings have remained stable throughout the year, and we hold more than the reserve agreed by the trustees.

Restricted funds

There are 2 restricted funds: the foodbank and offerings (a monthly collection for a variety of causes the charity supports). The foodbank had outgoings of 31K and began the year at £48K and finished at £48K. This is a significant increase in spending on last year (14K), which was partially due to 9k of winter fuel donations directly paid into food bank users' energy bills. These were largely funded by grants from the council. Excluding the winter fuel top ups, our yearly spend was £22K. We believe that keeping a balance equivalent to two years' expenditure keeps us in a sound financial position to continue to regularly help many people who need the foodbank, even if donations were to decrease.

Unrestricted funds

The funds started the year at £175K and finished at £179K. Given the agreed reserve of £112K we are in a very good position. We hold aside 10% of income in a designated 'tithe' fund that is exclusively for giving to other Christian work initiatives.

2. Sources of Income

The charity receives donations from church members and from other members of the public. We do not organize or run "fundraising" events. Rather everything that comes to us is as a result of individuals seeking God for his Will on what they should give to us.

In addition, external organisations sometimes provide grants for the foodbank and members of the public sometimes make financial donations or donate food. Everything given for the foodbank is held in a Restricted Fund and dedicated for that purpose only.

3. Policy on holding Reserves

In 2020, the church building experienced some significant subsidence issues as a result of trees owned by the local council damaging a section of the building's foundations. This has left us in the position that we are now unable to obtain building insurance to cover any future, similar incident. The Trustees have recommended that the charity holds a Contingency Fund of £50,000 to cover the worst-case event of having to pay for repair to the building foundations at some point in the next 20 years. After this period, building insurance will again be possible.

In addition to the Contingency Fund, our policy is to hold a standard reserve of 6 months outgoings (currently £62,000) making a total of £112,000 held within our Unrestricted Funds.

Structure, Governance and Management

1. Governing Document

New Zion Christian Fellowship is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). The organisation's Governing Document type is a CIO Foundation Constitution.

2. Trustee Governance

Procedures for the appointment, training, retirement, and removal of Trustees are all defined in the CIO Governing Document / Foundation Constitution. Key points include, but are not limited to, the following:

Appointment

- Charity Trustees are appointed by a resolution passed at a meeting of the Spiritual Leadership Team. In alignment with our Statement of Faith (defined in the CIO Governing Document / Constitution) the Team listens to God the Holy Spirit when reviewing, discussing, and approving all decisions.
- Trustees are appointed for a term of three years – unless the charity Trustees decide otherwise
- In selecting individuals for appointment as charity Trustees, the Spiritual Leadership have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the CIO.
- In addition, all Trustees must be more than 18 years old and subscribe and adhere to, in belief and lifestyle, the Statement of Faith.

Training of New Trustees

On or before their appointment, charity Trustees provide each new Trustee with the documentation listed below and follow up on an individual basis to ensure understanding.

- CIO Governing Document / Constitution and any amendments made to it
- A copy of the CIO's latest Charity Trustees' Annual Report and statement of accounts
- New Zion Christian Fellowship's "Policies and Documents" that are held in a secure access section of our website – www.newzioncf.net . These include broad foundational policies on Safeguarding, Equal Opportunities, Volunteer Management, Safety, Privacy / GDPR, as well specific procedures e.g., for the Management of Expenditure, Hospitality and Entertainment Policy etc. that are critical to the role.

In addition (as an option) we also offer the "Stewardship Trustee Training" course to our new trustees.

Retirement of Trustees

While a trustee can cease to hold office for a number of reasons we expect resignation, retirement or the completion of a term of office (without re-appointment) to be primary triggers for the change.

In more exceptional circumstances, the charity Trustees may recommend that an individual Trustee should be removed by virtue of their continued absence from meetings, or because the individual is deemed to be no longer capable of fulfilling their duties. This decision would then need to be endorsed by a resolution passed by at least 75% of the Spiritual Leadership team.

Renewal of Trustee Roles

November 2023 saw the three-year anniversary of the charity being established, and therefore two members of the Trustee Team, Susan Brown and Gillian Whitcombe, came to the end of their three-year

terms. The Spiritual Leadership Team invited both to renew their Trustee Roles and both agreed - Susan for a period of 12 months and Gillian for 3 years.

3. Trustee Meeting Structure

To ensure timely decision making the Trustee Team have agreed to adopt a structure of standing items to be added to the Agendas of their April / May end of financial year meeting and their November mid year meeting. These items include topics such as the approval of the Year End Accounts, review of the Risk Register, employee salary review, annual appraisal of our current utility providers and a review of all the charity's policies.

4. Policy Review

During 2023, Trustees conducted the annual review of the charity's policies. The outcome was as follows:

- Hospitality Policy - was updated to grant an increase for inflation to the cost per head for meals
- Fire Warden Policy - was changed to reflect the name of a new person taking on the role
- The Safeguarding and all other Policies were assessed as no changes needed
- The then absence of a Risk Management Policy and a Serious Incident Reporting Policy was identified as being a gap that needed to be addressed. Policies for both were therefore written and then approved by the Leadership and Trustee Teams.
- In addition, a Risk Register has also been compiled and will be reviewed regularly by both teams. More details are given in the Risk Statement below.

New Zion Policies are all available via the charity's website. The Leadership Team also deliver an annual Policy Reminder to the whole church during a Sunday meeting at the beginning of the year. This includes key contacts for specific items, fire evacuation procedures, safeguarding policies etc.

5. Risk Statement

- The Leadership and Trustee Teams of New Zion Christian Fellowship acknowledge that the responsibility for the management and control of the charity rests with them and that an integral part of this is to have a risk management policy and a risk register that are both reviewed on a regular basis.
- Our policy is to identify and manage the possible and probable risks that the charity may face in the short and medium term to help ensure that:
 - a. Risks are known and monitored
 - b. The charity can make the most of opportunities in the confidence that risks are properly managed
 - c. The charity aims are more successfully achieved and forward planning is improved.
- The Leadership and Trustee Teams recognise that not all risks can or should be avoided or fully mitigated but would seek to mitigate, as far as is possible, those that it considers to pose the most significant threat to the future viability and success of the charity.
- Overall, the Leadership and Trustee Teams have classified the risk profile of the charity as **LOW**, but recognise that this profile may change over time as a result of changes in external circumstances and influences
- Risks are reviewed at least annually at both Leadership and Trustee Team Meetings and any outcomes from these discussions are documented in the meeting minutes and the risk register. It is recognised that this assessment will necessarily involve a level of subjectivity however the aim is for all significant risks to be identified, documented and then actions put in place to mitigate them.

Funds held as Custodian Trustee on behalf of Others

None - Not Applicable

Exemptions from Disclosure

None - Not Applicable

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)	<i>Caroline R Reeves</i> Caroline R Reeves (Jan 3, 2025 14:46 GMT)	
Full name(s)	Caroline Reeves	
Position (e.g., Secretary, Chair)		

Date Jan 3, 2025