

**COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: NI008002**  
**CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 104852**

**Scripture Union (Northern Ireland)**  
**Company Limited by Guarantee**  
**Financial Statements**  
**31 March 2024**

Finegan Gibson Ltd  
Chartered accountants & statutory auditor  
Causeway Tower  
9 James Street South  
Belfast  
BT2 8DN

# **Scripture Union (Northern Ireland)**

**Company Limited by Guarantee**

## **Financial Statements**

**Year ended 31 March 2024**

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# Scripture Union (Northern Ireland)

## Company Limited by Guarantee

### Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)

#### Year ended 31 March 2024

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The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the financial statements of the Charity for the year ended 31 March 2024.

#### Reference and administrative details

<b>Registered charity name</b>	Scripture Union (Northern Ireland)
<b>Charity registration number</b>	104852
<b>Company registration number</b>	NI008002
<b>Principal office and registered office</b>	Beechill Business Park 96 Beechill Road Belfast BT8 7QN

#### The trustees

C Stewart (Treasurer)	(Appointed 14 November 2023)
A Steele	(Appointed 14 November 2023)
W Paul	(Appointed 14 November 2023)
E Paul	(Appointed 14 November 2023)
A Aicken	(Resigned 11 June 2024)
M McKeown	
R Craig	
J Cubitt (Treasurer)	(Resigned 20 June 2023)
H Marshall	
M Mason	
Beth Patterson	

**Company secretary** D Wharton

**Auditor** Finegan Gibson Ltd  
Chartered accountants & statutory auditor  
Causeway Tower  
9 James Street South  
Belfast  
BT2 8DN

**Bankers** Ulster Bank Limited  
Arches Retail Park  
Belfast  
BT5 4AF

**Solicitors** Hewitt and Gilpin  
Thomas House  
14-16 James Street South  
Belfast  
BT2 7GA

# **Scripture Union (Northern Ireland)**

## **Company Limited by Guarantee**

### **Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)***

**Year ended 31 March 2024**

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#### **Structure, governance and management**

- Governing Document

Scripture Union Northern Ireland (herein referred to as "the Company", "the Charity" or "SUNI") is a company limited by guarantee, governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 16 January 1970.

- Appointment of Directors

In line with the Articles of Association, the Directors have the power to appoint or co-opt a fit and proper person to serve for a period of time as a Director. Directors serve for three-year terms and are eligible for re-election at the end of their term.

- Trustee induction and training

On appointment, new directors receive a briefing on their legal obligations under charity and company law, the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the strategic plan and recent financial performance of the Company. In March 2024, all Trustees received refresher training in relation to the duties and responsibilities of Charity trustees.

- Arrangements for Setting Pay and Remuneration of Key Management Personnel

The Directors consider the board of Directors, who are the Charity's trustees, and the senior management team to comprise the Key Management Personnel of the Charity in charge of directing and controlling, running, and operating the Charity. All directors give their time free, and no director received remuneration in the year. The Directors set the pay for senior staff at a level they believe reflects the nature of the role and the level of responsibility involved. This is reviewed annually in the light of the current performance, with reference being made to inflation and the cost-of-living index.

# **Scripture Union (Northern Ireland)**

## **Company Limited by Guarantee**

### **Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)***

**Year ended 31 March 2024**

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#### **Structure, governance and management *(continued)***

- Organisation structure and how the Charity makes decisions

The Company is governed by its Board of Directors (known as the SU Council) which operates as detailed in the Charity's governing document, the Memorandum and Articles of Association. The Board meets nine times a year. A General Director (Damian Wharton who is not a director under company law) is appointed by the Board to administer the day-to-day operations of the Charity. To facilitate effective operations, the General Director has delegated authority approved by the Directors for operational matters including finance, employment and delivery of the charitable objectives.

- Relationships with related parties

There are no known related parties.

- Risk management

The Directors have a risk management strategy which comprises:

- An annual review of the risks the Charity may face
- The establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the plan, and
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the Charity should those risks materialise.

The strategy has helped identify the major risks to which the Charity is exposed, assessed those risks and put in place systems to mitigate the risks. This has resulted in better emergency procedure and contingency plans and has also given an impetus towards better planning. Particular attention has been focused on non-financial risks arising from fire, health and safety of staff and volunteers, safety and security of the premises and safeguarding which is of paramount importance. A key element of the management of financial risks is the setting of reserves policy and its regular review by the Directors.

# Scripture Union (Northern Ireland)

## Company Limited by Guarantee

### Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

#### Year ended 31 March 2024

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##### Objectives and activities

The Aims of Scripture Union (Northern Ireland) are:  
Working with the churches, Scripture Union aims:

1. To make God's Good News known to children, young people and families and
2. To encourage people of all ages to meet God daily through Bible and prayer so that they may;
  - come to personal faith in our Lord Jesus Christ
  - grow in Christian maturity and
  - become both committed church members and servants of a world in need

To remain connected to our current context we have created a Strategy Document for our new strategy period to 2030. In summary, this states:

##### 1) Our **Vision**

- To see all children and young people transformed by God's Good News.

##### 2) Our **Mission**

That every child and young person in Northern Ireland would have the opportunity to:

- Hear and respond to God's Good News
- Discover and explore the Bible
- Develop and grow in their faith journey

At the core of everything we do with children and young people there is a desire to:

- Communicate with them in ways that are creative, engaging and relevant to their personal circumstances
- Open God's Word with all people, helping them gain greater and deeper understanding of God's big story
- See children, young people and their families progress in their lifelong journey from the here and now to eternity.

##### 3) Our **Values**

Each of our values, as set out below, helps to bring clarity and focus to every aspect of our ministry. They remind us of the direction in which we are travelling and provide a sense of purpose as we relate to each other and to those we work alongside. In all we say and do, our desire is to honour God.

- Collaboration
- Dignity
- Excellence
- Integrity

##### 4) Our **Strategic Priorities** and **Underpinning Foundations**

We want to be clear and transparent in where we choose to focus our attention throughout our new strategy period. These strategic priorities will help inform all that we do and enable us to achieve our overall vision, and they are as follows:

- Biblical Depth
- People Development
- Transformative Delivery



# **Scripture Union (Northern Ireland)**

## **Company Limited by Guarantee**

### **Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)***

#### **Year ended 31 March 2024**

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Strong foundations provide us with confidence to continue to step out into God's plans and purposes. We recognise the importance of each foundation and seek to see each one strengthened and integrated across the SUNI movement.

- Spiritual Disciplines
- Excellent Governance
- Financial Stability
- Compelling Communication
- Adept Administration

In pursuance of our vision and mission, each department and subsequently each member of the staff team, uses an action plan to assist them in moving towards seeing our vision become reality. These action plans are reviewed on an annual basis and adjusted accordingly.

Each of our schools' workers and the volunteer teams who work alongside them, have had a variety of invitations to deliver curriculum-based content, lead assemblies and facilitate SU Groups in a variety of schools across NI.

Camps and Missions continue to be popular with the children and young people who attend our summer activities, and with the creation of a ministry development team, it has been encouraging to see greater collaboration across all that we do. We have seen continued growth across our schools' work, camps and missions alongside an improving infrastructure. Together we are interacting with around 65,000 children and young people and this year we mobilised over 1,700 volunteers.

# Scripture Union (Northern Ireland)

## Company Limited by Guarantee

### Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

#### Year ended 31 March 2024

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#### **Achievements and performance**

The three core areas of our work are:

##### ***Schools Work***

Since April 2023, SUNI staff (Schools Team and Ministry Development Team) have engaged with almost 59,000 pupils in 317 schools. Like previous years, we have engaged with some of these pupils on multiple occasions throughout the year. Again, the bulk of our engagements have been in Primary Schools (219) with visits to 67 Post Primary Schools and 31 Special Schools. Controlled Schools continue to be where the majority of our bookings come from. Our staff, collectively, visited 14 'new' schools this year, which continues to build on this encouraging figure over the last few years. Assemblies continue to be a key way for us to engage with schools and, this year, we delivered 531 assemblies (56 in Special Schools, 47 in Post Primary Schools and 428 in Primary Schools). Our staff were accompanied into schools by over 200 volunteers this year. Additionally, about 16 unaccompanied Church Teams engaged with schools (made up of over 40 individuals). Our District Support Teams (DSTs) are made up of 73 volunteers who support the Schools Workers in our ten districts. Finally, SU Groups in schools are run by well over 400 volunteers, the majority of whom are teachers. 8 Districts delivered Inter-schools' events this year combining 36 schools (one was a Primary 'Connect' event and the rest gathered together Post Primary SU Groups).

In terms of school SU Groups, our staff visited over 100 groups this year where they met with over 3480 pupils. The attendance at the groups visited was on average 34 members per group, with some groups numbering more than 100 whilst others were in single figures. Encouragingly, 11 new SU Groups were set up this year. 5 districts offered training events to churches this year with a total of at least 130 participants, as well as various one-to-one training opportunities.

The North Coast Schools district celebrated its 20th anniversary this year with a year of special events to mark the occasion, including a special service reuniting all four previous district workers.

This year has seen some changes in our Schools Team, with new workers established in five districts (of whom four are permanent, (one part time) and one is a Maternity Cover). In addition, we have also rebranded our work in schools as our 'Schools Project' rather than using the term 'E3', albeit we continue to explain this work under the headings of 'Engage', 'Equip' and 'Empower'. Our schools' work is now referred to as 'Scripture Union Schools Project in <District name>'.

##### ***Ministry Development***

The Ministry Development Team works across the organisation. It is made up of a team of children's youth, special needs, volunteer and chaplaincy support coordinators and headed up by the Ministry Development Director, with the aim of strategically delivering, advising and supporting ministry development in a variety of ways.

Some of the highlights of the past year have included:

- The addition to the team of Chaplaincy Support Coordinator. This is part of a 2-year pilot project, focused on the East Belfast and North Down & Newtownards areas, with the aim of supporting churches as they seek to engage with schools in holistic ways.
- Our annual 'Making Your Mark' event is coordinated by our Youth Ministry Coordinator and aims to support senior post-primary pupils who are involved in their School SU Groups. We expanded the event to a whole Saturday and had 117 pupils in attendance, from schools across Northern Ireland.



# Scripture Union (Northern Ireland)

## Company Limited by Guarantee

### Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

#### Year ended 31 March 2024

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- Both our Youth & Children Ministry Coordinators are involved in the production of the 'Shine' and 'Shine Kids' resources for school SU groups, alongside other SU movements, Crown Jesus Ministries and Logos Ministries International. These (mainly online) resources continue to be popular, with nearly 250 registrations to use the materials in total over the past year.
- Our Children's Ministry Coordinator also continues to be involved in the production of 'Back to School with God' - a resource for churches to use at the beginning of a new academic year. Again, these continue to be popular, with 90 registering to use the 2023 resources.
- We have seen a growing interest in our 'Kids Quest' RE curriculum resources for Primary Schools, with opportunities to deliver training on this for several schools during the course of the past year.
- Our Special Needs Coordinator has seen an increase in demand for training in this area - particularly in churches (both locally and at a denomination level). We also had an intern for six months, who was particularly focused in this area.
- We continue to deliver training in various contexts more generally, including training sessions in Union College (PCI), the Methodist training college (Edgehill), the Irish Baptist College and several sessions at Stranmillis University (teacher training) College.
- Working alongside the Safeguarding Team, we have also supported the development of new online training materials - for use with both staff and volunteers.
- Our Volunteer Coordinator has been intricately involved in the development of a new volunteer website over the past couple of years, as well as coordinating work and university placement students and various other operational aspects of volunteering processes. Recognising the more predominantly operational aspects, this role will move to be line managed by our newly appointed Operations Manager in the future.

During 2023/24 SUNI has also continued to provide Bible Notes, along with a limited amount of Sunday School Light Material. We have 55 annual subscriptions for Bible Notes (32 individual orders and 23 church orders) bringing in gross sales of £7675. There are approximately 375 Bible Notes going out every quarter. The majority of these are posted out and around 20 orders are collected at the office. There continues to be very encouraging feedback from our customers on the quality of the content of the Bible Notes and of the service they have received from SUNI.

#### **Camps and Missions**

This year saw a further growth in our ministries with an increase in volunteers signing up to serve and also increased numbers of families engaging in our programmes.

In-person training of key volunteers resumed and we had positive feedback from those engaging with it on its impact on their leading of our many summer teams. Training events happened in various locations and at strategic points in the year. These helped to develop and nurture our volunteers to harness their giftings and grow in their skills and abilities, equipping them to lead well in the summer, both representing the movement and declaring God's Word clearly and effectively in practice.

Summer 2023 saw 35 programmes, with 15 residential camps and 20 missions. Over the eight weeks of summer, we were so encouraged by the engagement of people from all walks of life, those new to NI, those from all economics backgrounds, those both having faith and those experiencing God for the first time. Further development of infrastructure within the movement has made it easier for both volunteers and the public to engage with all the opportunities we provide. We have streamlined and automated several processes to ensure we use our time and resources well, working with diligence and integrity.

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# Scripture Union (Northern Ireland)

## Company Limited by Guarantee

### Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

#### Year ended 31 March 2024

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We have further explored ways to ensure our ministries are accessible to all and have been working on developing support and opportunities for those with special educational needs and those with English as a second language, or those new to Northern Ireland. This has been a really exciting process and will be developed over the next few years.

#### **Public benefit assessment**

For each of the departments within SUNI (being the Schools Department, Camps & Missions Department, and Ministry Development Team), we identify and monitor on a regular basis:

1. Who is engaging with our work as a participant/beneficiary, including both attendees at events we host or in which we participate, and engagement with online resources;
2. Our volunteer base - to include levels of engagement with the wider organisation and attendance at training provided by SUNI;
3. The overall effectiveness of the programmes and engagements which we offer, measured in a number of ways including through attendee numbers, feedback received (both formal and informal) and referrals made;
4. How our activities fulfil our strategic priorities.

#### **Public benefit statement**

The public benefit requirement is defined in the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 and states that the organisation's purposes must be for the public benefit in order to be charitable. The Trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland pertaining to section 4(b) of the Charities Act (being the public benefit requirement statutory guidance). The Trustees are of the opinion that the organisation's activities have helped to achieve its charitable purposes and provide a public benefit.

# **Scripture Union (Northern Ireland)**

## **Company Limited by Guarantee**

### **Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)***

#### **Year ended 31 March 2024**

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##### **Financial review**

At the Board meetings, the Trustees are furnished with an updated set of management accounts. These accounts are presented to the Board by the Treasurer who attends all Board meetings in her capacity as a Trustee.

Budgets and forecasts for the year ahead are prepared by the Senior Management Team and General Director, with the oversight of the Treasurer, for consideration and approval by the Board. At the Board meetings, the Trustees are furnished with the most recent set of management accounts detailing the performance of each income and expenditure stream against budget along with a variance analysis. This ensures that the Treasurer, who attends all Board meetings in her capacity as a Trustee, together with the other Trustees regularly monitor and scrutinise financial performance during the year.

The Charity's Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2024 and Balance Sheet as at that date are shown in the attached financial statements.

Income for the year to 31 March 2024 was £1,145,073 compared to £894,748 on the previous year. Expenditure for the year was £1,026,164 compared to £982,812 in the previous year. These figures led to a surplus for the year of £118,909 compared to a deficit of £88,064 in the prior year.

At 31 March 2024, Unrestricted Funds stood at £1,694,151 (of which £1,182,470 was invested in Fixed Assets and Investments leaving net current assets of £511,681) and Restricted Funds were £274,335.

The Directors are committed to ensuring the financial position of the Charity is adequate to support the ongoing work of the organisation in schools, camps, missions and through ministry development across Northern Ireland. The Directors are fully aware of the effect of the current economic climate and the impact that has had on the funds available to SU particularly in relation to voluntary donations and sales of resource material. The raising of funds and potential new sources of income is a regular item on the agenda of the Board while the current financial position is continually under review.

##### ***Reserves Policy and Going Concern***

The Board of Directors has established a policy whereby the Unrestricted Funds not committed or invested in tangible Fixed Assets ("the free reserves") held by the Charity should be 3-6 months of the expenditure, which equates to between £256,541 and £513,082 in general funds. At this level, the Directors feel that they would be able to continue in the current activities of the Charity in the event of a significant drop in funding when it would obviously be necessary to consider how the funding would be replaced or activities changed. The Directors are committed to raising funds to stay within this target level in future periods.



# **Scripture Union (Northern Ireland)**

## **Company Limited by Guarantee**

### **Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)***

#### **Year ended 31 March 2024**

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##### **Plans for future periods**

With our new 2030 strategy now launched, we are seeking to deliver on our strategic priorities through the key areas of our work

- Schools
- Camps & Missions
- Ministry Development

With the recent appointment of an Operations Manager, we will endeavour to strengthen the administrative functions that support much of the front facing work that we do. We are aware of our need to continue working on our Fundraising Strategy, seeking to meet realistic targets throughout the year.

##### **Trustees' responsibilities statement**

The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the applicable Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. To help them discharge these responsibilities, the trustees have put in place a suite of Financial Policies, and compliance with these policies is internally monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

## **Scripture Union (Northern Ireland)**

### **Company Limited by Guarantee**

### **Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)***

**Year ended 31 March 2024**

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#### **Auditor**

Each of the persons who is a trustee at the date of approval of this report confirms that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Charity's auditor is unaware; and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Charity's auditor is aware of that information.

#### **Small company provisions**

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies' exemption.

The trustees' annual report was approved on 12 November 2024 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:



R Craig  
Trustee