

PRECEPT MINISTRIES IRELAND LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019).

Objectives and activities

Our Mission and Vision

The mission of Precept Ministries International and Precept Ministries Ireland is, 'Engaging people in relationship with God through knowing His Word' throughout the Island of Ireland. The vision is "Every believer in Christ living out God's Word everyday".

The objects of the company are to advance the Christian religion. This is achieved through:

- equipping people with Inductive Bible Study skills to help them to study and understand the Bible for themselves.
- providing various levels of study resources and leader training
- making training and resources available to all.

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

Achievements and performance

Post Covid

The year 2022 / 2023 has seen a return to more in-person gatherings and the shift away from online classes.

Over the year, there was a slow and gradual restart of some study groups meeting in person. However, meeting online using Zoom was still key to the life of the ministry as we seek to engage with students over the whole island of Ireland. The following initiatives which were commenced in response to the Covid situation have proved to be beneficial in unexpected ways and will continue to be a part of our ministry plan:

- i. We wrote and provided free online weekly Bible study resources with permissions for these to be passed on and downloaded as required. These studies still attract around 200 downloads per month. We will continue to provide new studies at regular intervals throughout the year.
- ii. Online Bible study groups called "Zoom into the Bible" have attracted people from all over the Island of Ireland and have enabled those who do not have local classes to engage in Precept Bible Studies. The diversity within the groups has added a fresh dynamic to the discussions which is very positive.
- iii. We developed an intentional social media strategy to increase the reach of our ministry, and this continues to be developed, and monitored for effectiveness and impact.
- iv. We developed a variety of online workshops to introduce people to Inductive Bible Study Skills and, due to low costs in providing these, we were able to offer these free of charge to attendees. Three more workshops have been developed during the year 2022/2023, each focusing on a different biblical genre.

PRECEPT MINISTRIES IRELAND LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1. Staff

During this year staff have returned to normal pre-covid patterns of work.

There have been no changes in our Staff team although some of their roles and responsibilities have been adapted to the changing needs of the ministry.

In October 2022 the National Director indicated she would be stepping down at 31st March 2023. The Board commenced a recruitment process and a new National Director for the ministry has been appointed to commence in post on 1st April 2023.

2. Leaders / Trainers

During the year 2022/2023, much of our focus has been to support and encourage leaders.

The administration staff in the office are also trained Bible study leaders and are equipped to advise and encourage leaders who contact the office. These conversations have played a key role in making leaders feel connected to the ministry and given them confidence as to where to find help and support.

We have delivered a number of Precept leaders' events and Leader training to encourage those who wish to start their own class.

A number of churches were also contacted and training given to their small group Bible study leaders.

We have also had the privilege of supporting a leader in a missional church community in Belfast as they set up some studies with members of the community.

3. Bible Study Resources

The team has continued to write short studies that were offered free of charge as downloadable documents, and these were made available to churches to use during the times when they were unable to meet in the church building.

These resources were used widely not only in Ireland, but we had reports of them being used in many countries around the world including England, Scotland, Switzerland, China, Malaysia, New Zealand and America. The number of people that have been reached is unknown, but it is exciting and encouraging to see that, despite the restrictions of this past year, we have been able to reach a much wider audience. We receive much encouragement to continue to produce these studies and one of our administration team has been increasingly involved in producing these studies for regular distribution.

Print NI in Mallusk continue to print many of our resources on demand and the remainder of our studies are sent from Precept in the USA. Due to increased printing and carriage charges, we are continually reviewing costs on these materials. It has been necessary to review our pricing and increase the cost of books as well as postage.

As the situation in Ukraine deteriorated and refugees started to arrive in Ireland, we were able to print suitable resources in both Ukrainian and Russian, and we have been offering these study books free of charge, thanks to the generous giving of many of our students. This is one of the benefits of being part of a global ministry.

PRECEPT MINISTRIES IRELAND LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

4. Social Media

Precept Ireland have a presence on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter with an average of 8 posts per week. Over the year engagement has increased on all platforms.

Precept Ireland also has a channel on YouTube, and some leaders have been using the videos posted there to help them as they lead their classes.

5. Training

During this year we have continued to teach four basic workshops:

- i. Short taster workshop lasting 30-40 minutes based on Psalm 23;
- ii. Introduction to Inductive Study – 1 hour workshop based on Psalm 1;
- iii. Bible skills workshop – 2 hour workshop based on Psalm 95;
- iv. How to study 40 Minute Bible Study series.

These four workshops have been offered free and through them new contacts have been made throughout this past year.

Three new half day workshops have been added to this list during this past year. They are intended to equip attendees with basic skills to study a variety of Biblical genre.

- i. How to study the Psalms.
- ii. How to study a New Testament letter.
- iii. How to study Old Testament prophecy.

We have a team of trainers who are equipped to deliver each of these workshops.

This year saw the launch of the **Precept Leader Academy UK**. Working in partnership with our UK office, we plan to run 6 x 4 day sessions over 3 years, and each session will equip attendees to use and lead one of our Precept resources. The first 4-day session was in November 2022 and we studied the 40 Minute study series. The next session is in April 2023 when we will be training in the use of the children's resources – Discover4Yourself.

6. New Initiatives

During the past year Precept Ireland has continued to develop several new initiatives as we continue to fulfil our mission of helping people to engage with God through studying his word.

i. Precept Equip Students – It has been our desire to equip and train the next generation of leaders (aged 16-24) and with this in mind we launched PES in March 2022. It was formatted as a three one day course based on the life of Jesus, teaching on the theme of discipleship while introducing students to inductive study skills. We were encouraged to have 12 students sign up for the first session in June 2022, and after the last session, we evaluated the course and are in process of reviewing the materials and reformatting them into a weekend course.

ii. Agency Partnerships – This year we had the privilege of being involved in New Horizon and the Bangor Worldwide Mission convention, as part of their mission agency exhibitions. This offered us many opportunities for making new contacts, as well as renewing old contacts from the past.

PRECEPT MINISTRIES IRELAND LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The benefit that the charity provides can be demonstrated in the following statistics for the 2022– 2023 year:

- **The average number of Bible study students (Not incl. July/Aug) 646**
- **Number of Students March 2023 781**
- **The average number of classes 55**
- **Number of classes March 2023 55**
- **The number of Bible study leaders active 94**

These statistics demonstrate an increase in the average number of students studying with us during this year, and continues to grow toward pre-pandemic levels.

Financial review

The results are set out in detail on pages 7 to 15. The charity returned net outgoing resources for the year of £1,149 (2022 net incoming resources: £3,589) leaving unrestricted funds of £32,217 (2022: £29,294) and restricted funds of £1,337 (2022: £5,409). The unrestricted funds are considered to be essential to provide sufficient funds to cover any unforeseen costs which may arise and fulfill legal obligations of the charity in the event that current levels of income are not maintained.

The Ministry's principal funding sources are voluntary donations, the sale of Inductive Bible Study resources, one off gifts and financial support from Precept Ministries International. Costs have been maintained to a minimum.

The charity operates as a debt-free Ministry.

In relation to financial planning the Trustees strive to achieve a goal to provide a cash operating reserve of not less than 90 days operating funds (excluding depreciation) at the year end.

Structure, governance and management

The company is registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee, company number NI629985, and was set up by a Memorandum of Association, on 13 March 2015. The company is constituted under a Memorandum of Association and is a registered charity, charity number NIC105799, registered 3 April 2017.

The charity is constituted with a Board of Directors and one National Director who oversees the day to day running of the Ministry. The registered office for the Ministry during this reporting period is Unit 9A, 218 York Street, Belfast, BT15 1GY.

At the beginning of the financial year the Ministry employed four members of staff, the National Director (part time), an Office Administrator (part time), an Administrative Assistant (part time), and a full time Database and Social Media Manager.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mr N Watts
Mr C Green (Chairperson)
Mrs P Jones
Mr S Broad (Board secretary)
Mr D McClurg

Routine decisions are made by the National Director. Major decisions are decided corporately by the Board of Directors and the National Director. The Ministry is affiliated to Precept Ministries International based in Chattanooga, Tennessee, USA.

The day to day management has been delegated by the Trustees to the National Director.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

PRECEPT MINISTRIES IRELAND LTD

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The Trustees regularly review the work of the Ministry to identify the major risks to which the Ministry is exposed. They then implement procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the Ministry. A special risk assessment was put in place for a return to office working post covid.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.


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Mr C Green (Chairperson)

Trustee

Date: 
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