



SIMPLY SERVING

MINISTRIES

CCNI Reg. No: 102580

Annual Trustees Report & Statement of Account

For the year 6th April 2022 to 5th April 2023

Annual Trustees Report and Statement of Accounts for Simply Serving Ministries. Year 6th April 2022 to 5th April 2023

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Trustees Report for Simply Serving Ministries (SSM) Year 6th April 2022 to 5th April 2023

Introduction and Trust Information

The Trust was created formally on 10th September 2011 by 'trust deed document' and recognised under HMRC rules, registration number XR32570. We were registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland on 19th May 2015, registration number 102580. We are a small trust, directed and managed by five trustees. With no paid staff or full-time volunteers, we rely upon our active trustees and those individuals that volunteer from time-to-time for specific projects and activities. We the Trustees are pleased to present our next formal annual report on the work of Simply Serving Ministries (SSM) for the period 6th April 2022 to 5th April 2023. **We publicly acknowledge God's goodness; the guidance of the Holy Spirit; the opportunity to serve our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ and the opportunity to support brothers and sisters in the Lord in their work for The Master.**

The trustees in post for the year to April 2023 are:

Hazel Knox, MBE

William Gibson

Michael Hewitt

David Brown (Treasurer)

Val Stewart (Chairman)

These are the founding members of the charitable trust from 2011. Only the trustees have the power to appoint new trustees.

Purpose:

As our name implies, and as the guidance of the Holy Spirit directs, we simply seek to serve others through our ministry. Our purposes remained unchanged for 2022-23, which are in summary:

- **To advance the Christian faith for the benefit of the general public**
- **The prevention or relief of poverty**
- **The relief of those in need by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage**
- **The advancement of education (through the study of the Holy Bible)**

These purposes are achieved through a number of objectives that the trustees have laid out in their founding trust deed document. Our objectives are available to read as part of our entry on the Charity Commission for NI website.

The objects of our charity will be conducted in accordance with our "Statement of Faith" contained in 'Appendix One' of our founding trust deed document. This "Statement of Faith" demonstrates this charities Biblical foundation, Scriptural mandate; ethical framework and the spiritual and moral benefits promoted by it.

In planning our activities for the year, the trustees have given consideration to the Charity Commission for NI's guidance on public benefit under section 4(b)' of the Charities Act (the public benefit requirement statutory guidance) to ensure that the activities have helped to achieve the charities' purposes and provide a benefit to the public.

Beneficiaries and achieving the public benefit:

In this year, we have been privileged to direct gifts, donations and activity through the charity to others. Our activities have focused on helping churches, missions and individuals in the countries of Albania, Greece, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

The Bible teaching undertaken separately by our trustees in Serbia, Moldova and Macedonia made a contribution to the spiritual and moral education of adults and young people, through the study of the Holy Bible. It supports, sustains and increases Biblical knowledge, skills, and expertise of church members, potential future church leaders, pastors and missionaries. In each locality pastoral support and encouragement was also undertaken with missionaries, church leaders, church members and their families.

The trust supported building projects in Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and Greece through organising work teams, providing materials and/or making grants towards the costs. Donations were channelled through the trust for the various building projects.

Assisting 'Gospel Literature Ireland', over 3 days in September 2022 at the National Ploughing Championships, County Laois, saw thousands of gospel shopping bags accepted by attendees to the show, with more than 1,000 children receiving free items containing the Word of God. Numerous other people received Bibles, Christian literature and CD's.

In October 2022, the trust organised a work team to progress another phase of the Bethesda Christian Centre building project in Moldova.

In November 2022, a Bible teaching and Gospel outreach trip was undertaken with a full week of activities, seminars and meetings supporting the teaching of adults and children in various locations across Macedonia.

The trust welcomes their involvement and support in establishing "The Venue." This is a location for outreach work in Ballymena, County Antrim, providing a base for various activities and outreach to the local community.

In parallel, the humanitarian work continues, although at a slower rate due to the fallout from Covid and international shipping costs. A quantity of specialised building material has been shipped out to Moldova to support the building project there.

How all this has been accomplished and how it has benefited the public as our beneficiaries, is explained further in the 'Activities and Achievements' section of our report.

A number of report meetings to churches and groups were undertaken by the trustees throughout the year. The trustees welcomed the opportunity to inform others about the advancement of the Christian faith in the countries the charity operates. These report meetings are open to the general public. Trustees also regularly represent the work of the trust at events and meetings organised by other organisations involved with Christian missionary and charity work.

Activities and Achievements:

All our activities and projects are led by at least one of the trustees. Our activities remain curtailed in this reporting years due to the ongoing fall-out from the worldwide Covid pandemic, and this is reflected in this Annual Trustees Report. We continue to be amazed and humbled by the encouragement received from others, demonstrated in both practical and prayerful support. To the people who have participated or supported the building trips to Moldova we owe a debt of gratitude that we can never repay. To any volunteers who have accompanied our trustees on the various encouragement visits to we are grateful for your company as travelling companions and your Christian encouragements shared with the people, we engaged with in the countries visited.

Montenegro

For the period of the report, we maintained contact with a number of mission partners in Montenegro.

A couple from the leadership team relocated from Podgorica, Montenegro to Kotor, Montenegro to help establish a new outreach in that area. We sent some financial support to help

Serbia

We visited Serbia in November 2022. The main purpose of the visit was to offer support to a number of ladies who had recently become widows. We got to visit a number of family units and share both emotional and financial support.

Slovakia

We met online with a team of youth workers from Slovakia, as part of the planning process for the Bible Camp scheduled for July 2023 in NI.

Follow up face to face meetings were also held in NI with the organisers in advance of the camp.

The Venue, Northern Ireland

SSM was gifted the use of a 3-storey building in Broughshane Street, Ballymena. To determine the use of the building and for governance purposes, a Steering Committee was established. This is made up with like-minded professionals who discussed, agreed, vetted and implemented a programme designed to benefit the local community. Some practical improvements were made to the building layout, the heating system and the electrics, then it was renamed and rebranded "The Venue".

The following lists some of the activities undertaken at The Venue during 2022/2023:

- A Warm Place (drop-in centre Mon to Fri 10:00 to 12:00),
- Mini-Bible School,
- Street Pastors,
- Fitness Classes,
- Mental Wellbeing Counselling,
- Collection and packing point for Christmas parcels for the Salvation Army.

The Steering Committee is currently in discussion with other parties wishing to avail of the facility.

Outreach at National Ploughing Championships, Ratheniska, Ireland – Organised by GLI and supported by SSM, amongst others. 19 – 22 September 2022

Over four days two trustees gave assistance to the Trustees of 'Gospel Literature Ireland' (GLI) at the National Ploughing Championships, Ratheniska, County Laois. With over 277,000+ people attending, from the exhibition stand used for the GLI outreach, thousands of gospel shopping bags were accepted by attendees to the show. More than 1000+ children received free items containing the Word of God, and numerous other people received Bibles, literature and CD's. A good number of reply cards and text message have been received by GLI from people seeking further evangelical literature. SSM was privileged to support and encourage missionaries working in Republic of Ireland engaged in the advancement of the Christian faith.

Building Trip to Moldova - 14 to 24 October 2022

We had to cancel a 10 day trip to Moldova for a team of 4 people planned for April 22, due to the lingering covid issues and the impact of the war in Ukraine. A 2-man team got out to attend to urgent electrical issues at the Bethesda Christian Centre, Zirnesti, Moldova and to assist the local church. Additional electrical works were required to provide a stronger outdoor network to run the Christmas Lights Festival. Also, a program upgrading light fittings to modern LED is seen as a priority to help reduce overhead costs. This work is well advanced.

This was a time of support and encouragement to the missionaries, church leaders and members engaged in the advancement of the Christian faith in Moldova and to support the organisation, Christian Missions International AID (CMIAID). There was opportunity for team members to participate in Bible Study with adults and youth meetings. The work among the young people in the village of Zirnesti sees 70 to 90 teenagers attending events on Friday evenings in the multipurpose hall. Summer camps also resumed with 7 weeks of camps during May and June with approximately 200 children being bused in daily from the surrounding district and villages.

This multi-purpose centre is designed to provide spiritual assistance, medical care, social care, elderly care and educational resources. These functions, along with the regular Christian gatherings continues to make a significant contribution to the spiritual and moral education of around 300 -400 adults and young people, through the study of the Holy Bible. The Christmas Lights Festival at the Bethesda Centre draws considerable crowds each year, with 9,300 attending it during the month of December. Hot food and drinks are served, with calendars and Gospel literature taken home by attendees.

Bible Teaching Trip to Macedonia 27 October – 2 November 2022

Five days Gospel outreach and Bible Teaching was undertaken on this trip, the first since the commencement of Covid in March 2020. A well-attended Bible teaching seminar was held on Sunday morning, followed by visiting three other church fellowships and outreaches in various locations, as far away as to near the Bulgarian border. The team travelled around 300km during the day.

There was gospel outreach and spiritual encouragement shared through Bible teaching on the other days of the trip. Across the week and in the different locations the team shared the scriptures and encouraged around 200+ people.

General:

Humanitarian Work

Our base for the humanitarian work since 2016 is in premises granted by a local business man from Lurgan, County Armagh. We are grateful for this facility and they are adequate for storing non-perishable materials but not suitable for sorting and loading shipping containers. Further impact has been the sharp increases seen generally in shipping costs since 2020 which has curtailed this activity considerably over this reporting year. We pray for guidance on the way forward with respect to the humanitarian side of our charity work.

Support, supplies and humanitarian aid were given to the Mizpah Trust Organisation for both the development of the new camp site in Northern Greece and also practical aid for the refugees travelling through Greece.

During the year 9-10 Euro pallets of electrical equipment and other specialised building material were shipped to CMIAID base in England and then containerised for onward travel to missionaries in Moldova. These consignments were used in the Bethesda Christian Centre building project. In December 2022, one euro pallet of Christmas presents for the 65 local CMIAID mission staff and food to be distributed to those in the community who are in poverty or in need was sent out.

We are grateful to play a part in assisting the Ukrainian relief work by providing food and clothing to refugees in Moldova and in Ukraine. We helped to directly support a number of families during the worst of the conflict. A special request for food in Ukraine saw 5 lorries full of 26 pallets each of essential supplies and food being shipped by other donors but we were directing them to the areas of need.

Numerous trips were made to different parts of Northern Ireland throughout the year to collect materials, tools, equipment, clothing and donations for the container work. We are grateful to all who contributed to this work. As we do not own our own goods vehicles, rental vehicles were used to facilitate these movements as necessary.

Restrictions on who can benefit:

There are no restrictions within our policies on the designated categories of who our charity helps. The only restrictions trustees may impose tend to be financially based, reflecting the fact we are a small charity with limited funding.

Harm:

The purposes of our charity should not lead to any harm. Our organisation does not work directly with children or vulnerable people.

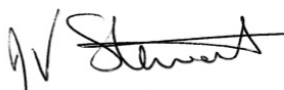
Our alternative premises provided for our humanitarian work are adequate for storing non-perishable materials but not suitable for storing more fragile items or sorting and loading shipping containers. This has curtailed the humanitarian activity. Further impact has been the sharp increases seen generally in shipping costs and this has impacted upon this work during 2022-23. This may have an adverse impact upon those who receive practical support through this part of our activities as a means to receive specialised building project materials and alleviating their poverty or need and we pray they receive such support from other sources to compensate.

Private Benefit:

A private benefit flowing from our purpose may arise as the result of occasional gifts of money passed on to us or be made by us, to named foreign missionaries, pastors or church members for personal living expenses. Many of these individuals do not receive a regular income from their church membership or a salary from a secular job but rather 'live by faith.' The Trust considers this is incidental and necessary because the continued presence of these individuals in the countries, directly contributes towards achieving the charity's purposes. The grant or gift of money for any of the charity's purposes must be approved by a quorum of trustees.

A private benefit flowing from our purpose may arise for a church pastor and family occupying as tenants the house attached to the church in Red Coast village, Macedonia. The Trust considers this is incidental and necessary because the continued presence of the pastor and family in the area, directly contributes towards achieving the charity's purposes of advancing the Christian faith for the benefit of the general public. It is the trustees understanding the church building and attached house will be controlled by FOUNDATION GALILEE BALKANS, a charitable organisation in Macedonia.

Signed on behalf of the trustees:



Val Stewart
Chairman

Independent examiner's report to the charity trustees of 'Simply Serving Ministries (SSM)

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 5th April 2023, which are set out overleaf.

Respective responsibilities of charity trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 65 of the Charities Act
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Commission under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

I have examined your charity accounts as required under section 65 of the Charities Act and my examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act.

My examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also included consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as charity trustees concerning any such matters.

My role is to state whether any material matters have come to my attention giving me cause to believe:

1. That accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 63 of the Charities Act
2. That the accounts do not accord with those accounting records
3. That the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act
4. That there is further information needed for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Independent examiner's statement

I am qualified to independently examine the accounts as you are a charity that is not a company and has an income of £250,000 or less. I have completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters (1) to (4) listed above and, in connection with following the Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.

Signature: 

Name: Mrs. Heather Carmichael

Relevant professional qualification or body: Professional Business Owner

Address: 64b Tildarg Road, Kells, Ballymena, BT42 3NY

Date: 1st February 2024

Treasurer's Report for the period 06 April 22 to 05 April 23

Treasurer's Report

We acknowledge that as a charity we generate no income from our own assets. The Trust relies on free-will offerings and gifts donated to us by interested individuals, churches, other charitable organisations, recognised grant making bodies and reclaim of gift aid. This is reflected in our accounts. We have no intention of using professional fundraising consultants.

We wish to express our thanks to everyone that made a donation or gift to us. It is truly 'an offering made unto the Lord.' We desire that the Lord Jesus Christ will bless your generosity to us and those we seek to serve in other countries.

We acknowledge the commitment of the trustees and volunteers to the work of the trust, displayed in their willingness to refund their eligible expenses and travel costs back. This has allowed a greater percentage of our funding to be directed to the activities of the Trust, allowing us to minimise our running and administration costs.

The Treasurers report accounts for the period 6th April 2022 to 5th April 2023 (a copy of the accounts for this period has been attached)

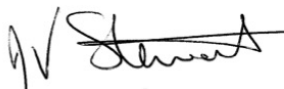
The following is a summary for that period:

- The SSM account had an opening balance of **£ 6,399.23** carried forward from the previous year.
- To this an amount of **£ 43,278.77** was added by way of receipts. The detail of monies received is contained within the attached accounts.
- This produced a total of **£ 49,678.00** (balance + receipts)
- Payments totalling **£ 35,479.90** were made, the detail of which is contained in the attached accounts.
- This left a closing balance of **£ 14,198.10**, made up of £ 9,500.00 of restricted funds and £ 4,698.10 of unrestricted funds across the two accounts.
- The closing balance was carried forward and formed the opening balance for the accounts for 2023/ 2024.

We own no physical assets nor have any physical liabilities. Detail of the sources of income and payments made is contained in the accounts.

Accounts completed by David Brown (Treasurer.)

Signed on behalf of the trustees:



Val Stewart
Chairman of Trustees