

Belfast City Vineyard Church

Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2023. The trustees have adopted the provisions of 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

We believe that God has called us to be an ever growing, regional, biblically based church in Belfast which will in a creative and contemporary style, worship God and communicate the gospel with compassion and mercy. We aim to make, train and equip disciples to be effective in the extending of God's Kingdom, to develop new leaders, to plant new churches, and to contribute to the blessing of the whole Body of Christ. We aim to be a community of people dedicated to pursuing the deep personal transformation that only comes from saving faith in Jesus, and then letting what He has done in us overflow and influence the world around us.

Our objectives and aims

Our aim in Belfast City Vineyard is to advance the Christian Faith. We do this through our three objectives, first to advance the Kingdom of God, second to continuously build the faith of believers and finally, to ever bless and serve our communities and the vulnerable with the compassion, grace and mercy of Jesus Christ.

Advancing His Kingdom

Belfast City Vineyard aims to advance the Kingdom of God throughout the greater Belfast Area, across the whole country and the island of Ireland. Our church has actively worked in our local communities to be a blessing in practical and relational ways.

We welcome those of all or no faiths and from every background and community who wish to visit during our Sunday and Friday services. Many of those have decided to stay and join Belfast City Vineyard. During this period, members continued to witness to the transforming power of Jesus and proclaim His gospel with compassion and generosity.

During this year the staff and leaders regularly welcomed new people in our newcomers' meals, sharing a meal together and week after week our members blessed and served their wider communities with acts of kindness as individuals and small groups, extending prayer and outreach. As we emerged out of the COVID pandemic, we have resumed our in-person services and kept our online format going, reaching places beyond what we can imagine.

Belfast City Vineyard continues to actively engage in church planting and we continue to bless and support those we have released to plant or lead churches in Bangor and Derry.

We continue to partner with two long term projects in North and South Africa both in prayer and financially. We continued to strategically invest in partnerships with churches within Turkey and the surrounding area.

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OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Building Our Faith

Attendance at our Sunday services and life groups has continued to gradually increase throughout the year. We have seen our average weekend attendance be around 300. Towards the end of this financial year, we have had to consider moving to multiple services on a Sunday morning, to provide space for more growth. In September 2022 we were meeting in Rosemary Presbyterian Church halls on a Sunday afternoon, providing kids and youth ministry for our 0-18s at this service. Due to the timing of the services on a Sunday, we noticed numbers fall slightly but it remained steady throughout our time there. We have still been able to record and release our adult services, do in-person training classes, groups and courses, prayer meetings and much much more.

In December 2022, we held a joint Carol Service with Rosemary Presbyterian Church, which was attended well by the community. We also held a Summer kids club in August 2023, for kids in our church community but also children in the community. This was well attended throughout the 3 days that it ran, with several children from the community coming along. To finish the week off, we held a family fun day, which gathered several families from the local area.

In June 2023, we held our first baptism service in 4 years, and baptised 12 people, from our kids, youth and adult ministry. We held the service in our building, which was greatly received by all who attended.

Refurbishment works were carried out in our newly purchased building starting in the previous financial year in August 2022, and were completed in March 2023. The keys and building were officially handed over in March 2023, and we held our first service in our newly renovated space on Sunday 5 March, which was very well attended at around 310 people. Since then, numbers remained at a steady level of around 300 and plans are in place to move to two Sunday morning services from September 2023, to allow for growth.

The pastoral staff continued to deliver training sessions, pressing into greater intimacy with Jesus. As a result, we have seen continued growth in our life group communities. Everyone is encouraged to join one of the small groups that meet mid-week. Attendance in our groups has grown throughout the year and we added several new groups over the course of the year. As we have moved into our own building more ministry areas are beginning to open up and more and more people have started to volunteer to help facilitate much of what we do.

The Staff have continued to undertake training in education and theology. While the wider community of leaders have attended regular training events held throughout the year including the National Leaders Conference in April 2023, our Irish Leaders Conference in February 2023 and Area Regional Days, as well as regularly meeting as a Community of Leaders. Regular ministry courses continued to run including The Following Jesus Course, Gospel of Wholeness and The Alpha Course.

A number of lifestyle classes and seminars have been offered this year to the general congregation, including the connection events for new attenders, marriage preparation courses, the marriage course, the CAP money course and special training for those working in our compassion ministries, children's ministries and prayer ministry teams. These were offered in addition to the practical biblical teaching at Sunday services and weekly life group meetings that empowers Church members to live a God centred lifestyle.

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OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Compassion for the Vulnerable

Every year Belfast City Vineyard actively seeks ways to bless and practically serve our community, especially the poor, the needy, young and old, including those who are outside our church community.

In partnership with Storehouse (NI), Belfast City Vineyard collects food and funds for distribution to those most at risk. Every week food parcels regularly go out to meet the needs of the poor in our local community, taking the immediate burden off statutory agencies, charities and community groups, allowing them time to put in place a long term solution.

Belfast City Vineyard also partners with Vineyard Churches UK & Ireland giving them financial support. VCUK & I connect churches with common values and practices providing spiritual guidance and oversight to the Vineyard Church leaders as well as facilitating new church planting.

STRATEGIC REPORT

Financial position

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering. Total Income of the congregation during the year was £642,556 compared to £713,889 in the previous year. Total expenditure increased from £411,105 to £466,292.

Reserves policy

The Trustees have considered the level of unrestricted net current assets that it is appropriate to hold taking account of current and ongoing commitments. It is the policy of the Trustees to aim to hold at least six month's normal expenditure, as the funding of its present activities is dependent of the ongoing financial support of members. At the year-end unrestricted reserves were £1,158,787.

Plans for the Future

This is by no means the sum of all that we do but merely a snapshot of the life of our church. We aim to pursue Jesus by pressing into intimacy with him, build out faith with our community around us and answer the call on our lives, that Jesus has placed by serving those who need us the most. We plan to take these aims into next year and the decades beyond as our church member's commitment increases. We are thrilled to have moved into our new to us building and we are actively seeking new opportunities to serve the community surrounding and further across Belfast and beyond.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust, and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Company number

NI060526 (Northern Ireland)

Registered Charity number

103520

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Registered office

2nd Floor Temple Court
39 North Street
Belfast
Co. Antrim
BT1 1NA

Trustees

Dr Darrin Alexander Barr CEO
Rev Andrew Textor Smith Minister of Religion
Mr Alan Roye Carson Associate Pastor
Ms Elizabeth Truesdale Project Coordinator
Mr Timothy Mairs Director
Mr Matthew Graham Director

Senior Statutory Auditor

John McCleary

Auditors

McCleary & Company Ltd
Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors
Garvey Studios
14 Longstone Street
Lisburn
Co. Antrim
BT28 1TP

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees (who are also the directors of Belfast City Vineyard Church for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) including Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland".

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

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

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

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STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES - continued

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

AUDITORS

The auditors, McCleary & Company Ltd, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

Report of the trustees approved by order of the board of trustees, as the company directors, on 21 May 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



Mr Alan Roye Carson - Trustee