

# CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIANITY (NORTHERN IRELAND) LIMITED

## TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

---

The trustees present their Annual Director's report and independently examined financial statements for the year ending 31st March 2024, which also complies with the requirements for a director's report and accounts under the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, the Companies Act 2006 and the company's Articles of Association. They comply with the Accounting and Reporting by Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard FRS 102 applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland.

### Report from the Chair of the Board

*I write these notes shortly after the riots that convulsed so many towns and cities across the UK, knowing that the impact will be remembered and felt for a very long time. One of the big challenges for both the faith sector generally as well as civic and political leaders is to elevate the quality and reach of public discourse on the many issues raised by the demonstrations and counter demonstrations. There is a huge need for wise, robust yet sensitive governance both locally and nationally in Stormont and Westminster. In our work in Contemporary Christianity, we aim to elevate understanding and conversation as best we can on these and other complex issues facing our society.*

*It is a great personal privilege to be able to play some small part in this work, but it is also fair to say that the support of others is also greatly needed if we are to do our work well. In the coming year we will be doing some behind-the-scenes work on the changing face of reconciliation in our land as well as looking to have some more public events to which you are very welcome indeed. Our website will be updated as our plans develop.*

*If you think you might be able to help us in any way, we would be delighted to hear from you. We are in particular need of some support in the world of social media, and in the organisation of some events. By definition, the more we do, the more we need to strengthen our capacity to do it properly. Our E-mail contact details are: [info@contemporaryChristianity.net](mailto:info@contemporaryChristianity.net) and [hamilton.norman@gmail.com](mailto:hamilton.norman@gmail.com). Finally, I do want to thank our indefatigable Honorary Secretary Stephen Adams, and all the members of the Board who contribute their God given time and wisdom to help us. Working with them really is a delight!*

The Trustees are pleased to submit this formal report as required under the relevant legislation.

### Objectives and Activities

The Purpose of Contemporary Christianity (Northern Ireland) is..."to promote the Christian religion and in particular (but not exclusively) to bring biblical/ principles to bear on the outworking of faith in Northern Ireland'. In planning our activities, we keep our Aims and Objectives under review and our stated public benefit as approved in our NI Charities Commission registration.

With its roots in the Evangelical community, Contemporary Christianity (Northern Ireland) Limited works across the Christian traditions to address the challenges of.... living out biblical faith in a changing world. We seek to draw on the lessons learned through nearly 40 years of community conflict. Both a concern for the faithful understanding of the biblical text, and an outworking of the mission of God as the reconciliation of all things in Christ, are critical in enabling Christians to challenge their communal loyalties and engage with the work of peace building and community relations.

Contemporary Christianity (Northern Ireland) Limited is committed to help churches and faith-based communities engage with challenges of a rapidly changing society. We work with a range of organisations across the Christian traditions and seek to provide a relevant programme of activities.

# CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIANITY (NORTHERN IRELAND) LIMITED

## TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The benefits that flow from this purpose include challenging people of faith across Northern Ireland to think about their faith and its implications in their communities. Contemporary Christianity provides a "safe space" for conversations, which might be more difficult to organise on a church or denominational basis. Some of this work is done by the organisation and some is done by working in partnership with other organisations. Through this, the local Christian Community can be challenged, disturbed and encouraged to reflect theologically on real issues and review their lifestyle and practice.

These benefits are evidenced through opportunities to open up and consider contemporary real life issues, which affect how people live out their faith in our divided communities. These benefits are advanced through a range of events, meetings and conversations organised to challenge Christians across our communities.

The beneficiaries of this purpose are primarily those involved in church and community relations across N Ireland who are willing to encourage engagement with these types of issues to enhance their citizenship.

### Structure, governance and management

During 2023-24 we held five hybrid Board meetings.

We have on-gong work to improve and refresh our website, as a resource to promote engagement on the issues we are working on.

Our Memorandum and Articles of Association were approved in November 2009. In October 2014, we registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland — (NIC100585). We have been a member of NICVA since 2016.

We communicate to our database of friends by email, by our website, and by social media. Through these, we have endeavoured to maintain meaningful contact. We appreciated having personal contact this year with the Covid 19 restrictions now well behind us! Alongside our public activities, the Board has been developing a work-plan for the next 2-3 years and this has involved discussions and negotiations with several partner organisations.

### Ensuring our work delivers our aims

**Vision:** We desire to see the Christian community in Ireland nurture a radical biblical faith in God, who in Jesus Christ reconciles the world, restores human relationships and redeems all of life and creation.

**Mission:** We are committed to develop the knowledge and personal skills needed among Christians and churches to serve their communities at critical points of cultural contention, communal conflict and social change, by becoming a place where they can access biblical resources and practical support.

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

The Board is so grateful to God for the continued support of a faithful small group of regular donors, who underwrite our work. We keep them informed of the direction of travel as we develop a 2-3 year work-plan. We continue to be vigilant in effecting economies and maintaining a reasonable cash flow and reserves.

### Achievements and performance

We work entirely as a volunteer organisation and we are fortunate to have a highly committed Board. We rent an office in the Inter-Church Centre of the Irish Council of Churches and we benefit greatly from being located with the Irish Council of Churches and other organisations.



# CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIANITY (NORTHERN IRELAND) LIMITED

## TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

---

### Conversation

Recognising that our ECONI "roots" were essentially people with passion volunteering to work together to challenge the church, society and also local political leaders, this approach has inspired occasional "conversations" on current and relevant topics. The series we commenced last year is known as "In These Times" events. Two evenings were held in Ulster University new Belfast Campus on York Street.

In May 2023, Dr John Kyle spoke on ....The Scourge of Loneliness and suggested how Christians and Churches might begin to address this problem. His talk was supplemented with a presentation from Ryan Karayjannis who gave a particular and disturbing perspective on loneliness amongst young people, and the effects of Covid.

In November 2023, we took a further look at the issue of poverty around the theme ...Foodbanks: standing in the way or in the gap? Lynda Gould led on the subject and then Chris Leech and Louise Ferguson gave their perspectives from their experience of foodbanks in the Craigavon area and from the work of the Larder in East Belfast.

Recordings of these events are available on our website.

Publications of ...PS...blogs was our regular activity for engagement over the year. . Most months we were able to post two ...PS...Blogs. We are grateful to a wide range of writers who make this possible. Each blog was on a topical theme and there is scope to share reactions.

Other Activities: We hosted virtual monthly meetings of the Churches Initiative Group (C.I.G), and welcomed some new members to that group. We has worked in partnership with other organisations and Evangelical Alliance (NI) in discussions leading to the formation of a Coalition of Christian Voices against Poverty.

Communications: We rely heavily on e-communications as the only cost effective way of informing and dissemination of information and notice of events to our supporters and wider contacts.

Email: [info@contemporarychristianity.net](mailto:info@contemporarychristianity.net)

Website: [www.contemporarychristianity.net](http://www.contemporarychristianity.net)

We have both Facebook and Twitter social media connections.

### Financial review

The Board is so grateful to God for the continued support of a faithful small group of regular donors. We are encouraging new supporters to help us with a small monthly donation.

### Reserves policy

It is the policy of the charity that unrestricted funds, which have not been designated for a specific use, should be maintained at a level equivalent to between three and six month's expenditure. The trustees consider that reserves at this level will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, they will be able to continue the charity's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised. This level of reserves has been maintained throughout the year.

### Changes to the Board Directors

Mr Peter Crory joined on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024, Mrs H Knox (nee Taylor) stepped down from the Board on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2024, and Mr J McGrath stepped down from the Board on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

# CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIANITY (NORTHERN IRELAND) LIMITED

## TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

---

### Risk Management

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and are satisfied that a system is in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

### Reference and administrative details

Company registration number: NI 37038  
Charity registration number: NIC 100585  
  
Registered Office\*\*\*: 48 Elmwood Avenue  
Belfast  
BT9 6AZ

### Structure, governance and management

The charity is a company limited by guarantee.

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 S Adams

Ms C Bollaert

Mr J Currie

Rev Dr M White-Dundas

Rev Dr N Hamilton OBE

Dr J Kyle

Miss H Taylor until 5<sup>th</sup> August 2024

Mr J McGrath until 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024

Dr L Whitten

Mr P Crory from 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024.

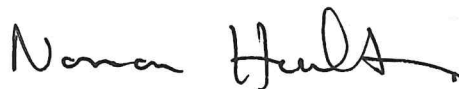
The Trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

\*\*\* From December 2024, the Registered Office and postal address changes to:

**Inter Church Centre, Suite 1, Belfast Cathedral Centre, Donegall Street, BELFAST. BT1 2HB**



**Mr S Adams**  
Trustee  
Dated: 5<sup>th</sup> November 2024



**Rev Dr N Hamilton**  
Trustee  
Dated: 5<sup>th</sup> November 2024