

St Patrick's Parish Church, Drumbeg
Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements
Year ended 31 December 2022

Trustees' Report

The trustees present the annual report and statements of Receipts and Payments and Assets and Liabilities for the Parish Church for the year ended 31 December 2022.

Chairman's Report

1. Structure Governance and Management:

Drumbeg Parish follows the standard Church of Ireland structure at Parish level as set out in the Constitution of the Church of Ireland, governed by General Synod and the Synod of the Diocese of Down and Dromore. At Parish level it is managed by a Select Vestry (the trustees) and is chaired by the Rector of the Parish, Reverend William S Nixon. The Select Vestry is elected annually at the Easter General Vestry (to be held in the three weeks preceding or following Easter Sunday) where all Parish members from the Register of Vestrymen are eligible to vote or be appointed. The Select Vestry consists of 12 members plus two Churchwardens and two Glebewardens. The Churchwardens for 2022 were Mrs Alexandra McClung and Ms Wendy Kidd. The Glebewardens were Mr Hugh Crookshanks and Dr Brian Dean. The Honorary Treasurer appointed is Mr William (Bill) Miscampbell. The Honorary Secretary was Miss Nicola Wadsworth. We express thanks to Miss Wadsworth and Mr Miscampbell, the glebewardens, the churchwardens and to the Select Vestry for their hard work in 2022.

The Select Vestry is responsible for the day-to-day management and maintenance of Parish Finances, Parish Buildings & Glebe Lands and Parish Furnishings; known as the three 'f's: Finance, Fabric and Furnishings. They also have a responsibility to the necessary provision of monies and resources to support the Rector and Ministry Team in the mission objectives and ministry activities of the Parish.

The Select Vestry is supported in this work by the local Diocesan Office in the Diocese of Down and Dromore through the Diocesan Council, the Diocesan Secretary, the Diocesan Accountant and the Administration staff. The Bishop of Down and Dromore is the senior clerical officiant in the Diocese and as such is ultimately responsible for the pastoral and spiritual oversight of the Rector of the Parish.

Objectives and Activities

We are a Church of Ireland Parish Church in the Diocese of Down & Dromore within the context of the wider Anglican Communion committed to both Word and Sacrament and seeking to minister to all ages and backgrounds, expressing our mission in the following key areas:

• **Teaching the Bible**

Faithfully teaching the Bible in Church and in homes; equipping everyone in our care to live out the truth wherever they are.

• **Ministering In Prayer**

Praying for one another after church on Sunday mornings; Praying for the life of the Church at regular Prayer Meetings and in our homes. We are available to pray. No prayer request is too big, too small or too inconvenient.

- **Making disciples of all ages**

Creating a learning community, that helps people at all stages in their faith journey to move towards maturity in Christ.

- **Proclaiming Jesus locally and globally**

We believe that we have something so exciting to share that we can't keep it to ourselves. We want our community and other communities across the globe to meet Jesus and discover real life.

- **Caring for people in Jesus' name locally and globally**

We believe Jesus commands us to 'love our neighbour as ourselves', so we seek to support people in their mental, physical and relational needs. We seek to stand alongside, and advocate for: the forgotten, the oppressed and the poor of body, mind and soul, both on our doorsteps and further afield.

- **Caring for God's Creation**

We believe the natural environment is God's gift to humanity and as such it is our responsibility to steward the natural resources of the world in a 'green' manner for successive generations. We seek to achieve this by calling on our membership to encourage and to implement sustainable environmental practices in their daily lives.

2. Select Vestry Activities

2022 was the first complete year of what one might call 'normal Parish activities' after the challenges of Covid19. Covid19 left the Parish with fewer attending the services and activities of the Parish, but throughout 2022 there was a steady increase in attendance to the point that from September 2022 numbers attending had returned to their pre-covid19 numbers. This was greatly helped through an online Parish Survey in July/August of 2022 which sought to engage with the Parishioners to establish more healthy patterns of attendance at all the activities of the Church.

Mr Michael Barnett, the Parish GDPR Data controller, appointed by the Trustees, continues to uphold our GDPR policy procedures. Mr Barnett also keeps on top of the safe storage of data regarding risk management and welfare of children issues. Licences have been purchased to further facilitate the online presence of the Church in order to allow us to have as wide a reach as possible with information about Parish activities. To help with online support, administrative support and to create a presence on social media platforms the Select Vestry agreed to employ Mrs Esther Livall on a part time basis. She started with us in September 2022 and has been a great asset to the Parish. Her position will be reviewed in April 2023.

The ongoing welfare of children and vulnerable adults is looked after by a Safeguarding Trust Panel whose Trustee membership includes: Reverend William Nixon (Chairman), Dr Brian Dean and Mrs Susan Boreham. Dr Rosie Steele has begun her training to be added to this panel and will officially begin in 2023 when Mrs Susan Boreham plans to stand down from this role. The work of the Safeguarding Trust panel is both important and appreciated in the Parish. The Church of Ireland Guidelines for the Welfare of Children is implemented by the Safeguarding Trust Panel. A Safeguarding audit and inspection was carried out by Mr Andrew Brannigan in November 2022, on behalf of the Diocese of Down and Dromore, and I am pleased to say that we passed the audit with no concerns raised. In May 2022 we held a training event in the Parish, hosted by the Diocesan Development Officer, to ensure that all our children's and vulnerable adult volunteers

are kept up to date with the necessary welfare legislation and good practice for the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

The Parish Health and Safety Committee, established in 2017, has continued to be a busy group in the Parish and meets regularly. Updates of their meetings are recorded in the Vestry minutes. The H&S Committee members are: Mrs Susan Boreham, Mr Michael Barnett, Mr Hugh Crookshank and Dr Brian Dean. They deserve sincere thanks for their continued efforts to ensure that all aspects of Church life continue in as safe a manner as possible. Annual PAT Tests of Electrical appliances are carried out and Risk Assessments are both prepared and checked for all the activities in the Parish. The Select Vestry are careful to ensure that safety is high on the agenda. Mr Crookshanks and Mr Barnett have worked tirelessly to ensure that risk assessments are chased up and completed properly. All activities, groups and congregations in the Parish are subject to carrying out biennial fire drills and evacuations.

3. Achievements and Performance:

In 2022 we continued to seek to fulfil our commitments to international and local missional and humanitarian projects. To this end we had the 'Bike it in lent' project which raised just over £10000 which was split between six charities: CMSI, Belfast Homeless Services, Made for More, International Justice Mission, the Larder Foodbank and Retina UK. In relation to this the Harvest Appeal in October 2022 raised just over £5000 for a dedicated hardship fund to be used for those who are struggling with the cost of living crisis. Further to this the Rector's Annual Sit-Out raised a further £7000 for the work of Habitat for Humanity Ireland's 'House to Home' project. This project was the theme of our Advent Service on the second Sunday in Advent 2022.

We continue our relationship with the Larder Foodbank based at St Christopher's Church Belfast which has allowed us to fulfil our objective of caring for people locally. We were pleased to be able to forward £1000 at Christmas to the Larder Foodbank to help with the purchase of Christmas Gifts of Electric and Gas Cards for those who struggle with the costs of heat and light. The ongoing support for Christian Aid world development continued in 2022 through the First Friday Soup Lunches.

Our ministry objectives of making disciples of all ages and teaching the Bible are now facilitated through our new fortnightly Life Groups, where groups of 6-10 people meet in various homes around the Parish for Bible Study, Prayer and Fellowship support. There are 56 people attached to a Life Group and we have six well established groups.

Children and young families are very well looked after through JAM (Sunday School) and Messy Church. Our Little Lambs, mother/father and toddler group has grown well in 2022, to the point that we were able to establish it on Sunday mornings during Church, alongside its Thursday morning meetings. The Boys Brigade (BB) Company and the Girls Brigade (GB) companies both continue to grow. James Cochrane completed his BB Officer training in the spring of 2022 and took over as BB Captain in September 2022. Rachel McFarlane took on the role of GB Captain in early 2022. All of our Children's and Youth work is well looked after and overseen by Rachel Pascu who is employed on a part-time basis to look after the ministry to young families. In 2022 Rachel role was extended to include the discipleship and pastoral support of our youth and children's leaders. It was also good to build our ministry team at Drumbeg through a new

volunteer worship leader joining the Church in September 2022. The ministry team was also augmented by a new JAM Sunday School leader taking of the role of Sunday School Leader in September 2022. She is now being assisted by a good team of volunteers. I am pleased to note a much more consistent and increased attendance at all our Youth and Children's activities in the autumn term of 2022. It seems we have made up the lost ground which was brought about through Covid19.

The annual prayer weekend was very well supported on the 3rd weekend of June 2022. The highlights of the weekend were visits from each of our Mission Partner Links, but this year we focussed on the Parish Vision and used the opportunity to launch our new Vision based around the title 'Energize' with the three objectives of: discipleship, leadership and apostleship. We are seeking to seriously make disciples and care for them, to grow leaders for the Church locally and for other congregations and to seek to take the message of the Gospel to as many as we can in the community. To help with our objective of Apostleship we have employed Mr Mark Trimble on an 8 hour a week basis to help us to reach out beyond ourselves. Mark began his post in November 2022, with obvious benefits to the ministry here in Drumbeg, in particular our reaching young men in the 25-40 age-group.

Global Mission relations were strengthened in the Summer of 2022 through a visit from Archbishop Samy Fawzy from Egypt and by our participation in providing the catering for a large mission event in Lady Dixon Park in association with CMS Ireland, SIM and Friends International. We enjoyed the hospitality of Malone Golf Club for a formal dinner event to further highlight our relationship and support for the Archdiocese of Egypt. Some 28 nationalities were represented at the event in Lady Dixon Park and this allowed us the platform to host two further events where we invited refugees and asylum seekers to attend a social event and subsequently a Christmas event at the Parish. Some 200 people attended these events and again there were many nationalities represented. This is part of our desire to work for justice for the poor and marginalised living in our community. Mr Nigel Quinn, our Mission Committee Chair made two trips to the continent of Africa in association with our partners in Egypt and Uganda. These were important due diligence trips which ensure that our support of the various projects in Prison Ministry, Education and Medical care is being used wisely and profitably. Due to covid19 there was no international mission teams in 2022, as we felt it was best to wait until travel restrictions were completely removed and to encourage people to join us on a team in early 2023.

We have continued to financially support the outreach work at Dundrum Community Church both financially and in terms of resourcing the leadership there through my line management of Mr Colin Morris. We are pleased to find that in 2022 this congregation continued to show growth in faith and number. We also continue to help to resource St Andrew's Ballyhalbert through oversight of their Select Vestry, the provision of Parish Lay Readers to Sunday cover for holidays and sickness and through my line-management of Mr Raymond McClure, the lay Parish Worker, on behalf of the Diocese of Down and Dromore. This missional relationship has again proved to be a growing and encouraging congregation.

Pastoral care has continued to be a focus for the Parish. This is delivered through the Rector, the Lay Readers and others who on an ad-hoc basis seek to care for one another in the Parish.

4. Chairman's Financial Review:

As with many in the Faith and Charity sector there has been a slow-down in the growth of our income from FWO's and Standing Orders, which we suspect is a result of the soaring costs of energy and the cost of living crisis biting the UK and Ireland. Thankfully our income from FWO's and Standing Orders held its own in 2022. To help with growing our income we have taken the decision that in future the Harvest Appeal will be for general Church funds. An increase in the number of Standing Orders has afforded the treasurer a stronger platform from which to estimate giving and thus cashflow projections are much easier to make. Our new Treasurer, Mr William Miscampbell, has worked hard to provide the Select Vestry with monthly financial reports accompanied by all the necessary information to allow them as Trustees to keep abreast of the finances. All Select Vestry (Trustees Meetings) in 2022 were able to take place in-person.

We had considerable expenditure in 2022 on Glebe property, Due to a Health and Safety risk assessment it was discovered that the Graveyard Wall immediately behind the hall needed extensive work carried out. This cost the Parish in the region of £10000, but was necessary expenditure to maintain a safe glebe. It was also decided that the Church Halls needed the added protection of Closed-Circuit Security Cameras, so after much discussion the work went ahead and the security cameras were installed at the hall. Alongside this we took the decision to install a security alarm system at the Church to reduce the risk of being robbed. On top of this we installed a high visibility video display television at the Church Hall to help us to advertise our activities and services better. These upgrades were expensive but necessary glebe expenditure and are already proving their work.

The result of our financial prudence and generosity, for which I am kindly thankful to our Parishioners, is a sustainable, growing, lively and fruitful ministry at Drumbeg. It is reasonably believed that adequate funds are held in reserves for the ongoing ministry objectives in future periods, with these being augmented by a strong gift-aid claim in late 2022. The Treasurer is supported in his endeavours by a team of two, Mr Hugh Crookshanks and Mr Gordon Poots who carry the responsibility for creating and maintaining a gift-aid database.

I extend my thanks to all the Trustees with particular thanks to the Honorary Treasurer, the Glebe Wardens, the Honorary Secretary, the Finance Team, the Select Vestry and alongside that extend sincerest thanks to all the ministry volunteers who continue to made this ministry in the name of Christ a blessing to the Parishioners and wider community of Drumbeg in 2022.

The congregation is growing in faith and number and our continued outreach, care and love for the global and local community is as source of blessing to us all. We seek to make a genuine difference in the lives of those we serve and it is my sense that we can truly assert the words of Christ himself to be true of our work and ministry: 'well done good and faithful servants'.

With thanksgiving to God for his work among us and to all who support the work at Drumbeg Parish. Psalm 107:1 'Give thanks to the Lord for he is good; his love is eternal'.

William S Nixon

Rev William S Nixon (Select Vestry Chairman).