

**St. Mark's Parish Church**

**Annual report and financial statements**

**For the year ended 31 December 2022**

**Charities Number: 103350**

## **St. Mark's Parish Church**

### **Annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022**

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## **St. Mark's Parish Church**

### **Annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022**

#### **Legal and Administrative Details**

<b>Charity Name:</b>	St. Mark's Parish Church Down & Dromore, Church of Ireland	
<b>Charity Number:</b>	103350	
<b>Contact Address:</b>	Parish Office Church Street Newtownards BT23 4AN	
<b>Trustees:</b>	Rev Canon Chris Matchett Rev Peter Hilton Rev Stephen Doherty Mrs Elizabeth McMullan Mr Ossie Bamerry Mr Matthew Morrison Mrs Alison Cochrane Mr Tom Quinn Mr William McCrossan Mrs Anne Drysdale Mrs Lorraine Rooney	Mr Tim Reid Mr Paul Hawkins Mrs Gillian Morrison Mrs Cathy Allen Mrs Debbie Phillips Mr Paul Pierce Mr Michael O'Brien Mrs Beth Campbell Mrs Doris Thompson Mrs Hilary Stephens
<b>Principle Office Bearers:</b>	Clergy:  Church Treasurer: Church Secretary:	Rev Canon C Matchett Rev P Hilton Rev S Doherty Mrs D Phillips Mrs E McMullan
<b>Independent Examiner</b>	Guardian Chartered Accountants 2 William Street Newtownards BT23 4AH	
<b>Bankers:</b>	Danske Bank Belfast Business Centre PO Box 183 Donegal Square West Belfast BT1 6JS	

## **St. Mark's Parish Church**

### **Trustees' annual report for the year ended 31 December 2022**

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022.

#### **Principal Objectives and Activities**

The charitable purpose of the Church of Ireland is the advancement of religion.

The principal function of St. Mark's Parish Church is to support the advancement of the Christian religion by promoting, through the work of the Parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Being open to and engaging with society as a whole and offering support for those needing help are fundamental to the practical delivery of the benefits of Christianity. All functions of the Parish relate to the advancement of religion through holding regular worship and communicating with and caring for parishioners and others in the community.

As a result of the activity in the pursuit of the advancement of the Christian religion, St. Mark's Parish Church has custody of property and of records, materials and artefacts of significance to the cultural and religious heritage and maintenance of which is undertaken by the Select Vestry of St. Mark's Parish Church.

#### **Activities and Public Benefit**

St. Mark's Parish Church seeks to provide a variety of opportunities for worship and prayer that are open to all sections of the community. We offer morning and evening worship on Sundays and a mid-week service on Wednesdays. The church building is open every day for private prayer and reflection.

One of our diocesan readers continues to assist with church services, baptisms and funerals in the Ardkeen Parish Church.

In St Marks weekly worship takes place on a Sunday at 9am, 11am and 6pm. There is a recording made and shared on YouTube. Recordings are made of the main church service and CDs are delivered to those who are housebound or have been unable to return to church.

Tea and coffee is provided after the morning church service in the Parish Centre. This helps relieve the social isolation suffered by some parishioners.

Pastoral care is a major part of our charitable activities. There are regular visits by the clergy and church members to the elderly and the sick, at home and in hospitals and nursing homes.

Visits are made and preparation time for those who bring children for baptism or for those who come as adults for baptism. Wedding preparation is provided by the clergy. Funeral services are conducted in the church or at an alternative venue as requested by family.

A catering group made up of church members willingly provide and serve refreshments when requested by families following a funeral or after a wedding, with food donated by other church members.

The curate-assistant enables strategic outreach to younger parishioners and their families and is helping the church achieve our aims.

The Jig Saw (Sunday School) meet on Sunday mornings with 3 groups meeting with different age groups. We are seeing a growth in young children and their families coming to church. None of this could be done without our volunteers.

The Youth Fellowship for young people aged Primary 6 to year 10, meet Sunday evenings 6.30-8pm with an epilogue, games, food, and special social activities. All assisted with volunteers who are able to take the lead.

Members of the church congregation regularly help in the leading of the church services; we have a Diocesan Reader and 2 Diocesan Evangelists in training, and 2 commissioned Parish Readers. The further development of the lay people continues to be very evident.

Reaching out to the Community (ROC) is a food bank where dry and tinned foodstuffs are donated by church members and local residents. Food parcels are delivered monthly to identified families in the Glen Ward area and wider community. We have seen an increased need for help from the foodbank and monthly deliveries in person help us to build relationships in the community.

In providing pastoral care we also seek to respond to situations of need through practical support and where financial support is needed, a small donation of money has been provided and accounted for.

We continually seek to extend our outreach to all age groups within our parish boundary which takes in most of the west end of Newtownards, including the town centre.

St Mark's Church and Parish Centre provide a venue for a range of community groups to meet, including the Health and Social Care Trust. A range of groups from the Scouting and Girl Guiding Associations are associated with St Mark's and meet in the Parish Centre to provide associated benefit to children and young people. These groups are also involved in church worship.

There is a range of groups and activities run by the church including: a weekly group for pre-school children and their carers; a midweek opportunity for parishioners, friends and members of the public, especially those who live alone or are isolated, to enjoy a cup of tea, food and a chat; Mothers' Union; Chest Heart and Stroke; Senior Citizens' Club; Bowls Club. These are open to the whole community.

We have a social media presence (Facebook, YouTube) and a website. The weekly service sheet includes details on church services for the following week. Where necessary mail shots are sent to keep parishioners advised of what is happening in the church and community.

St Mark's Parish Church offers activities for youth and young people, carried out under the requirements of the Church of Ireland's Child Safeguarding Policy.

There is a weekly drop-in group for adults with learning difficulties to attend in the Parish Centre, resourced by church members, under the guidance of Social Services and Mencap. This group is welcomed by the members and their families. We are indebted to those who volunteer and help.

We have strong links with local schools and appoint Transferor Representative Governors to several Boards. There they take an active part in the running of the school community thus fostering links between the school and church communities.

Several schools hold their annual carol services in St Mark's church, bringing parents, families and members of the school communities into church as well as being an important feature of the life of these schools.

St Mark's also supports Christian Mission through individual agencies working at home and overseas. In some instances, support is given where possible on an ecumenical basis e.g. through Newtownards Christian Aid Committee, and the Link Family & Community Centre. The St Mark's Christian Aid leaders assist with volunteers from St Marks with annual collections in the town and host a yearly quiz to raise much needed funds. The yearly self-denial Lenten lunch, hosted by the St Mark's prayer meeting attendees, is a time for people to get together and share a light meal with monies raised go to an identified charity and this year this was donated to Christians Against Poverty (CAP).

Fund raising continues and we have been able to hire a stall at the local Saturday market and had 3 successful cake sales. We are grateful to those who baked and attended the stall. This gave us the opportunity to be seen in the community and copies of John's gospel were given out. In November we had a Christmas Fair which was well supported by the local community and money raised was shared with the church and the Bishop's Appeal for Ukraine.

St Mark's is a member of Ards Churches Together which organises a number of joint prayer and worship events, including an annual Good Friday service in the town centre.

St Mark's Parish Church holds a special place in the local community as a building of historical interest with links to the Londonderry family. Normally, visitors are encouraged and a booklet on the history of the church is provided free of charge. The church building is a venue for history walks and participates in the annual European Heritage Open Days.

The church provides access to archive records (births, deaths and marriages) for genealogical research.

We believe that our activities have been instrumental in maintaining and developing the lives of our members to the benefit of the community of which we are a part.

St Mark's Parish Church Newtownards would not be able to deliver the quality of welcome and fellowship without the many hours of voluntary service given by many volunteers in all aspects of church life.

In order to strategically develop our outreach activities in Newtownards, the congregation of St Mark's has two planted churches. These two church plants serve two of the three largest social housing estates in the town. The Glen estate has approximately 500 households and the West Winds some 1200 households, with each estate remaining within the top 100 small pockets of deprivation in Northern Ireland (NI Census 2021).

Glen Community Church (GCC) was launched in 2014 and is lead by an evangelist-in-training under the supervision of an Ordained Local Minister, funded by the Down and Dromre Church Plant Fund and the generous giving from those engaging with the community church. West Winds Community Church (WWCC) is led by our Ordained Local Minister and was launched during the summer of 2021.

Busy Sunday mornings in both church plants witness a growing gathering of local people coming together in their respective community centres for a time of informal worship and a warm welcome over refreshments, allowing time for fellowship. GCC hold their Bible study group on a Sunday evening whilst WWCC has two groups meeting on a Thursday evening.

In the Glen, a midweek focus turns towards two well-attended Children's groups with the main youth programme held in the town's Youth Centre. In both church plants, the intentional approach of youth ministry is targeted towards young people at risk, offering programmes aimed at diversionary activities. These ministries are enabled with thanks to a significant financial grant from the Down and Dromore/Connor Orphans and Children's Fund and the C of I Priorities.

In both the Glen and West Winds, two growing groups aimed at bringing men together are in full thrust, funded in the West Winds by a C of I Mind Matters Grant whilst local women are engaged through two groups creating safe and supportive spaces for both men and women.

The community Associations in each estate are very supportive in offering facilities and funding in many instances and the church staff are developing closer relationships with the Neighbourhood Police.

### **Achievements and Performance**

- \* Outreach into the community of Newtownards
- \* Cross Community Events
- \* Giving to Missions and other charities
- \* Continual development of the Glen Community Church.
- \* Select Vestry (Trustees) continue to meet monthly.
- \* The old rectory was sold and a newer house purchased. This necessitated taking out a loan.
- \* Ongoing building work and repairs in the church and parish centre.
- \* Christian resources are now available in the parish centre foyer for people to take with them.
- \* Much work has gone into ensuring that as an organisation we are environmentally aware, so we recycle and reuse.
- \* In the parish centre, LED lights are in place and timer switches used in areas well used.
- \* Holiday Bible Club in August 2022.
- \* Bible study groups offered on Zoom but now are in person.
- \* Mind Matters - research suggests that the most effective contribution that the Church can make in promoting positive mental health is by concentrating, in the first instance, on four key areas:
  - \* Reducing stigma
  - \* Promoting connections
  - \* Providing clergy with additional training and support
  - \* Exploring additional faith-based supports for mental health

Regular meetings take place to discuss positive mental health and how we can promote this further within our church and the local community.



### **Ongoing Matter of Concern**

During the year 2022, an independent Commission of Enquiry was formed. This Commission was set up by the Bishop of Down and Dromore to examine a query with the accounts in prior years. We ask that you continue to hold the matter and all involved in your prayers.

### **Financial Review**

The following paragraphs provide a summary of the financial position presented in these statements which have been prepared in accordance with the requirements for charities, *The Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015*, relating to charity accounting and reporting which commenced on 1 January 2016.

As our Parish income for the year was more than £250,000 but less than £500,000 we must:

- Prepare accounts on the accruals basis;
- Have our accounts independently examined in compliance with Section 65(4) of the Charities Act NI;
- Complete a trustees' annual report that also reports on how our charity has met the public benefit requirement; and
- Complete an annual monitoring return.

### **Unrestricted Funds**

Unrestricted funds comprise of the Parish General Fund, Property Fund and Investment Property Fund.

Overall unrestricted Parish income was £10,246 less than expenditure this year with a total of £300,961 of income against £311,207 of expenditure.

#### **General Fund Income**

General fund income was £300,961, up £60,437 from £240,524 in 2021. This income was from the following sources:

- General giving increased from £213,354 last year to £263,232 this year.
- Property related income was £6,439 compared to £6,509 last year.
- General Parish income from sources such as hall rental, magazine donations, events was up from £14,559 last year to £29,397 this year.
- Investment income earned was £1,893 this year compared to £1,883 last year.

#### **General Fund Expenditure**

Overall expenditure increased from £256,114 in 2021 to £311,207 for 2022, an increase of £55,093. The main areas of expenditure were:

- Clergy and staffing costs increased from £150,865 in 2021 to £171,267 this year (£20,402).
- Diocesan costs decreased slightly from £40,575 in 2021 to £39,394 (£1,181).
- General Parish expenses e.g. consumables, postage and printing increased from £17,635 in 2021 to £19,997 for 2022 (£2,362).
- Glen CC general expenses for the year increased from £2,657 last year to £12,899 for 2022 (£10,242).
- West Winds CC general expenses were £7,084 for the year, last year £nil.
- Financial fees increased from £3,614 in 2021 to £11,757 (£8,143) due to estate agents fees on the sale of the old rectory and loan interest payable.

### **Restricted Funds**

Restricted funds comprise of the Building Fund, RJ Coulter Trust, The Stained Glass Window Fund, EA Youth Grant Fund, Childrens & Orphans Funds, Priorities Fund and the Mind Matters Fund.

Restricted fund income for the year was £56,558 with expenditure of £12,031 compared to income of £70,939 and expenditure of £5,934 last year.

#### **Restricted Fund Income**

This income was from the following main sources:

- Collections, donations etc £22,558 (last year £20,879).
- Children & Orphans Fund £20,000 (£10,000 to Glen CC and £10,000 to West Winds CC).
- Priorities Fund £10,000 to West Winds CC.
- Mind Matters Fund £3,800 to West Winds CC.

### **Restricted Fund Expenditure**

Expenditure during the year comprised £2,000 from the Stained Glass Window fund, £1,483 from West Winds CC Priorities fund and a decrease in the valuation of the RJ Coulter Deceased Trust of £8,454 .

### **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 months 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. Based on 2022 expenditure of £323,238 the target level of reserves is £80,810 to £161,620. Free reserves as at 31 December 2022 are £202,121. The Trustees are satisfied that relevant level of reserves has been maintained throughout the year.

### **Going Concern**

The trustees have reviewed the budgets for the year ahead and are satisfied that there are adequate funds in place to ensure that the Parish can continue its activities and the financial statements for the year ended 2021 can be signed off as a going concern.

### **Structure, Governance and Management**

#### **Governing Document and Constitution of the Charity**

Chapter III of the Constitution of the Church of Ireland governs Parishes and Parochial Organisations. The Select Vestry members are the Charity Trustees.

#### **Recruitment and Appointment of Select Vestry (Trustees)**

All members of the Church of Ireland, who are over the age of 18 and are either resident within the Parish or live elsewhere but have been accustomed members of the congregation for at least three months, may register as members of the General Vestry of the Parish, allowing them to attend and vote at meetings of the General Vestry and to stand for election to the Select Vestry. Meetings of the General Vestry are held at least once a year. The Select Vestry is elected as part of this General Vestry meeting. The Select Vestry will hold their positions for a period of one year. Select Vestry members may be re-elected annually and there is no limit on the number of terms which may be served.

#### **Organisational Structure**

The Select Vestry is responsible for the day to day management of the Parish. The Select Vestry consists of the members of the clergy serving in the Parish, two church wardens, two glebe wardens, and 12 other members (one of which is the Honorary Secretary and another the Honorary Treasurer) of the General Vestry elected at the General Vestry.

The Select Vestry is chaired by the Incumbent. Select Vestry members are responsible for making decisions on matters of general concern and importance to the Parish including deciding how Parish Funds are to be applied.

The Select Vestry meets at times fixed by the members or by the Diocesan Synod. Special meetings may be convened at any time by the chairperson or the church wardens. In 2022 the Select Vestry met 5 times during the year.

#### **Compliance with Public Benefit**

The Parish has given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities entered into during the year have helped to achieve the Parish's objectives and activities, as well as providing public benefit.

#### **Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities**

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland 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 Parish and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the Parish for that year.



In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

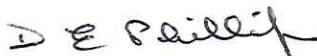
- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principals in the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Parish's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Parish and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008 and the provision of the Constitution of the Church of Ireland. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Parish and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees report was approved by the Board of Trustess on 20 April 2023.



Rev Peter Hilton  
Trustee



D Phillips  
Trustee