

Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2024

The trustees present the annual report and statements of Receipts and Payments and Assets and Liabilities for the Parish of Donaghmore Upper, St Patrick's for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Objectives and Activities

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

The principal function of the Parish of Donaghmore Upper, St Patrick's is to support the advancement of the Christian religion by promoting, through the work of the Parish of Donaghmore Upper, St Patrick's Church of Ireland, 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.

As a result of activity in the pursuit of the advancement of the Christian religion, the Parish of Donaghmore Upper, St Patrick's 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 Parish of Donaghmore Upper, St Patrick's.

Achievements, Performance & Public Benefit

The Church exists primarily, and above all else, as a place of Christian worship. Services of public worship are held each Sunday morning throughout the year. Evening services are held on Wednesday nights during Lent, each night in Holy Week (both shared with our sister parish), in March for the Girls Friendly Society enrolment, at Harvest Thanksgiving, and a Christmas Carol Service. Since the enforced lockdown in the early months of 2021 all services have also been broadcast online.

The parish is always pleased to host groups from the wider community, and does so annually for the Orange Order. The local Primary School hold their annual Carol Service in the Church.

There are good working relationships with other local churches. There is a service for Christian Unity Week, alternating with St Patrick's Roman Catholic Church in Donaghmore.

During the year 2024 there were three baptisms one marriage and seven funeral services in the church.

The Church was built in 1843 with a grant from the Board of First Fruits, and enlarged and re-oriented during the 1860s by the addition of a semi-circular apse, vestry and tower.

The parish supports a small but active Sunday School, which meets most weeks from September to May, a Girls Friendly Society which meets weekly throughout the winter, and there is a Mothers Union meeting monthly. The local WI make regular use of our parish hall.

Parish finances and fabric are cared for by the Select Vestry. Various fund raising and social events are held each year.

The parish supports several missionary groups, particularly CMS and the Church Army. There is also a series of special appeals and collections for various local and international groups and in light of international disasters.

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Financial Review

- The chief source of revenue for the church continues to be parishioner donations which are supplemented by gift aid claims. The church recorded a total surplus in 2024 of £9,082 (2023: deficit £1,477). Whilst income remained broadly similar, running costs were lower and a significant refund was received from Power NI in respect of an overcharge.
- Careful financial management has continued in order to control costs where possible.
- It is the Trustees' policy to hold a level of unrestricted funding to meet at least one year's running costs.

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 31 December 2024 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 Organisation. 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.

Pay and remuneration

Select Vestry members are not remunerated for their services as Trustees. Any payments to Trustees for services unrelated to their role as a Trustee are approved by the Select Vestry. Such decisions are taken on the basis of good governance and being in the pursuit of the objectives and activities of the parish.

Organisational Structure

The Select Vestry is responsible for the day-to-day management of the parish. The select vestry consists of the member of the clergy serving in the parish, any curate assistant ("the curate"), the churchwardens, the glebe wardens and generally not more than twelve other members of the general vestry elected at the General Vestry.

The Select Vestry is chaired by the incumbent or other member of the clergy officiating in the parish. 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.

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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 churchwardens. In 2024 the Select Vestry met 3 times during the year and the average attendance was 70%.

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 statement of receipts and payments and statement of assets and liabilities in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland with Income of less than £250,000 requires the trustees to prepare a statement of receipts and payments and a statement of assets and liabilities for each financial year.

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 assets and liabilities of the Parish. 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.

Signed on Behalf of the Trustees

Raphael Burnside



Winifred Hewitt



4th May 2025