

**Kilmakee congregation of the Presbyterian Church in
Ireland**

**Annual report of trustees and financial statements for
the year ended 31st December 2023**

Kilmakee congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Trustees Annual Report

The Trustees present here their Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2023 including a Statement of Assets and Liabilities at that date.

Reference and Administrative details

Kilmakee congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
Willow Gardens
Dunmurry
BT17 9UE

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland – **NIC104263**

Charity Trustees

The Charity Trustees who served during the year or who were trustees at the date of this report.

Ann Taylor	Jim Taylor
Adele Spratt	Philip Spratt
Carol Houston	Graham Houston
Merrill Morrow	Aileen Irvine
Heather Smyth	John Smyth
Carol Curry	David Curry
Alastair White	Rev Robert Love (Vacancy Convenor)
Billy Elliott	Jenny Belshaw

Principal office bearers

Minister	Rev Robert Love (appointed as Vacancy Convenor April 2023)
Clerk of Session	Dr Aileen Irvine (October 2021 - September 2023)
Clerk of Session	Alastair White (September 2023 -)
Treasurer	John Smyth

Independent examiner: Thomas Sweeney

Walker's Farm
Culcavey Road
Hillsborough

Bankers

Ulster Bank, 18 Bow Street, Lisburn, Co. Antrim, BT28 1BN

Solicitors

Jennifer Hamilton of:
Keown Solicitors
Lynden House, 19 Cregagh Road, Belfast BT6 8PX

Structure and Management

The Kirk Session

The Charity trustees of the congregation are the members of Kirk Session. Under the congregation's governing document, The Code, the book of the Constitution and Government of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the Kirk Session seeks to watch over and promote the Spiritual interest and wellbeing of the congregation and of persons not connected with any congregation who are within its boundary. It ensures Pastoral Care is in place within the congregation and seeks to further the contribution of the Church to Christian witness and service in the local community. The Kirk Session has delegated to its Congregational Committee the temporal affairs of the congregation including administering all funds and property belonging to the congregation. Members of Kirk Session are ex-officio member of the Congregational Committee.

The Kirk Session consists of the ordained minister and the ruling elders of the congregation. All members are entitled to propose, speak and exercise equal votes at meetings, with the exception of the Moderator (the minister in active duty within the congregation) who has no deliberative vote but only a casting vote.

Stated meetings of Kirk Session are held monthly (with the exception of Summer months) or as appropriate.

To be chosen for the office of Eldership in the congregation a person must be a voting member and a regular attendant at ordinances. The selection of those proposed to be called to the office of Elder can be either by the congregation or the Kirk Session. Members are elected if they obtain two-thirds of those who vote.

Presbytery

Under the Presbyterian Church in Ireland form of governance the corporate oversight of a congregation is the responsibility of a Presbytery which superintends generally the Spiritual and temporal affairs of the congregations assigned to it by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The Kilmakee congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has been assigned to the South Belfast Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The membership of the Presbytery consists mainly of the active ministers of congregations assigned to it by the General Assembly, ministers who have retired from active duty and an elder from each congregation appointed by the Kirk Session of the congregation.

The General Assembly

The General Assembly is the supreme court of the Church, representing in one body the whole Church and acting as its supreme legislative, administrative and judicial authority in dealing with all matters brought before it. The General Assembly is normally constituted during the first week in June each year for worship and to conduct its business. At the end of business, it is dissolved. The membership of the General Assembly consists mainly of the active ministers of each congregation, retired ministers and a representative elder appointed by the Kirk Session of each congregation.

Description and purpose

The charitable purpose of the congregation is the advancement of religion.

Kilmakee congregation is a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland, as a Reformed Church within the wider body of Christ, is grounded in the Scriptures and exists to love and honour God through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ and by the power of His Spirit and to enable her members to play their part in fulfilling God's mission to our world.

The congregations' mission purpose is found primarily in three phrases:

Showing – we want to show the love of Jesus Christ to all peoples of all ages through our life as a congregation and lives as individuals.

Growing – we want to help people grow in their faith and in their knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ through God's Good News.

Going – we aim to be active in the local community and beyond as ambassadors of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom.

We see ourselves as rooted in God through the working of His Spirit to Glorify His Son, Jesus Christ. We live out these ideals as we:

Enrich Worship – by carefully exploring different avenues to enable people to worship God individually and corporately while recognising that not everyone enjoys singing, or even music.

Deepen Thought – many people have many questions and although we do not have all the answers we always want to be engaging with education of self in the Bible and in the Christian life.

Protect the Family – as a church family, made up of families, singles and everything in-between, we want to look out for everyone *where they are*. We try to protect and help, for example, where there is a struggle for finance, a physical or mental health problem, a breakdown in relationships.

Think Small - Act Big – we are small in number and resources so we cannot be stretched too thinly. Therefore, we aim to recognise what we can do with what we have, knowing that sometimes it is a small thing that can have the greatest impact.

The congregation aims to live out its Mission and Vision as a family of God's people by being:

- *A Christ-centred Family: where everything we are stems from the work, teaching and life of Jesus Christ*
- *A Spirit-powered Family: where we recognise our own limitations and realise the work of God to be in us, through us and extending out to those around us.*
- *A Modelling Family: we see all peoples of all ages as important and relevant so we try to make sure there is something for the youngest to the eldest.*
- *A Church Family: we are part of something larger than ourselves and we subscribe to and are under the authority of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.*

Activities and Objectives

The congregation meets for worship every Sunday and visitors are welcome to join. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is observed on several occasions during the year and all those who have been baptised and have made a confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are admitted to the Lord's Supper. Regular Bible Study meetings (both in-person and online) are held in which many members of the congregation participate. The congregation also enjoys a wide range of activities through groups and organisations including;

- Sunday School
- Bible Class
- Youth Fellowship (Y.F. aka Young Followers)
- Bowling Club
- Girls' Brigade
- Boys' Brigade

- KeeCraft
- KeePactive
- Prayer and Praise group
- CH@T (Coffee Here @ Ten) – informal fortnightly drop-in
- Open House – informal Saturday drop-in Saturday's monthly
- Badminton Club
- Holiday Bible Club (Superhero Academy) annually in July

Achievements and performance

Worship and prayer

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 11.00am and occasionally on Sunday evenings from 7.00pm specifically for Praise/Worship. During the week the Bible Study groups (both in-person and online) provide an opportunity for members to meet in fellowship, to study the scriptures and for a time of prayer.

As well as our regular services during the year we acknowledge God's gift of new life by celebrating 2 Sacraments of Baptism and by conducting 1 Service of Marriage. Sadly, but in loving memory and in comfort of their grieving loved ones, we conducted 4 services giving thanks for their lives and demonstrating our love through prayerful and pastoral support to those in bereavement.

During the Covid years Kilmakee, like many other churches, experienced a significant drop-off in Sunday attendance and a loss of membership. Now, for the purposes of this statistical analysis at end of 2023 (being the first *full* year post-Covid), the numbers of those claiming membership have been reassessed to approximately 80-90 families (or households) with the numbers of associated persons (or family members) at approximately 140-150 of which 80-85 are Communicant Members. An average of 43 persons took Communion on more than two occasions in year 2023

Weekly attendance at end of 2023 averages 60-70 adults *plus* 20-25 children of Sunday School and Bible Class age. An increase of numbers attending has been observed since the beginning of 2023 along with *signs* of some new folks joining.

Pastoral care

Members of the congregation who are unable to attend worship due to sickness or age are visited on a regular basis by the Elders and/or by the Minister (Vacancy Convenor) as required. Kilmakee also has an anonymous Prayer Chain through

which folk can bring their concerns and petitions confidentially so that others in the prayer chain may pray for them.

Mission and outreach

At a local level the congregation provides for children in the area through our uniformed and casual organisations. We are also present in the local school on the Board of Governors as well as representation in a community steering group involving community representatives and local councillors.

The congregation supports the United Appeal for Mission which is a central fund of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. This fund enables congregations to support the wider mission of the denomination and to do mission and outreach on a denominational basis beyond what the congregation could do on its own. The United Appeal Fund provides financial support for mission personnel at home and overseas, assists congregations with the deployment of locally based staff, enables church planting, provides grant support for the upkeep of church premises, assist with the running costs of Union Theological College (the Church's training college for ministry students) and financially supports congregations in areas of worship, discipleship, global mission, outreach, leadership and pastoral care.

The congregation also contributes to the World Development Appeal, Sunday School project and other special appeals that arise.

Presbytery

The congregation was represented at the regular meetings of Presbytery by our Vacancy Convenor (acting as Minister during our vacancy) and Kilmakee's elders.

General Assembly

Our Vacancy Convenor and two of our elders were nominated to attend the meeting of the General Assembly held in Assembly Buildings, Belfast, in June.

Property

All property - 56 Mosside Road, Dunmurry, Belfast (the Church Manse) and Kilmakee's location in Willow Gardens - is kept up to date with relevant renovations as and when required. There were no major works in 2023.

Organisations

- Sunday School and Bible Class and Creche

- Sunday School and Bible Class run in parallel with regular Sunday morning worship. There is age-appropriate Bible teaching through stories, crafts, activities and singing. The age-range is 3-15 with approximately 30 children on a regular basis. Creche is provided for babies and toddlers, again running parallel with the worship service with 3 children in this age group in 2023.
- Youth Fellowship (Y.F. aka Young Followers)
 - YF meets on alternative Sunday evenings with a membership of 16 regular young people of 11-17. Activities include music, Bible-based teaching slot, quizzes, outings, activities and Christian movies and refreshments. Numbers increased very pleasingly from 4 in 2022 to 16 in 2023.
- Bowling Club
 - Meeting for Club nights every Friday the bowlers have a good mix of men and women of varying ages. The Club is predominantly Kilmakee members although there are a number from other nearby churches and the local community. Rejoining the area short-mat bowling league remains an option as it had ceased due to Covid. At year-end 2023 we had around 20 members rising from 12 at the beginning of the season.
- Girls' Brigade
 - The 142nd Kilmakee Company of the Girls' Brigade follows GBNI guidelines and meets from September to April on Monday evenings from 6.00pm-9.30pm with approximately 70 members aged 3-18 years plus 15 officers/leaders. Focus is on PE competitions and badgework which includes Scripture content appropriate for each age group. Member of Kirk Session lead the Scripture Badgework. GB is supported by a pastoral group of Kirk Session 3 members.
- Boy's Brigade
 - The 32nd Belfast Company of the Boys' brigade meets every Thursday evening from September to Easter. Since Covid, we have had regular average attendance of around 35-40 boys aged 4-14 with the majority at primary school age, plus 6 officers/leaders. Our programme is primarily sports, marching to music, general interests and teaching about the Christian faith following the motto of *...the advancement of Christ's Kingdom among boys...* Our programme runs in all of our halls and all boys are welcome.
- CH@T
 - CoffeeHere@Ten is an informal drop-in on alternative Wednesday mornings. Introduced initially to create an open space whereby members of the local community can come in for a tea/toffee and some

snacks and simply have a safe, warm place to have a chat in like-minded company. The conversation is always open and no subject is discouraged. A separate quiet room is provided if someone wants a private chat or prayer. We have around 12 regular visitor/members, some who are alone at home, who enjoy the opportunity to get out and just be with others in gentle fellowship.

- Open House

- Our Open House initiative provides another opportunity for folk in the local community to call in and enjoy FREE hot sausage sandwiches, some fresh muffins or pancakes, treats and bottomless cups of tea/coffee in a relaxed setting. Meeting on the last Saturday of each month, this initiative allows the church through gentle outreach to welcome families in for a relaxed time catching-up with each other while their children play games, colour-in, or do jigsaws and the like.

- Holiday Bible Club (aka HBC or Superhero Academy)

- Begun in 2022 from the outworking of a dream where God put the seed of an idea in the heart of one young leader for Kilmakee to host a Summer Holiday Bible Club open to all the children in our locality. The seed grew quickly and the mission realisation caught the hearts and minds of the full church leadership and swept through the congregation. Year one (2022) saw some 34 church members volunteering as leaders. Year two (this current year - 2023) saw the volunteer leaders reaching a new level of 46.
- Our capacity each year is for 120 children of Primary School age attending nightly Monday-Friday. Each year we have been vastly oversubscribed at registration and, unfortunately, we have had to place many children on a waiting list, such was the clamour for attendance. Each night features a different Bible Character “Superhero” with Jesus as the central theme throughout the week. Content is: Bible stories of the characters presented in an imaginative way, video, songs, games, crafts and sports – all split over 3 age groups across our suite of halls and external grounds.

- KeeCraft

- With a membership of approximately 20 the KeeCraft group meets on alternative Friday's. The group is a wonderful source of both fun and fellowship for its members who participate in a different craft-making topic and craft activity each time. Tea/coffee with traybakes and sweet baking items are provided. The group is predominantly Kilmakee members but a few others from the local area also attend. The group is open to all.

- Prayer and Praise group
 - o This group meets on the last Sunday each month specifically to pray and praise in a more intimate setting than Sunday morning Worship. The group seeks to encourage those who attend to grow deeper in their prayer life and their faith. Without expectation or pressure on anyone prayer may be offered vocally while others may choose to sit in quiet, inward reflection. Some songs of Praise or Worship will also feature within this group setting.

Volunteers

The trustees are deeply appreciative of the time and energy of all volunteers in the church's programme of activities across all organisations and groups who give freely, selflessly and abundantly of their time, energy, skills and talents passionately to those they serve in and through Kilmakee Presbyterian Church. The trustees wish to acknowledge with sincere thanks all the leaders' contributions to the work for and advancement of Christ's Kingdom within the boundary of our charge and beyond.

Public benefit statement

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland meets the public benefit requirement by providing benefit to its members and the general public by making known the Christian Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ through the advancement of religion.

The direct benefits which flow from the purposes of the Church include the gaining of an understanding in Christian beliefs as set out in the Bible and the Church's subordinate standards (as found in the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Shorter and Larger catechism) leading to spiritual and moral development and opportunities for response to Bible teaching. In turn, this framework leads to practical expressions of Christian beliefs and standards in the local community such as through the care of those in need which includes the sick, those with disabilities and the bereaved.

Generally the above benefits are delivered locally by congregations and their members, or are facilitated through Presbyteries or are organised and delivered centrally. Local delivery is facilitated by central resources in almost all cases. Public access is made known through the use of noticeboards, printed material, press advertisements, websites, social media and in other ways.

The benefits are demonstrated through regular evaluation of the services and informal feedback from members, their families and members of the public.

The purpose does not lead to harm. The only private benefit flowing from our purpose is related to Ministers, Missionaries, Deaconesses, Irish Mission workers and Lay Agents who receive benefits as a result of their holding office or employment. However, this is incidental and necessary in order to further our charitable purpose. There are no other private benefits. The beneficiaries of this purpose are members, their families, other individuals that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is in direct and indirect contact with, the community in which pastoral services are provided and other communities throughout Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and worldwide which benefit from our engagement with and support for both Christian and other secular organisations, charities and individual members of the public.

The Kirk Session has had regard to the Charity Commissions Public benefit requirement statutory guidance.

Financial review

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering with some additional Gift Aid and occasional modest donations.

As the congregation's income does not exceed £250,000, the trustees have elected under Section 64(3) of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 208 to prepare a *receipt and payment* account along with a statement of assets and liabilities.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the congregation's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time its financial position. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the congregation and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This **Trustees Report** approved by the Kilmakee Congregation Kirk Session at a meeting on Tuesday 29th October 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

Aileen Irvine (Clerk of Session October 2021 - September 2023)

Aileen Irvine signed this day 29/10/2024

Alastair White (Clerk of Session September 2023 -)

Alastair White signed this day 29/10-2024