

**CASTLEREAGH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

a Congregation of The Presbyterian Church In Ireland

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

The Trustees present their Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 including a Balance Sheet as at that date.

**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

Castlereagh Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in  
Ireland  
79 Church Road  
Castlereagh  
Belfast  
BT6 9SA

*Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC 104335)*

**CHARITY TRUSTEES**

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

May Anderson  
Andrew McCann  
Phyllis Grier

Rev. Mervyn Burnside  
John Hanna

**PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS**

Minister  
Clerk of Session  
Accounts prepared by

Rev. Mervyn Burnside  
Andrew McCann  
PGR Accountants Ltd, 21 Old Channel Road, BT3 9DE

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER**

Jonathan McNeill, ACA, 21 Old Channel Road, Belfast, BT3 9DE

**BANKERS**

Danske Bank, Donegall Square West, Belfast, BT1 6JS

**SOLICITORS**

King & Gowdy Ltd, 298 Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, BT4 3EJ.

## **CASTLEREAGH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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### **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (continued)**

#### **STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT**

##### **The Kirk Session**

The charity trustees of the congregation are the members of its 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 of the congregation and of persons not connected with any congregation who are within its bounds. It ensures pastoral care is in place in 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 the Kirk Session are ex-officio members 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, except that the Moderator, the ministers in active duty in the congregation, has no deliberative but only a casting vote.

Stated meetings of the Kirk session are held at least four times each year or as appropriate.

To be chosen for the office of the eldership in the congregation a person must be a voting member and a regular attendant on its ordinances. The selection of those proposed to be called to the office can be either by the congregation or by 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. Castlereagh Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the East 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 appointed by the Kirk Session of each congregation.



## **CASTLEREAGH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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### **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (continued) 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, administration and judicial authority, in dealing with all matters brought before it. The General Assembly is normally constituted during the first week in June 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**

Castlereagh Presbyterian Church 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 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 congregation's mission purposes is by the grace of God, to help people of all ages become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ. Our vision is, by the grace of God, to be an inclusive, welcoming community of Christ's people of all ages, which:

- *is increasingly characterised by love for God, and love and concern for others;*
- *is committed to the historic Christian gospel as revealed in the Bible;*
- *is relevant to people of this time and place.*

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

- *A Covenant Community: where our relationships are rooted in the promises of God by living faithfully toward him and toward one another*
- *An Intergenerational Community: where adults intentionally take the lead to engage with, encourage and nurture younger members to maturity in Christ.*
- *An Outward looking Community: where we want the blessings of God that belong to us in the gospel to become blessings for others beyond the bounds of our community.*
- *As a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, we believe that the Bible is the supreme authority over all we do, and that the Westminster Confession of Faith, along with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms set out what we understand the Bible teaches on key matters of Christian faith and practice.*

## **CASTLEREAGH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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### **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (continued) ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES**

The congregation meets for worship every Sunday and visitors are welcome to join. The Sacrament of the Lords Supper is observed on several occasions during the year and all those who have been baptised and who have made a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are admitted to the Lord's Supper. The congregation holds regular bible study meetings and has a wide range of organisations including:

- Boys' Brigade (*B.B.*)
- Hilltop Group (*Senior Citizens*)
- Presbyterian Women (*P.W.*)
- Bowling Club
- Zoom Prayer meeting.

### **ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

#### **Worship and prayer**

Organisations resumed meeting in person from September 2022 and continued for the rest of the year. Printed weekly worship resources continued to be distributed by email or hard copy as requested. At 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 there were 85 communicant members and 171 families connected with the congregation. The average weekly attendance at morning worship is 40 people.



## **CASTLEREAGH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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### **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (continued)**

#### **Pastoral care**

Members of the congregation who are unable to attend church due to sickness or age are visited on a regular basis by the minister, elders or by one of the congregation's pastoral visitors.

#### **Mission and outreach**

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 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 the areas of worship, discipleship, global mission, outreach, leadership and pastoral care.

#### **Presbytery**

The congregation was represented at the regular meetings of Presbytery by our minister and/or one of the elders. This provides an important link between the congregations and the wider structures of the church.

#### **General Assembly**

The minister and one of our elders were nominated to attend the meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland held in Assembly Buildings, Belfast, in June.

#### **Organisations**

The congregation supports a number of organisations who actively make use of both the Church and Hall facilities, including Boys' Brigade for children and young adults, Hilltop group for older members of the congregation, Presbyterian Women and more. Subject to the Approval of Kirk session outside organisations such as Ravara Productions have been able to use the facilities for rehearsal space. Again subject to approval of Kirk Session and availability, various outside groups and individuals have been able to avail of the facilities for various family celebrations.

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### **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (continued)**

#### **Property**

During the year no major repairs were completed to the Manse.

Investment Property valuation remained the same as the prior year at £587,851 (2022: £587,851).

#### **Volunteers**

The Trustees wish to acknowledge their deep appreciation of those who give freely of their time by serving on committees and helping with organisations and other church activities.

### **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 in the Church's subordinate standards (*the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Shorter and Larger Catechisms*) 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 (*including the sick, disabled and bereaved*).

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 notice boards, printed material, press advertisement, websites, and social media or in other ways. The benefits are demonstrated through regular evaluation of the services and informal and ad-hoc 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.



**CASTLEREAGH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (continued)**  
**GOING CONCERN**

The activities of the congregation are dependent on ongoing contributions from its members. The Trustees are of the opinion that the congregation has sufficient resources at the date of approval of these financial statements to meet commitments which will arise in the year from the date of signing this report and subject to the continuing support from members to fund on an ongoing basis the congregation's current activity and other financial commitments.

**RESERVES POLICY**

The Trustees have considered the level of unrestricted reserves that it is appropriate to hold taking account of current and ongoing commitments. It is the policy of the Trustees to hold at least one month's normal expenditure. At the year-end unrestricted reserves were £150,322 which represents a higher level of reserves. The Trustees however, consider it prudent to hold reserves at this level as the funding of its present activities is dependent of the ongoing financial support of members.

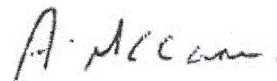
**RISK REVIEW**

A review of major risks has been undertaken by the Trustees and the system and procedures implemented to manage identified risks. The principal risks are in relation to the likelihood of reputational damage and financial risks associated with the expectation of ongoing financial support from members. These risks are mitigated by the Trustees, and the Congregational Committee, regularly monitoring the various activities of the congregation at stated meetings and by encouraging members in their regular giving.

Approved by the Kirk Session at a meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024 and signed on its behalf  
by:



Rev. Mervyn Burnside  
Minister



Andrew McCann  
Clerk of Session