

GILNAHIRK CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

**Trustees Annual Report
for the year ended 31 December 2023**

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC104474)

GILNAHIRK CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

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

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Gilnahirk congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
161A Gilnahirk Road
Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC104474)

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

Mrs Carol Anderson	Dr Trevor Gilliland
Miss Hilary Gowdy	Miss Patricia Gowdy
Mr Stephen Jackson	Mr Stephen Jordan (resigned 13/3/23)
Mr Andrew Kerr	Mr David McDonald
Mr Colin McRoberts	Mr David Mark
Rev Stephen Moore	Mrs Hilary Morrow
Mr Johnston Morrow	Mrs Judith Morrow
Mrs Julie-May Noteman	Mr Richard Patterson
Mrs Roberta Patterson	Mr Michael Picken
Mrs Susan Roche	Mrs Audrey Smallwood
Mr William Smyth	Mr Malcolm Strain
Mrs Heather Taylor	Mrs Rachel Toland

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister	Rev Stephen Moore
Clerk of Session	Mrs Heather Taylor
Treasurer	Mrs Hilary Morrow

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Mr John Cummings, 15 Moyne Park, Belfast BT5 7QT

BANKERS

Ulster Bank, Kings Square, Kings Road, Belfast BT5 6JL

SOLICITORS

C & J Black Solicitors, Linenhall House, 13 Linenhall Street, Belfast BT2 8AA

GILNAHIRK CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

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 minister in active duty in the congregation, has no deliberative but only a casting vote.

Stated meetings of the Kirk Session are held 5 times per year.

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. Gilnahirk congregation of the 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.

GILNAHIRK CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

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 a 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

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

Gilnahirk congregation of the 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 purpose is:

Gilnahirk Presbyterian Church exists to

- *Show the love of God in Christ Jesus;*
- *Proclaim the gospel and enable people to find its healing power;*
- *Encourage members to worship and learn together, and grow in faith;*
- *Apply the faith in practical concern and help to others.*

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.*

GILNAHIRK CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

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 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 range of organisations including

- Toddler Church and Kids Church (Children's Ministry)
- Roots (Youth Ministry)
- Youth Club
- Parents and Toddlers
- Presbyterian Women
- Gilnahirk Friendship Group
- Monday Morning Drop In
- Men's and Women's Bowling Clubs
- Ladies' and Men's Groups
- Contact Singers

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and prayer

The congregation meets for worship on Sunday mornings at 11.00am and normally on the first and third Sunday evenings of each month at 7.00pm. The praise is led by the Choir, supplemented on occasions by the Praise Group and other Singers, accompanied by the organ and at times by the Band – all under the leadership of our Musical Director.

During the week the Discipleship Groups provide an opportunity for members to meet together for fellowship, to study the Scriptures and for a time of prayer.

As well as our regular services during the year we celebrated the Sacrament of Baptism on 1 occasion, and we gave thanks for the lives of those who died and sought to comfort those who had been bereaved during the year.

At 31 December 2023 there were 303 communicant members and 316 families connected with the congregation. The average weekly attendance at morning worship is 125.

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, a retired minister who provides additional pastoral and preaching support, elders or by one of the congregation's pastoral visitors.

GILNAHIRK CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

Mission and outreach

At a local level the congregation is engaged in schools' work through its Youth and Family Worker and the minister, conducting assemblies in one primary school and one grammar school, and taking a variety of other classes.

A Holiday Bible Club or other activities for young people take place during the summer.

Members support Dundonald Foodbank by donating non-perishable food items on an ongoing basis.

A variety of charities and good causes are regularly supported by the congregation, with £21,768 being donated to such in 2023.

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

The congregation also contributes to the denomination's annual World Development Appeal and any other special appeals.

Presbytery

The congregation was represented at the regular meetings of Presbytery by our minister and 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.

Property

No major repairs or refurbishment projects were carried out during the year.

GILNAHIRK CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

Organisations

Two Discipleship Groups meet fortnightly for Bible Study, fellowship and prayer. Over 30 adult members attend regularly.

Toddler Church, Kids Church and Roots provide around 30 children and young people with Bible teaching and activities on Sundays.

Youth Club offers recreational activities for approximately 40 young people fortnightly on Saturday evenings, mainly in the Church Hall but also at times on trips to various locations.

Each Thursday morning our hall is used by our Parents and Toddlers group. Approximately 20 children and their carers regularly attend.

The Gilnahirk Friendship Group organises monthly meetings or outings for approximately 25 older members as well as a Christmas party.

Monday Morning Drop In provides a space for older members and others to meet for refreshments and chat each week for an hour.

Presbyterian Women offer the 20 or so members Christian fellowship as well as highlighting and resourcing mission projects in Ireland and overseas.

Between them the Ladies' Bowling and Men's Association cater for over 40 keen indoor bowlers every week.

The Gilnahirk Ladies' and Men's Groups provide their members (about 50 and 25 respectively) with a variety of talks from a wide range of guest speakers on a regular basis.

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.

GILNAHIRK CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

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).

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 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 Commission's Public Benefit requirement statutory guidance.

**GILNAHIRK CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND
TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering. There were 187 contributors during the year [238 in previous year, 2022] donating a total of £137,185 (£112,608 in previous year, 2022). This does not include the loose offerings.

Total income of the congregation during the year was £211,938 compared to £161,805 in the previous year.

Total expenditure increased from £188,134 in 2022 to £224,261 in 2023.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the annual report and the financial statements of the congregation in accordance with applicable law and generally accepted accounting practice.

As the congregation's total income does not exceed £250,000, the Trustees have elected under Section 64(3) of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 to prepare a receipts and payments account and 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.

Approved by the Kirk Session and signed on its behalf on 20 October 2024 by



Stephen Moore



Heather Taylor