

**Mountpottinger Presbyterian Church  
a Congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Ireland**

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**Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements  
for the year ended 31 December 2023**

Registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland NIC 104529

**Mountpottinger Presbyterian Church  
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## **Trustees' Report**

The Trustees present their Annual Report and Financial Statement for the year ended 31 December 2023 including a balance sheet as of that date.

## **Reference and Administrative Details**

Mountpottinger Presbyterian a Congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Ireland

45 Castlereagh Street Belfast BT5 4NE

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland NIC104529

## **Charity Trustees**

The Charity Trustees at the date of this report were

Rev Enrique Tagle Aguiar

Mr Thomas Baker

Mr Ronnie Baxter

Mr David Craig

Mr Brian Currie

Mrs Margaret Grayson

Mr Gordon Kennedy

Mr John Minnis

Mr Hill McRoberts

Mr Neill McRoberts

Mr Peter Parke

Rev Martin Smyth

Dr Robin Wilson

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### **Principal Office Bearers**

Minister.	Rev Enrique Tagle Aguiar
Clerk of Session.	Margaret Grayson
Deputy Clerk of Session	Neill McRoberts
Treasurer	Wendy Baker
Congregational Secretary	Pat Jones

### **Auditor**

Peter Woods F.C.A.  
61 Ardmore Heights  
Holywood  
BT18 0PY

### **Bankers**

Danske Bank  
Donegall Square West  
Belfast  
BT1 6JS

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## **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 voice 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 bi-monthly from September to June. To be chosen for the office of 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. Mountpottinger 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.

### **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 Session of each congregation.

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## **Description and Purpose**

Mountpottinger 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 – in faithful prayer and relying totally on God.

The congregation aims to live out its mission purpose as a family of God's people by being:

- a community of believers that seeks to study and learn from God's Word
- a community where each member is developing a discipleship life
- a community seeking to love Jesus and that is evident to all as we welcome everyone
- to be outward looking to share this love, the gospel and the blessings of God with others beyond our church bounds
- all we do is totally dependent on God, on the truth in His Word, surrounded by the power of prayer and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

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**Activities and Objectives**

The congregation meets for worship every Sunday at 11am. This service is open to all the community and visitors are welcome to join. There is a live stream of this service for those members unable to attend in person. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is normally observed four times during the year and all those who have been baptised and have made a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are admitted as members. Anyone who professes Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour is welcome to partake in the Lord's Supper. The congregation has regular midweek Bible Study meetings and a wide range of organisations including:

- Bible Class
- Boys' Brigade
- Creche
- Food table
- Friday Fellowship Lunch
- Girls' Brigade
- Junior Church
- MASK
- Open Door
- Prayer meeting
- Presbyterian Women
- Seniors
- Toddlers
- SNYF

## **Activities and Performance**

### **Worship and Prayer**

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 11am. At the bi-weekly, midweek meeting the members study the Scriptures and through the teaching continue to develop their everyday living as a witness to the Love of God in their lives. On a Monday morning there is the opportunity to meet to pray for our church, our community, our city and the wider world.

As well as our regular services, during the year, we acknowledged and celebrated God's gift of new life at three Sacraments of Baptism (two infant and one adult) and we conducted two marriage services. In addition we also gave thanks for faithful service and sought to comfort those who had been bereaved during the year.

On 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 there were 93 communicant members and 113 families connected to the congregation. During the year, we welcomed five new communicants to the Lord's Table and one new member on transfer from another congregation.

The normal weekly attendance at worship was 93.

### **Pastoral Care**

Members of the congregation who are unable to attend church, due to sickness or age, are visited regularly by the minister, elders and members of the congregation.

### **Mission and Outreach**

At a local level, members of the congregation seek to live as disciples, loving Jesus, loving others, both within the Mountpottinger family and in the wider community.

Our weekly free food table ministry has continued to develop, building relationships, getting to know people and their life concerns. During 2023 the food table was moved from outside to inside the church, those who come then enjoy coffee and toast in our coffee dock area and the trust that has been earned allow those involved in the ministry, the opportunity to share on a personal basis about Jesus. As a congregation we would like to acknowledge and thank Tesco for their support and generosity.

There is an open invitation to members and to the community to join us at our Friday Fellowship lunch for a time of fellowship and finishing with a meal shared together.

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Mission Possible, our charity shop, has built relationships with customers and the volunteers over the past 20 years. Many come in for a chat to share about family issues and request prayer, and faith is shared in a natural conversation.

The congregation supports the United Appeal for Mission, which is the 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 denomination 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, assists 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 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 are nominated to attend the meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, which is held in the Assembly Buildings, Belfast, in June annually.

**Property**

The congregational property consists of a church sanctuary and halls complex, located in Castlereagh Street in inner East Belfast; a manse at Crawford Park and our Mission Impossible Charity Shop on Castlereagh Road.



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**Organisations:**

- Junior Church - aged up to 11, meet during the Sunday morning service, to learn from the Bible and grow in their understanding of God
- Creche – area for babies and toddlers aged three and under, there is free play and other activities
- Bible Class – young people attend on a Sunday morning during the church service, as well as meeting for social events during the year
- SNYF – Sunday Night Youth Fellowship meets with a varied programme
- Prayer meeting – Monday - members meet to pray for our church, our community, our city and the wider world
- MASK – Mountpottinger After Schools Kids – homework club on Monday/Thursday for primary school children drawn from schools in the area
- Seniors – meet on Tuesday afternoon twice a month, enjoying spending time together and hear visiting speakers
- Girls' Brigade – on Tuesday evenings, girls aged 3 to 18
- Food table – free food table to help those in need of food in the local area, of friendship and opportunity share personal faith with those who come regularly, over tea and toast
- Toddlers – on Wednesday mornings, children and carers gather to spend time together, play activities, bible story and a snack
- Midweek Bible Study - on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday evening
- Open Door – opportunity for members to come together on a Thursday morning for friendship and fellowship
- Boys' Brigade – meets on a Thursday evening with boys aged 4 to 18
- Friday Fellowship Lunch – open to all who want to come, activities and chat followed by a hot meal and dessert
- Presbyterian Women (MPW) – ladies in the congregation meet on 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in the month, at 11.00, to share a varied programme of worship, activities and hear invited speakers, including missionaries

**Volunteers**

The Trustees wish to acknowledge their deep appreciation of those who give freely of their time by serving in all aspects of church life.

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**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 of 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 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 and social media or in other ways.

The benefits are demonstrated through regular evaluation of the services and informal ad-hoc feedback from members, their families and individual 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 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 secular organisations, charities and individual members of the public.

The Kirk Session has had regard to the Charity Commission public benefit requirement statutory guidance.

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## **Financial Review**

The congregation's main source of income continues to be the generous contributions from our members.

Total Income during the year was £151,476 compared to £ 165,282 in 2022  
Total Expenditure during the year was £154,595 compared to £257,771 in 2022

There was a considerable bequest to the church in 2021 which was transferred to an investment fund during 2022. This is the main reason for the reduction in expenditure during 2023 compared to 2022.

## **Responsibilities In Respect of the Financial Statements**

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

The Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the congregation and the financial activities for that year. In preparing the financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Funds will continue in operation

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Funds transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the congregation and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities 91 January 2015)." They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## **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 continuing support from members to fund on an ongoing basis the congregation's current activities and other financial commitments.

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**Risk Review**

A review of major risks has been undertaken by the Trustees and systems 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 17 September 2024 and signed on its behalf by



Rev Enrique Tagle Aguiar

Minister

Date 17 September 2024



M I Grayson

Clerk of Session

Date 17 September 2024