

BALLYCARRY CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

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

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC104901)

BALLYCARRY PRESBYTERIAN 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 and a Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at that date.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Ballycarry congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
60 Hillhead Road, Ballycarry, BT38 9HE.

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC104901)

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

Rev Mark Russell	Mr. Arthur McQuitty
Miss Daphne Bashford	Miss Denise Savage
Mrs Mabel Bell	Mr Roy Bamford ((installed 10 Sept 2023)
Mr. Mark Campbell	Mrs Joan Dobbin (installed 10 Sept 2023)
Mrs Anne Cowan	Mr Ivan Jefferson (installed 10 Sept 2023)
Mr Samuel McAllister	Mrs Rosemary Junkin (installed 10 Sept 2023)
Mr Stephen McFaul	Mrs Kristina Loughridge (installed 10 Sept 2023)
Mrs. Ethel McKibbin	Mrs Libby Russell (installed 10 Sept 2023)
Mr. Samuel McKibbin (retired 31 Dec 2023)	

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister	Mark Russell
Clerk of Session	Daphne Bashford
Treasurer	Mrs Chris Shaw

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

K.A. McAnoy, Accountant

BANKERS

Danske Bank, High Street, Carrickfergus, BT38 7AN

SOLICITORS

MacAuley & Ritchie Solicitors, 1 St. John's Place, Larne, BT40 1TB

BALLYCARRY 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 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 three times in 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. Ballycarry congregation of the Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the Carrickfergus 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 the congregation.

BALLYCARRY 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 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

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

Ballycarry 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 purpose is as described in our mission statement:

Our desire is to be 'a light on the hill', drawing people together for God and for each other

A people

- increasingly characterised by love for God, and love and concern for others.
- committed to the historic Christian gospel as revealed in the Bible.
- 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.

BALLYCARRY 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 at least 4 times 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 has two Bible study groups that meet regularly. This year these groups continued to meet both in person and via Zoom. Prayer Cell Groups remained in touch throughout the year and are constantly updated with prayer needs and requests. It has a wide range of organisations including:

- Discovery Bible Club (incorporating our Sunday School and Children's Church)
- Connect 1 (Youth Bible class)
- Threads
- PW (Presbyterian Women)
- Chat and Chill
- Parents and Toddlers – Jack and Jill
- Mini Explorers/Explorers

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and prayer

The congregation meets for worship each Sunday at 11.00am with an occasional evening service which we moved to an earlier time to accommodate older members of the congregation who would prefer not to drive at night. This meant our attendance at the Harvest Service and Carol service was better attended this year. Each month the Bible Study groups provide an opportunity for members to meet both in person as well as online for fellowship, to study the scriptures and for a time of prayer.

As well as our regular services during the year, we were able to have special services during Holy Week. Sadly, we also met to give thanks for the lives of seven members who had died through the year and sought to bring comfort to those who were bereaved during the year. We were also able to celebrate the marriage of one young couple from the church.

At 31 December 2023 there were 121 communicant members and 210 families connected with the congregation. The average weekly attendance at morning worship was 100.

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

Pastoral care

Thankfully this year saw the easing of restrictions that had prevented us from providing pastoral care through regular visits to the homes of our congregation. The Minister and Elders sought to visit members at home, in Residential care and in Hospitals. At the same time, we continued to use the alternate methods we had utilised during the restrictions such as by telephone and text to encourage and support one another. The trustees continue to take Child Protection seriously in their activities. The current Designated persons are Audrey Stewart & Stephen McFaul, who report on this at the Kirk Session meetings.

MISSION AND OUTREACH

This year we were able to join in several joint worship services with the other congregations in the village. We met together on Good Friday for a service in St John's church of Ireland; shared in a service of lessons and carols in our own congregation as well as coming together for the community Carol service held at the community centre on the Sunday evening before Christmas. We also joined with the congregations of Whitehead and Islandmagee on several occasions to reach out to youth, Ladies and men through specially themed events.

Throughout the year, services of worship are made available through several social media platforms such as YouTube and Facebook. The WhatsApp Prayer Group was extended and updated, and other WhatsApp groups were made available to all members. These allowed us to share and encourage members as well as pray for their friends and others in the community who were going through worrying and difficult times.

EVENTS

In March we welcomed one of our PCI missionaries, Mrs Naomi Leremore who shared with us and the wider Presbytery of the work in Kenya.

We held a coffee morning to help raise funds for the Smiles Foundation in Romania as one of our young adults was going out on mission during the Summer.

Over the Summer months, we continued with our fellowship walks, spending time chatting with one another and enjoying the good weather. Our Holiday Bible Club, Rocky's Plaice ran from 17th to 21st July and was well attended and supported from families in the wider community.

We were able to decorate the church for the Harvest celebrations in October with our church choir leading us in Praise. These floral decorations were then distributed to members of the congregation.

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

Our Harvest offering went towards church funds and a tenth was sent to support both the work of the Presbyterian Church in Galway and the ministry of Release International

At Christmas we had another fellowship event called Coffee and Craic when we gathered together to share with one another.

During the year we supported the local food bank and at Christmas we:

- Donated toys to the Salvation Army in Larne.
- Visited housebound and bereaved members with a gift of shortbread.

Donations to external missions and agencies:

As well as the donations mentioned above, 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, 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.

The congregation contributes to the Presbyterian Children's Society, United Christian Broadcasters, Christian Aid, World Development Appeal and other special appeals throughout the year including a collection for the Student Bursary Fund at our Ordination and Installation of six new Elders in September. This fund provides financial support for students for the Ordained Ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

Presbytery

The congregation was represented at the regular meetings of Presbytery by our Minister and representative Elder. This provides an important link between the congregations and the wider structures of the church.

General Assembly

The General Assembly met this year in June 2023, slightly later than usual as well as a different format to try and encourage younger members to contribute to the debates.

BALLYCARRY CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

Property

The major items of expenditure during the year was the painting of the Meeting House both externally and Internally and the re-covering of additional chairs for the halls.

ORGANISATIONS

Bible Discovery Club – Children are part of the worship at the beginning of our service and then go across to the Halls after a time of praise and a suitable talk to them to begin their own specialised study. It is our goal to teach the children about Jesus and God's love for us using Bible Stories and themes, Christian Songs suitable for young people as well as Quizzes and craft to add to the learning. We have four different teams of teachers and helpers who share the workload each week. We have 24 children on the roll with an average attendance each week of around 15. We held monthly Family services when we all met together with leaders and children of the Bible Discovery Club taking part in the service. They also led our worship at our Nativity service held in December 2023.

Connect 1 – Our youth Bible class recommenced this year, again with several volunteer leaders to help spread the load. There are about 8 young people on the roll, and they spent time thinking of some big questions such as *'the reality of the Bible'* and *'what happens when I die'?*

Creche - Provides a safe place for babies, toddlers & Primary school children during worship on a Sunday. This is made available for any family that need to use the facilities.

Chat and Chill –. This continued to meet twice a month although the numbers began to dwindle towards the end of the year. We are taking time to consider how best to revitalise this work. We also had a congregational Lunch at Christmas with 50 members in attendance. We used outside caterers and then were able to spend time together with a Quiz and Carol singing.

Threads - A ladies' group meeting twice monthly with refreshments served. Those attending knit/crochet for many charitable outlets at home and abroad. There are also ladies who are unable to come to the meetings but who work at home and are linked into the Group. The items produced by this group are many and they support mission abroad in Malawi and Romania, and at home mission to Seafarers, local residential homes, Tiny Life and premature baby units in hospitals, and fund raising by Age N.I.

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

Jack and Jill (Parents and Tots) - We are grateful for the volunteers who set up our large hall with play areas and a variety of toys and puzzles for the children to enjoy. Refreshments for the children and adults are provided. The accompanying adults also appreciated the chance to come and share; to swap stories and advice of their own experiences. A number of special evenings were also held in the evenings to build relationships with the parents and guardians. We are encouraged that the group has been well attended with many new families joining each week.

Presbyterian Women (PW) - The aim of this group is to bring women together of all ages for friendship and support, highlighting the need for love and unity, obedience to God, Christian Living and service to others using our talents and skills. The group endeavours to support local and global mission. Membership is open to all women, regardless of race, nationality, disability or sexual preference. The group is administered by a committee, elected by the group at the AGM and consists of Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary and a maximum of two other members of PW. The group meets on a regular basis for a range of activities, including speakers, events and outings.

Indoor bowls – They have not been able to resume their activities as numbers have dwindled considerably over the last number of years.

Mini Explorers/Explorers – This new organisation caters to boys within the P2-P6, age bracket meeting weekly in the halls for games, bible stories, quizzes and craft. It seeks to build friendships that they will be able to take further into life, sharing with one another along the way. About 12 boys regularly meet each week, but that number has increased to 25+ when they have held special *'invite your friend evenings'*. In September a new related group began catering for an older group from P7 upwards. Even though the numbers are in single figures, we are encouraged by the commitment of the boys to return each week and for the leadership team who diligently give of their time each week.

Volunteers

The Trustees wish to acknowledge their deep appreciation of all those who still give freely of their time by serving on committees and helping with organisations and other church activities in the challenging time for church life post covid.

BALLYCARRY 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.

BALLYCARRY 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 161 contributing families during the year donating £53,415 (£51,414 in the previous year 2022). The Trustees note the increased donations by the members and want to acknowledge their generosity and support.

Total Income of the congregation during the year was £102,105 compared to £118,405 in the previous year.

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 payment 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 by

Name *Japhne Boslford*

Date 11th September 2024

Name *W.R. Bedford*

Date 11th September 2024

