

Craigy Hill Presbyterian Church, Larne

**(Craigy Hill Congregation of The
Presbyterian Church in Ireland)**

**Annual Report and Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 December 2022**

Charity Commission for Northern Ireland Number NIC104931

Craigy Hill Presbyterian Church, Larne

Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2022

The Trustees present the annual report and financial statements for Craigy Hill Presbyterian Church, Larne for the year ended 31 December 2022.

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: Craigy Hill Congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Ireland (otherwise referred to as "Craigy Hill Presbyterian Church, Larne")

Charity Registration Number: NIC104931

Contact Address: 76 Churchill Road
LARNE
BT40 2EN

Correspondence Address: c/o 4 The Roddens
LARNE
BT40 1QT

Charity Trustees

Rev. Ben Preston
Brian Clenaghan
Alan Doole
John Dundee
David Fulton
David Gillespie
Nigel Hull
Elvin Martin
David McGregor
Robin Ritchie (retired 4th October 2022)
Stephen Wharry

Principal Office-bearers
Minister: Rev. Ben Preston
Clerk of Session: John Dundee
Treasurer: Alan Doole

Independent Examiner
Simon Hopper FCA,
MBSCA, 3 High Street, Larne, Co. Antrim. BT40 1JN

Bankers
Danske Bank, P.O. Box 183, Donegall Square West, Belfast. BT1 6JS

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**Trustees' Annual Report
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Structure, Governance 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 at least eight times in each year.

To be chosen for the office of the eldership in the congregation a person must be a voting member and a regular attendant at 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.

Trustees do not receive remuneration, reward, or other private benefit for carrying out their Trustee responsibility.

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. Craigy Hill 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 each congregation.

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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 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.

Craigy Hill Presbyterian Church, Larne 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 glorify God and enjoy him forever 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 statement reads:

'Under the Sovereignty of God, Craigy Hill Presbyterian Church is committed to following Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, and to sharing His gospel by word and action in the local community and the wider world, in the power of the Holy Spirit for the glory of God'

Our vision is, by the grace of God, to be an inclusive, welcoming community of Christians 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; and
- 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 using the gospel to become blessings for others beyond the bounds of our community; and
- As a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, we believe that the Bible is the supreme standard over all we do, and that the Westminster Confession of Faith, along with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms (being the subordinate standards) set out what we understand the Bible teaches on key matters of Christian faith and practice.

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Objectives & Activities

The congregation meets every Sunday for morning worship and again for evening worship and everyone is welcome, whether members of the congregation or not. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is observed regularly during the year and all those who have been baptised and who have a credible profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are admitted to the Lord's Supper. The congregation holds regular midweek bible studies and has a wide range of organisations which are referenced below.

COVID-19

During 2022, the charity's activities continued to be disrupted by the restrictions implemented in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. The restrictions imposed meant that although all of our meetings were permitted, social distancing and face covering requirements remained in place until 26th January when PCI advised that face coverings could be removed when seated, but were still to be worn during singing and when moving around, including entry and exit.

From 1st March, social distancing was no longer required but 1 m spacing was still encouraged where possible; in addition, catering was once again permitted.

From 4th April, wearing face coverings became voluntary. Prior to this final lifting of restrictions, an announcement was made to the congregation by the Clerk, inviting people to speak to him if they had concerns about this relaxation. Due to the concerns of a few people, an area was allocated at the rear of the church seating only for those who wished to retain masks at all times and be socially distanced. At the end of June, this provision was removed with the people who had used this area advised by the Clerk in advance.

We resumed tea and coffee following the evening service after Easter and in the mornings in September when most people were more comfortable to mix following a general societal return to *normal*. Our flower donation for morning services also resumed in September, along with the associated distribution to recently bereaved families, the sick and to families on bereavement anniversaries. This ministry is greatly appreciated and we acknowledge the work undertaken by volunteers who regularly arrange the flowers as well as delivering them, often with some time spent ministering to those in receipt.

Boys' and Girls' Brigade enrolments resumed in 2022 following absences in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID.

Most organisations met as per their normal programme during 2022, complying with the guidelines in place at the time.

The Sunday School, Youth Fellowship and Bowling Club did not meet again until September, with all organisations back to their pre-COVID arrangements from then.

Meetings of Trustees continued at the regular one per month frequency, excluding July and August, with additional meetings held to discuss extraordinary matters. In accordance with the Guidance at the time, these meetings were held in person with distancing and wearing of face coverings. In total 14 meetings were held in 2022, all of which were in person. One of these meetings was outside our premises and occurred over a longer than normal period on a Saturday. This was to provide additional time to consider key issues in more detail.

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Achievements & Performance

Worship and prayer

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 11.00am and 6.30pm. During the week the Wednesday midweek provides an opportunity for members to meet for fellowship, to study the scriptures and for a time of prayer.

Joint evening services were held with 1st Larne and Gardenmore congregations during July and August, with three in each church, with the church building in Craigy Hill utilised; this was a return to our pre-COVID programme.

We held the Sacrament of Communion on five occasions in the first half of 2022, three in the morning and two in the evening utilising the pre-packed elements, set out individually for members to collect on their way in to worship to avoid contact due to COVID-19 concerns. A further two morning and one evening communion were held in the remainder of 2022 with a return to our pre-COVID routine.

During 2022 there were two Baptisms conducted and no marriages. We sought to comfort those who had been bereaved which was especially challenging in the ongoing COVID-19 concerns.

On 31 December 2022 there were 153 communicant members, with four new members joining in March following communicant classes. Three communicant members died during the year and Martin Delaney, assistant minister joined. There were 215 families connected with the congregation with some new names on the list replacing those removed. The congregation had an average weekly physical attendance of around 80 at morning worship and 30 at evening worship, with approximately 40 more in the morning and 15 in the evening joining virtually.

Our online capacity on YouTube and Facebook continued in 2022, with livestream each Sunday at 11am and 6:30pm along with the telephone service for members who did not have access to the internet, enabling them to listen live on Sunday morning or hear a recording during the week. This was facilitated each Sunday by a core team in the hall, in compliance with Regulations and Guidance applicable at the time. This team deserve special thanks from our congregation and Trustees for their faithfulness and commitment each Sunday, with some new team members becoming involved in 2022 providing additional cover. In addition, all sermons are available on the church website.

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 and the elders. During the COVID-19 pandemic, elders also regularly contacted members by telephone, especially those who were alone and/or shielding.

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Mission and outreach

The organisations of the church (listed below) seek to meet its objectives and activities through their varied programmes, covering all age ranges from babies and toddlers right through to the oldest members in our community. None of these organisations could function without the committed service of all those in leadership and we thank everyone who gives up their time and uses their God-given gifts to serve God in this way.

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.

One of our members, Naomi Leramore, works under the auspices of the PCI Council for Global Mission and receives support centrally from the United Appeal.

The congregation donated £35,538 to missionary societies and charities, all but £1,050 of which was destined for international aid support. Included in this is the congregation's contribution to the denomination's annual Children's Society, Sunday School projects and any other special appeals as the need arises.

The congregation donated £8,068 to work in Ukraine with an additional £10,000 received from a local business. This money was gifted through European Christian Mission (ECM) with our supported ECM worker Sashko Nezamutdinov assisting Ukrainian Refugees in Krakow, and through Tear Fund.

At our February meeting one of our Trustees brought to our attention a book for children about the life and Christian faith of Queen Elizabeth II in celebration of her upcoming Platinum Jubilee in June. The Trustees decided that we would gift a copy of this book to all in our local Linn Primary School where we have members on the Board of Governors. This was accepted by the school and the books containing an insert stating that they were from Craigy Hill Presbyterian Church, were distributed to the pupils in May. A number of comments of appreciation were received from members of the community for these.

At the May meeting, ongoing struggles of some on our community were brought to the Trustees' attention. After consideration by the Committee finance group at the direction of the Trustees, the Trustees agreed the establishment of a Hardship Fund which was implemented through the Committee. This fund is available for gifts to those in need at the discretion of the Minister and another Trustee due to matters of confidence.

On 9th July, it was with deep regret that we learnt of the death of a local man who died while helping with the construction of the Antiville bonfire which was located on the green adjacent to the church premises. The Rev. Preston attended the scene on the tragic evening and was able to minister to the family and the community at that time and in the days following.

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Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2022

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.

Property

The congregation continues to maintain its buildings and facilities. This year saw the completion of the repairs to the bell tower with some minor associated landscaping and handrail works to be completed as part of the routine maintenance.

Special thanks go to the Property Convenor, the members of the property sub-committee, our caretakers and all those who volunteered to clean the church and halls and carry out property maintenance tasks throughout the year and to those who provide their time on a regular basis to set out and clear the halls for worship services as well as creche and junior church.

A special mention also goes to all those who have facilitated our in-person worship during the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring that we comply with the Regulations and Guidance, including the provision of adequate hand sanitiser, maintaining social distancing, stewarding of the congregation, and facilitating safe access and egress.

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Organisations

The congregation has a wide range of organisations that meet during the week. These include:-

- Sunday School for primary school aged children (resumed September 2022).
- Crèche for children under 3 who meet during morning service each Sunday.
- Children's church for children between 3 and 7 who meet during part of the morning service each Sunday.
- Bible Class (suspended in March 2019).
- Boys' Brigade.
- Girls' Brigade.
- Mums and Tots.
- ROCK for primary school aged children who meet on the 1st Saturday of the month (suspended in September 2019).
- Ladies Fellowship.
- Women's Zone.
- Open Door.
- Bowling club - open to all ages, meets on a Monday evening (resumed September 2022).
- Youth Fellowship (resumed September 2022).
- Weekly homework club in Linn Primary School (suspended due to COVID).
- Welcome Hub (commenced Tuesday 28th November 2022).

As stated earlier, most organisations met during the year and complied with COVID restrictions as applicable.

During Autumn 2022 it was clear that many in our society struggled with the cost of living, particularly in light of increases in energy costs. The Trustees decided to commence the Welcome Hub on Tuesdays. This follows on from the Women's Zone and Open Door, starting at 12pm and for the trial period ending at 2pm. A lunch is provided as part of this, with it open to church members and the community. This new venture is encouraging and is to continue in 2023.

In addition to the weekly activities, there are some other events which take place each year:

- Bible Club in June in the early evenings for primary school age children. In 2022 this was back in person for three nights from 20th – 22nd.
- Motor's Night in the summer open to the community, with a supper and epilogue afterwards, which returned in 2022.
- Fellowship evenings.

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Staff

The congregation has three paid members of staff:

Minister	Rev. Ben Preston (also a Trustee)
Assistant Minister	Mr. Martin Delaney (licensed from 17 th October)
Praise Coordinator	Mr. David Fulton (also a Trustee)

From 27th November 2022 the Rev. Preston also acted as Vacancy Convenor for our neighbouring congregation, Gardenmore. This will continue for a number of months in 2023.

Volunteers

The Trustees wish to acknowledge their deep appreciation of those who give freely of their time by praying, serving on committees, leading in organisations, encouraging others, and helping with the wide range of church activities, making it the lively and vibrant community that it is. Their help is at the heart of God's work and witness in Craigy Hill and we are very grateful for their commitment and contribution.

We thank those who have come forward to help establish the Welcome Hub, in particular Mr. David Marshall who leads the catering.

We also note that two of our Boys' Brigade leaders are stepping down at the end of the 2022/23 Session; we thank them for their service and having confirmed that we wish this work to continue, we are actively seeking to replace them.

Further we take this opportunity to thank Robin Ritchie who has stepped down as a Trustee in 2022. We thank the LORD for his years of service, his contribution to Craigy Hill and the ongoing support that he continues to provide.

Finally, we highlight that during 2022 the Kirk Session decided to add to the current Session due to retirements and a bereavement over recent years and accordingly instigated a process in accordance with the Code of the church to select up to four new members. It is expected that this process will conclude during 2023, with new members of Kirk Session also becoming Trustees.

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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 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, 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.

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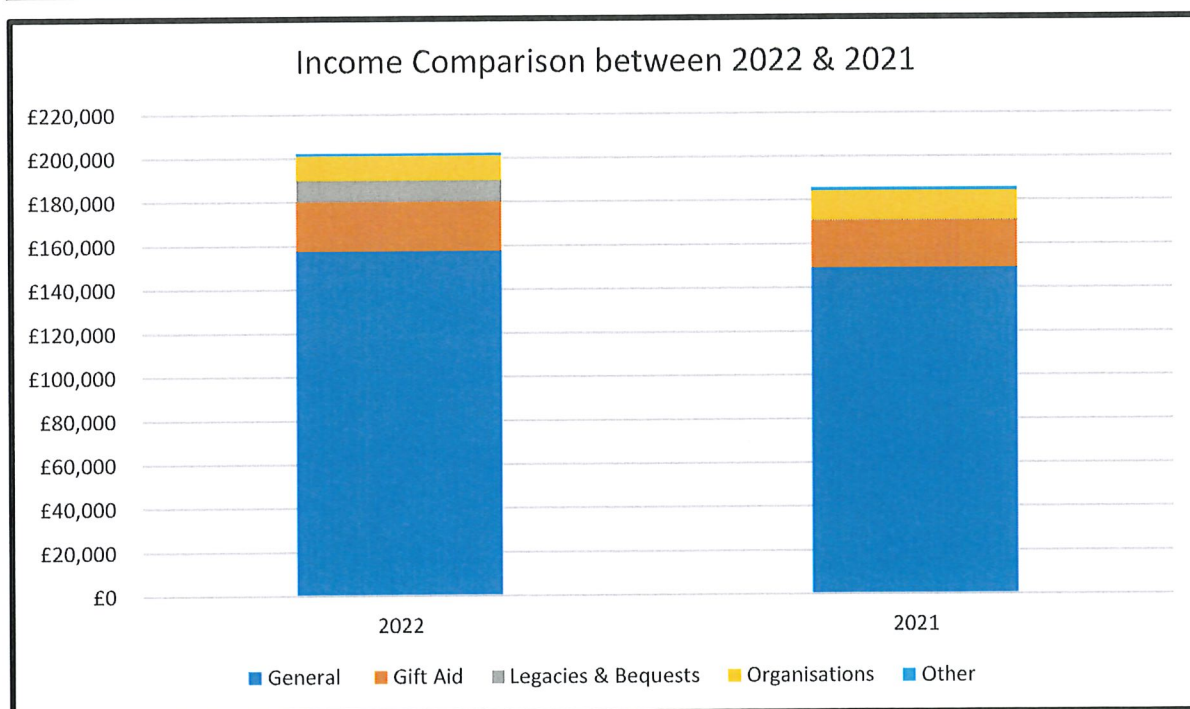
Financial Review

The congregation's principal source of income is members' contributions through Weekly Freewill Offering. There were 160 contributors during the year (2021 - 169) donating just under £98,000 to general funds (2021 - £99,457).

Total receipts from all sources for the year amounted to over £202,000, compared to £185,000 in 2021. The increase is largely accounted for by a donation from Wilson Resource Group to forward for Ukraine refugee relief, and a legacy from a trustee's estate. It is worth noting that members generosity continued this year, evidenced by the overall increase of funds from £91,000 to £107,000 in spite of the cost of the bell tower repairs and support for Ukraine refugees. The generosity also resulted in the opportunity to settle the loan outstanding to Community Finance Ireland, and we enter the year 2023 free of congregational debt.

The total income is summarised in the following table and chart.

Total Income Comparison Between 2022 & 2021			
Income	2022	2021	Difference
General	£157,674	£148,990	£8,684
Gift Aid	£22,646	£21,692	£954
Legacies & Bequests	£9,705	£240	£9,465
Organisations	£11,240	£13,359	£-2,119
Other	£1,051	£1,531	£-480
TOTALS	£202,316	£185,812	£16,504



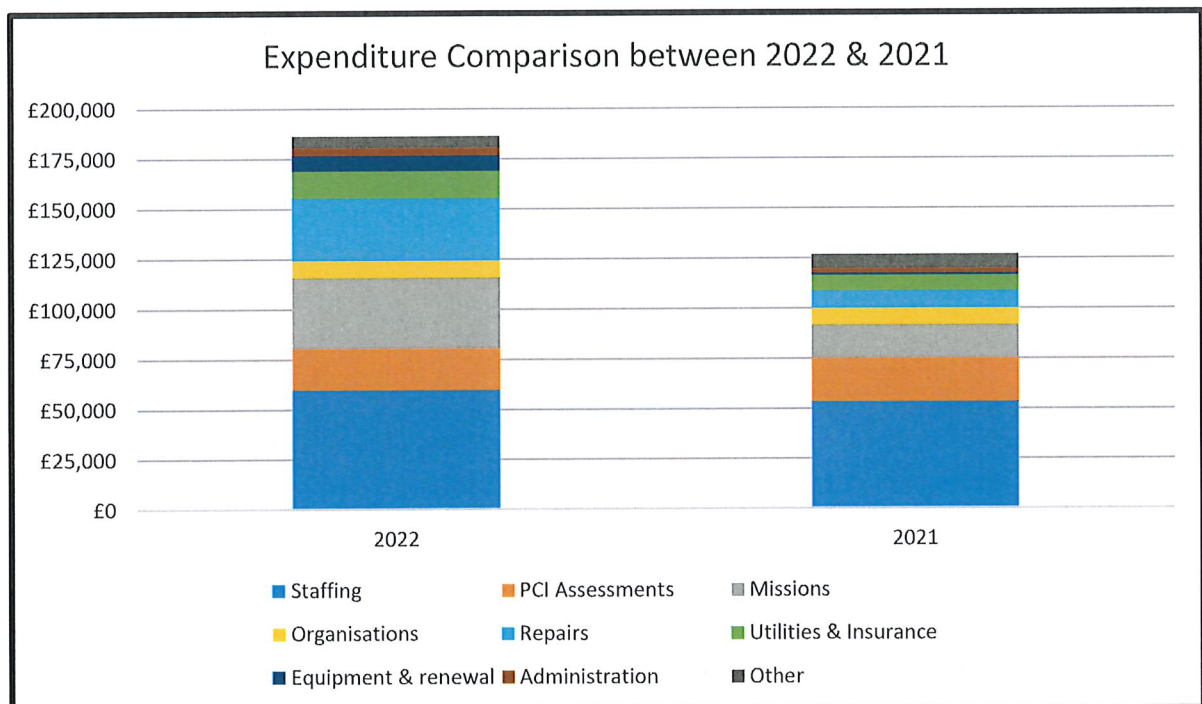
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Total payments increased from £127,009 in 2021 to £186,397 in 2022. Although costs increased in general, this can largely be accounted for by the cost of the tower repair and contributions to Ukraine refugee appeal. Salary costs have increased following the licensing of our assistant minister. Equipment & renewal reflects the retention payment to the builder for the Vestibule project completion.

The total expenditure is summarised in the following table and chart.

Total Expenditure Comparison Between 2022 & 2021			
Expense	2022	2021	Difference
Staffing	£59,662	£53,221	£6,441
PCI Assessments	£20,728	£21,856	-£1,128
Missions	£35,538	£16,563	£18,975
Organisations	£8,267	£8,058	£209
Repairs	£31,271	£9,089	£22,182
Utilities & Insurance	£13,554	£7,634	£5,920
Equipment & renewal	£7,705	£1,015	£6,690
Administration	£3,927	£2,513	£1,414
Other	£5,746	£7,060	-£1,314
TOTALS	£186,397	£127,009	£59,388



Kirk Session wishes to thank the members of congregational committee, finance sub-committee and counting teams for their diligence in dealing with the financial affairs of the congregation.

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Reserves Policy

The Trustees' policy is to retain a level of free/general reserves which will match its ongoing financial commitments. Free reserves are those unrestricted reserves not invested in fixed assets and available for general use.

The main reason for holding reserves is to ensure that the charity has enough resources to fund its programmes and pay all debts as they fall due. The Trustees believe that holding unrestricted funds that will cover three to six months expenditure is prudent and sufficient.

On 31st December 2022 the charity held Unrestricted Funds of £58,390. The trustees regard this balance as satisfactory. Note that at their regular meetings, Trustees are provided with an update of the current financial position and regularly monitor the movement in reserves.

On 31st December 2022, the charity also held £23,310 of Restricted Funds, and £25,585 of Endowment Funds provided for the purposes as explained in note 10 of the accounts.

Overall, in 2022 our total reserves increased from £91,367 to £107,286.

Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others.

There are no funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others.

Plans for future periods

The Trustees, in conjunction with the Committee, do not currently have any plans for major building projects. Other regular ongoing repairs and maintenance are anticipated.

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Statement of Trustees' 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 Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 requires charity trustees to ensure that accounting records are kept which are sufficient to show and explain all the charity's transactions, which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the charity and enable them to prepare statement of accounts which complies with regulation under the Act. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operational existence.

Approved by the Kirk Session at a meeting on 3 May 2023 and signed on its behalf by



John Dundee – Clerk of Session

3 May 2023