

CLARE 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 (NIC104955)

CLARE 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 a Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at that date.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Clare Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
8 Beauwood, Portadown, Craigavon Co Armagh BT62 3TH

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NI104955)

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

Philip McClelland

John Clarke

John Mason

John Adair

Brian Greer

Gary Fraser

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister Rev`d Philip McClelland

Clerk of Session John Adair

Treasurer John Mason

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Mr Brian Hamilton
23 Brackagh Road Portadown BT62 3RW

BANKERS

Danske Bank Portadown

SOLICITORS

Nelson Singleton Solicitors Main St
Markethill

CLARE 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 congregations. 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 twice 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 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. Clare congregation of the Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the Armagh 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.

CLARE 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.

Clare 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 congregations mission purpose is to magnify Christ by making disciples in Clare and beyond. As far as our vision is concerned, we long to see Christ praised in our area and world as our covenant community overflows with disciple making disciples of all ages who, equipped by the exposition and example of godly leaders, gather to edify each other and scatter to evangelise those outside, through the prayerful speaking of the word of God. 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.

CIARE 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 Lords Supper is observed on two 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 prayer meetings and has a wide range of organisations including

- Sunday School/Bible Class
- Presbyterian Women
- Girls Brigade
- Bowling Club

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and prayer

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 12 Noon and normally once a month at 6.30pm. During the week the Bible Study provides 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 conducted one marriage service and gave thanks for faithful services and sought to comfort those who had been bereaved during the year.

At 31 December 2023 there were 100 communicant members and 86 families connected with the congregation. The average week attendance at morning worship is seventy.

Pastoral care

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

Mission and outreach

At a local level the congregation seeks to encourage and equip our members to share the gospel on their front lines in everyday life at: home, school, university, work and leisure. We also reach many girls in our surrounding community through our GB Company. We support Belfast City Mission financially and practically, especially at Christmas time. Finally we support in many ways, including financially the work of European Misson Fellowship primarily in the country of Moldova.

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

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

The congregation also contributes to the denominations annual World Development Appeal, Sunday School project and any other special appeals.

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

Renovation and extension of our Church Hall commenced in late November 2021. This work has progressed well and the hall will reopen in April 2024

Organisations

Our Sunday School and Bible class are now meeting again in person with around 25 children in attendance most Sunday mornings. Throughout the year they have supported a number of different Charities. Our Girls Brigade company meet on a Friday evening for Bible teaching and various recreational activities. Membership is around 40. Our P.W. ladies meet around eight times a year with a varied programme of events. Our Bowling Club meet on a regular basis often playing friendly matches with other clubs, however these have been curtailed due to our Church Hall being out of use.

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.

CLARE 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 Commissions Public benefit requirement statutory guidance.

CLARE 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 77 contributors during the year, (78 in previous year, 2022,) donating a total of £32817, versus (£31975) in previous year, 2022.

Total Income of the congregation during the year was £131811 compared to £159,669 in the previous year. The reduction can in main be accounted for by a gift day for our hall renovation fund that was held in Spring 2022. During the year we also drew down borrowing facilities of £376,000.

Total expenditure rose from £306389 to £528208. This can primarily be accounted for by the fact that during the year we spent in excess of £455,000 on the second stage of our hall renovation project.

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 congregations 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 at a meeting on 14th May 2024 and signed on its behalf by

Philip McClelland

John Mason

14th May 2024

14th May 2024