



Movilla Presbyterian Church

## **MOVILLA 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 (NIC105049)**

## **MOVILLA CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND**

### **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

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## **MOVILLA CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND (PCI) 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**

Movilla Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland  
87 Movilla Road  
Newtownards  
BT23 8RQ  
Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105049)

### **CHARITY TRUSTEES**

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

Rev. Robert Hamilton (Moderator/Chairman)	
Mr. Brian Turtle (Clerk of Session)	Mrs. Denise Turtle
Miss Margaret Garrett	Mr. Ronnie Gamble
Mrs. Ena Stanfield	Mr. Raymond Mayes
Mrs. June Kelly	Mr. Robert Wilson
Mrs. Alison Moore	

### **PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS**

Minister	The Rev. Robert S. Hamilton
Treasurer	Mrs. Joan Gordon
Assistant Treasurer	Miss Chloe McMurrin
Secretary	Mr. Robert McMurrin
Clerk of Session	Mr. Brian Turtle



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TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER**

Mr. Graeme Allen

8 Crossnamuckley Road      Newtownards

**BANKERS**

Danske Bank

Business Banking PO Box 183

Donegall Square West

Belfast BT1 6JS

**SOLICITORS**

None retained

## **MOVILLA 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 PCI, 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 vote but only a casting vote.

Stated meetings of the Kirk session are held.

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, subject to quorum.

#### **Presbytery**

Under the PCI 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. Movilla congregation of the Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the Ards Presbytery of the PCI. 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.



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## **MOVILLA 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 AND OBJECTIVES**

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

Movilla 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 vision statement is: "Movilla Presbyterian Church seeks to be an effective worshipping and witnessing fellowship so that salvation in Jesus Christ may be proclaimed in the local community and the wider world."

This vision statement manifests itself in the following practical applications:

#### **God's Call to us**

- a) Prayer - We will seek God's will and power so that we can enhance our church's impact on the area in which He has placed us.
- b) We have been blessed by effective teaching from our ministers. However, Christ's call is to **us all** to be His "light" and "salt". When we hold evangelical events, they are often well attended by Christian members, but we need to do more to attract neighbours or friends who need to hear God's claims on their lives. If we are to be more effective then more of our members need to understand and be motivated to practice ways to share our faith, at home, at work, and where we spend our leisure time. This is being achieved in part through the development of "home groups" within the congregation. We will also continue to develop a theme of discipleship focussed on deepening the individual's Christian experience and witness. In 2022 we added to our Ministerial team through the appointment of an assistant minister who has joined our leadership team until Autumn 2024.

## **MOVILLA CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND**



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## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

- c) Our Christian community already cares and provides prayer and practical support for members who are challenged by what life throws at them. We will devise ways to ensure individuals are not missed. We also need to give thanks more for this supporting environment so that others will be drawn into experience Christ's love through how we care.
- d) We will consider how best to use the local news media, social media and technology and have implemented a revised strategy to enhance our use of these to support b) and c) above.
- e) We will continuously review our youth ministry to check it is fit for purpose and that the organisations work together to ensure that young people dropping out of one organisation are picked up by others. We need to succession plan, so as to ensure the continued leadership of these important organisations. In 2019 the rebranded and remodelled "The Gospel Project" was taken forward to sustain and build these elements of our children's ministry.
- f) We have piloted a "Messy Church" initiative. This informal service including craft, games, modern praise, a simple message and snacks has allowed us to invite families to experience God's love and understand our desire to engage with them in an unthreatening / de-jargonised environment. This will now be introduced on a regular basis as part of our outreach.
- g) We will involve more of our young people and newer or "marginal" members in our Sunday worship services through activities such as readings, young people's praise group, sound/video projection, welcome and offering teams.
- h) We have partnered the local Methodist and Church of Ireland churches in the planning and implementation of a "Christmas Star". This outreach through the performance based telling of the Christmas story provided a non-threatening celebration of our Lord's birth with craft, games, snacks and goody-bags focusing on God's love.
- i) We have implemented a new member's induction process which would deepen their understanding of their faith and help them get to know each other and key individuals in our congregation.
- j) We need to implement a range of initiatives to engage more with unchurched families who or whose children attend organisations. Similarly, we need to act to reach out to individuals and families who have no current contact with us. The initiatives could include discussions based on topical moral/social issues, debt/financial management support, prayer walks, engagement with community "gatekeepers" and using our premises to facilitate for example Covid vaccinations. We have carried out leaflet drops in the new Rivenwood development. We will engage with the Bowtown Community Development Association to improve our relationship with and access to this area.
- k) A Youth Outreach member of staff took up post January 2023. She has been instrumental in developing an early Primary kids club with plans to augment this with provision for 8-11 year olds from January 2024. She has also been developing leaders and helpers to help run Kids Club, Holiday Bible Club and Messy Church.



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

### ACTIVITIES

The congregation meets for worship every Sunday and visitors are welcome to join with us. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is observed on several occasions during the year and all those eligible to be, and 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 a weekly mid-week bible study and prayer meeting. In addition, four small home bible study groups have been initiated which meet fortnightly.

The congregation also has a wide range of organisations/ activities.

Event/Organisation	Age range	Frequency	Average attendance	% not members of this cong.	If joint state other congregation(s) / Other Notes
Sunday School	4-10	Weekly	18	10%	Now the Gospel Project
Bible Class	11- 15	Weekly	0		Now the Gospel Project
Sunbeams Mums & Tots	0-3	Weekly	40	80%	Reopened June 2022
Kids Club	4-10	Weekly	40	40%	
Bowling Club	16-80	Weekly	40	33%	
Midweek	30-80	Weekly	25	0%	
Girls Brigade	3-18	Weekly	0		Closed September 2023
Praise Group	14-80	Weekly	8		Ongoing
Knitting & Natter	55-80	Weekly	15		
Women's Fellowship	40-80	Monthly	50	5%	
Boys' Brigade	5- 18	Weekly	25	70%	
Prayer meetings	25-80	Weekly	25	0%	Tuesday Evenings
Men's Fellowship	50- 80	Monthly	25	5%	
Holiday Bible Club	4-11	Annual	100	85%	
Movilla Youth Connect	11-18	Monthly	0		Suspended due to Covid
New member Courses	15-70	As needed	20	0%	Pre becoming communicants
Carol Singing	16-80	Annual	20	0%	
Church Coach Holiday	40-80	Annual	6	20%	
Little Rainbows Group	2-4	Daily	10	90%	Suspended due to staffing
Prayer Cards System	40-80	Ongoing	12	0%	Requests submitted by members and friends
Prayer Text System	20- 70	Ongoing	50	30%	Requests submitted by members and friends
Home Study fellowship groups	20-75	Fortnightly	35	0%	Currently four groups operating

- Subject to holiday periods which are variable depending on the organisation





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

### **ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

#### **Worship and prayer**

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 11am and 7pm. During the week the Mid-week meeting and Home Study Groups provide an opportunity for members to meet for fellowship, to study the scriptures and for a time of prayer. Under the constraints of Covid19 these were replaced from March 2020 by a prerecorded or Sunday YouTube service and a Tuesday mid-week Podcast. Since July 2020, within the PCI guidance and after a replacement of the church's media equipment, live Sunday services were resumed from 2021 and live streamed to provide services to those shielding and as an outreach. Midweek meeting have also resumed. A revised Worship Committee has been established under the convenorship of one of the Session members/Charity Commission trustees.

As well as our regular morning and evening services, at which God's Word is read and preached and praise offered, during the year we gave thanks for faithful Christian service and sought to comfort those who had been bereaved during the year through several funeral services.

At 31 December 2023 there were 162 communicant members and 122 contributing families connected with the congregation. The average weekly attendance at morning worship was 140 pre Covid and this had returned to 95 by the end of 2023 with a further 80+ households watching online.

#### **Pastoral care**

Members of the congregation who are unable to attend church due to sickness or age are contacted by telephone or visited on a regular basis by the minister or elders. Care often takes the form of the provision of gifts of food and practical assistance. Infirm members receive the sacrament of Communion at home to provide spiritual encouragement. We believe the introduction of home study groups has further enhanced mutual support within the congregation. Post March 2020 and Covid, a network of pastoral care was established through weekly telephone calls, food, prescription delivery and CD /DVD delivery.

#### **Mission and outreach**

Each Sunday we have two services when God's word is read and expounded, and lively praise is offered. At each service visitors/YouTube subscribers are welcome. The congregation usually contains a mix of communicants, marginal members and visitors/ external viewers. Our move to services by YouTube and Podcast has provided a new vehicle for evangelism allowing easy media- based access to services and members to share service links with friends and acquaintances. As a result 10 new individuals have become communicant members of the church.



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

All members of the congregation were sent Christmas cards containing details of the Christmas services in an attempt to re-engage with inactive or marginal members.

A ladies Coffee Club has commenced meeting, supporting ladies in a social environment, particularly those unable to get out in the evening or not engaging in small groups or midweek.

Houses in a neighbouring new development were visited in 2021 and literature containing information about our activities and services left.

Many of our organisations act as a bridge into the local community.

Members of our congregation have also taken part in province wide outreach by joining Scripture Union and CSSM teams working in schools, camps, and beach missions.

In recent years individuals have been involved in international mission in Uganda with ABAANA, Russia with Love Russia, Lebanon and Romania working with children's summer camps, outreach and medical support.

Our congregation prayerfully and financially support several Christian Charities such as Open Doors, The Belfast City Mission, Missionary Aviation Fellowship, Love Russia, Project Romania, Christian Aid, the Vine and the Link.

In 2018 we formed a Youth Forum to encourage a coordinated approach to youth activities, leader training and succession planning.

Marketing through professionally produced paper-based materials and electronic media had been reviewed and greatly enhanced.

Four home study groups have been formed and are meeting fortnightly.

A new member's course has been established for those wishing to become full members of our congregation. Through this those joining will be challenged to Christian service in our church and community.

. During 2022 we commenced seeking resources both within our congregation and outside it which will allow this to move forward. In December 2022 the staff member has been identified and they took up post on 01 January 2023.



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## **MOVILLA 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 PCI. This fund enables congregations to support the wider mission of the denomination and to provide 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 also contributed to the denominations annual World Development Appeal and 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. This year this occurred with the support of media technology.

### **Property**

The main focuses have been on general maintenance and ensuring electrical and fire/ electrical safety compliance. The sound and multimedia systems have been replaced allowing enhanced socially distanced services, podcasts with an overflow in the hall and their live streaming. A restructured Property Sub-committee is being established under the convenorship of one of the Session members/Charity Commission trustees.



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

### **Organisations**

A schedule of organisations, their frequency of meeting, the age group they serve, and average attendance is shown above.

The Gospel Project meet weekly with a programme of on-site activities including bible stories, discussion, kids praise, games and craft. The members play a major part in Children's day and Nativity services.

The Mid-week, Women's and Men's Fellowships play a vital role in the prayer, praise and Bible study life of our congregation and have regular inputs on a wide range of topics from visiting speakers.

The four home study groups continue to provide a vehicle for deepening our members' faith and the additional opportunities for fellowship and pastoral care.

The Sunbeams mums and tots and our new Kids Club, provide a significant outreach and opportunity to reach pre-school and Primary age children.

We are fortunate to have a BB company.

It provides for children from age 4 – 18, and offers a range of activities including drill, music, craft, a bible class, cooking and offsite sponsored walks and visits to the cinema, the fire station, ten-pin bowling, and sporting events such as ice-hockey and cross-country running.

The praise group contribute considerably to our general Sunday worship and provide musical items for seasonal services such as the "Nine Lessons" and Carols service at Christmas.

Our bowling club meets weekly and provides outreach and fellowship with a backdrop of competitive bowling.



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## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

### **Volunteers**

The Trustees wish to acknowledge their deep appreciation of those who give freely of their time by serving on committees and acting as leaders and helpers within organisations and other church activities. Their energy and commitment not only allow our wide- ranging programme to be delivered but is also in itself a Christian witness to those adults and children who participate.

### **PUBLIC BENEFIT STATEMENT**

The PCI 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 using noticeboards, printed material, door to door visitation, 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 because 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

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TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

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.

## MOVILLA 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 122 FWO contributors during the year 2023 (140 in 2021), donating a total of £ 86,185 in 2023 (£73015 in previous year, 2022).

Total Income of the congregation during the 2023 year was £127420 compared to £106,340 in the previous year. Total expenditure in 2023 was £ 133,576 as compared with £106,104 in 2022.

Our borrowings amount to £0 as compared with £3000 (interest free loan) in 2021.

A copy of the Receipts and Payments accounts and Statement of assets and Liabilities is submitted in a separate file. An audit certificate is also separately attached.

#### 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 at a meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2024 and signed on its behalf by

Rev. Robert Hamilton



Mr. Brian Turtle

