

Helen's Bay Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland  
Trustees' Annual Report

HELEN'S BAY CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements  
For the year ended 31 December 2024

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105282)

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The Trustees present their Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024 including a statements of assets and liabilities at that date.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Helen's Bay Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland  
Church Road  
Helen's Bay  
Bangor  
BT19 1TP

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105282)

**CHARITY TRUSTEES**

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

Rev Colin Megaw  
Mr Gary Alexander  
Mr Samuel Gallaher  
Mr David McAuley  
Mrs Etta McGucken

Mrs Lynn Palmer  
Mrs Joanna Pollock  
Mr William Pollock  
Mrs Wendy Quinn  
Mrs Gloria Smith

Principal Office Bearers:

Minister: Rev Colin Megaw

Clerk of Session: Mr David McAuley

Treasurer: Mrs Karen McDowell (to 16<sup>th</sup> November 2024)  
Ms. Jean Johnston (from 17<sup>th</sup> November 2024)

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Mr Wesley Hanson  
7 Murdock's Lane  
Bangor  
BT19 7QQ

BANKERS

Danske Bank  
Branch Business  
P.O. Box 183  
Donegall Square West  
Belfast  
BT1 6JS

## **STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT**

### **The Kirk Session**

The Charity Trustees are the members of the 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 within congregation who are within its bounds. It ensures pastoral care of 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 speak, propose and exercise equal votes at all 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 nine times each year (no meetings are held in December, July and August) and additional meetings are held as and when required.

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 attain two thirds of the vote.

### **Presbytery**

Under the Presbyterian Church in Ireland form of governance the corporate oversight of 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. Helen's Bay Congregation has been assigned to the Ards Presbytery.

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 a elder appointed by the Kirk Sessions of the congregations.

### **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, administrative 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.

Helen's Bay congregation 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 Scripture and exists to love and honour God through faith in his Son and by the power of his Spirit, and to enable here members to play their part in fulfilling God's mission to our world.

The congregation's mission statement is:

Helen's Bay Presbyterian Church focusses on Faith, Family and Friendship;  
we worship our Lord God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in sincerity and truth;  
we love and support one another in the family of the church;  
we reach out in Christian witness and friendship to all people far and near.

## **ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES**

The congregation meets for worship every Sunday morning and on the evening of the first Sunday in the months of June, July, August and September. Visitors are welcome to join. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is observed on several 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 has a wide range of activities including:

Presbyterian Women

Men's Fellowship Breakfast

Wednesday morning open Link

Wednesday noon and Sunday morning prayer meetings

September Prayerfest

Bible Study

Summer Holiday Bible Club

## **ACHIEVEMENTS AND PURPOSE**

### Worship and Prayer

The congregation regularly meets for worship each Sunday at 10.30 am. As well as teaching from the Bible and prayer we sing hymns and worship songs as we focus our hearts and minds on worshipping the Lord together. As well as regular prayer meetings we have a Prayer Warriors WhatsApp group and a three day Prayerfest in September.

As well as our regular services during the year we conduct marriage services and thanksgiving services for the lives of those who have died.

At 31 December 2024 there were 165 communicant members and 145 families connected with the congregation. The average weekly attendance at morning service is 45.

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Pastoral Care

Members of the congregation who are unable attend church due to sickness or age are visited on a regular basis by the minister, elders or by one of the congregation's pastoral visitors.

Mission and Outreach

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.

During the year the congregation also contributed to Presbyterian Orphans and Children's Society, World Development Appeal and Moderator's Appeal.

Presbytery

The congregation was represented at the regular meetings of Presbytery by our minister and representative elder. This provides an important link between the congregation and the wider structures of the Church.

General Assembly

The congregation was represented at the General Assembly by our minister and a representative elder.

Property

The congregation owns the church building, the church hall and the much newer Link building which together provide flexible accommodation for our worship, ministries and other activities. The congregation also owns a manse which is in a good state of repair.

**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 Larger and Shorter 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-named benefits are delivered 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.

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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 or 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.

## **FINANCIAL REVIEW**

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering. There were 101 contributors during the year donating a total of £83,506.81 compared to £78,518.72 the previous year.

Total income of the congregation during the year was £109,022.89 compared to £196,770.98 the previous year.

Total expenditure increased from £120,968.38 to £134,506.18

## **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 payments account and 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.

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

**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 exception 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 by encouraging members in their regular giving.

Approved by the Kirk Session at a meeting on 1st October 2025 and signed on its behalf by

Rev Peter Lyle

Mr David McAuley