

Main Street Garvagh Presbyterian Church a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Trustees Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2023

Registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland NIC105347

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

The Trustees present their Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2023 including a Balance Sheet as at that date.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Main Street Garvagh congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
Main Street, Garvagh. Coleraine, BT51 5AA

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105347)

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

W J Campbell
WJ Clyde
Alex Farlow
B Moore
F Smyth
JI Wright
S Dinsmore

B Farlow
Alan Farlow
H Gilmore
G McClure
KS Workman
T Wright

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister
Clerk of Session
Treasurer

Congregation was vacant during 2023
Alan Farlow
J Ivan Wright

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Ms Anna Clyde
5 Station Road
Garvagh
BT51 5LA

BANKERS

Ulster Bank 30-32 Catharine Street, Limavady BT49 9DB

SOLICITORS

Anderson Gillian Barr, 41, New Row, Coleraine, BT52 1AE

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 twice 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. Main Street Garvagh Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the Coleraine & Limavady 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.

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. Main Street Garvagh 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 purposes is *"To see unbelieving people become committed members of Christ's Church"*

- *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;*
- *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 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*

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES

During 2023 our organisations are running again. The Sunday morning service has continued to be broadcast live while we have approx. 180 people attending.

The congregation meets for worship every Sunday and visitors are welcome to join. The Sacrament of the Lords 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 holds regular bible study meetings and has a wide range of organisations including:-

- Sunday School/Bible Class/Children's Church/Crèche
- Junior Bible Club
- Holiday Bible Club
- Youth Club
- Women Together
- Friendship Group
- Crafters
- Boys Brigade

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and prayer

The congregation meets for worship each Sunday at 11.00am and 7.00pm alternate Sundays. During the week the Bible Study/Small Groups 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 if applicable during the year we would acknowledge God's gift of new life at the Sacrament of Baptism, (we had one baptism this year), we gave thanks for faithful services and sought to comfort those who had been bereaved during the year. At 31 December 2023 there were 199 communicant members and 194 families connected with the congregation.

The average weekly attendance at morning worship was 180/200.

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 (Convenor covering the vacancy), elders or by one of the congregation's pastoral visitors.

Mission and outreach

The congregation is supportive of **local mission** through its involvement in support of the local Mission Hall and input into the local Primary Schools. Through the provision of catering as when required. We host events for Young Farmers Club, Trefoil Guild, Women's Institute and Garvagh Playgroup etc.

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 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.

Our **outreach** to the local community is wide and varied including Pampered & Prepared and The Holiday Bible Club which are two well established annual events.

Donations include support of the following:-

Belfast City Mission
Leprosy Mission
Tearfund
UFM
Faith Mission
Scripture Union
Adopt A Child
PCI Missionaries
Various local charities

Presbytery

The congregation was represented at the regular meetings of Presbytery by our convenor 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

We continue to upkeep our church buildings along with the Manse and other small properties.

Organisations

Sunday School / Bible Class

Every Sunday morning from September to June from 10.00am to 11am, around 30 children and young people aged 4-16 and 7 adults meet in different areas of the church to participate in varied Bible teaching and learning activities, including songs, games, Bible stories, discussions, crafts, quizzes, breakfasts. A Youth and Children's service was programmed in June, and children and young people also take part in Family Services. Last Christmas there was also a Kids Christmas Activity Night in the church which was opened to the community on the back of the church's involvement in the Garvagh Christmas Lights Switch On event.

Junior Bible Club

Junior Bible Club is a youth organisation aimed at children from Primary 1 to Primary 7. It is held in Main Street Church Hall every Monday evening from September to March. Due to a lack of help coupled with a drop in numbers, Junior Bible Club did not physically meet in the hall again this year. Instead, leaders were involved in a community event helping to organise the Christmas lights switch on in the town. This was a joint venture on the churches behalf, between the Sunday School and the Junior Bible Club. Together with about 15 volunteers, 150 packs were assembled for the purpose of distributing them to the families in attendance at the switch-on. The packs contained a Christmas book, pencils, stickers, Christmas decoration and various other items, and given out one to each family. Following on from that event, children from the community were invited to a Christmas fun night, again organised jointly between the Sunday School and the JBC, and approximately 50 children attended. To begin with the children were given hotdogs, pizza and ice cream which they thoroughly enjoyed. Later on they participated in two craft activities and games followed by a Christmas video and finishing the evening off with hot chocolate and marshmallows.

Based on the success of the evening it will certainly be worth considering repeating again.

Holiday Bible Club

Holiday Bible Club is a yearly outreach aimed at children from Primary 1 to Year 9. It is held in Main Street Church Hall every July, and spans 5 evenings running from 7 – 8.30pm. This year our theme was 'Campfire' and was about Jesus disciples and the early church and there was an average nightly attendance of around 80 – 90 children from all around the community.

Each evening began with fun warmup exercises followed by a lively praise time; all of which was led from the front. Everyone then sat on the floor to hear the story, which was told using media clips, before the children divided into smaller groups to complete worksheets with their group leader. This time within a smaller group enabled the leaders to get to know the children on a more personal level and for the children to bond with each other over the course of the week. After worksheets were completed, the children enjoyed a snack of juice and biscuits before participating in a variety of activities including craft and games or outdoor activities if the weather was favourable. One of the children's favourite parts of the night was the drama which was performed each evening by some of our younger leaders.

This was based in and around a campsite and fitted in with the memory verse 'Let us consider how we can stir up one another to love. Let us help one another to do good works. Hebrews 10 v 24.

As each evening drew to a close the children once again assembled back in the hall for memory verse work and a final lively rendition of the theme song 'Strike a match, light a light', before going home. On Friday as a special treat the children were given s'mores which were very popular indeed, and the older group enjoyed toasting marshmallows over a firepit.

The whole week required a team of around 30 people who helped in various capacities i.e. group leaders/helpers, registration desk, carparking duties, kitchen duties, craft room set up/tidy up, first aid, administration and those who helped with decorating the hall. This ensured the smooth running of the club all week.

On Friday after the Club was over, the leaders enjoyed some tea and coffee with desserts, and as the weather was favourable the younger leaders had fun getting soaked on a slip 'n' slide outside.

Youth

April is the end of our main season and last year saw us host "4 the win gaming" - a gaming and outreach ministry.

We also had our weekend away to Rostrevor.

Mid September saw the return of youth with an event called Game Plan - kicking off the year getting to know our new young people. We had food, games and a some info on what youth nights look like and why we do them.

October, November and December we had 8 weeks of programmes from Grow Curriculum - On friendships and Gratefulness.

December is full of Christmas events - outdoor Christmas movie, carol service and party.

January we go online and start the year with volunteers showing us a glimpse of their quiet time/daily devotion.

February and March continue weekly programmes filled with games, food and fellowship and finishing with a praise event for Easter.

We have around 12 - 20 young people attending events throughout the year.

Women Together

In February and March of 2023 Women Together continued to meet on the first Tuesday of each month in Café Link. In February we had an update from 'The Smiles Foundation' and we finished off the 2022-23 session in March with a members' night with the programme being taken from the Inspirations Pack 'Going Deeper'. We also held our AGM that evening where the new office bearers for 2023-24 were voted in. The committee then met in May to plan our programme for the 23/24 season. The theme as provided by PW head office for 23/24 is 'Being Transformed'.

Our women's outreach Pampered and Prepared was held in May after a 3-year break due to Covid 19. The events took place over 2 Tuesday nights and were well attended by both old

and new faces. Activities included a forest walk, cookery demo, craft and health talks. Vi Dawson and Claire Murphy shared their testimonies of their personal walk with God.

The 2023-24 season recommenced with our annual Sunday service which was held in September. The guest speaker was Gillian Gilliland from The Samaritans Purse. The first monthly meeting was held in October with a craft night and epilogue from our Secretary, Patricia Farlow. In November we were invited to join with First Garvagh for their meeting. We also enjoyed a trip to the Theatre to see Phantom of the Opera. In December we held a Christmas Social party night which was organised jointly between Main Street Women Together and Killaig PW. The entertainment was provided by Kingsway events and an Epilogue by Mr Adam Steen. A great night's fun was had by all who attended. This was followed the next week with our monthly meeting where we invited four of our Young People from the congregation to give us an update on the missionary trips and camps, they had attended during the summer months.

Friendship Group

The Friendship Group meets the 3rd Thursday of the following months October to April. About 20 to 30 people attend. We have the following activities :- Time of hymn singing. Quizzes. Tea/Coffee. Epilogue. On our final day we have a meal & outing.

Crafters

Crafters meet on alternate Mondays in each month. They share crafts eg. knitting, sewing, crochet, tapestry etc. as well as enjoying fellowship over a cup of tea and cake. To end the season we join with the Friendship group for an outing.

Boys' Brigade

The Boys Brigade's objective is the 'Advancement of Christ's Kingdom amongst boys. Open for boys from ages 5 to 18 and we provide a full program of activities throughout the year from September to April.

The company has currently 54 boys and 12 Leaders.

During the current session we have met regularly, and the boys have competed in BB competitions at a local and national level.

We operate a comprehensive badge award system whereby boys can attain badges for various activities throughout their BB journey and this culminates in the highest award of the Queens Badge.

We have awarded 1 Queen's Badges and 4 President's Badges this session to boys within the company section.

We have a further 2 Boys working towards their Queens Badge next year and the boys will be involved with Local Community projects during the summer months.

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.

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.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering. There were 130 families who contributed during the year donating a total of £77,296.

Total Income of the congregation during the year was £180,216 compared to £170,783 in the previous year.

RESPONSIBILITIES IN RESPECT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

The Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the congregations and the financial activities for that year. In preparing the financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Funds will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the funds transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the congregations and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities (1 January 2015)". 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.

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND
ANNUAL REPORT
For the year ended 31 December 2023**

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.

RESERVES POLICY


The Trustees have considered the level of unrestricted reserves that it is appropriate to hold taking account of current and ongoing commitments. It is the policy of the Trustees to hold at least one month's normal expenditure. At the year-end unrestricted reserves were £124,388 which represents a higher level of reserves. The Trustees, however, consider it prudent to hold reserves at this level as the funding of its present activities is dependent on the ongoing financial support of members.

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 expectation 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 and by encouraging members in their regular giving.


Approved by the Kirk Session at a meeting on 22nd January 2024 and signed on its behalf by Signed on behalf by

Mr Alan Farlow
Clerk of Session
Date



2/10/24

Mr Ivan Wright
Treasurer
Date



2.10.24