

FIRST OMAGH CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

**Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 December 2023**

FIRST OMAGH 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

First Omagh Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
19 Dublin Road
Omagh
BT78 1HF

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105655)

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

Mrs Isobel Bell
Mr David Bowman
Mr Mervyn Boyle
Mr Godfrey Crawford
Mrs Margaret Cummings
Mr Keith Davison
Mr Philip Ewing
Mr Neville Hagan
Mr Hubert Hamill
Mr Samuel Hammond
Mrs Florence Harper
Miss Audrey Hodge
Mr Edwin Johnston
Rev Patricia Jane Nelson
Mr Arthur Rainey
Mr Ivan Short
Mrs Dorothy Simpson
Mr Ivan Simpson
Mr David Swann
Mr William Swann
Mr David Vance
Mr Brian Wilson (deceased 11/05/2023)

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

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister
Clerk of Session
Treasurer

Rev P Jane Nelson
Miss Audrey M Hodge
Mr Neville Hagan

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Hamill McIlwaine Chartered Accountants
28-30 Old Mountfield Road
Omagh
BT79 7BJ

BANKERS

Ulster Bank Limited
14 High Street
Omagh
BT78 1BJ

FIRST OMAGH 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 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 on alternate months of each year; usually five times a 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 the votes of 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. First Omagh congregation of the Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the Omagh 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.

FIRST OMAGH 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.

First Omagh 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 its members to play their part in fulfilling God's mission to our world.

The congregation's mission purpose is to become a people called to worship God and by the power of the Spirit to share love in Christ with the world, building communities of hope, healing and transformation and to revitalise the life and worship of the congregation in order to encourage a more effective Christian witness in a changing community.

Mission Statement - First Omagh congregation exists to respond to the Gospel of God's love in Christ through worship, fellowship, discipleship, care for the church family, witness in the community and to the wider world.

Mission Plan - First Omagh congregation intends to focus on the following three aspects of mission: -

- Develop and strengthen our understanding of Christ's mission in the world and the role that we, as a congregation, play in it.
- Find ways of connecting with the increasing number of irregular or non-attending members of the congregation and encourage them to engage with issues of faith.
- Gain an understanding of the needs of the wider community and identify ways in which we can meet those needs in Christ's name.

FIRST OMAGH 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 and encouraged 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 holds regular bible study meetings and has a wide range of organisations including...

- Sunday School (incorporating JIGSAW, BLAST and TOTS)
- Boys' Brigade
- Craft Group
- Coffee Stop
- Bowling Club
- Badminton Clubs
- PW
- Bible Study
- Prayer Meetings
- Walking Group
- Aerobics
- Toddle Along
- Sunday Lunch Bunch

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and prayer

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 11.30 am and special evening services at 7.00 pm are organised throughout the year. Sunday School takes place each Sunday morning during the morning service; children are in church for approximately 15 minutes and then they go to their age specific groups.

During the week many organisations meet in our premises offering a varied program of activities and events bringing many people together from inside our membership and from the wider community.

Bible Study series held in the autumn and the spring, usually lasting 6-8 weeks, provide an opportunity for members to meet together for fellowship, to study the scriptures and for a time of prayer. Monthly congregational praise and prayer services offer another opportunity to meet together for prayer time and reflection. We also have the support of a very successful Prayer Chain to respond to the many challenging situations faced in our congregation and local community.

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

As well as our regular services during the year we acknowledged God's gift of new life at 4 Sacraments of Baptism and gave thanks for faithful services and sought to comfort those who had been bereaved during the year.

At 31 December 2023 there were 388 communicant members and 279 families connected with the congregation. The average week attendance at morning worship is 98 with around 20 others watching online.

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, elders or by one of the congregation's pastoral visitors. Most services are livestreamed and are available to view or download from the internet.

Mission and outreach

This year First Omagh supported financially the Mission Station at Embangweni (Malawi), Scripture Union NI and also the Harold McCauley House Residents' Comfort Fund through its Outreach Fund.

An annual week-long Holiday Bible Club is organised in August each year (since 2013 but Covid affected in 2020, 2021 and 2022) and this has been well supported from both inside and outside the congregation.

During the year donations were made to various charitable organisations and good causes.

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.

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

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

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

During the year a major refurbishment of the internal timbers in our church building was completed. Roof beams and exposed tongue and groove boards on the ceiling and perimeter walls were sanded back to bare wood and re-stained and coated with fireproof varnish.

An access walkway for maintenance purposes was erected above the ceiling high point and electrical wiring was brought up to an acceptable standard.

The internal walls were also repainted leaving the inside of our church in an excellent state for many years to come.

The cost of the project was £116,407.

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

Organisations

Jigsaw, Blast and Tots (Sunday School) meet on a Sunday morning during Morning Worship with 20 children averaging in attendance.

Boys' Brigade meet weekly on a Tuesday evening with an average attendance of 20.

Craft Class meets weekly on a Monday evening facilitating around 10 people.

Coffee Stop meets on a Wednesday morning (open to non-members) with an average of 25-30 calling in for a cuppa and a chat.

Toddle Along is our Mums and Tots Group and meets on a Thursday morning with around 30 children and their guardians.

Bowling Club meets on a Wednesday evening (and occasionally on a Friday evening) with a membership of around 25.

Badminton Clubs meet on a Tuesday morning (ladies) and a Monday and Thursday evening (open) with numbers attending around 12-15.

PW meet on the 2nd Tuesday of the month with approximately 25 joining in.

Sunday Lunch Bunch provides a 3-course meal on the last Sunday in the month (Sept to April) for those members who live on their own. Usually between 10 and 20 people attend.

Bible Study has two sessions (autumn and spring) with around 25-30 meeting together - approximately 10 of whom meet in a morning house group and the others meet in the church halls in the evening.

Praise and Prayer Services take place on the third Sunday of the month and usually 15-20 come together to pray for our congregation and community.

Walking Group meets on a Tuesday evening from April till October. Open to non-members this group can reach as many as 50.

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.

FIRST OMAGH 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 Commission's public benefit requirement statutory guidance.

**FIRST OMAGH 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. Total donations received from the congregation during the year as FWO was £77,547, compared to £72,025 in the previous year. Other amounts were received including, for specific charitable collections, from investment income and to off-set specific expenses, totaling £111,700. Total expenditure of £271,916 was spent during the year in achieving the church's charitable objectives which includes £116,407 for repairing the roof beams in the church.


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.

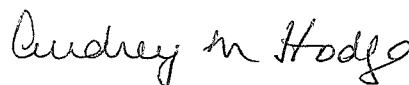
As the congregation's total income does not exceed £250,000, the Trustees have elected under Section 64(3) of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 to prepare a receipts and payment account and a statement of assets and liabilities.

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 14 April 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



Rev P.J. Nelson



Miss Audrey M. Hodge

