

Village Church Belfast

Trustees' Report

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements of the church for the year ended 30 June 2023. The Trustees confirm that they comply with the requirements of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, The Charities (Annual Return) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, The Charities (Annual Return) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice which applies to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).

The Trustees

The Trustees who served the church during the year were as follows:

Thomas McConaghie

Nick Wright

Jonathan Parks

Structure, Governance & Management

Village Church Belfast is governed by their Constitution.

The Trustees are responsible for the overall governance of the church. The number of Trustees shall not be less than three, nor more than seven.

Statement of compliance

In setting our activities and planning our activities for the year the trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities have helped to achieve the charity's purposes and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries.

Purposes

The purpose of this church shall be to glorify God; it will be a community of Christ followers who understand that the city and their spheres of influence are their mission field. They will be trained and equipped to be faithful disciples of Jesus, and to live out the Gospel for the sake of God's glory.

Activities

Summary activities

Weekly Sunday services, children's programmes, weekly home group gatherings, prayer & worship evenings, men's and women's events, community clean up days, monthly leadership development, building use for community events, mum & tots group, religious holiday events like carol services, easter events, etc, partnership with Walkway Community Centre.

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Beneficiaries

The charity's beneficiaries are:

Members

Members families

Those connected with the church

The local community

The general public

Private benefit

A private benefit of the work is the financially supported pastor which is incidental and necessary to the continued work of the church.

Public benefit

The purposes of Village Church Belfast are:

The advancement of the Christian faith in accordance with the declaration of faith set out in a Schedule to the Articles. The direct benefits flowing from this purpose include the facilitation of regular public worship, that provides for the spiritual wellbeing of society; the training and equipping of people in their Christian faith. These benefits can be demonstrated through weekly meetings to present the teachings of the bible and the provision of opportunities for Christian response including but not limited to prayer and worship. These benefits are demonstrated by the members of the public who choose to attend our weekly worship gatherings, events and training days and the feedback they provide.

To promote and fulfil such other charitable purposes beneficial to the community in Belfast, Ireland the United Kingdom and such other parts of the world as the directors may from time to time think fit. The direct benefits flowing from this purpose include working with the local people of Bloomfield and Ballymacarret in dealing with issues of addiction, sexual exploitation and sectarianism; through the teaching provided at services and events held at the church building; and the financial support of charities working to alleviate those in poverty. These benefits are demonstrated by the presence of members of the public choosing to receive the teaching and through the feedback of the local stakeholders we partner with both locally and abroad.

To relieve aged persons and persons in need, hardship, sickness, or distress arising therefrom whether in connection with housing or accommodation or shelter or any other purpose (whether by loan, gift, the provision of accommodation or shelter in any other way), in Belfast, Ireland and United Kingdom and such other parts of the world as the directors may from time to time think fit. The direct benefits flowing from this purpose include relief of the needs of people suffering from hunger, poor nutrition, lack of shelter, sickness, social exclusion or other hardships. These benefits are demonstrated by the feedback of those members of society whose hardships have been alleviated.

To advance education whether of children (above or below compulsory school age) or of adults. The direct benefit that flows from this purpose is the educational value provided by the religious and Biblical teachings being offered by our charity. These benefits are demonstrated by members of the public choosing to receive the teaching and the feedback they provide.

There is no harm arising from any of the purposes.

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Financial Review and Results for the Year

See attached annual accounts for the year ended 30 June 2023.

Main Achievements for the Year

Worship services held each week throughout the year both in person and online (bible teaching, prayer, worship, fellowship)

Prayer and small group support via Zoom and in person meetings

Benevolence for people in need

Women's events

Men's events

West Belfast church plant

Child protection training

Youth club

Tots group

Hope Explored evangelism classes

Regular leadership development meetings

Partnership with Walkway Community Centre

Village community clean up day

Coordinating with community stakeholders such as NGOs and community bodies on community development issues

Weddings

Marriage prep counselling

Continued development of second congregation in a strategic part of the city

Multiplication of small groups meeting throughout Belfast

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Future Plans

2022/23 has been both fruitful and challenging. We're still recovering in many ways from the heights of the pandemic. We've left Zoom meetings behind in many aspects, no longer needing it for our main gatherings, only for the occasional meeting or mid-week reflection and pray times. Our West Belfast church plant endeavours have sadly come to a pause with Nathan Brown no longer employed for Village. We still have a desire to plant a church in West Belfast and consider the work done over the past couple years not a waste at all. We've gained some important relationships which we trust will be crucial for any future plans in the West.

We have brought on a new children and families worker who has done an excellent job engaging with not only the families who are part of our growing congregation, but with the wider Bloomfield community; our parents and tots group being a particular highlight. We have also brought on a new Treasurer who has helped bring greater accountability to our finance team as we have grown as a church.

Our building purchase project has been slow to complete. Our giving campaign has been a success but solicitors have been slow. This hasn't stopped us from continuing to make some needed improvements to the building. We look forward to completing the building purchase in the near future.

Risk Management

Risk is an everyday part of the Charity's normal activity. The Trustees have considered and identified the major risks to which the charity is exposed having taken appropriate professional advice have been assured that adequate systems and procedures are in place in order to mitigate or manage those risks.

Reserves Policy

The Charity does not have a reserves policy.

Pensions

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme (which meets the requirements of The Pension Regulator as a qualifying workplace pension scheme) for the benefit of its permanent staff and those who are eligible under Auto Enrolment. The assets are administered by insurance companies in personal pension plans and are held independently from those of the charity. Contributions are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.


Results

The results for the year and the charity's financial position at the end of the year are shown in the attached financial statements.

Small companies provision statement

This report has been prepared in accordance with the small companies regime under the Companies Act 2006.

The annual report was approved by the trustees of the charity on 15 March 2024 and signed on its behalf by:


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Jonathan Parks
Trustee

Village Church Belfast

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of Village Church Belfast for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland". The report and accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions in the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

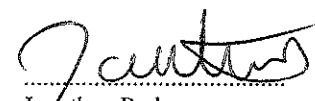
Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards, comprising FRS 102 have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that can disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approved by the trustees of the charity on 15 March 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



Jonathan Parks
Trustee