

## **Chairman's report – 2022-2023 for GT (UK & Eire) – Charity No. 107036**

**Name of Trustees** – Adeline McClenaghan (Chairperson), Emma Dorman (Secretary) Des Clarke (Treasurer – non Trustee), Gail Lawther (Trustee), Jacqui MacAulay (Trustee) and Emma Crawford (Trustee), Rebecca McMullen (Trustee)

**Governing document** – finalised in March 2018

**Summary of Purposes** – to promote the love and healing grace of Jesus Christ to all within the UK and Ireland.

To relieve those in need by reason of bereavement through death, family breakdown, separation or divorce, through the provision of training and resources, to deliver grief support programmes for children and young people within UK and Ireland.

**Financial year** 2022 -2023

### **Main events and achievements**

Another change to the Board members as Rebecca McMullen became a member of the board as a Trustee with many skills on the Social Media side of things as well as promoting GT on Facebook and other media channels. Rebecca's resume was impressive as a Child of God along with her talents and benefits she would bring to our mission and aims. The Board formally welcomed her at the AGM held in Greenisland Baptist Church in September 2022. This was our first public AGM (more details later.) Morgan Cole also applied to be a volunteer with the Grief Support Groups and both her and Rebecca did this training on 17/3/22, as it was thought it would be opportune to do this when things were relatively "quiet"!!

The year of 2022/2023 saw a continuation of operating on zoom at our meetings due to Covid 19 still being present in the environment, but a bit more relaxation re restrictions meaning some fundraisers could be done in person and at venues. (More of this information later ) However, as stated, we were able to organise a public AGM on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022, where our very own Mary Gault presented our all new and all singing and dancing website which was only finished days before! Thus the new website was officially launched!!! Much appreciation for her dedication to her input and dedication to completing it along with Platform Media who were very professional in their understanding of the sensitive nature of the information contained in our new website. Many people will gain much needed information on grief and its impact on their lives as well as being made aware of the "tools" available to them to help them process their difficult and painful journeys.

Time was taken in adopting some more policies and procedures. Roles of various volunteer positions were also produced and, again the Board had much input with regard to their own roles and roles needed in the future. For example Fundraiser Role, Admin role and Social Media Role. Again, Mary Gault was the main person adapting and renewing and adding these which are needed for our Charity to operate professionally and in keeping with Governing Standards and, at time of writing this, are nearing completion! The Board agreed to purchasing a new laptop for her as her current one was so old and giving difficulties, given the amount of work she was doing within her role of Our UK Representative.

It was of particular pleasure to meet up with Alison Crawford who was over for 3 months from USA due to family issues. Although these were of a sad nature it meant that the Board could reunite

with her as she was one of the original team running Pots of Gold at the very beginning in Northern Ireland. Those on the Board who had not been part of this then knew of her valuable contribution to GT's work from the very start over 20 years ago!! Discussions were initiated whether Alison could "take over" from Jewell and Dale when they retired and the Board felt that within the next 5 years all their responsibilities will transfer to either Alison or ourselves,

Due to discontentment with our bank the Board decided to transfer to Danske Bank. Online banking was set up by Des Clarke and Adeline McClenaghan. Mary informed regular contributors to GT with this change. HMRC accepted us as a Charity and a Stripe account was set up with the new website being active.

Raising awareness of GT is evermore to the forefront and there were more opportunities to do this in this period. (See below)

### **Fundraising Events –**

In July 2022 there was a "Colour Me Beautiful" event held in Greenisland Baptist Church where £443 was raised on the night and a further £80 in contributions in the following days.

Monies were also gratefully received for a "Just Giving" Page as one of our Board Members lost a much treasured parent in the summer of 2022. This was over £1,000 and was much appreciated, given the circumstances.

Monies from Tesco involved a photo shoot in January 2023 (Our 1<sup>st</sup> position receiving £1,500, which was mentioned in last year's report ) finally became public and Rebecca put this on our webpage which attracted a lot of "likes" and acknowledgements. A subsequent ASDA application has been made in the local Larne store. Watch this space!

### **Training**

Adeline attended a session in January 2023, regarding applying for local lottery funding, in Larne. It basically stated that there was a pot of money to avail of waiting to be applied for! It is hoped that this can be tapped into in the near future and it was recognised that a volunteer in this role would be advantageous as this is quite time consuming. It would also be beneficial in raising our profile simultaneously.

Adeline completed a Food Hygiene course online (Level 2) in September 2022 and Morgan did the same in February 2023, in their roles as facilitators in running the grief support groups with children and young people. Gail Lawther also expressed an interest in completing this next year over the summer.

Mary and Adeline attended a Volunteer Now session on 9/3/23 called "Achieving Accreditation as a Charity", held in Carrickfergus Town Hall, led by Wenda Gray, their Volunteer Support Co-ordinator. The Mayor of Carrickfergus also attended, Both Adeline and Mary felt it was achievable and could look at this within the next year or two. The event also stated that when businesses look at the list of Charities as possibilities to donate, if they see this accreditation it is a positive sign for them and they are more likely to choose you!!

## **Social events**

A social at a coffee/diner in Carrickfergus was done in July 2022 and enjoyed by all who could come.

Nearer Christmas the group ate at a Carrickfergus restaurant while listening to a ukelele band playing Christmas songs to get us all excited for the forthcoming festivities of the birth of our Lord! Of course, needless to say, it was excellent, as one of the band members was my husband!!

As two new people on the team, Rebecca and Morgan these “events” are seen as important and so lunch was organised at The Dairy in Gleno on 15/4/23. Some people had never been to this venue and really enjoyed the chat and meeting others for the very first time. It was planned that another social was to be organised towards the end of the year and the feelers were out as to what this could be! Watch this space- again!

**International news** – Meetings online with Mary Gault and, Jewell and Dale Erickson in USA still ongoing whereby they were still collaborating on the pages of the new website which was completed (stated earlier) Unfortunately, the licensing agreement is still in progress and is proving to be more arduous than anticipated.

**Conclusion** - It has been recognised that, as restrictions were more relaxed, the group were able to be out and about more and raising the profile of GT, the Board feels that it is still in a period of reformation and ongoing training of volunteers, finalising all the necessary paperwork needed but with an emphasis of more “public” events to raise our profile in the local area of Antrim and Mid Antrim. The major piece of work being the production of the new website and using the skills of a web expert in Chris Rea to get this up and running once work with Platform Media was completed.

The Board, in setting out its objectives and planning their 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 its activities have helped to achieve the Charity’s purposes and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries.

Reports from the UK rep are still being received and training opportunities are sought to further equip the Board in their skills

It is hoped that more applications for funding from local places can be made as well recruiting someone with fundraising skills and another with administration skills would be good as well as more volunteers to help run the children’s grief support groups.

God has been good to us as usual and we look forward to what He has in store for His work and His Kingdom next year!

Adeline McClenaghan

Chairperson

