

THE HILLS CHURCH LTD

DIRECTORS REPORT
(INCORPORATING TRUSTEES' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2023

Company Registration Number: NI 648296

Charities Registration Number: NIC 108616

THE HILLS CHURCH LTD

REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS (INCORPORATING TRUSTEES' REPORT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2023

CONTENTS

	Pages
Report of the Trustees	2 - 6
Highlights of the year	7

THE HILLS CHURCH LTD

REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS (INCORPORATING TRUSTEES' REPORT)

The Directors (who are also the trustees) are pleased to present their annual report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31st December 2023, which are prepared to meet the requirements for a directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes. The directors have adopted the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (Charities SORP – FRS102), in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name:	The Hills Church Ltd
Company registration number:	NI648296
Charity Commission Registration Number:	NIC 108616 (registered 18th March 2022)
HMRC Charity Reference:	NI 01105
Principal office and registered office:	Ebrington Centre, Glendermott Road, Londonderry, BT47 6BG

Directors and Trustees of the Company

The directors who held office during the period were as follows:

Mr Andrew Gamble
Mrs Victoria Gamble
Mr John Gamble
Mr Henry McCrory (appointed 01/10/2023)
Rev John Ashe (appointed 01/10/2023, resigned 04/04/2024)
Mr David Beck (appointed 05/04/2024)

Structure, governance and management

The Hills Church Ltd was incorporated on 27th September 2017. It is currently managed by the trustees and all decisions are passed by a majority vote at their regular trustee meetings.

The Company is a charity limited by guarantee without share capital. The company is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. In the event of the Company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1. The Board is responsible for the overall governance of the Company and is actively involved in the day to day management of the organisation. Directors are appointed in line with the Memorandum & Articles of Association of the company. The Board of Directors are also known as Trustees for the purposes of the Charity Commission.

Risk management

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the Company is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the Company, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate the exposure to major risks. Risks identified, such as the financial viability and sustainability of the charitable company, have been reviewed to ensure that a level of funding is maintained that is necessary for the charitable company to continue to meet its objectives. Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of company policies such as the policy on financial controls, which require the authorisation of all transactions at the regular trustee meetings and segregation of duties where possible. The directors have conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed. Financial risk is reviewed on a monthly basis having due regard to ongoing income and expenses.

THE HILLS CHURCH LTD

REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS (INCORPORATING TRUSTEES' REPORT) Continued

Objectives and Activities (and how they deliver public benefit)

The Church's objects are specifically restricted to the promotion and advancement of the Christian faith, the advancement of education, the relief of poverty, sickness, hardship and distress and the promotion of the benefit of the inhabitants in the North West area of Northern Ireland primarily and in any other part of the world as the directors may think fit ("hereinafter called the "area of benefit") without distinction of age, gender, disability/ability, race, ethnic origin, political, religious or other opinion with the objective of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants and in particular:

(a) to advance the Christian faith and promote Christianity in such ways and in such areas as the Directors from time to time may think fit, and in particularly but not exclusively through the provision of preaching, the distribution of Christian literature and the education of people in the area of benefit through evangelism and the provision of biblically based teaching, discipleship training, meetings, bible studies and social activities;

(b) to train Leaders and Pastors and volunteers so that they may work on projects promoted by the Church in the area of benefit;

(c) to train Christians so that they may seek to plant churches and to encourage new, and strengthen existing, partnerships with churches and evangelical groups in the area of benefit;

(d) to relieve sickness and financial hardship and to promote and preserve good health by the provision of funds, goods or services of any kind, including through the provision of counselling and support in the area of benefit as the Directors may from time to time may think fit.

The Hills Church ("the church") was established in Derry/Londonderry as a non-denominational evangelical church to cater for the spiritual needs of the members and the local community by encouraging active participation within the community based on biblical principles for life and to unite an inter-faith area.

The main objective is to advance the Christian faith for the benefit of the public. The basis of this faith is found in the Holy Bible. The church believes that mission is the focal point of the Gospel and that mission should be a key element in the life of Christians. As a consequence of this, the objects of the church also span the relief of poverty, sickness, hardship and distress and the promotion of the benefit of the inhabitants in the North West area of Northern Ireland primarily and in any other part of the world as the Directors may think fit.

The church has a busy schedule of Sunday services and midweek meetings. All the services are open to the public. The Church also seeks to reach out and offer services to meet the wider needs of the community, for the public benefit. Amongst other things, it is hoped that these activities will include youth groups, Sunday schools and summer schemes.

The Church also supports other charitable organisations involved in missionary work and relief of poverty overseas. The church carries out a wide range of services that assist local charities. It's the aim of the church to fund all activities.

The Church seeks to advance the Christian faith and promote Christianity in such ways and in such areas as the Committee may from time to time may think fit, and in particularly but not exclusively through the provision of preaching, distribution of Christian literature and the education of people in the area of benefit through the provision of biblically based teaching, meetings, bible studies and social activities; Our aim and objectives are to be a Christian church consisting of all the values according to the New Testament.

THE HILLS CHURCH LTD

REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS (INCORPORATING TRUSTEES' REPORT) Continued

Public Benefit

The Hills Church Ltd strives to ensure that they provide public benefit. Public benefit is at the heart of what it means to be a charity. To achieve this objective, The Hills Church Ltd meets the following purposes:

Purpose (a) - The direct benefit from this purpose is the provision of instruction and encouragement on living a moral and law abiding lifestyle. The benefit will be demonstrated by the growth of attendance and through feedback from beneficiaries via comments on social media, emails, verbal approbation from community representatives and positive feedback from local council and funding bodies. To our knowledge this purpose will not lead to any harm but if such occurs it will be far outweighed by the benefit. The beneficiaries are regular attendees of The Hills Church Ltd (adults, children and the aged) and inhabitants of the Derry/Londonderry area and all others who wish to attend our meetings. We have identified no private benefit flowing from this purpose.

Purpose (b) - The direct benefit from this purpose is that those attending any of our services or events will be able to avail of help, support and assistance from well-trained people well able to meet their practical, emotional and spiritual needs. This benefit will be demonstrated by the ability of those trained to be able to effectively assume positions of leadership and responsibility and that the public will be aided and protected. Records will exist as people complete training in areas such as child protection and leadership development. To our knowledge this purpose will not lead to any harm but if such occurs it will be far outweighed by the benefit. The beneficiaries are those being trained but also the wider public (adults and children) who will benefit from the availability of trained persons at our regular meetings and large public events. Private benefit from this purpose may be that training provided may also be of use outside of the charity situation but this is incidental.

Purpose (c) - The direct benefit from this purpose is the promotion of good relations with other similar organisations and the strengthening of partnerships to contribute to and tap into a larger wealth of experience and skills with which to assist the community. In training members to plant new churches we will provide new opportunities for advancement of moral standards. This benefit will be demonstrated by the planting of other churches and by good relations and co-operation with other churches and groups. To our knowledge this purpose will not lead to any harm but if such occurs it will be far outweighed by the benefit. The beneficiaries are local, national and multi-national individuals, communities and organisations. There may be slight benefit to some relating to resources now available to them through charity contacts, but this is incidental.

Purpose (d) - Direct benefit from this purpose is the welfare and well-being of the public will be enhanced and improved by services provided by the charity. For example, free events which enable those in financial difficulty to attend, giveaway of hampers, gift home heating oil at Christmas and various times throughout the year, and the intended establishment of a regular prayer service. Also, the future establishment of a hardship fund to help those in need. The benefit will be demonstrated by regularly held free public events, endorsed and part funded by local council, large quantities of provisions distributed via Christmas hampers and, positive feedback from beneficiaries. We have been unable to identify any harm flowing from this benefit. The beneficiaries are primarily adults and children in the Derry/Londonderry area but it is probable that people from further a-field will also visit to avail of our events and services, as there are no geographical restrictions. Private benefit may occur during training whereby the person may avail of counselling services themselves during the training process but this benefit is incidental and necessary to properly equip the person being trained.

No harm arises from the organisations purposes. We reach out to all communities and cultures in Derry/Londonderry and the wider North West region. Our primary beneficiaries are our congregation and the public who attend our free events. The beneficiaries range in age from birth to the elderly including people from the protestant and catholic communities and people from different ethnic minority backgrounds. Other beneficiaries are disadvantaged struggling families who receive support in various forms including food hampers, pastoral care, support towards home heating costs, gifts for children at Christmas and other times throughout the year. No private benefit arises from the organisations purposes.

THE HILLS CHURCH LTD

REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS (INCORPORATING TRUSTEES' REPORT) Continued

Financial review and funds policy

The company is a non profit making entity. During the year the charity received income totalling £139,379 and had expenditure of £153,661, so recorded a deficit of £14,282 for the year. The directors expect the charity to report an overall surplus in the incoming year.

The principal funding source of The Hills Church Ltd is from freewill offerings given at church services and by online giving.

The directors consider it prudent to hold monies in reserve in the event that unforeseen circumstances may arise that could lead to financial difficulties which might put its future into jeopardy. At the year end the charity had £24,508 of cash funds to meet the continuing running costs of the company. The directors have examined the charity's requirements for reserves taking into account the risks that they have recognised. The reserves policy requires that reserves are maintained at a level which ensures that the core activity of the company could continue during a period of unforeseen difficulty. The company plans to continue its activities in the forthcoming years.

Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others

The charity does not hold any funds on behalf of others.

Small companies provision statement

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to companies subject to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Statement of directors' responsibilities

The directors (who are the trustees of The Hills Church Ltd) are responsible for preparing the directors' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the directors have prepared the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law).

Under Company law the directors 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 income and expenditure for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP-FRS102;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statement; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and 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 HILLS CHURCH LTD

REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS (INCORPORATING TRUSTEES' REPORT) Continued

In the case of each director in office at the date the Directors' Report is approved:

- so far as the director is aware, there is no relevant accounts information of which the charity's independent examiners are unaware; and
- they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a director in order to make themselves aware of any relevant accounts information and to establish that the charitable company's independent examiners are aware of that information.

THE HILLS CHURCH LTD

REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS (INCORPORATING TRUSTEES' REPORT) Continued

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR – THE HILLS CHURCH 2023

Throughout 2023 we held weekly services in person in Derry/Londonderry. These saw many people attend. After every service refreshments are served.

Each week Kids aged between 1-11 got to attend our ministry called 'Hills kids' where they played together, made crafts, sang songs and heard a story from the bible. This saw children from all backgrounds come together and engage in activities together. Every Christmas the children also partook in a performance together where they acted and sang in front of their parents and other church attenders. Children and adults alike benefited from bible teaching and social activities.

On certain Sundays of the year we held 'Party Sundays' which were particularly aimed at engaging with the local communities. We often had bouncy castles, hot food and refreshments along with fun and games at these services.

At Easter we held our annual Easter Fun day where thousands of local school children received an invitation along with their families to attend. At our Easter Fun Day community event we had a Kids Farm, amusements, food trucks, other refreshments and more. We also gave away vouchers to some children in the community through spot prizes. This event links in with benefiting our community by holding social activities.

Throughout the year we worked closely with individuals, helping them when they need pastoral visits and cooked meals, reassurance, prayer and counselling. This has benefitted our community by providing the above services to those who are facing financial hardship and other concerns.

Local youth from across the North West met together on Monday nights during term time and also quarterly for social events. Weekly they got together to play games, get to know each other and to take part in discussions. This benefited the young people by providing a social space for them to meet and to also study the bible together.

Throughout the year we held meetings to teach and train. These took various forms, often in smaller settings such as 'Groups' which take place in homes across the North West bi-weekly in Spring, Autumn and Winter. These are easily accessible to attend with all details being online. At these groups we get to teach from the bible, study it and learn together. We also held volunteer meetings to train volunteers in various areas.

In December 2023 we helped other charities out by providing toys, food hampers and vouchers. We worked closely with Foyle Woman's Aid and made sure each family in the housing they provide were given a Food Hamper. We also donated hundreds of new toys for them to distribute to the families they have in their care. Vouchers collected in were also given to Foyle Woman's Aid to distribute. This will have benefitted all these families by receiving items at Christmas which helps with financial hardships.

We also donated hundreds of new toys to the Derry/Londonderry Christmas Toy Appeal which then were distributed to many homes throughout Derry/Londonderry in time for Christmas. The donations benefitted those experiencing financial hardship in our local area, The North West.

On 21st December we held our annual Carol Service which was a Free event where hundreds of people joined in the singing of Carols with refreshments afterwards. On 31st December we held our final service of the year which was online only. This helped people hear the message of the Bible.

All other weekly services from 2023 are also available on podcast, benefitting those who cannot attend, giving them the accessibility to still hear our weekly messages and teaching. We used various forms of advertising in 2023, our church website, Instagram, Facebook, Texts, Emails, flyers and business cards.

Approved by the Board on 23rd September 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



Andrew Gamble



Victoria Gamble



John Gamble