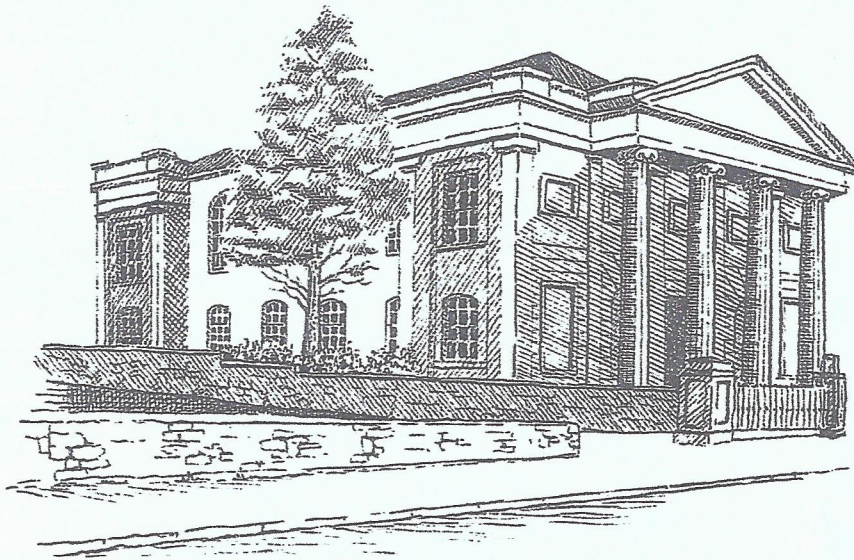


**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
NON-SUBSCRIBING
BANBRIDGE**



J. Y. - 26/02/24

ANNUAL REPORT

2023

Charity No. NIC 100336

ANNUAL REPORT

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Minister: Rev Brian Moodie

Session: Mr S Agnew (Clerk)

Mr RJ Russell; Mr D Stevenson

Mr R McClean; Mrs C McAlister

Mrs K Bushby; Mrs C Brown

Mr R Hutton; Mrs E Hutton

Hon Secretary: Mrs C McAlister

Hon Treasurer: Mrs E Hutton

Committee: Mr T Shields; Mrs L Shields; Mrs V McCullough

Mr D Little; Mrs D Whan

Stipend Treasurer: Mr RJ Russell

Sunday Collection: Mrs E Hutton

Charity Collection: Mr R McClean

Publicity Officer: Mrs K Bushby

Organists: Mr Stephen Thompson; Mrs Julie Black

Trustees: Mr RJ Russell; Mr T Shields

Mr D Stevenson; Mr R McClean

Mrs K Bushby; Mr D Little

Sunday School Superintendent: Mrs C McAlister

Child Protection Officer: Mrs D Whan

Building Maintenance Officer: Mr D Little

Church Supervisor: Mr D Little

First Presbyterian Non-Subscribing Church, Banbridge
Minister's Report for the Year 2023

In December 2023, it was my 3rd year of ministry in Banbridge. Difficult to think how the time has flown.

As can be seen from the very comprehensive Honorary Secretary's Report, 2023 was a productive year, which included visits from Rev. Stephen Reain-Adair, Moderator of the Presbytery of Bangor; the Right Rev. Lena Cockroft, Moderator of the NSPCI; as well as guest preaching by Mr Paul McCabe, Dr Tony Moodie and Rev. Colin Campbell.

Preaching topics that were embarked on by myself included:

- Exploring Genesis
- Exploring Exodus
- Exploring Numbers
- Exploring Deuteronomy
- Wrestling with Joshua
- Get out your pruning shears!
- What have you dedicated your life to?
- The Priceless Gem and Living Water
- A short history of Mothering Sunday
- Can you sin before you are born?
- Can Doubt Sometimes be a Good Thing?
- When last did your heart burn within you?
- A Story of Cross-Community Compassion
- Waiting and Belonging
- The Wind and Flame of Divine Love
- A Mountain-Top Experience
- Where does courage come from?
- A Life of Joy
- The Sound of Silence – A reflection on the song lyrics
- Imagine – a reflection on John Lennon's song
- Everything I Own – a reflection on Bread's Hit Song
- That's How the Light Gets In – Reflecting on Leonard Cohen's song Anthem
- Into my Arms (Interventionist God) – a reflection on Nick Cave's song.
- Like a Bridge Over Troubled Water – A reflection on the song lyrics
- Turn Turn Turn – A Harvest Sunday Reflection
- One Day at a Time 12 Steps to Sanity
- The Courage to Change – One Day at a Time
- Hope for Change – One Day at a Time
- Making a Decision – One Day at a Time
- Facing Ourselves – One Day at a Time
- He Ain't Heavy – Remembrance Sunday

- Coming Clean – One Day at a Time
- Hope: Reflecting on the Life and Teaching of Victor Frankl

We also had a number of special services that included:

Easter Puppet Show with Beany and Sheenie
 Songs of Praise – Celebrating the Coronation Weekend.
 Country Gospel Service
 Beany's Christmas Rap – Puppet Show
 Carol Service

In addition, there were a number of reflections on 'This Day in History', as we briefly reflected on significant dates and people throughout the year. These included:

- The birthday of Dr Seuss
- The birthday of King Henry II
- The death of Terry Pratchett
- Abba's Song– Boomerang
- Iraq War, Supernovas and Psalm 8
- Beethoven and Richard Dawkins
- Hans Christian Anderson and Dr Martin Luther King
- Sir Isaac Newton
- Shakespeare, To be or not to be?
- Sir Tim Berners-Lee – World Wide Web and Unitarian Universalism
- The Founding of Volkswagen
- Tiananmen Square, Emily Davison and Churchill's Speech
 Lord Alfred Tennyson's Religious Views

All of these sermons and reflections have been made available on the Church Website, the YouTube Channel shared with the Dromore Congregation, as well as on the Church Facebook page.

Special services that took place over the year included our hosting of the World Day of Prayer on the 3rd of March as well as the Ordination and Installation of new Elders on the 29th November.

We also had the opportunity to celebrate the baptism of Luke Alistair Robert Shields, son of Gavin and Siobhan, brother to Olivia and Archie and grandson of Lynda and Tom, at a special Sunday afternoon service on 16th April 2023.

A very big thank you to all who, in visible and invisible ways, have contributed to and helped to enrich and make our Sunday Worship Services special, whether this is opening up and closing, helping to decorate the church for special occasions, providing flowers, assisting with readings, singing solos or simply being a warm, friendly and welcoming presence for regulars and visitors who come through our doors.

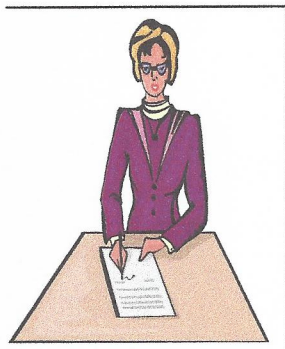
Attendance at Church Services remains steady. It is always encouraging to see that we can attract wider family and friends to our special services. And yet all of us in the congregation, and especially in the leadership ought to be mindful of the fact that in order to ensure a future for our congregation, we need to attract more people to our services, whether those be from within our existing church families, or new-comers. A question, that we might all need to consider, is what our unique identity and contribution is, within the churches of Banbridge and how we can use that unique identity and contribution, to attract those who cannot find a home in any of the other churches in the town. Boosting our profile on social media, particularly on Facebook, may be one of the most effective ways of advertising ourselves in the town.

Apart from those who have assisted in various ways, hidden and visible, with Sunday Worship Services, I wish most especially to thank our Elders and all in our Committee, who help with the smooth running of the Church. I feel honoured to serve with each of them. And in this regard, it would be remiss of me not to celebrate the ordination and installation of our three new elders in November 2023 - Elaine and Rodney Hutton, and Colette Brown.

Rev. Brian Moodie

19/02/2024

HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT 2023



According to official records, 2023 was apparently the hottest year on record for the UK and for Northern Ireland was the wettest year since 2002. So wet, that there wasn't a long enough dry spell to see the Committee's plans to have the outside of the Church painted fulfilled, although we did manage to have the Graveyard gates painted. Hopefully, 2024 will be a drier, brighter year for everyone and the Church will get its much needed facelift.

We are grateful to the members of the Congregation for their continued support throughout the year. Attendances have been fairly regular, with some very good attendances at the special services such as Mothering Sunday, Easter, the Songs of Praise service for the King's Coronation, the Country Gospel Service in June, the Harvest, Remembrance Sunday, the Nativity Puppet Show and the Carol Service.

Baptism

On Sunday 16th April 2023, Luke Alistair Robert Shields son of Gavin and Siobhan, brother to Olivia and Archie and grandson of Lynda and Tom, was baptised.

Thanks are extended to:

- Rev Moodie for continuing to provide an online sermon for those members of the Congregation unable to attend Church and for maintaining the Church's Internet site
- Mrs Karen Bushby for maintaining the Church's Facebook page and for her articles in the local papers; Karen has recently been appointed as Editor for the new look Denominational magazine, iNSPIration, which will now be published on a quarterly basis
- our organists, Mr Stephen Thompson and Mrs Julie Black
- those members of the Congregation who supply flowers for the pulpit throughout the year, and
- all the members of the Congregation who play a part in getting the Church ready for services each Sunday.

Sympathy is extended to all the members of the congregation who have been bereaved during the year.

REVIEW OF EVENTS 2023

January

We welcomed Mr Paul McCabe, who led our service on Sunday 15th January and Rev Stephen Reain-Adair from our Killinchy Church and Moderator of the Presbytery of Bangor, who exchanged pulpits with Rev Moodie on Sunday 29th January.

February

On Sunday 5th February, thanks were extended to our organist, Julie, for her donation of Junior Mission Praise Hymn Books for our use.

March

On Friday 3rd March, the local World Day of Prayer was held in our Church. The service, which was well attended, was led by Mrs Wendy Moodie and Mrs Karen Bushby. Representatives from the other Churches in the town took part in the service, which was written by the women of Taiwan. Thanks were extended to the ladies of the Congregation for providing refreshments after the service.

There was a good attendance on Mothering Sunday, the 19th March. Rev Moodie played the guitar and sang a funny song for the occasion and Heidi & Luke Hansen handed out gifts to all the mothers and ladies present. Thanks are extended to Mrs Elaine Hutton for putting together the gifts.

April

On Palm Sunday, the 2nd April, all the readings were from Matthew's Gospel and candles were lit for Passion Week. There was a good attendance at the service on Easter Sunday 9th April when Rev Moodie and Wendy put on a puppet show to tell the Easter story. Thanks to Mrs Elaine Hutton for leaving a basket of creme eggs in the hall for everyone to dip into.

May

There was a good attendance on Sunday 7th May when we held a Songs of Praise Service to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III. During the service, Ellen Forsythe gave us a beautiful rendition of the hymn 'Be Thou my Vision'. Communion Service was held on Sunday 14th May, when Rev Moodie was assisted by Mr Bertie McClean and Mrs Carol McAlister. At the end of the Service, presentations were made to Mr Jim Russell, Mr Noel Cruikshanks and Mrs Sylvia Cruikshanks in recognition of their long service to the Church as Elders and Committee members. The service on Sunday 21st May was led by Mr Paul McCabe.

June

There was a very good attendance at the Country Gospel Service on Sunday 18th June. The musical ensemble, who led the praise, included Rev Moodie, together with his mother Margaret and his wife Wendy on guitar; lead vocalist, Mrs Maureen Smyth, from our Dromore Church; and Julie, our organist, on the electric piano. As it was also Father's Day, Heidi and Luke Hansen handed out gifts to all the Dads and men present. Again thanks are extended to Elaine for putting together the gifts.

July/August

The service on Sunday 2nd July was led by Mr Paul McCabe and the service on Sunday 30th July was led by Mr Tony Moodie. Mr Paul McCabe took the service on Sunday 27th August.

September

The Service on Sunday 3rd September was led by Mr Tony Moodie and during the service, a candle was lit by Mrs Karen Bushby to mark the 10th anniversary of the passing of her mother, Mrs Denise Russell. During Rev Moodie's holiday, the services on Sunday 10th, 17th and 24th were taken by, Rev Lena Cockroft, Mr Tony Moodie and Rev Cockroft respectively.

October

The Church, as always, was beautifully decorated for our Harvest Service on Sunday 1st October. Thanks are extended to Mrs Elizabeth Stevenson, Mrs Sylvia Cruikshanks and Mrs Vera McCullough for all their hard work. Rev Moodie took the service during which Ruby Bushby sang 'In Christ Alone' and Ellen Forsythe sang 'How Great Thou Art'. During the service, Rev Moodie dedicated our new electric piano, which was presented to the Church by Mr Jim Russell and his daughters Karen and Diana, in memory of Jim's wife, Denise, who died on 3rd September 2013 and son, Keith, who died on 12th December 1987 at the age of 16. A large number of non-perishable food items were donated by the Congregation and these were later delivered by Rev Moodie and Mrs Vera McCullough to the Storehouse Banbridge Community Foodbank.

November

Communion Service was held on Sunday 5th November 2023. Mr Dougie Stevenson and Mr Bertie McClean assisted Rev Moodie in the serving of the wine and bread. Thanks were extended to Mrs Sylvia Cruikshanks for baking the shortbread and to Mrs Colette Brown for obtaining the non-alcoholic wine. There was a good attendance at the Remembrance Day Service on Sunday

12th November when the wreath at the war memorial was laid by Mr Alfie Hazley and Binyan's words were read by Mrs Sharon Hansen. The Last Post and Reveille were played by Mr Stephen Thompson on the organ. Thanks are extended to Mrs Elizabeth Stevenson for her usual beautiful poppy displays. On Wednesday 29th November, a Service was held for the installation of 3 new Elders for the Congregation, namely Mr Rodney Hutton, Mrs Elaine Hutton and Mrs Colette Brown. The Service, which was led by the Moderator of Presbytery, Rev Stephen Reain-Adair, was well attended with a good number of Presbytery members in attendance. Thanks were extended to the ladies for providing refreshments after the service. Our Service on Sunday 26th November was led by Mr Paul McCabe.

December

The Church was again beautifully decorated throughout the Christmas period and thanks go to Mrs Sylvia Cruikshanks and her daughter, Karen, for the various displays on the windows and throughout the Church. Thanks also go to David Little for putting up and decorating the Christmas tree and to Mrs Edna Agnew and Sam for providing the Advent wreath, the first candle of which was lit by Rev Moodie on Sunday 3rd December. As Rev Moodie had covid, our Service on Sunday 10th December was led by Rev Colin Campbell. There was a good attendance at the Carol Service, which was held on Sunday 17th December. Readers at the Service were Mrs Charlene Little, Mrs Vera McCullough, Mr Alfie Hazley, Mrs Sylvia Cruikshanks and Mr Tom Shields. During the service, Ellen Forsythe played 'O Holy Night' on the electric piano and members of the Congregation placed paper hearts on the Christmas tree to remember relatives and friends no longer with us. There was a good attendance on Sunday 24th December, when the puppets Beany and Sheenie, aka Rev Moodie and his wife Wendy, made a further appearance to retell the Christmas Story. There were also a number of musical items with Bella Shields playing the electric organ and accompanying her sister Charlotte in singing 'When a Child is Born'. Bella also played the electric piano and sang a solo of 'Hallelujah' and Sarah & Ellen Forsythe sang 'Gloria in Excelsius Deo'. After the Service, Santa made a surprise visit and handed out selection boxes to all the children who were present.

There was a good attendance at the service on Christmas morning, during which, Ruby Bushby, accompanied by her Dad Matthew on guitar, sang 'Mary, Did you Know?'

Thanks were extended to everyone who brought donations of toiletries for our Christmas Appeal for Barnardo's. Our final Service of the year, on Sunday 31st December, was led by Mr Paul McCabe.

Carol McAlister

Honorary Treasurer's Report 2023

Our thanks must go to our church members for their generosity throughout 2023. While we continue to see a decline in our ordinary collection each year, our total stipend collection (envelope and regular monthly bank transfers) for the year has increased by 11.5% from last year. We raise over £900 in total annually to the various monthly retiring charity collections and as a small congregation we should be proud of this. Our chosen charities are always grateful for the donations they receive from us.



A number of members are now opting to pay stipends directly into our church bank account and if any other church member needs further details about how to do this, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Our church income was again boosted this year by payment of Gift Aid claims made for 2022, which amounted to £3,579.55. Thank you to everyone, who has already signed up to the Gift Aid scheme. The scheme allows the church to claim 25 pence for every pound that you have already given to the church, providing that you are a taxpayer. It is a very simple process and forms are available for anyone, who has not yet signed up to Gift Aid and would like to do so.

This year, we were in the position to invest a total of £75,000 into a 2 year 5% fixed interest bond with the Progressive Building Society and I thank Rev Moodie and Mr Sam Agnew for their help and advice regarding this.

Our main outlays during 2023 were for the usual church insurance, graveyard maintenance and heating oil costs. It had been our aim to get the exterior of the church building repainted, but poor weather during the summer of 2023, meant that these plans had to be put on hold until 2024. Hopefully this work will now be carried out over the coming months.

I would like to thank the other members of the congregation, who have helped me during the year – Mr Jim Russell for his work as Stipend Treasurer, Mr Bertie McClean for collecting the weekly charity donations and Mrs Carol McAlister for her help & advice throughout the year. I am grateful to you all.

Thanks also to Mrs Jocelyn Girvan for independently verifying our accounts for 2023.

Once again, many thanks to all the members of our church – your continued support is greatly appreciated. I hope and pray that 2024 will be another good year for our church and for us all.

ANNUAL REVIEW

	<u>Stipend Collection</u>	<u>Ordinary Collection</u>
2017	£13,744	£529
2018	£13,145	£516
2019	£11,946	£224
2020	£11,225	£50
2021	£14,383	£223
2022	£14,862	£170
2023	£16,586	£129

Elaine Hutton - February 2024

STIPEND FOR YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2023

	<u>STIPEND</u>	<u>GIFT AID 2022</u>
1	£600.00	£138.75
2	£1,070.00	£262.50
3	£350.00	£75.00
6	£1,080.00	£267.50
8	£290.00	£70.00
9	£900.00	£150.00
10	£300.00	£75.00
16	£140.00	
18	£750.00	£155.00
21	£290.00	£70.00
22	£640.00	£182.50
24	£290.00	£63.75
26	£550.00	£101.25
27	£485.00	£117.50
28	£220.00	£37.50
30	£550.00	
33	£410.00	£116.25
34	£215.00	£62.50
35	£330.00	£61.25
36	£560.00	£135.00
38	£455.00	£100.00
39	£106.00	£26.75
45	£290.00	£80.00
47	£60.00	£15.00
48	£100.00	
49	£800.00	
51	£510.00	£130.00
52	£35.00	
93	£550.00	£137.50
95/105	£872.00	£209.00
101	£560.00	£140.00
106	£109.00	£28.00
107	£109.00	£28.00
112	£110.00	
119	£110.00	£42.50
120	£110.00	£42.50
121	£280.00	£50.00
122	£530.00	£130.00
132	£510.00	£122.50
137	£360.00	£90.00
	Interest	£66.55
	TOTALS	£3,579.55
	£16,586.00	

Charity No.NIC100336
Stipend Treasurer: Mr R.J. Russell
Auditor: Mrs. J. Girvan

No. 1 Account - Year Ending 31 December 2023

<u>RECEIPTS</u>		<u>PAYMENTS</u>	
Balance @ bank Jan 01	£61,105.65	Minister's Salary	
Stipend (envelopes)	£12,276.00	including HMRC & Pension	£10,547.35
Annual Stipend (via bank)	£4,310.00	Vints - Payroll Services	£433.20
Ordinary Collection	£129.00	Pulpit Supplies	£306.00
Rent -Silver Band	£150.00	Church Cleaning	£720.00
Wayleave	£6.92	Organist & Relief	£2,085.00
Sustentation Fund	£150.00	Electricity	£182.97
Ground Rents	£105.00	Oil	£1,887.08
Gift Aid 2022	£3,579.55	Website Maintenance/Domain Name	£217.00
Ministry Expenses No.4 Acc	£1,000.00	MG Fire Services	£192.00
Dividends	£2,248.87	Transfer to Progressive 2yr Savings Bond	£45,000.00
Church Magazines	£106.40	Sunday School Gifts	£120.95
Burial Fee Cyril Woods	£50.00	Long Service Gifts (3 Elders)	£72.48
UK GOVT Energy Support Payment	£600.00	Benevolent Fund	£100.00
		Insurance	£2,159.66
Charity Collections		Annual Postage Expenses	£76.19
Southern Area Hospice	£132.00	N.I. Water/Sewerage Charges	£181.68
Alzheimers	£130.00	Catering Kettle	£49.26
Kidney Research	£65.00	Weedkiller	£58.00
Children's Hospice	£110.00	50% Reimbursement UK Visa Application	
Orphan Fund	£40.00	re: Rev Moodie	£2,404.00
Graveyard	£175.00	Rev Moodie sundry expenses	£9.31
B Positive	£95.00	Church Magazines	£85.36
Poppy Appeal	<u>£80.00</u>		
	£827.00	Denominational Funds	
		Joint Inc & Mod Fund	£285.00
		Sunday School Fund	£49.00
		Sustentation Fund	£430.00
		Rem. Synod	£45.00
		Trustee Co. Fund	£10.00
		Bodel Mackenzie	£20.00
		Ministers' Widows' Fund	£100.00
		Orphan Society	£100.00
		Porter Fund	£30.00
		Students & Ministers	<u>£50.00</u>
			£1,119.00
Donations		Charity Collections	
Graveyard Donations:		Southern Area Hospice	£132.00
D Bryans	£50.00	Alzheimer's Society	£130.00
S Curran	£100.00	NI Kidney Research	£65.00
		NI Children's Hospice	£110.00
Harvest Donations:		B Positive	£100.00
Mr & Mrs McCarrison	£50.00	Poppy Appeal	<u>£80.00</u>
			£617.00
Other:		<i>money sent directly to charity not included in figures:-</i>	
Mitchell family	£100.00	Christian Aid	£100.00
Just Giving	£9.61		
J Grossmith re:weekly organ practice	£100.00	Balance @ bank Dec 31	£18,438.51
Loose change donated			
for retiring collection charity	£8.00		
	<u>£87,062.00</u>		<u>£87,062.00</u>

No. 2 Account - Ben Dickson Fund - Year Ending 31 December 2023

Jan 1 Balance @ Bank	£171.18	Dec 31 Balance @ Bank	£171.18
	£171.18		£171.18

No. 3 Account - Renovation/Dunbar School - Year Ending 31 December 2023

Jan 1 Balance @ Bank	£54,642.79	Graveyard maintenance	£1,300.00
Rent Dunbar School	£8,150.04	Painting of graveyard gates	£370.00
		Church guttering maintenance	£560.00
		Deposit for church painting	£4,470.00
		Dec 31 Balance @ Bank	£56,092.83
	£62,792.83		£62,792.83

No. 4 Account - Manse - Year Ending 31 December 2023

Jan 1 Balance @ Bank	£43,139.28	Ministry Expenses	£1,000.00
Dividends	£3,104.96	Transfer to 2yr savings bond	£30,000.00
Interest	£48.64	Dec 31 Balance @ Bank	£15,292.88
	£46,292.88		£46,292.88

Dunbar Fund - Year Ending 31 December 2023

Jan 1 Balance @ Bank	£1,957.21	Bank fees	£30.20
Interest	£1.98		
Dividends	£99.26	Dec 31 Balance @ Bank	£2,028.25
	£2,058.45		£2,058.45

Charity No.NIC100336

Treasurer:

Mrs. E. Hutton

Independent Examiner:

Mrs J. Girvan

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN (NON SUBSCRIBING) CHURCH

BANBRIDGE

Annual General Meeting – Tuesday 12 March 2024 at 7.30 p.m.

AGENDA

Welcome & Opening Prayer

Apologies

Correspondence

Minutes of last AGM - March 2023

Matters Arising

Report of Hon. Secretary

Report of Hon. Treasurer

Election of Officers

Election of Presbytery & Synod Representative

Any other business