



**First Dunmurry
NS Presbyterian Church**

**Reports and Financial Statements
Year ended
31st December 2019**

Sunday Services	Morning 11.30am Evening, as arranged
Church for Children	11.30am meet in Church and transfer to McCleery Hall
Communion	Celebrated in May and November
Baptism	By arrangement
Session	Meet prior to Communion and other dates as arranged
Committee	Monthly
Women's League	As arranged

CHURCH OFFICERS

Minister-in-Charge	Rev. Dr. David Steers
Clerk of Session	Vacant
Honorary Secretary	Mrs M Graham
Honorary Treasurers	Mrs S McBride Mrs K Yuille
Freewill Offering Secretary	Mrs N Wilson
Honorary Registrar	Mr S Kennedy
Honorary Auditor	Mr J Neill
Organist	Mr A Yarr
Sunday School Superintendent	Mrs A Johnston

CONGREGATIONAL TRUSTEES

**Mr R Mcl Douglas
Dr J I Logan
Mrs S McBride
Mr C F Wells
Mr S Kennedy
Mr J Douglas
Mr J Neill
Mr R Graham**

The N.S. Presbyterian Church of Ireland Trustee Company

Report - Minister In Charge (AGM 2020)

This year our AGM has inevitably been delayed by the extraordinary circumstances which have developed across the world. These have been challenging times for everyone, not least for churches, and they have come upon Dunmurry on the back of other issues over which we have no control and which are not yet finalised. On top of that the congregation endured the loss of their esteemed minister emeritus the Very Rev William McMillan in January of this year.

Since March we have been unable to meet together for worship or any social activities and all use of the hall has had to stop. Only now are we starting to come out of lockdown. Although the path to resuming activities is not entirely clear and we still don't really know what the 'new normal' will look like.

But despite all this the congregation is in as good shape as it possibly could be. This is partly because through its excellent Facebook page and website, Dunmurry has the most effective electronic communication with its members of any church in the denomination. The committee has also produced first class newsletters to send to members at home. In addition we have maintained services, children's stories and other things online through the You Tube channel which attracts large audiences from within the church and further afield. But all this is not the same as the normal interaction we would expect as a congregation and a community and times have been especially hard for those who have been bereaved and those who have been unwell over recent months.

I would like to pay tribute now to all the office holders, members of the committee and others who take on the various responsibilities in the church. In all aspects of its administration and operation Dunmurry is extremely well run and I want to thank those who organise the committee, keep the minutes, manage the finances and the stipend, lead the Sunday School, play the organ, clean the church, look after the premises and the grounds, manage the graveyard and all the other myriad activities that go on. At this AGM we are thinking particularly of these activities in 2019 but they have all had to continue throughout the period of lockdown, in some cases in limited form but in exactly the same way.

In the final analysis it is incumbent on all of us to continue to support our church in whatever way we can. In a history that stretches back well over 300 years the congregation has faced many challenges and difficulties, the current situation is just the latest of these, but we exist because we are inspired by our faith, we must continue to be guided and sustained by this.

Rev Dr David Steers

Members of Committee

Retiring 2020

Mr S Kennedy
Mrs N Wilson
Mrs R Frizzell
Mrs E McCrudden

Retiring 2021

Mr M Douglas
Mr J Douglas

Retiring 2022

Mr R Gordon
Mr K Yuille
Mrs K Yuille
Mrs S McBride

Members of Session

Mr R McFarland
Mrs S McMillan
Mrs A Jonston

Mr G Cameron
Mrs M Graham

Synod and Presbytery Representatives

Rev Dr D Steers and Mr Stephen Kennedy

Secretary's Report for Committee January - December 2019

Meetings of Committee

This year the Committee convened on 7 occasions, chaired by our Minister-in-Charge Rev Dr D Steers. In January 2019 the Committee was informed that a bequest to Dunmurry congregation of £20,000 has been received from the estate of Mr A Martin DFC who had died in December 2017. Mr Martin, a highly respected member of the congregation, had been Clerk of Session for many years. His generous bequest was greatly appreciated.

The congregational Annual General Meeting was held in the McCleery Hall on Monday 29th April chaired by Rev Dr D Steers. At this meeting the annual reports of the past year's church activities and the church's financial accounts were circulated to those present. These reports had also been made available for all who had attended the previous day's Sunday service.

All reports were read and opportunity given to discuss each report. All were accepted and passed. The Committee and office bearers were re-elected for a further year.

Presbytery/Synod Matters

Mr Stephen Kennedy has represented Dunmurry congregation at the quarterly meetings of the Bangor Presbytery where he has provided the Presbytery with a congregational update. At each meeting he has sought permission to advertise our vacancy, but this has been denied because of pending legal action which has been postponed on several occasions. Rev Dr Steers also attends these meetings and has supported Mr Kennedy, especially with regard to Dunmurry's request to advertise the vacancy.

Mrs Margaret Graham attended General Synod in Moira on Wednesday 11th June, as representative elder. Mr Gilbert Cameron also attended to raise an issue relevant to the whole Denomination concerning Charity Commission guidelines.

Pulpit Vacancy

Due to the on-going vacancy, a rota of ministers, students and lay preachers has been maintained with pastoral care and other ministerial duties as required carried out by Rev Dr D Steers.

The Committee welcome and thank the Rev Dr Steers for his ongoing support provided throughout our vacancy.

Organisations and Clubs

The organisations and clubs which use the McCleery Hall weekly and monthly continued throughout the year and were well attended.

These include the monthly Glebe Gardening Club and Belfast Floral Art Club.

Weekly sessions include the Baille Irish Dancing class for children and Adult Yoga class.

At the beginning of 2019 a weekly session of Keep Fit for Seniors led by the yoga teacher, commenced and has been welcomed by those attending.

Churches Together

The Denomination has supported all the inter-church services which have been held throughout the year. These include the Christmas Service, Christian Unity Service, World Day of Prayer and Easter Dawn Service.

Thank you to all who have faithfully supported these services.

Other Events

This year the Committee willingly supported an initiative proposed by committee member, Mrs Emma McCrudden, to organise a number of lifestyle awareness fund raising events to purchase a defibrillator. The goal was achieved and a defibrillator installed outside the entrance to the McCleery Hall in October.

A demonstration and training evening regarding its use was well attended and the defibrillator is now registered on "The Circuit", which is the national defibrillator network hosted by the British

Heart Foundation. It is connected to every Ambulance Service in the UK and allows them to direct bystanders to the nearest defibrillator to help save lives.

In June and December Mrs McCrudden arranged a Family Film Night with refreshments served. These family evenings were welcomed, allowing members of the congregation to meet and socialise.

The Church was open for European Heritage Day on Sunday 15th September.

Thanking all volunteers and those who support the Church

The Committee are very appreciative of the assistance and support which Rev Dr D Steers has given, and continues to give, to the committee and congregation during the vacancy.

A big thank you is also due to Mrs Adele Johnston, Sunday School Superintendent, and her volunteers who lead the Sunday School each week. This is a huge commitment and is greatly appreciated. Special congratulations must go to the children for all their hard work and effort, especially on the occasions they have led Sunday worship. Well done to all those "stars" who participated.

Thanks also to Noelle Wilson and Mrs Sheila McMillan who weekly record and bank the Freewill Offering. Similarly the attention given to Church financial affairs by Mrs Sylvia McBride and Mrs Kathy Yuille, joint Treasurers, and Mr John Neill, Auditor of our accounts. Mrs McMillan continues to do many jobs around the Church to ensure that the property is maintained, oil tank filled, bins emptied and much more.

Thanks is also due to those who provide refreshments when required and all who donate flowers for Sunday worships and outside planters, those who clean the Church and look after the graveyard. There is a lot of work involved in keeping the property neat, tidy and safe. The congregational practical support is much appreciated as is the additional assistance of Bobby McCorrison.

In September the Committee was informed that Mr Sammy McClure would no longer be available to help with cleaning the McCleery Hall. Mrs McMillan also gave notice that, due to health problems, she would no longer be able to open the Church for Sunday services. It was agreed to put the opening on a rota of committee members.

The Committee very much appreciate the assistance of Mr and Mrs Lenny Myies who have volunteered to clean the hall when required in addition to helping with other cleaning duties.

The Committee also acknowledged the long time contribution of Mr Tom McCullough, who had to retire for health reasons from collecting the offering each Sunday. Mr McCullough had carried out this duty regularly for many decades.

Special thanks must also be given to Mrs Emma McCrudden who manages our Facebook page. It is a very informative and up to date page and continually receives many "likes" and compliments. Our Facebook page is a means of communicating what is going on in the Church to a younger generation and wider audience as it provides information of up and coming events and shows many lovely images of the Church and activities. Emma also manages our Church web-page. Emma's skills and knowledge in safely managing this social media are much appreciated by all. It is heartening to see how many views and requests come through this media.

The Committee continue to take great pride in caring for all aspects of the Church, the grounds, buildings, Christian heritage and ethos. It is encouraging and supportive to see good attendance each Sunday especially during our vacancy.

This report is for 2019, however, on behalf of the Committee, I wish to pay tribute to our Minister Emeritus, Rev McMillan or "Rev Mac" as he was so fondly known by all, who sadly died in January 2020.

His funeral was one of the largest seen within the Denomination in recent times with overflow of several hundred mourners listening to the relayed Service in the McCleery Hall. We all mourn the loss of such a remarkable and multi-talented man who blessed not only our congregation as a Minister who espoused Christianity with insightful liberal thought. As a flower arranger extraordinaire he placed wonderful flower arrangements in Church throughout his long tenure as Minister and into retirement.

He will be remembered by all whose lives he touched not only in Dunmurry but those here at home and abroad.

Our sympathies are extended to Sheila and family.

Margaret Graham
Secretary

Honorary Treasurers' Report - 2019

The Financial Statement for 2019 again shows a very good surplus which was boosted by a Legacy from Miss M.A. Orr and a transfer from Reserves in the Bank of Ireland.

The congregational income was down slightly but the rental income, which included the new property purchased in 2018 and the increased dividends and interest, compensated for the decrease.

Expenditure for the year was down and this was mainly due to no Ministerial salary and expenses for the period. All the other expenses have varied within reasonable parameters, the exception being professional fees paid which relate to the ongoing dispute with our previous Minister.

The Church's Gift Aid for the year has decreased but we are grateful to all the members who are involved with the Scheme.

2020 will be a challenging year for the Church due to the Covid Pandemic and the suspension of Sunday services. Meanwhile expenses and maintenance relating to the Church property and grounds are ongoing with a greatly reduced congregational income having to support this.

We would like to thank Mrs Noelle Wilson, Freewill Offering Treasurer, for her work throughout the year and also Mr John Neill for his valued work as Church Auditor.

The Committee would like to thank all the Congregation for their support at this time and look forward to welcoming everyone back to Church in the near future.

Mrs S McBride and Mrs K Yullie
Honorary Treasurers

Sunday School Report 2019

The Sunday School in Dunmurry met every Sunday during 2019 with a break over the summer months. We have continued to follow the denominational syllabus and support denominational Sunday School events.

On 9th March 10 of our children participated in the Denominational Sunday School Games at the Trinity Centre in Lisburn. They joined over 50 other children representing 8 of our congregations and enjoyed an afternoon of games, quizzes, crafts and all eagerly participated in a very noisy drum circle. After refreshments the children were all presented with a medal by the Moderator, Rt Rev Campbell, as a souvenir of the event.

The children worked hard on their entries for the annual Exhibition of Work / Sunday School Service which was held in All Souls Church on Friday 7th June. One of our young people, Erin Black, did a reading at the service. The children from Dunmurry did very well and were awarded a total of 13 prizes - 7 individual prizes and 6 group prizes for the whole Sunday School, the children were also awarded the Betty Weaver Award for Music and Drama for their short drama performance of Jesus Calming the Storm. Our full list of prizewinners were as follows:-

1st Prizes

Erin Black (Thank you tree)
Erin Black (Reading)
Group prize for Jesus Calming the Storm drama.

2nd Prizes

Grace Brown (Thank you tree)
Julia Englefield (Hymn Review)
Holly Brown (Palm Leaf)
Group Prize for Joseph Scrapbook
Group Prize for Bible ABC Book
Group Prize for Singing "Our God is a Great Big God"

3rd Prizes

Erin Black (10 Rules to Live By)
Erin Black (Holy Week Time Line)
Toby & Juliet Power (Poster about God's Wonderful World)
Group Prize for Singing "Give Me Oil in my Lamp"

At the NSPCI General Synod Meetings in June I was honoured to be re-elected as Joint Denominational Sunday School & Youth Convenor with Rev Stephen Reain-Adair.

Sunday School Finished for the summer with our Children's Day Service on Sunday 9th June. The Service was led by Rev Steers, our Minister-in-Charge. Erin Black and Grace Brown read the lessons, the children wrote a prayer which was read by myself and all the children took part in a short item called "Think of a World Without any Flowers" which was narrated by Julia Englefield. At the end of the Service Rev Steers presented the children with prizes for Attendance and their entries for the Exhibition of Work.

Sunday School started back after the summer break on 14th September.

The children continue to sponsor Yeny in Peru and have been writing to her and have received some beautiful pictures from her. We are continuing to collect "loose change" to help sponsor Yeny and would like to thank members of the congregation for helping with this. Donations are always welcome and can be left in the Sunday School Room or in the Church.

I think the highlight of the year was this year's Christmas Service which was held on Sunday 22nd December. This year's service was led by the Sunday School with the teachers, children and their parents doing the readings and prayers. The children had made Christingles which were on display in the Church and Jenna, Holly, Toby and Juliet handed out candy canes to the congregation while our organist, Allen, did a short musical recital. Two of our youngest members, Holly and Jenna, also did fantastic solos during the Service. At the end of the Service the children were presented with Gift Tokens and Selection Boxes.

We would love to see more children in Church each Sunday - please support the Sunday School and bring / encourage your children or grandchildren to attend - they will be very welcome.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Linda Kerr and Heather Cameron for their help on Sunday mornings, Allen Yarr our organist, Rev Steers and the visiting preachers who have included the children in their Services and also the Session, Committee, Parents and Congregation for their continued support over the year.

Adele Johnston
Sunday School Superintendent