

**Newtownards, Congregational Church, 93 Victoria Avenue, Newtownards, BT23 7ED**

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**Nic No 101645**

**Trustees Annual Report for period 1st January 2023 - 31st December 2023**

The trustees during the period of the report were:

Rev Paul Acheson, Mr Roy Mckee, Mr Simon Mcnamara, Mr Geoff Murray, Mr Ken Logan, Mr Ian Gallagher, Mr David Bennett.

The Trustees have had regard to the Commissions Public Benefit requirement statutory Guidance, they are also satisfied that effective Safeguarding is in place in respect of vulnerable adults and children. Child protection policies are in place and training takes place every 2 years (last completed 5/12/24) for all those who are involved in this work. All are aware of their responsibilities regarding reporting requirements.

Newtownards Congregational Church is governed by its Constitution, Covenant and Code of Doctrine 2009.

The Charities main activities are varied with all our main focus on public worship services each Sunday morning and evening promoting the Christian faith and through faithful Biblical teaching to bring hope and purposeful living to people of all ages.

Our purpose leads only to good and has no harmful effects.

Our activities within the church are varied and reach out to all age groups within the community.

Sunday Bible Club and Bible Class continue to meet each week. Around 12–15 children attend where they have continued to use, “ The Gospel Project,” material which gives an overview of the Bible for the first half of the year and then moved on to the Life of Christ.

Both the Sunday Bible Club and Bible Class continue to take part in various services throughout the year with Children’s Day and the Christmas Tree Service well attended by parents and guardians. The children and adults can bring a present and place these under the tree, if they so desire. These were then given to the, “Youth for Christ” Charity in Donaghadee where they were then distributed to under privileged children.

The Ladies Fellowship continued to meet on a regular basis. The ladies would meet and spent time enjoying some fellowship. The evening would normally be finished off with a guest speaker giving a short epilogue. The ladies enjoyed their Annual Retreat in February. This year there were 30 present. This involved a weekend away, with the ladies being taught from God’s Word, a time of fellowship, and relaxation. The ladies also enjoyed their Fit4Life program which was held every Thursday in May. The ladies enjoyed this as it provides them with some exercise and also guests speakers would deliver some talks on general health. The Christmas afternoon tea was attended by around 65 where they all enjoyed some treats, Carol singing and quizzes.

Girls and Boys Brigade continue to meet every Thursday and Friday nights respectively (September-March). This brings the boys and girls from various backgrounds into a safe environment, providing them with Christian Teaching, Physical Activity and Badge Work. This in turn helps them to develop life skills and leadership qualities. Two boys were presented with their President’s Badge this year at the Enrolment Service which was well attended by parents and guardians.

Cross Factor has continued to meet after the Evening Service every Sunday. This is a time where the young people can spend together in a safe environment. It is a time where they can express themselves and reflect on God’s Word. Around 8–10 young people enjoyed a weekend away throughout this year. This enables them to learn from God’s Word, build relationships, develop

personally, and simply enjoy themselves. Some of the young people would also participate in the Praise Ministry within the Church.

The Evergreens, (those a certain age) have continued to enjoy regular outings throughout the year. These are a time of fellowship and companionship. Normally the Evergreens would frequent cafés/restaurants, and enjoy some conversation, perhaps, with a short epilogue at the end of the day.

Craft Corner continue to meet regularly with around 16 ladies being present. They will generally complete some Craft Activities, ie Card Making, etc. This is a time of opportunity for fellowship and conversation. Normally the evening will be rounded off by a short epilogue. Craft Corner made a donation to Keith Lynnsey, ARCE Gospel Mission, and Ida Johnson, Child Evangelism Fellowship in Norway.

This year the Church ran a Mission entitled, "Missing Peace" from 5-12th Nov. This was a time where people from right across the local community could come and hear testimonies from various people about what the Lord Jesus Christ means to them. This event was attended by around 70-100 people every night and provided them with an opportunity to ask questions, enjoy fellowship, and enjoy some companionship. We also had an opportunity to enjoy some conversation around a cup of tea and a bun.

#### Missionary Support:

Missionary support continues throughout the year with regular opportunities given for individuals to support various causes. The total amount given to Missionary Societies throughout the year amounted to £14555.00 (see accounts)

#### How we are funded:

Newtownards Congregational Church has sufficient funds in its accounts to sustain its expenses and liabilities with the main source of income from Free Will Offering Envelopes and loose donations.

A report of our activities and finances are prepared annually and presented for adoption at our AGM in February each year.

Secretary

Simon McNamara

February 2024