

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

Correspondence, C/O Simon McNamara 3, Hillside, Portavogie, BT22 1EZ

Nic No 101645

Trustees Annual Report for period 1st January 2024 - 31st December 2024

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 5/12/23) 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 Mathew Marshall (Relief Aid Ministries) and taken to Ukraine where they were distributed to those who were in genuine need.

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. Three boys were presented with their President’s Badge at this years display.(the BB highest award). There was also a joint BB/GB Enrolment Service this year 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. The young people have enjoyed some fun activities throughout the year, ie: bowling and a black tie take away night which was well attended by them and their families. 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 times 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 14-18 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.

Both Phil Dunn from EMF (European Missionary Fellowship) and Alan Cousins from SAT7 attended our Missionary Weekend. This was well attended by adults and young people and gave the opportunity to all to be informed about Mission Work and to ask questions relating to this area of God's work.

This year we have also enjoyed a couple of, "Church Fellowship Lunches." This is held directly after the morning Sunday service and has been attended really well by around 60/90 people of all ages. This is a time where we all enjoy a meal and some fellowship one with another generally finishing off with a time of praise to the Lord.

At the end of June we ran our Holiday Bible Club, (HBC) This was attended by around 50-80 primary school aged children. They enjoy lessons from the Bible every night, arts and crafts along with some well appreciated fun and games. The children come from all across the local community and the week is finished off on the Sunday, (HBC Sunday) with a short service where their parents and guardians can attend.

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 £13,986.61 (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 2025