

**St. Finnian's Parish Church
Cregagh
Belfast**

Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended 31st December 2022



Northern Ireland Charities Number:101977

Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2022

Contents

	Page
References and administrative details	4
Trustees' Annual Report	6
Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees	9 - 10
Statement of Financial Activities	11
Balance Sheet	12
Notes to the Financial Statements	13 - 22

St Finnian's Parish Church, Cregagh

References and administrative details

Charity Name: St Finnian's Parish Church, Cregagh

Charity Registration Number: 101977

Contact Address: The Rectory
3 Upper Knockbreda Road
Belfast
BT6 9QH

Trustees

Rev Canon J PIERCE (Rector)
Rev A HAY (Curate)
Michael ALLEN
Peter ARMSTRONG
David CAIRNS
Robert CRAWFORD
Neil DONALDSON
Mrs Karen GATELY
Miss Catherine HAMILTON
Geoff HARMAN
Miss Angela HARVEY
Jim HAUGHEY
Jonathan JOHNSTON
Greg KIDD
Brian LAVERY
Timothy LECKEY
Mrs Linda LEONARD
Trevor SMYTH

Principal Office-Bearers

Clergy:	Canon Jonathan DM Pierce (Rector) Rev Andrew Hay (Curate)
Secretary	Mrs Linda Leonard
Treasurer:	Robert Crawford
Churchwarden- Rector's:	Miss Angela Harvey
Churchwarden – People's:	David Cairns

Independent Examiner

Jackson Andrews
6 Mandeville Mews
PORTADOWN
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Bankers

Danske Bank
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Trustees Annual Report for the year ended 31st December 2022

The Trustees present the annual report and accounts for St.Finnian's Parish Church, Cregagh for the year ended 31st December 2022

Objectives and Activities

The charitable purpose of the Church of Ireland is the advancement of religion.

The principal function of St. Finnian's Parish Church, Cregagh is the advancement of the Christian religion by promoting through the work of St. Finnian's Parish Church, Cregagh the whole mission of the church – Pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Being open to and engaging with society as a whole and offering support for those needing help is fundamental to the practical delivery of the benefits of Christianity.

As a result of activity in the pursuit of the advancement of the Christian religion, St. Finnian's Parish Church, Cregagh has custody of property and of records, materials and artefacts of significance to cultural and religious heritage, the maintenance of which is undertaken by the Select Vestry of St. Finnian's, Cregagh.

Achievements, performance and public Benefit

Activities in 2022 continued to be affected by the Government restrictions relating to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. These impacted both on Church services and the activities of all Church organisations. The Covid Management templates agreed in 2021 still applied until the summer when plans were made to reintroduce all Services in Church and the organisations began to make their arrangements to reopen in September. This included the updating of Safeguarding Trust training for all volunteers working with young people.

During the first six months of the year technology facilitated the delivery of Church services and the conduct of meetings online so that contacts were retained with the congregation and wider community. The volunteer telephone service continued to offer practical and emotional support to the elderly and housebound while face to face contacts could not take place. The Rector delivered his weekly blog, popular podcast "Bitesize Chunks of Faith" and Alpha training online reaching out to individuals not just in the local area but much further afield.

The Parish magazine and Facebook page have kept people informed of changes and new activities throughout the year and help to encourage people to become involved in both group and online activities.

An 8 week mental health course started in the autumn. This Sanctuary course was introduced as a new initiative to help people learn more about mental health, provide an opportunity to take part in discussions and to find out about resources available in the community. The Course is designed to facilitate a safe place for people to talk about their mental health. Each week a video focusses on a mental health issue and then the group engages in discussion on some of the topics raised.

In early December a Belfast based Pastor and GP Dr Stephen Rodgers, who has a particular interest in mental health, gave a talk to people from the congregation and local community on managing stress. Further talks are planned as the parish continues to look at ways to heal the traumas following the Covid 19 pandemic and the impact it has had on people's lives and their mental health.

Trustees Annual Report for the year ended 31st December 2022 - cont'd

Established and new groups began to meet regularly from September with numbers steadily increasing as people become more confident about mixing. The Cregagh Crafters group which began as a new initiative to help reduce social isolation has proved very successful and offers an opportunity to meet as well as to continue with or to learn a new craft. The Pilates group has also become a very popular addition to the range of activities on offer.

The HEDGE project which encourages young home schooled people to learn gardening skills and provides an opportunity for socialisation has helped transform part of the Church grounds into a flourishing vegetable garden and colourful flowerbeds. Volunteers from the Parish have become actively involved with the HEDGE group and a new support programme at Lisnasharragh primary school which was set up to help young people whose literacy and numeracy skills had fallen behind as a result of disrupted education during the pandemic.

The Parish provided over £2000 financial support to the Bishops' Ukraine Appeal (in addition to its annual allocation to the Bishops' Appeal) and then in June welcomed a Ukrainian family into the Parish. A house was furnished with donations and the family were given assistance to settle in their new home. Practical, financial and emotional support is ongoing and the older child has started to attend a local school. Parishioners donated over £10,000 to the Parish's own Ukraine Project.

Over the summer months an English language group was set up in conjunction with two other local churches to help new arrivals from Ukraine to settle in and develop their spoken English.

2022 was a special year for the Church as it marked its 90th year of Consecration. A Fun day with a "Welcome back" theme was planned for early September but due to the death of HM Queen this had to be rearranged. The new date linked to the Harvest Festival in October and proved to be very popular. It was well attended both by parishioners and local residents. The Archbishop of Armagh and the Bishop of Down and Dromore were invited to speak at special anniversary services. Displays of flowers were provided by Belfast City Council to support the 90th anniversary events and local traders also offered support by providing goods. Foodstuffs were collected at the Harvest Festival and donated to the Larder Foodbank at Mersey Street.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee was celebrated with a picnic in the Church grounds and in October a silver birch tree given by the Mothers' Union President was planted.

In July the Parish began to look again at its access and development plans which had to be shelved due to Covid. During the autumn a series of meetings were held to agree plans to make the Church building more accessible through the provision of a ramp and to improve internal access and facilities for wheelchair users. A Parish consultation meeting was held in November and the agreed plans will go to Tender in early 2023.

At the end of the year the Select Vestry agreed to allocate funds totalling £17,850 to a range of organisations both at home and overseas. These included Missionary Societies, Christians against Poverty, The Larder, The Hub at Queens, Marie Curie and Divine Healing Ministries. The Parish also continues to support the work of Fields of Life in Africa. This includes the provision of education and medical support in the community and in hospitals.

Trustees Annual Report for the year ended 31st December 2022 -cont'd

The work carried out in the Parish and local community is provided by the clergy and a large team of volunteers engaged in a wide range of activities from leading Sunday School, the Boys' Brigade and the Mothers and Toddlers group to one to one visits to people who are housebound, looking after the grounds and buildings and maintaining the communication networks.

The Parish is indebted to these dedicated volunteers who so generously give their time to assist with its worship and community activities. Without them the guidance and support which St Finnian's can offer, and from which many people enjoy direct benefits, would be greatly reduced.

The parish has given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities entered into during the year and those planned for the future have and will continue to help to achieve the parish's objectives as well as providing public benefit.