

First Church of Christ Scientist

Trustees' Annual Report

Year ended 31 March 2023

The trustees present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name First Church of Christ Scientist

Charity registration number 102712

Principal office Unit 2
Leslie Office Building
393 Holywood Road
Belfast

The trustees

Mrs G Boyd	(Retired 30 September 2023)
Ms L Campbell	(Retired 30 September 2023)
Ms M Kissock	(Retired 30 September 2023)
Ms A Pollock	(Retired 30 September 2023)

Mrs V Walker	(Appointed 1 October 2023)
Mrs H McCreery	(Appointed 1 October 2023)
Mrs S Allen	(Appointed 1 October 2023)
Mrs A Willis	(Appointed 1 October 2023)

Independent examiner John Magee
631 Lisburn Road
Belfast
BT9 7GT

Structure, governance and management

The governance and management of the Church is made up of Trustees and Elders. All decisions regarding church affairs and how church funds are spent is handled by the Trustees.

Objectives and activities

We hold services on Sundays, and a Sunday School: also a meeting on Wednesdays for readings, discussion, prayer and testimony. We also organise public talks/lectures and other meetings. All these are open to the public.

Our Charitable purposes are "to promote the Cause of Christian Science in such ways only as are strictly consonant with the teaching and practice of Christian Science set forth in "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" by Mary Baker Eddy and with the Manual of The Mother Church, The First Church of Christ, Scientist, Boston, Mass., USA"

First Church of Christ Scientist

Trustees' Annual Report *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

Achievements and performance

The Church's Board of Directors (Charity Trustees) are satisfied that both aspects of the public benefit requirement are met; The direct benefits flowing to the members and attendants include access to regular study of the Bible and of our text-book, 'Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures' as well as other literature published by our 'Mother Church' in Boston, USA, for the worldwide movement. This leads to understanding more about, and living by, proven moral standards. Personal prayer and collective worship are encouraged. The moral and ethical framework of the church leads to practical acts - such as those of our 'Christian Science Practitioners' - of personal devotion to help and heal others in need, for example through visits and prayers. Christian Scientists believe that improved mental and physical health can directly arise from their faith and are encouraged not to rely on doctors, chemists or hospitals for treatments and drugs etc. but rather rely on their faith and prayers for good health and healings. There is, however, no compulsion to rely exclusively on spiritual healing and each individual is free to make their own decision in the circumstances with mainstream healthcare always being an option open to them. The Church harms nobody, but rather it lives to bless our fellow-man in whatever way possible. These benefits are demonstrable through the clear existence of a moral, spiritual and ethical code of beliefs which encourages the practical application of religion in in society, attendance at our religious services which are conducted in public, testimony of attendees suggesting higher levels of well-being and happiness and of the practical help and healings that their prayers have provided. Our Church in Boston also publishes periodicals, a weekly Sentinel and the monthly Journal. These contain verified accounts of healings. Our benefits are open to all. Anyone is welcome to come and share in our Services on Sundays and Wednesday Testimony Meetings, to use our public Reading Room/ Library facility on our premises and to attend our public lectures. Individuals apply for membership voluntarily (when he/she feels ready for it) and likewise may leave at any time. There is no pressure or exclusivity. Since it is totally a lay-church, there are no paid ministers or officials. Any existing 'private benefits' are very small - payments to our Readers, Librarian or Soloists which cover little more than travelling expenses and which are in practice frequently paid back in donations. The church does have 'Christian Science Practitioners' - people who devote themselves, when they are called upon, to helping and healing through visits to and prayers for those in need. Again 'payment' is frequently given by the patients for the time and help given, but this is on a voluntary basis, and the poor are not excluded; they would pay whatever they could afford and perhaps in certain circumstances no payment is given.

Financial review

Collections increased to £28,322 (2022 £16,265). Although church costs increased slightly to £23,763 (2022 £23,209), there was a surplus of £4,559 (2022 £6,944 deficit).

First Church of Christ Scientist

Trustees' Annual Report *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

The trustees' annual report was approved on 25 May 2023 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:

Mrs V Walker
Trustee



Mrs H McCreery
Trustee



Mrs S Allen
Trustee



Mrs A Willis
Trustee

