

## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (2022)

### PURPOSES:

- 1) The main purpose of St Comgall's parish is the advancement of the Christian religion through engagement with the general public, and in particular with the disadvantaged, the sick, the elderly and the young. This can be measured and evidenced through increased social integration and pastoral care delivered at the point of need.
- 2) The parish also seeks to advance the Christian religion through the public enjoyment of cultural and historic buildings and artefacts (such as church plate, furnishings and archival records) as well as encouraging an overall improved appreciation of longstanding Christian heritage. This is achieved through education in relation to Bible, theology, church history and culture; through regular maintenance & upkeep of all parish property; through the conservation of important artefacts; and through the safe-keeping and provision (on request) of copies of archival documents for personal research, legal, and genealogical purposes. Public access is facilitated outside normal service times & parish organizations' normal operation hours through consideration by the Select Vestry/Trustees of continual requests for the use of our facilities and resources by individuals, community groups and members of the wider society (eg for public meetings, social celebrations).

### NON MALFEASANCE

There is no harm arising directly from any of these general purposes. Any harm potentially flowing from the various parish activities is pre-empted as much as possible and mitigated by the adoption of good practice guidelines and the provision of relevant training (eg first aid, food & hygiene, and health and safety training); by the introduction of accident/emergency incident reporting procedures; through the invitation of topical speakers to different organisation meetings; by regular routine maintenance and inspections of all property, equipment and resources; and by holding regular fire & other risk assessments, and practising emergency evacuation drill procedures.

Charges are set at a denominational level for archival searches and the provision of certified copies of any records. Additionally, on occasions, the engagement of professional staff, and services are essential in providing security and public access, but these are incidental to the fulfilment of the purpose.

### BENEFICIARIES

The beneficiaries of St Comgall's are the general public, primarily (but not restricted to) those living in the Greater Newtownabbey and Rathcoole parish areas. Being open to, educating, and engaging with society as a whole, and offering support for those needing help is fundamental to the practical delivery of the tenets of Christianity. The wider benefit to the public will outweigh any detriment arising in the course of Christian outreach. The parish does not function for the private benefit of individuals except if incidental to its main purposes (eg a speaker invited to an individual organisation may have benefitted by the sale of his/her work, or this could have resulted in an increased profile for them). No Trustee receives remuneration, reward or other private benefit for carrying out their responsibility in relation to the main purpose of the parish ie the advancement of the Christian religion. No personal private benefit is received either by Trustees fulfilling their responsibilities in respect of access to records, buildings or artefacts, but reasonable fees/donations are received by the Charity itself to cover essential expenses incurred for events in the premises.

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### PUBLIC BENEFIT

The benefit of participation in the life and associated activities of the parish includes the enjoyment of public worship; the giving and receiving of pastoral ministry; increased socialization for isolated members of the community (eg Ladies Guild, Coffee Morning); greater physical activity and community cohesion (Community Bowling Club; BB & Anchor Boys; Girl Guides, Brownies & Rainbows); improved educational outcomes (individual schools projects/surveys, invited guest speakers); better understanding of the values relating to civic engagement (ROC Befriending Scheme; Christmas Fair); access to specialist support groups (eg STAR Autism), and the facilitated networking and working together of diverse groups using the premises

**Delivery of any material** (parish magazines, service sheets, essential resources, children's activity packs) The delivery of Church magazines was supported by a small dedicated group of individuals.

Artificial flower arrangements were purchased for use in the church sanctuary in 2021.

### IMPACT / EVALUATION OF BENEFIT

The public evaluation of these benefits has been achieved through annual Diocesan statistical return surveys, including an analysis of attendance at public worship and organisational membership trends. Information gathered by these means was additionally supplemented by soft data gathered through 1-1 conversations. By year end (2022) membership of St Comgall's was represented by **188** households (corresponding to **396** individuals); and had an average weekly attendance at Sunday morning services of **37** individuals. This attendance figure continues to be skewed due to the impact of covid on all parish activities, but also reflects the commitment of members to continue 'normal' activities when possible.

Ad hoc anecdotal feedback and post-event comments received from members of the public following their personal experience of receiving the ministries of St Comgall's have always been extremely positive (eg following family baptisms, weddings and funerals; or after social gatherings and uniformed organization events) Direct appreciation is regularly given to parish visitors and clergy in relation to pastoral care offered to their family relations, (or the individual themselves) whilst in hospitals, private nursing homes, at the point of emergency or crisis, whilst recuperating, or long term housebound at home.

### Funerals and ministry to the bereaved

Funerals remained consistent in 2022.

At the beginning of 2022, the offering of sanitised hand crocheted hearts and crosses to the dying and the bereaved became a tangible and precious symbol of the pain of loss. Numbers attending the in-person service for Lost Loved ones remained consistent. The reading of the memorial lists, the interactive symbolism, the opportunity for silence, the use of both secular and sacred music, and the reflective nature of this service was appreciated by all in attendance.

### Provision of worship (in person and online) and the use of social media platforms

A special service was held to celebrate the Queen's platinum Jubilee, a bench was dedicated after the service in honour of the Queen. All attendees were provided with a book and badge as a keepsake to

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mark the occasion. A light lunch was provided after the service. The service was attended by XX individuals.

Christmas morning worship was attended by 20 individuals. A evening Carol service was also held and was attended by 25 individuals.

The use of social media, in the form of the parish Facebook page, became the central way of disseminating information to church members and the wider public alike. Many posts were known to have been 'shared on' to an even wider audience. Posts included motivational and inspirational quotations, fun memes, prayers and Scriptures as well as updates on covid lockdowns, testing & self care information, and any changes to restriction guidelines or school opening. The linked use of Messenger established in previous years facilitated easy and non-threatening direct communication with the general public and many queries, concerns and personal prayer requests were received by this means. Several pastoral care problems were also communicated initially also by MSN or FB and followed up with personal phone calls and visits (where allowed).

The Rector continued to offer services throughout all the lockdowns by self recording short acts of worship (as allowed) from the church. These were sent to some members via Whatsapp. Videos of in person services were also uploaded to the church FB page and this proved to be very much appreciated and surprisingly popular even amongst non church attenders, increasing our reach far beyond its normal levels.

### OBLIGATIONS & ACCOUNTABILITY

In setting the objectives and in planning all activities for the year the Trustees of St Comgall's Parish have had due regard to the Commission's public benefit statutory guidance and reporting requirements set out in regulations 32-34 of the accounting and reporting regulations and issued by the Commission under section 4(b) of the Charities Act.

### OUTPUTS & OUTCOMES/ACHIEVEMENTS (Section 32 (2) (b))

**Kidz Church** – This activity resumed in September 2022 with an average attendance of around 12 children. There continues to be 2 adult members who lead the weekly activities.

**The Ladies Guild** – The Ladies Guild met for 3 months in 2022, however due to low numbers this organisation has been suspended.

**Bowling Club** – The Bowling Club resumed in 2022 in line with Church of Ireland guidelines. Whilst competitive matches did not resume, the club did manage to hold several friendly matches.

**Star Autism Support Group** All gatherings and activities continued to be suspended in 2022.

### 11<sup>th</sup> Newtownabbey Company Boys'

All section meetings resumed mid January with 10 members attending across all sections. An additional helper was enlisted to support with additional requirements around sanitisation. Boys were provided with individual stationary sets to reduce the risk of cross contamination.

**127<sup>th</sup> Belfast company, Guides, Brownies and Rainbow Guides** All section meetings resumed in March 2022 with additional vigilance around covid. All sections enjoyed Jubilee celebrations in May 2022. At Christmas, the Rainbows and Brownies enjoyed a magician's show, and the Guides held a

pizza party. The Guides also made Christmas decorations as gifts to be distributed during the Seniors Christmas event.

Hon. Sec. Mr. Robert Leung 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023  
Mrs Kerry Whyte Stepochek 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023.