

**COOKE CENTENARY CONGREGATION OF THE  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND**

**Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements  
for the year ended 31 December 2020**

**Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC104311)**

## **COOKE CENTENARY CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND**

### **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

The Trustees present their Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020 including a Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at that date.

### **REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

Cooke Centenary congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland  
216 Ormeau Road, Belfast BT7 2FY

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC104311)

### **CHARITY TRUSTEES**

The Charity Trustees who served during the year or who were trustees at the date of this report were -

Mrs S Bennis	Mr D McWilliams
Mrs H Brunt	Mrs P McWilliams
Mrs J Corscadden	Mrs C Reynolds
Mrs P Emerson	Mr K Savage
Mr H Glenn	Mrs C Smith
Mrs J Glenn	Mrs B Taylor
Dr C Hetherington	Mr A Wilson
Mrs E MacNeill	Mrs M Wisoner
Miss J McKnight	

### **PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS**

Minister	Rev Morris Gault
Clerk of Session	Mrs Elaine MacNeill
Treasurer	Mr Keith Savage

### **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER**

**Mr Mark McGinley**  
**80 Upper Dunmurry Lane**  
**Belfast BT17 0PS**

### **BANKERS**

**Ulster Bank**  
**365-369 Ormeau Road**  
**Belfast. Co Antrim. BT7 3GP**

**COOKE CENTENARY CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND  
TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

**SOLICITORS**

**King & Gowdy  
298 Upper Newtownards Rd,  
Belfast BT4 3EJ**

**STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT**

**The Kirk Session**

The charity trustees of the congregation are the members of its Kirk Session. Under the congregation's governing document, The Code, the book of the constitution and government of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the Kirk Session seeks to watch over and promote the spiritual interest of the congregation and of persons not connected with any congregation who are within its bounds. It ensures pastoral care is in place in the congregation and seeks to further the contribution of the Church to Christian witness and service in the local community. The Kirk Sessions has delegated to its Congregational Committee the temporal affairs of the congregation including administering all funds and property belonging to the congregation. Members of the Kirk Session are ex-officio members of the Congregational Committee.

The Kirk Session consists of the ordained minister and the ruling elders of the congregations. All members are entitled to propose, speak and exercise equal votes at meetings, except that the Moderator, the ministers in active duty in the congregation, has no deliberative but only a casting vote.

Stated meetings of the Kirk session are held approximately 10 times each year.

To be chosen for the office of the eldership in the congregation a person must be a voting member and a regular attendant on its ordinances. The selection of those proposed to be called to the office can be either by the congregation or by the Kirk Session. Members are elected if they obtain two-thirds of those who vote.

**Presbytery**

Under the Presbyterian Church in Ireland form of governance the corporate oversight of a congregation is the responsibility of a Presbytery which superintends generally the spiritual

## **COOKE CENTENARY CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

and temporal affairs of the congregations assigned to it by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Cooke Centenary congregation of the Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the South Belfast Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The membership of the Presbytery consists mainly of the active ministers of congregations assigned to it by the General Assembly, ministers who have retired from active duty and an elder appointed by the Kirk Session of the congregation.

### **The General Assembly**

The General Assembly is the supreme court of the Church, representing in one body the whole Church and acting as its supreme legislative, administration and judicial authority, in dealing with all matters brought before it. The General Assembly is normally constituted during the first week in June for worship and to conduct its business. At the end of business it is dissolved. The membership of the General Assembly consists mainly of the active ministers of each congregation, retired ministers and a representative elder appointed by the Kirk Session of each congregation.

### **DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE**

The charitable purpose of the congregation is the advancement of religion.

Cooke Centenary congregation of the Presbyterian Church is a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland, as a Reformed Church within the wider body of Christ is grounded in the Scriptures, and exists to love and honour God through faith in His Son and by the power of His Spirit, and to enable her members to play their part in fulfilling God's mission to our world.

*The congregation's mission purposes is by the grace of God to help people of all ages become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ and to show God's love to the community of Ballynafeigh.*

*Our vision is, by the grace of God, to sustain and extend the Christian witness of Cooke in this community which is home to people from a diverse range of Christian denominations, other religions and those with no active faith and to be an inclusive, welcoming community of Christ's people of all ages, which:*

- *is increasingly characterised by love for God, and love and concern for others;*
- *is committed to the historic Christian gospel as revealed in the Bible;*
- *is relevant to people of this time and place.*

## **COOKE CENTENARY CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

### **ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES**

The congregation normally meets for worship every Sunday and visitors are welcome to join. The Sacrament of the Lords Supper is observed on several occasions during the year and all those who have been baptised and who have made a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are admitted to the Lord's Supper. The congregation has a wide range of organisations including:

- Crèche, Sunday School & Bible class
- Presbyterian Women
- Model Railway Club
- Worship Group
- Genesis Youth Club
- Crochet Club
- Tots' Café
- Community lunch

### **ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

#### **Worship and prayer**

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at **11.00am**. Worship is led by a pianist, guitarists and singers who meet each week to prepare music to lead Sunday morning worship and other special services throughout the year.

From March 2020 this rhythm of Church life changed due to the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic when meeting together in a church setting for public worship was no longer possible.

Sunday worship, including worship songs, prayers and sermons were pre-recorded and made available online through the Church website and Facebook. There were an average of 193 views each week.

A mid-week message was recorded each week from 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and made available through the channels above as an encouragement in difficult times. Easter reflections during Holy Week were similarly recorded. Church opened again in September under the required guidelines but services continued to be live streamed.

The usual activities of Creche, Sunday School and Bible Class, where our children and young people could meet to hear Bible stories and learn of God's love for them in age-appropriate settings, were suspended from March 2020. Age-appropriate recordings of stories with craft activities were available for primary school children during Advent and Lent.

In person meetings for youth on Sunday evenings and weekly Bible Studies were similarly suspended from March 2020 but some of these groups continued to meet virtually.

## **COOKE CENTENARY CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

We sought to comfort those who had been bereaved during 8 funeral services in 2020.

At 31 December 2020 there were **156** communicant members and **241** families connected with the congregation. Before the suspension of services, the average weekly attendance at morning worship was **90**.

### **Pastoral care**

Members of the congregation who are unable to attend church due to sickness or age previously received visits on a regular basis by the minister, elders or by one of the congregation's pastoral visitors. During the pandemic, pastoral care continued through regular telephone contact.

### **Mission and outreach**

At a local level the congregation has several local mission and outreach activities in which the congregation strives to meet some of the needs which have been identified in Ballynafeigh. Cooke works with care providers, voluntary groups and neighbouring congregations to support those most in need of help through the provision of food parcels from the Cooke Foodstore. Each food parcel will provide a family with sufficient provisions for several days until a source of regular income is achieved.

Although food parcels were provided at the start of 2020, these ceased after April 2020 as local congregations did not meet and adequate food supplies could not be maintained. 59 hampers were provided between January and April 2020.

The Community lunch & Tot's Café ceased in March 2020 and due to restrictions were unable to resume in 2020.

The "Walk of Witness" on Good Friday which the congregation participates in with the other churches in the Ballynafeigh Clergy Fellowship was unable to take place due to Coronavirus restrictions on gatherings.

In December 2020 Women's Aid were particularly appreciative of the toys and gifts which were provided by the congregation to share our love and care for the families that they support.

The annual church pantomime was held in January 2020. It provides an opportunity for family entertainment and to welcome the community into our premises. Over the past 10 years the cast has grown to include many people from the community who were otherwise unconnected to Cooke. This event has become a much-loved part of our church outreach, providing an opportunity to build and develop relationships outside of normal

church activities and is enjoyed and well supported by the community.

### **COOKE CENTENARY CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

The congregation supports the United Appeal for Mission which is a central fund of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. This fund enables congregations to support the wider mission of the denomination and to do mission and outreach on a denominational basis beyond what the congregation could do on its own. The United Appeal Fund provides financial support for mission personnel at home and overseas, assists congregations with the deployment of locally based staff, enables church planting, provides grant support for the upkeep of church premises, assist with the running costs of Union Theological College, the Church's training college for ministry students, and financially supports congregation in the areas of worship, discipleship, global mission, outreach, leadership and pastoral care.

The congregation also contributes to the denominations annual World Development Appeal and any other special appeals.

#### **Presbytery**

The congregation was represented at the regular Virtual meetings of Presbytery by our minister and one of the elders. This provides an important link between the congregation and the wider structures of the church.

#### **General Assembly**

The minister and one of our elders are nominated to attend the meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland held in Assembly Buildings, Belfast, in June each year. The General Assembly did not take place in 2020 because of Coronavirus restrictions on gatherings.

#### **Property**

Dry rot was discovered in a beam in the Church building in September 2020 which required immediate treatment to eradicate. Routine servicing and maintenance of fire and electrical appliances continued and an application was made to renew the Entertainments Licence for the Church Hall.

#### **Organisations**

The Cooke Crochet Group, Presbyterian Women, the Model Railway Group and the Guiding Organisations were unable to meet from March 2020 due to Coronavirus restrictions on gatherings.

**COOKE CENTENARY CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND  
TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

**Volunteers**

The Trustees wish to acknowledge their deep appreciation of those who give freely of their time by serving on committees and helping with organisations and other church activities.

**PUBLIC BENEFIT STATEMENT**

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland meets the public benefit requirement by providing benefit to its members and the general public by making known the Christian Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ through the advancement of religion.

The direct benefits which flow from the purposes of the Church include the gaining of an understanding in Christian beliefs as set out in the Bible and in the Church's subordinate standards (the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Shorter and Larger Catechisms) leading to spiritual and moral development and opportunities for response to Bible teaching. In turn, this framework leads to practical expressions of Christian beliefs and standards in the local community such as through the care of those in need (including the sick, disabled and bereaved).

Generally, the above benefits are delivered locally by congregations and their members, or are facilitated through presbyteries or are organised and delivered centrally. Local delivery is facilitated by central resources in almost all cases. Public access is made known through the use of noticeboards, printed material, press advertisement, websites, and social media or in other ways.

The benefits are demonstrated through regular evaluation of the services and informal and ad-hoc feedback from members, their families, and members of the public. The purpose does not lead to harm. The only private benefit flowing from our purpose is related to Ministers, Missionaries, Deaconesses, Irish Mission workers and Lay Agents who receive benefits as a result of their holding office or employment.

However, this is incidental and necessary in order to further our charitable purpose. There are no other private benefits. The beneficiaries of this purpose are members, their families, other individuals that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is in direct and indirect contact with, the community in which pastoral services are provided and other communities throughout Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, and worldwide which benefit from our engagement with and support for both Christian and other secular organisations, charities and individual members of the public.

**COOKE CENTENARY CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND  
TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

The Kirk Session has had regard to the Charity Commissions Public benefit requirement statutory guidance.

**FINANCIAL REVIEW**

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering. There were 142 contributors during the year [161 in previous year, 2019] donating a total of £172,143 (£114,342 in previous year, 2019)

Total Income of the congregation during the year was £208,240 compared to £165,983.00 in the previous year. During 2020 there had been 8 deaths of members.

Total expenditure increased from £145,033.00 to £149,885

**STATEMENT OF TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the annual report and the financial statements of the congregation in accordance with applicable law and generally accepted accounting practice.

As the congregation's total income does not exceed £250,000, the Trustees have elected under Section 64(3) of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 208 to prepare a receipts and payment account and a statement of assets and liabilities.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the congregation's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time its financial position. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the congregation and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Kirk Session at a meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and signed on its behalf by

[Name] *Elaine McSill*

[Date] *24<sup>th</sup> October 2021*

[Name] 

[Date] *24<sup>th</sup> October 2021*