

**St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church a congregation of the
Presbyterian Church in Ireland**

**Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 December 2023**

Registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland NI104324

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

The Trustees present their Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2023 including a Balance Sheet as at that date.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

St. Andrew's congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
Rosetta Road Belfast BT6 0FG

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC104324)

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

Rev. R.S. Aicken
Mr. K. Brown
Mr. A. Hunter
Mr. A. Kilpatrick
Mrs. E. McCallum

Mr. J. McCallum
Mrs. L. McGarrell
Mrs. S. McLearnon
Dr. R. Scott

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister
Clerk of Session
Treasurer

Rev. R.S. Aicken
Mrs. E. McCallum
Mr. K. Brown

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Mrs. J. Sloan

BANKERS

Danske Bank
Forestsideside Belfast

SOLICITORS

None

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

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 Session 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 congregation. All members are entitled to propose, speak and exercise equal votes at meetings, except that the Moderator, the minister in active duty in the congregation, has no deliberative but only a casting vote.

Stated meetings of the Kirk session are held once a month, or as appropriate.

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 and temporal affairs of the congregations assigned to it by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. St Andrew's Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the East 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 each congregation.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

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

St. Andrew's 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 purpose is by the grace of God, to help people of all ages become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ. Our vision is, by the grace of God, 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.

The congregation aims to live out its Mission and Vision as a family of God's people by being:

- A Covenant Community: where our relationships are rooted in the promises of God by living faithfully toward him and toward one another.
- An Intergenerational Community: where adults intentionally take the lead to engage with, encourage and nurture younger members to maturity in Christ.
- An Outward looking Community: where we want the blessings of God that belong to us in the gospel to become blessings for others beyond the bounds of our community.
- As a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, we believe that the Bible is the supreme authority over all we do, and that the Westminster Confession of Faith, along with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms set out what we understand the Bible teaches on key matters of Christian faith and practice.

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 Lord's Supper is observed approximately every six weeks, 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. We were able to share the sacrament together on six occasions this year. The congregation holds regular bible study meetings and has a wide range of organisations including

- Sunday School (SMASH)
- Bible Class
- Pastoral Care Team
- Knit & Natter
- Badminton
- Tuesday Men's Bible Study and Prayer
- Tuesday Work Team
- PW
- Small group bible studies (4, meeting Wednesday and Thursday)
- Coffee & Craic
- Smash Club (Thursday)
- Teens Hangout
- Tots @ St Andrew's
- Come Dine With Us
- Men's Ministry
- Summer Walking Group
- Care and Share project

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and prayer

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 11.00am, for prayer on the first Sunday of each month at 7.00pm, and for teaching at our Deeper sessions on the third Sunday of the month at 7.00pm.

On Sunday mornings we have been studying Genesis, Acts, Psalms and Mark, and during the Christmas season we explored how Isaiah points us towards the promised Messiah.

Teams of volunteers serve coffee after the morning service each week, which is an opportunity for people to catch up with each other. Donations go to the PCI Sunday School project.

We normally have about 20 people attending our monthly prayer meetings, when we pray for the work and needs of our congregation. We launched our winter session in September

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

with a special prayer and praise evening, when we had an overview of many of our church activities and were able to pray for them.

Our Deeper series once a month on Sunday evenings, which encourages us to go deeper into the Word, explored Tracing the Major Themes of Scripture, Am I a Christian, Who is the Holy Spirit, God and Suffering, and What Happens When I Die.

We held membership classes in March, and were delighted to welcome 6 new members into our church family in April. Our Kirk Session are encouraged to see the Spirit at work, drawing into membership a mix of people new to faith, and those who have been believers for some time.

Session spent some time reviewing our Vision Plan, and revising how it was operating in the congregation, and in May we combined our AGM with a Vision Night, when we presented the revised Vision Plan to our members. Our focus is on worshipping God, and making and growing disciples of Jesus. Members had an opportunity to look back over the past year and discuss the year ahead, and we finished the evening with coffee and cake.

At 31 December 2023 there were 111 communicant members and 125 families connected with the congregation. The average weekly attendance at morning worship was 90, with others watching online.

Pastoral care

Members of the congregation, including those who are unable to attend church due to sickness or age, are normally visited on a regular basis by the minister and assistant minister, the elders, or by one of the congregation's pastoral visitors. For those housebound members without internet access, a distribution team continue to deliver a copy of the sermon each week, along with Bible reading notes and a copy of the weekly bulletin. In the run-up to Easter, our members were encouraged to take a copy of the book "Is Easter Unbelievable" by Rebecca McLaughlin, to read and then pass on to a friend. We also delivered copies of the book to homes in the Wynchurch area, with a flyer inviting people to our Easter services. At Christmas, the ministry team and other volunteers visited those who are unable to attend regularly with a Christmas card and a gift from the church.

Our Food Ministry continues to provide meals for people facing particular challenges, for example those who are ill, have suffered a bereavement, have had a new baby etc. The Pastoral Care Team meets with the minister every week, to ensure pastoral needs are being followed up. This year we set up and trained a new group of Pastoral Visitors who

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

undertake to make regular visits to our housebound members. The Kirk Session watched some videos on pastoral care, with helpful advice on praying and preparation before the visit, suggestions on using the Psalms, and listening more than speaking. The minister, along with some of the elders, arranged home communion services for a number of our members who can no longer get to church, and these were very much appreciated.

At Session meetings, our Kirk Session regularly pray through our congregational list, praying for each of our members by name.

Training

We were delighted that Stephen McCombe was accepted as a student for the ministry at Union Theological College. The congregation presented him with a gift, and our church will make an annual grant towards books to help him in his studies. Stephen enjoyed the opportunities to preach and take part in the service most weeks, which helped him appreciate that all parts of the service are part of our worship, so we are aiming for excellence in everything. We will miss his input to our church life, but he and Courtney will continue to worship with us in the meantime, and we are thankful that we have been able to invest in Stephen. We look forward to seeing how God will use him through college, and feel privileged to have been part of his journey.

Session appointed Dylan Conway as Ministry Apprentice, starting in September. Dylan is from Monaghan, and took up his new role of shadowing Robin while he continues with his studies, and generally gains experience in how church functions.

Andrew Frazer, our Assistant Minister, continues to support Robin by playing a full part in leading services, preaching, visiting, and helping develop our men's ministry.

We encourage the congregation to develop their reading habits, and make devotional books available at Easter and Christmas. The elders have set aside some time in Session meetings for training – in some meetings we watched and discussed PCI Pastoral Life Videos to help us be more aware of how to pastor people with mental health issues. At our monthly congregational prayer meetings we have been using the "Five Things to Pray for..." series of books, and occasionally have a guest along to tell us more about a particular project we are praying for. Many of us read 'Pride – Identity and the Worship of Self' by Matthew Roberts and we had a useful Book Club discussion on this topical issue at the end of August.

Several of our congregation attended the annual East Belfast Presbytery Mission Service in Stormont Presbyterian, on the theme of New Beginnings. Rev David Moore spoke on his calling to set up a church plant in West Belfast, and Rev Richard McIlhatton spoke about the revitalisation project at Tullycarnet.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

Deiniol Williams, minister of Trinity Church, Chester, led our annual Summer Bible Conference in June, on the theme of the Gospel in Four Words. It was good to spend some time with Deiniol as we have been praying for him and his family, and following his progress in Trinity. A book stall was provided by the Covenanter Bookshop.

In October we had a morning conference hosted by Mel Lacey from Growing Young Disciples, which focussed on how to raise Christian children in today's world, and was aimed primarily at parents, grandparents and leaders concerned about raising the next generation for Jesus.

In November our Kirk Session attended a PCI conference 'Refresh: Renewing your Calling as an Elder' in Assembly Buildings. It was an encouraging evening, with practical suggestions to be refreshed in our calling – seeking to fall into step with God, looking for where he is at work, and praying to him for fresh strength and encouragement. Most of us were able to meet for dinner beforehand, and it was good to be able to spend time together over a meal. Elders also attended a Northern Ireland Envisioning Conference in March, which highlighted the need to equip and support our volunteers – we have included discipleship and training as priorities in our vision statement.

Mission and outreach

Andrew has been developing a **men's ministry**, including some discipleship get togethers to discuss themes around friendship and relationships, and some social gatherings including axe throwing and bowling. Stephen got us all together for an exciting **Six Nations rugby** tournament when we watched the matches together and enjoyed pizza in the minor hall.

Our **St Andrew's Night** get together for our whole church family was an opportunity to have some fun, and be entertained by several talented people in our congregation, with poetry readings, music and songs, and some sketches. Robin brought us a closing message, and we are indebted to those who provided the sumptuous supper!

Our congregation regularly supports **Tearfund**, an evangelical Christian relief and development charity, working with partners to tackle the causes and effects of poverty, bringing Jesus Christ's good news to the poor in over 100 countries around the world. As part of our harvest gifts, shoeboxes were made up by members in support of **Operation Christmas Child** through **Samaritans Purse International**. Our Christmas copper collection is donated to **Tearfund**, and we also support **Christian Aid**.

We maintain our strong links with **Cregagh Primary School**, and at Christmas we delivered gifts for every child in the school on behalf of our church. Robin is a representative on the school's Board of Governors, and one of our members is the current Chair of the Board. Cregagh Primary School held their senior school Carol Service in St Andrew's -our praise

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

band accompanied the singing, and our members hosted supper afterwards. The school Principal and teachers are very appreciative of this strong link with our church.

We are involved in the **Cregagh Community Association**, with two representatives attending their meetings. We help at the monthly community pensioners' lunches by transporting people, serving, clearing up, and chatting to those who attend. St Andrew's **praise band** played carols outside Ian's Bakery one Saturday morning before Christmas, and on Christmas Eve we sang carols to some of our older members at their homes.

The **Exodus Belfast Centre** has become well established in our premises, and we were happy to have some of their Summer Teams hold coffee mornings on our premises as fundraisers for their trips. We are pleased to be able to partner with Exodus in facilitating preparation for Summer Teams meeting weekly from mid February until June, plus Saturday evening hangouts for young people, and it is a bonus to have Exodus helping staff our Light the Night event in October. We also partnered with some of the Exodus teams to hold Summer Pop-Ups in our church grounds for Year 8 up, when we had activities in a fun and inclusive environment, with drinks and snacks. Some good connections were made with the young folk who came. St Andrew's were allocated another **Exodus Team** this year for a week in July. The team stayed on our premises, and while they were here they did children's work, visited some of our housebound folk, did outreach in the community, and practical work around the church and neighbourhood.

In October we held **Light the Night**, with numbers in the grounds limited to 500 through online booking. In addition to our own volunteers, we had a team from Exodus who helped with stewarding. We distributed evangelical literature to all the families who came, and the children were able to enjoy the activities without too much queuing. The fireworks were spectacular as usual! This is an opportunity for families to enjoy quality time together in a safe and welcoming environment.

We continue to facilitate **L'Arche Belfast** in giving their core-members more opportunities to socialise outside of their homes through cookery and art therapy. **Daisies** and **Buttercups** (pre-school and after-school groups) meet throughout the year in the Courtney Hall, and make occasional use of the main hall and our extensive grounds to run off steam. We were also able to offer space to **Mount Oriel Clinic** to continue their flu vaccination and Covid booster programme. Our facilities are the regular meeting place for **Cregagh Cactus Club** and the **Ulster Guides Singing Circle**. We are pleased that the **Rainbows, Brownies, Guides** and **Rangers** continue to have good numbers and excellent leadership, as they make use of our halls on Friday evenings. We continue to partner with **Trinity Chester**, an International Presbyterian Church project, and are supporting them financially and in prayer as they establish this church plant, build on their connection with students. We appreciate the reciprocal encouragement which enriches both congregations

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, assists with the running costs of Union Theological College (the Church's training college for ministry students), and financially supports congregations in the areas of worship, discipleship, global mission, outreach, leadership and pastoral care.

St Andrew's as a congregation maintains a strong interest in **overseas mission**, and continues to support a number of personnel and projects throughout Latin America, Africa, Asia and the UK.

Overseas Mission Support -2023

During the past year, our congregation has continued to financially, practically and prayerfully support the work of a number of overseas workers. This work is overseen by the Missionary Committee within the Church which seeks to keep members of the congregation updated on our Missionary interests through the provision of quarterly prayer bulletins, videos, guest speaker events and designated prayer meetings.

The Rivero Family, Pucallpa, Peru

We were pleased to welcome the Rivero family back to NI for a period of home leave from April to August 2023 and to be able to provide accommodation for them in a property adjacent to the Church. On their return to Peru, the Riveros took the decision to step down from their roles in the Orchard Children's Home with Kids Alive and to explore new opportunities through Latin Link. Before finishing their assignment with Kid's Alive, they facilitated trauma based training for the staff team in the home and ran a sports outreach event for local children.

FONIC Trust, Nepal

Throughout the year, FONIC Trust continued to support a number of Nepali families on a regular basis with direct financial support to enable them to have adequate shelter, clothes, food and medication as well as paying the school fees of 5 children and providing financial support to two children's homes in Kathmandu. FONIC, as the primary partner, also helped establish a wheelchair repair centre in Kathmandu. The Project was able to distribute 100 reconditioned wheelchairs which they hope to continue to do on an annual basis. FONIC provided the necessary financial support for two local men, both of whom are themselves disabled, to undertake technical training in India.

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FONIC also continued to offer financial support to 25 rural Christian pastors most of whom work in the far west of Nepal which is known for its extreme poverty, poor education and healthcare. These pastors often have no other source of income.

FONIC continued to provide part funding to support medical training of 11 young people undertaking both medical and nursing training as well as to support 4 additional students undertaking a Diploma in Pharmacy Programme. The majority of these healthcare students come from disadvantaged rural areas where they would not have been able to finance any level of medical training through their own resources. It is encouraging to note that in the main, they have returned to serve within their native communities.

One of the indigenous workers continues to run eye and dental camps across several regions of Nepal using his contacts in local hospitals and schools.

During November, Philip and Deborah McMillan were able to travel to Nepal to visit the projects FONIC supports and meet with staff on the ground.

We were pleased to be able to host our annual Christmas craft sale in aid of FONIC Trust in December and to receive an up to date report from the McMillan's on their recent visit.

Dave and Helen Smithers, SIM, Manchester

Dave and Helen live and work in Manchester where their ministry involves supporting a local Church plant as well as providing a neighbourhood outreach to the Muslim community where they live. Dave provides sports coaching at a local inner city school where many of the children come from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and experience behavioural issues and low self-esteem. During the past year, Helen successfully completed a counselling qualification and took up a post with Home Start providing practical and emotional support to families in need.

Ruth McKee, Arequipa, Peru

Ruth who is a qualified physiotherapist works in the Shalom Centre in Arequipa which offers a range of therapeutic and educational support to disabled children and young people as well as outreach to their families. Ruth also runs a physio group at her local church. The Shalom Centre celebrated its twentieth anniversary this year which was marked by a celebratory event for the students and their families. The Centre also ran a camp in July for the students, their parents and siblings with 54 people in attendance. Ruth is due to return to NI for a period of home leave in January 2024.

Gary and Mary Reid, Kenya

The Reids continue to minister to the the Maasai people in the Olkinyei area of Kenya as Project Co-ordinators with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. Gary is involved directly in

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

ministry and teaching at two local Churches as well as providing support to pastors, evangelists and worship leaders. During the year, Gary has also been involved in providing computer lessons to members of local churches which will hopefully equip them to be more self-sufficient in developing resources for use in worship. The Mission also supports the provision of clean water through the installation of rainwater catchment tanks and the digging of trenches. It has helped build and furnish a nursery classroom in the hills of Siana which can accommodate 25 children as well as install a playground at Isintin Primary School. Work to develop a further nursery site at Empiris is also underway. The Reids hosted a visit from the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and his wife in the latter part of the year which was a source of great encouragement both to them and to the Maasai people they met in the local churches. The Reids are on a period of home leave in the first quarter of 2024.

Presbytery

The congregation was represented at the regular 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 were nominated to attend the meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland held in Assembly Buildings, Belfast, in June.

Property

The Committee met on four occasions during 2023 as well as once on an ad-hoc basis to address urgent items of business.

A significant programme of work was undertaken during the year both to maintain and refurbish our premises as well as to ensure ongoing compliance with health and safety regulations.

While it has been very encouraging to see the increasing number of babies and toddlers within our congregation, it has been challenging to find a suitable venue within our suite of buildings to host the crèche on Sunday mornings. A room formally used by Session was identified as the most appropriate location and this was cleared of existing furniture, redecorated and appropriate safety measures such as radiator grills installed. The provision of portable and stackable tables and chairs has rendered this room multi-purpose allowing it to be used by a number of groups such as the Tuesday Men's Group and L'Arche.

Wall mounted floodlights were installed on the patio area at the front of the church offering permanent lighting for outside events such as Light the Night. This solution is less hazardous than the towers and cables previously used to better illuminate this area. Internal and external tamper proof sockets were also installed at the basement door.

A number of identified faults in relation to electrics within the white buildings and Main Hall were resolved enabling us to obtain the necessary certificate of compliance.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

Further electrical work will be required to be undertaken within the Courtney Hall to render it safer and more efficient.

Some repainting of the white buildings was undertaken during the summer months. This greatly improved the outward appearance of the Bannagh Corner side of the building. There are plans to repaint the carpark side of the church in the Spring.

The windows, emergency and exit doors on the Bannagh Corner side of the church along with the doors to the crypt and patio areas have also been replaced. The replacement of the doors will render us compliant with health and safety requirements. Additional emergency lighting has been installed around the exit points of the church buildings and existing lights replaced with LED lights.

An upgrade to our fire alarm system was also undertaken. New hardware was installed with Control Zone options and an accompanying maintenance plan. First responders have been identified and trained.

We replaced the office photocopier during the year.

In line with a directive issued by the General Assembly in relation to identification of use of reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete, the Committee has engaged the services of an independent expert to inspect our premises to identify if our buildings contain RAAC. As a result of the standing down of the East Belfast Presbytery as the holding Trustee for our property deeds, the Committee proposed the transfer of our deeds to the General Assembly Holding Trust Company. This decision was ratified at a congregational meeting in October 2023.

Members of Committee participated in a sub-group established by Session to consider the future use of our buildings in line with our Five Year Plan and tenure status. The recommendations made remain under consideration.

Organisations

SMASH, our Sunday School, runs on Sunday mornings alongside our church service for all children of primary school age. It is open for both children whose parents are attending the church service, and those who want to come independently. There are 12 children on the register, with an average attendance of 6 each week. We join in for the beginning of the church service, and after a children's address leave to follow our own programme. Last year we began a new curriculum which will take us through the Bible over three years. Towards the end of last year, an exciting addition was made as we invited the creche children to join us for a short time at the beginning of our lesson, when we have been learning new songs, and having a simple recap of stories. We look forward to welcoming them to join us fully in 2024!

Our **Bible Class** which caters for post-primary young people, ran every Sunday before the church service with 5 young people in total, and an average attendance of 2 each week. After consultation, we have decided to change our meeting time to Sunday evenings, and hope to see an increase in numbers which will help build our young people together as a group in 2024.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

Our Thursday **Smash Club** runs on Thursday evenings from 6.15 to 7pm for all children of primary school age. This has a games based format, with a variety of games and crafts. The evening finishes with a Bible story and memory verse. This year we have been looking at words describing God, and have worked our way through to R so far! The children are amazingly creative at coming up with great descriptive words, and the idea is that the following week they hear a Bible passage which illustrates this description. There are 25 children registered, with an average attendance of 16 each week. We are delighted to have so many children there on a Thursday evening, and very glad to have Thomas and Anna who have stayed on to help with games and the younger members.

Together with Sunday Smash and the creche we enjoyed two events in 2023. In June we went on a trip to the zoo, which was a fun trip out and enjoyed by all. In December we organised a Christmas party, attended by around 40 children, as we invited Sunday Smash, Thursday Smash Club, Bible Class/Teens members, and also the creche children. The morning was divided for games and crafts, as it covered such a wide age range, but all came together for our party lunch and visit from Santa. It was great to see so many get together for this event.

In September we launched a new initiative on Thursday evenings for **Teens** from Year 8 to Upper 6th, as a follow-on from the Thursday Smash Club, and are looking forward to this becoming established in the future as a means of making and growing disciples among our young people.

Our **Knit and Natter** group meets on Monday evenings. There are usually about 15 people of all ages knitting and nattering, pausing for tea and a short devotional time led by various members. The members are very supportive of the **Care and Share** project, and have knitted countless baby cardigans, children's jumpers, and blankets which have been added to the groceries and toiletries donated by members of the congregation to the Care and Share trolley every week. They also make up gift baskets for new babies.

The **Tuesday Work Team** has reached out to about a dozen men who meet for an hour of Bible study and prayer on Tuesdays before the core work team does maintenance work around the church property. They make the most of the skills and abilities of members to keep our premises in good order, identifying problems and arranging appropriate tradespeople to deal with them where necessary. They are a point of contact for others who are using the property, or who require access.

Coffee and Craic meets once a fortnight on a Wednesday for an hour and a half, and provides a warm welcoming space for people to come and chat. We have found people are glad of an opportunity to come and discuss issues worrying them, and we try as a church to

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont')

support in whatever way we can. We provide very simple refreshments of wheaten bread, cheese, scones, toast, and occasional baked treats. We feel our time is best spent chatting with everyone as people open up more with a cuppa in their hand. In the summer time we went for several morning outings to Coleman's Garden Centre at Templepatrick. These were very popular as everyone enjoyed a morning browsing around the shops and having refreshments. Cregagh Primary School choir came at Christmas time to sing to us, and this has become an annual event that we all look forward to.

Tots @ St Andrew's continued to meet on Friday mornings, with an average of 40 children and 25-30 adults each week. Feedback has been that we are very friendly, with a great selection of toys, and some mums have been really appreciative that it is free, especially in the current economic climate. Unfortunately due to changes in leadership, we were unable to open again after Easter.

Our **Summer Walking Group** enjoyed Thursday evening walks at Stormont, Marino and Purdysburn. We explored Belfast across some of the bridges, enjoyed the twirling trees in Coronation Gardens at Hazelbank, and had a tour of L'Arche Village in the Castlereagh Hills, which gave us a further insight into the valuable work they are doing among vulnerable adults. This is another opportunity to invite friends to join with us for a walk and a chat over supper afterwards in the minor hall.

PW started the year with an evening in the company of the wives of the ministerial team – Janice, Jenny and Courtney – who chatted about their Christian journey. We heard about the work of NI Prison Fellowship, who were celebrating 40 years of offering hope and a new beginning to prisoners and their families. Caroline Yeomans spoke to us about her challenging role in PCI as Head of Special Services, developing services for people with intellectual disability, and those suffering from trauma and addiction. Her department aims to help people feel valued and that they matter to God. In April we had a dinner of Shepherd's Pie and Lemon Drizzle Cake, with proceeds going to our PW projects. Our October meeting was just ourselves sharing favourite songs and Bible passages (followed by pudding!), and it was inspiring to hear other people's personal experiences on their Christian journey. Stephen Knox spoke at our last meeting of the year about his work with Youth for Christ in Moldova, where two businessmen from Northern Ireland have established a residential home in the capital for young women at risk of being trafficked. In addition to supporting the PW Mission Projects, we were also able to make donations to the NI Prison Fellowship, Youth for Christ Moldova, and Exodus, to help with their work. The PW Committee attended the PW Forum in February which encouraged them in their leadership roles, and they were able to pick up some useful ideas shared by other PW groups. As always, Jackie provided superb suppers to round off our meetings, which create such an important opportunity for people to stay and chat with one another

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont')

Come Dine With Us has been going since 2012, at the very affordable subscription of £5 per person. Because of other commitments we were only able to host one event this year. The menu was homely comfort food – roast beef followed by apple tart and ice cream. This creates an opportunity for members to socialise together, develop friendships, and invite friends who may have little church connection. Most people stayed to chat over tea and coffee (and goodies!) afterwards, and seemed to really enjoy the evening. We catered for 40 people and just about broke even. We have reluctantly decided that we will have to suggest an increased donation of £7.50 per person, and plan to have more regular dinners next year.

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. We believe that the key to a healthy church is more than activities, programmes or events – though these have their place – the key is the gospel, and we aim to support all our volunteers in keeping the gospel at the front and centre of everything we do as a church.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

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.

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

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering. There were 84 contributors during the year, (85 in the previous year, 2022) donating a total of £104,422 (£ 96,727 in previous year, 2022)

Total Income of the congregation during the year was £189,748 compared to £170,497 in the previous year.

Total expenditure increased to £ 249,880 from £212,559, this included £43,148 on property repairs and maintenance.

RESPONSIBILITIES IN RESPECT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

The Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the congregations and the financial activities for that year. In preparing the financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Funds will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the funds transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the congregations and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities (1 January 2015)". 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.

St. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Ireland

For the year ended 31 December 2023

GOING CONCERN

The activities of the congregation are dependent on ongoing contributions from its members. The Trustees are of the opinion that the congregation has sufficient resources at the date of approval of these financial statements to meet commitments which will arise in the year from the date of signing this report and subject to the continuing support from members to fund on an ongoing basis the congregation's current activities and other financial commitments.

RESERVES POLICY

The Trustees have considered the level of unrestricted reserves that it is appropriate to hold taking account of current and ongoing commitments. It is the policy of the Trustees to hold at least 4 month's normal expenditure. At the year-end unrestricted reserves were £73,172 which represents a higher level of reserves. The Trustees, however, consider it prudent to hold reserves at this level as the funding of its present activities is dependent on the ongoing financial support of members.

RISK REVIEW

A review of major risks has been undertaken by the Trustees and systems and procedures implemented to manage identified risks. The principal risks are in relation to the likelihood of reputational damage and financial risks associated with the expectation of ongoing financial support from members. These risks are mitigated by the Trustees, and the congregational Committee, regularly monitoring the various activities of the congregation at stated meetings and by encouraging members in their regular giving

Approved by the Kirk Session at a meeting on 27th February 2024

and signed on its behalf by



Rev. R.S. Aicken

27th February 2024



Mr. K. Brown

27th February 2024