

**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 2024**

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 2024 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
Forestsides 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 (Sunday Night Youth)
- 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
- Thursday Smash Club
- Teens Hangout
- 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 continuing systematic studies through Genesis, Acts, Psalms and Mark.

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, our community, and across the world.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

Our Deeper series once a month on Sunday evenings, which encourages us to go deeper into the Word, helps us grapple with big issues like Understanding the Old Testament (with Colin Burcombe), What the Bible says about Heaven and Hell, the Trinity, and Presbyterian teaching on Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

This year we moved our Sunday morning Bible Class to Sunday evenings (Sunday Night Youth) and were pleased to see an increase in numbers attending. They meet on the first and third Sunday in the month, at the same time as our Prayer and Deeper nights, to facilitate parents who may be leaving teens off for the Youth meeting. During the year, we phased out our Thursday night Teens Group to merge with Sunday Night Youth, in order to use our resources to better effect.

In May we combined our AGM with a Vision Night, when Robin interviewed our assistant minister, Andrew Frazer, about his experience in St Andrew's. We also heard from several of our Pastoral Visitors, and were inspired by their stories of visiting some of our housebound folk, and how they felt blessed in this ministry. 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 2024 there were 110 communicant members and 90 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 any housebound members without internet access who request it, 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. 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, and the minister visited members who had lost loved ones during the year. 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 regularly, to ensure pastoral needs are being followed up. This year we set up and trained a new group of Pastoral Visitors who undertake to make regular visits to our housebound members, with tips from Robin on how to do an effective pastoral visit, and help with completing Access NI forms. 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.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

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

Training

At the end of August, Dylan Conway finished his time with us as Ministry Apprentice, and we made a presentation to him after morning service in September. Robin had encouraged him to get fully involved in most aspects of church life, and he had taken part in services most weeks, tackling the children's address, reading Bible passages which were sometimes very long and with lots of challenging names, and leading prayers very thoughtfully. When he preached, his presentation of God's word was well thought through, clearly communicated, and easy to follow. He made many friends in the congregation, and will be missed, but we look forward to keeping in touch.

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, and this year we have been reading and discussing together a book on the eldership entitled 'A Good Work' by David Watson. 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. This year we invited David and Elaine Moore to tell us about their church plant project in West Belfast, and also heard about the work of the European Mission Fellowship, specifically in Finland.

Several of our congregation attended the annual East Belfast Presbytery Mission Service in Cregagh Presbyterian, when we learned more about the wider work of PCI. James and Heather Cochrane spoke about their 10 years spent church planting in Porto, Portugal, and Gary and Mary Reid told us about their outreach initiatives among the Masai people in Kenya.

A couple of our elders attended a PCI Conference on Autism in the Church in April, when Rachel Briggs gave practical advice about dealing with children with high support needs, and Erin Burnett spoke about autism with low support needs (which may well include many of us!) and encouraged us to make an effort to include people.

Our Kirk Session had an Away Day in Railway Street, Lisburn, when we had an opportunity to share fellowship together while we were looking at Leadership in Christ's Church. We had helpful and biblical input from Angus Stewart, and our discussions afterwards focused on discerning our ministries, passing the baton and investing in people.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

In October some of our elders and leaders attended a training night in Dundonald, organised by East Belfast Presbytery. The facilitators encouraged each church to look at all the activities taking place, and consider where they sat on an evangelism and discipleship platform. This could be a useful exercise for Session to reflect on in the future, looking at where there may be opportunities to make small changes to facilitate an evangelistic edge to existing activities. It seemed significant that while all our activities ticked some boxes for evangelism and discipleship, the church service ticked all the boxes, so Session might usefully consider how we might order our congregational life to improve or build on connecting church activities to our church services.

Our Kirk Session appointed Courtney McCombe as Youth and Family Worker from September 2024 to June 2025, to develop our work among children and young people, and encourage young families to connect into the life of the congregation. Lorraine Blight stepped down from Smash at the end of June, and Courtney took on the responsibility of leadership. She has been doing an excellent job, developing Smash and Thursday Club, working in local schools, mentoring, getting Smash leaders along to training events, as well as developing her own leadership skills by undertaking training with Growing Young Disciples. Courtney's infectious enthusiasm is a real blessing to us.

75th Anniversary

St Andrew's was established in September 1949, and to mark our 75th anniversary, we held an afternoon tea on Saturday 21 September, and special services on Sunday 22 September. We had an excellent response to invitations, including from former ministers and assistants – an indication of the warmth of feeling people have for St Andrew's. Our home bakers produced enough hot nibbles, sandwiches, and sweet delights to cater for afternoon tea, a light lunch after the Sunday morning service, and tea and coffee with buns after the evening celebration, eliciting a lot of praise on the variety and quantity of homemade cakes and goodies.

We created a timeline with information about main events in St Andrew's from 1949 to 2024, with text and photographs charting our history, along with other posters featuring people throughout those decades, and displays about the BB, Guides and PW. We had some lovingly polished silver awards for BB and the Bowling Club on display. We had also been given a video of a garden fete which had taken place in the church grounds in 1955, featuring Rev Courtney, Ernie Forbes and others - as well as Laganvale Brass Band, who have played several concerts in our church this year – which we showed on our large TV.

There was a great buzz at all the events, when people really seemed to enjoy renewing friendships on such a happy occasion. None of this would have come together without a huge effort from a large number of volunteers, and it was very impressive that some of our

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

newer members who would not have known former members, offered to serve tea and clear up, leaving more established members time to socialise and be welcoming to our visitors – we are indebted to them. We were also gratified that both of our former ministers (Alistair Kennedy and David Maxwell) were there, along with a number of former assistant ministers, all of whom remembered their time at St Andrew's with great fondness. We are grateful to all our church family who made this celebration weekend so enjoyable and memorable.

Mission and outreach

Andrew has continued to develop a **men's ministry**, including some discipleship get togethers, and some social gatherings. Andy Lamberton from Legacy hosted four sessions on 'Men Behaving Dadly', which encourages men (fathers, grandfathers, uncles, leaders) to be Christian role models, fostering productive relationships within the family.

We got together for an exciting **Six Nations rugby** tournament, with friends from neighbouring churches, when we watched the matches together in the minor hall, and enjoyed pizza and other goodies at half time.

At Easter we organised a **Family Easter Trail** around the church grounds, with crafts, treat and prizes. We held **Messy Church** at Easter and Christmas, with growing numbers of children and parents attending, having fun and food, and hearing the gospel. It is always good to see our **Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers** at the Thinking Day service in February, and we were delighted to see so many of their parents worshipping with us and sharing in tea and coffee afterwards.

In October we held **Light the Night**, with numbers in the grounds limited to 600 through online booking. 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.

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!

In November and December, a local charity, **Assistance Dogs (Northern Ireland)** held a **Craft Fair** in our main hall, with local crafts for sale, some puppies looking for cuddles, and some trained Assistance Dogs making friends with people. This was a good opportunity for us to connect with people in the community, and offer hospitality. There was good footfall, and we look forward to hosting more monthly Craft Fairs next year for this charity

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

On Christmas Eve, led by our **worship leaders Robert and Jeanette**, a group of us sang carols to some of our older members at their homes.

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**. Fruit and vegetables brought for our harvest celebrations were donated to The Larder foodbank. Our copper collection is donated to **Tearfund**.

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 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.

The **Exodus Belfast Centre** has become well established in our premises, and is making good connections in schools in our area. Exodus taught SOAR leadership courses in Grosvenor and Wellington, and 9 teams with 58 team members met weekly from mid February until June in preparation for serving in Ireland and abroad in the summer.

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 vaccination programmes. 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, and 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.

Overseas Mission Support -2024

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** are now working with Latin Link in Moyobamba, Peru. The boys have settled well into new schools, and are making new friends at school and in church. Through **Fonic Trust**, we were able to send financial assistance to administer much needed aid to people who had been displaced through floods and landslides in Nepal. We enjoyed a coffee morning with **Ruth McKee**, who was on home leave from her work in Arequipa, Peru, and it was encouraging to hear first hand accounts of the families she is helping. The **Smithers Family** continue to work with SIM in Manchester, where Dave works with special needs children at a local school, and Helen runs English classes, and looks for opportunities to develop friendships and witness to neighbours. We continue to pray for **Gary and Mary Reid**, and the valuable work they are doing among the Maasai in Olkinyei, Kenya.

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.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

Property

The Committee met on four occasions during 2024 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. £38,753 was spent on the programme of works.

Organisations

COFFEE & CRAIC (Moyra Hunter)

We decided this year to try meeting weekly, and this was welcomed very enthusiastically. Our aim is to provide a warm welcoming space where people can just relax and enjoy catching up with each other. We have found people are glad of an opportunity to come and discuss issues worrying them, and we try as a church then to support in whatever way we can. It's also been a good way to form friendships outside of church on a Sunday.

We serve tea, coffee, wheaten bread, soda bread, cheese, scones, and some nice baked treats.

This year we enjoyed three trips out. The first one was to Coleman's Garden Centre. The second one was to the Secret Garden and the third one to McKees Farm Shop and Cafe. All three trips were quite different and everyone enjoyed the refreshments.

We finished the year welcoming Cregagh Primary School choir which as usual set the tone for celebrating Christmas.

SMASH (Courtney McCombe)

Sunday Mornings at St Andrew's Halls (SMASH) is currently working through The Biggest Story curriculum (Crossway). The curriculum features engaging lessons designed to teach children 104 Bible stories that will help them understand God's plan to redeem the world through his Son, Jesus. The leaders are enjoying this material - and vitally, the children are responding with enthusiasm and developing a deeper understanding of God and His great love for them.

On the average Sunday morning, we have approximately 10 children in attendance, with ages ranging from 2 to 11. This broad age spectrum is probably the main challenge to SMASH leaders, as they try to cater to the very youngest and very oldest but also engage all those in between. Ideally, we would separate the children into different age groups but as attendance can fluctuate and the ages are spread, we currently don't believe this to be a viable approach.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

St Andrew's is blessed to have faithful and kind SMASH leaders, who are committed to serving the children, and indeed their families, throughout the year. Parents can therefore have confidence that their children are receiving solid biblical teaching on Sunday mornings, which of course complements their own discipleship at home during the week.

Next term in SMASH, we are seeking to further involve parents (or grandparents) in our Sunday school teaching. We will soon be distributing a document to families which provides an overview of the SMASH teachings for the term, with ideas for home discipleship included. The heart behind this is to empower and support parents to be the primary disciple-makers in their children's lives

YOUTH FELLOWSHIP (Courtney McCombe)

Youth Fellowship typically runs on the first and third Sunday of each month, in line with St Andrew's evening services/prayer meetings. The strategic goal behind that scheduling is to allow adults and their teenage children to both attend the Church building for separate programmes on the same night. We have a small team of volunteers for Youth Fellowship, but their investment is much appreciated.

Since September 2024 we have been using the NUA film series (created by Scripture Union) as our Youth Fellowship content. This resource allows young people to develop an understanding of the basics of the Christian faith and challenges them to reflect on their own lives and personal beliefs.

Youth Fellowship attendance is up to 12 young people. Of these young people, around 3 have a Church background, while the rest would be from an "unchurched" background, predominantly residing in the local estate area. Therefore, our approach with Youth Fellowship differs slightly to the typical YF programme, in that our content strives to be both evangelical/outreach-focused, while also having themes of intentional discipleship.

In this next term of 2025, we plan to complete the NUA series and then utilise a resource provided by Love For Life which explores social media usage and Christian characteristics such as wisdom and integrity. We also hope to partner with Love For Life in March to host an event for parents, again looking at the theme of social media and parenting in the digital age.

We are also exploring how we could partner with Exodus Belfast; signposting young people to their programmes, reaching their connected parents through events such as the above, and supporting their work in local secondary schools. We are currently already utilising Exodus' "Walk with Me" resource to mentor one young person in our congregation with significant growth being displayed in just a matter of weeks.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont')

BADMINTON (Ken McKeown)

St Andrews Badminton club has approximately 18 adult members. It's a mixed club (male / female), and has a range of ages and abilities. It is a friendly club that welcomes new members of any ability.

The club meets once a week and runs for 9 months through the year, taking a break over the summer months, although a small number persevere throughout the full year!

The club is fully affiliated with the governing body Badminton Ireland (BI); membership costs around £75 per year, which includes BI registration fees, costs for feather shuttles and a contribution to the church for the use of the hall, which has two courts.

The club runs two teams, one in the Presbyterian League, consisting of home and away matches, and one in the Ulster League where all matches are played in the National Badminton Centre in Lisburn. Matches are always competitive, and the club has enjoyed some success in both Leagues.

KNIT & NATTER (Jackie Doran)

We have had another productive year at Knit & Natter, although we have added a few extra requests that we hope to implement in the year ahead. We have been asked for more babybaskets, and to produce knitted teddies for emergency services who deal with family problems involving children who need comforting in sometimes very trying circumstances. Also, regarding hospital dementia patients, we have been asked to make twiddle muffs, which help calm them.

We don't have huge numbers attending, but we do have enthusiastic members who would really like us to meet every Monday night with no breaks at all!! We have lots of chats and all give opinions on many subjects, but the best conversation is our short devotional, which at least half of the ladies take turns at leading, usually nervously, but produces personal admissions of how we always need to have Jesus in our lives.

Noreen Getty is in contact with social workers and members of the Salvation Army who we also support. We feel very privileged to help where we can, and extremely thankful that as a group we are open to each other and blessed by each connection, trusting and caring for each other, always remembering to thank God for all He enables us to do.

Tuesday Prayer and Work Team (John McCallum)

You might be intrigued when you notice the above title in the weekly Church bulletin. A group of men meet (indeed have been meeting now for several years) on Tuesday

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

mornings from 10:00 am. If you don't know what we do, the clue is in the description. Whilst the need to carry out various tasks such as minor repairs, but also housekeeping and caretaking duties, created the impetus for our coming together, it wasn't long before we believed it would be good to begin our day with devotions. Our programme begins with refreshments, (often kindly augmented by leftovers from the Monday evening "Knit and Natterers"), followed by a Bible based reflection and then a time of prayer. Folk are welcome to join us for devotions, and we have been able to welcome a number of friends from other congregations - they also regularly supplement our refreshments and one of these folk very generously donated the coffee maker in our minor hall kitchen. No one is under any obligation to commit to the work team following our devotional time but we would like to think we are a hospitable bunch, so tea and coffee is always available and there's always a bit of craic over lunch!

Thursday Smash Club (Lorraine Blight)

Our club runs on Thursday evenings during term-time 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. We have had an average of 20-25 coming each week.

Each week we incorporate a Bible story and a memory verse into the evening, and it is great to have the opportunity to reach so many children.

In June, to finish the year, we went with the Sunday Smash to Spruce Meadows Activity Farm. As well as seeing the farm animals, there was a bouncy castle, reptile handling, barrel train ride, quad bikes and a rodeo bull which gave much amusement!

During December, the Thursday Club combined with Sunday Smash to film our Christmas play, which we showed at our Christmas service.

The year ended with a Christmas party with crafts, games, party tea and a visit from Santa.

CARE & SHARE TROLLEY (Jackie Doran)

The trolley continues to be well supported, and although this year we did not make up hampers, we were able to supply The Larder in Mersey Street with lots of provisions, as well as Cregagh Community Centre. We do keep a basic amount of supplies, and we can often get an emergency request for help, but nothing goes to waste. Many thanks to all who contribute in any way – including Daisies and Buttercups who have made several generous

MEN'S MINISTRY (Andrew Frazer)

The men's ministry at St. Andrews began in 2023 with the aim of bringing men together, deepening connections, and reflecting on what it means to be a man of faith. Over this time we have explored various topics, but more recently, we have focused on how our faith

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont')

influences our relationships and our witness to others. We have also contemplated our devotional lives, the significance of the church, the Christian journey, and ways to persevere in our faith. The evenings feature a blend of teaching and small group discussions, allowing us to learn from one another and consider practical applications for daily life. There is typically tea or coffee and sweet treats on offer! We have also enjoyed some social outings, including bowling, boules, and mini-golf, and have also enjoyed a hearty breakfast or two! It's been encouraging to have a good number of men engage with the ministry.

Our most recent gatherings were facilitated by Andy Lamberton from Exodus, who delivered his programme "Legacy," which helps fathers, grandfathers, and father figures better understand how to pass on the faith. The programme was well attended and extremely challenging, yet also beneficial. A couple of friends from Mount Merrion Parish joined us, and all who attended found it informative and helpful, feeling better equipped to pass on the faith to the next generation.

SUMMER WALKING GROUP (Edith McCallum)

Our Summer Walking Group enjoyed Thursday evening walks at Victoria Park, Scrabo Quarry, Eel Weir on the Lagan, Hilden, Comber Greenway, Cregagh Glen, and Newtownards Canal. We tried to play boules, patiently instructed by George Davidson, revived afterwards by coffee and donuts at Tim Horton's, and finished off our season with a walk at Cairn Wood, followed by a barbecue at Drew and Moyra Hunter's house. This is another opportunity to invite friends to join with us for a walk and a chat over supper afterwards (usually in the minor hall).

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN (Edith McCallum)

Andrew Frazer, our assistant minister, bravely came to PW in January, to be interrogated about his life and call to the ministry – and survived! PW members also decided to get to know each other better in January by inviting someone they didn't usually sit with for coffee and a chat. In February we spent a hugely entertaining evening in the company of Jill Sencherey from Exodus, who speaks about nine languages, trained as an opera singer, fell in love with discipleship and became a missionary, working in Kenya, China, France, Burkino Faso ... and eventually ended up in Northern Ireland, which she has made her home. We had an invitation night in March, when we invited neighbouring women's groups and had a lovely musical evening with Roy Fleming's band, Spirit of Praise. We rounded off our spring session with a dinner served by the Come Dine With Us team, and after dinner entertainment by the Ulster Guides Singing Circle. We invited anyone in the congregation to come along, and funds raised went to the PW mission projects. Unfortunately our speaker for October was ill, so we improvised an evening Down Memory Lane, chatting about when and why we started coming to St. Andrew's, our greatest influences,

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont')

Stand-out memories, and what might enrich our fellowship. We didn't see the time passing! In November Olive Turkington told us lots we didn't know about the social history of aprons. And some of us brought along an apron and shared something of why it was special.

As always, Jackie provide superb suppers to round off our meetings, which create such an important opportunity for people to stay and chat with one another.

COME DINE WITH US (Edith McCallum)

Our first dinner of the year was in February, when we catered for about 30 people, with sausages from our local butcher, roasted in a plum ketchup made by one of our members from a glut of plums in the autumn – very popular. In June we offered a more experimental menu, with squash and chorizo. We had a fairly low turnout, although most people sampled both the dishes on offer, and everyone claimed to really enjoy them. It turned out to be quite a relaxed evening for the team, and all of us took the opportunity to sit down to dinner and chat to our guests. Though we all commented it seemed to take just as long to clear up afterwards! We arranged our next dinner in November as a thank you to all the Light the Night volunteers, and had about 35 guests for beef and ale stew or quiche, with a brioche apple pudding made by our pastry chef, which got the accolade "to die for"! Come Dine With Us is a great opportunity to spend an evening with friends without spending a fortune (it is still excellent value at £7.50) and get to know people over good food you didn't have to slave over. And no washing up!

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 85 contributors during the year, (84 in the previous year, 2023) donating a total of £110,386 (£ 104,422 in the previous year, 2023)

Total Income of the congregation during the year was £196,699 compared to £189,748 in the previous year.

Total expenditure decreased to £ 233,125 from £249,880, this included £38,753 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 2024

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 £59,690 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 10th February 2025

and signed on its behalf by



Rev. R.S. Aicken

10th February 2025



Mr. K. Brown

10th February 2025