

**NEWTOWNBREDA CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH IN IRELAND**

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

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC 104325)

NEWTOWNBRED A 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 2023 including a Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at that date.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Newtownbreda congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Newtownbreda (St John's) Presbyterian Church

374-378 Ormeau Road

Belfast

BT7 3HX

Website Newtownbreda.org

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC104325)

CHARITY TRUSTEES

The Charity Trustees who served during the year or who were trustees on 31 December 2023 were:

Christopher Armstrong	Deborah Eve	Donald Milliken
Raymond Barrett	William Ferguson	John Moutray
Muriel Bloomer	Barbara Gordon	Lynn Orr
Neal Brown	Denis Guiler	Helen Pallin
Kenneth Campbell	Marjorie Guiler	Peter Pallin
Grace Chambers	Joan Henderson	Wesley Parker
Brian Compston	Ross Irvine	Vilma Patterson
Robert Cousins	Maureen Johnston	John Peacock *
George Ditty	Rosemary Johnston	Clare Pollock
Deborah Doherty	Desmond McClean	Bruce Robinson
Maurice Doherty *	Hilary McCourt	Kevin Robinson *
Simon Doherty *	Raymond McNeill	John Sloan
Margaret Elliott	Joan McQuoid	Craig Stuart
Caroline Elwood	Allison Meek	Rev Anne Tolland *
Colin Eve	Robert Meek *	Irene Younge

- * Resigned during the year

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister	Rev. Anne Tolland (resigned 12 March 2023), vacant for remainder of the year
Clerk of Session	Sir Bruce Robinson
Treasurer	Mr Denis Guiler
Congregational Secretary	Mr Donald Cairnduff

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Mr Timothy Browne, FCA
36 Bresagh Road
Boardmills
BT27 6TU

BANKERS

Danske Bank
Donegall Square West
Belfast BT1 6JS

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE 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 vote but only a casting vote.

Stated meetings of the Kirk Session are held at least six times a year.

To be chosen for the office of 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 the Kirk Session.

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.

Newtownbreda 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 the 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, administrative 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.

Newtownbreda Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland 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.

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES

The congregation meets for worship every Sunday and visitors are made most welcome. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is observed 5 times 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 holds regular bible study and prayer meetings and has a wide range of organisations including:

Sunday School, Bible Class and Creche	Explorers, Scouts, Cubs, Beavers and Squirrels
Focus (youth group)	Rangers, Guides, Brownies and Rainbows
PW	Carers and Tots
Asante	Badminton Clubs
Koinonia	Sew Crafty
The Choir	Community Pizza nights
Coffee and Chat	Newtownbreda Strollers
Messy Church	Wednesday Gardeners
English classes for Refugees and Asylum Seekers	

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

2023 was a challenging year for the congregation but one in which many members volunteered to ensure all aspects of worship and congregational life continued. Rev. Anne Tolland accepted a call to Regent Street Presbyterian Church and conducted her last service on 12th March. Rev. Andy Galbraith was appointed Convenor of the Vacancy from 1st April and we are deeply grateful to him for his guidance, leadership, love and commitment to the congregation. Through prayer and God's grace, the congregation was drawn closer to God as a family of his people and in December they issued a unanimous call to Rev. Paul Lutton to become minister. Rev. Paul conducted his first service in February 2024.

WORSHIP AND PRAYER

The congregation meets for worship each Sunday at 10.30am. Services are live streamed for those unable to join in person and are also available on YouTube later in the week. Morning worship is preceded by a Prayer Time and followed by an opportunity for the church family to meet together over coffee.

We continue to strengthen the connection with families with young children and with our young adults under the leadership of our Family worker, Sandy Kane. Carers & Tots meets weekly and Messy Church monthly under her leadership, and she and a large team of volunteers ran a very successful Holiday Bible Club in the summer. During the weekly English Classes for asylum seekers and refugees, primary aged children are helped with their homework and looked after by Sandy and her team.

Members gather for prayer prior to the Sunday service and continue to meet together at Home Groups.

Our chief concern, Sunday by Sunday, is that God will be pleased with our worship and that we worship in such a way that brings glory and honour to Him. Music, singing, prayer and Bible readings are at the core of our worship and we are grateful for our dedicated and talented Director of Music, our choir and for all our members who enhance the services with their readings from the Bible and Prayers.

As well as our services of worship, during the year we acknowledged God's gift of new life at 3 Sacraments of Baptism. At 31 December 2023 there were 290 communicant members and 280 families connected with the congregation. The average weekly attendance at morning worship was 130.

PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral care and support for those who feel isolated is one of our priority issues. We thank Rev. Janice Browne, who, with Rev Andy Galbraith, coordinated this work during the vacancy and the Elders and Pastoral Care Group who helped.

We continued to produce "News @ St John's" on a monthly basis as another channel by which everyone keeps in touch with the congregation and with each other.

MISSION AND OUTREACH

We are called in faith to follow the teachings and actions of Jesus whose response to a very messy world was to engage fully with it irrespective of cost – to reach out and seek to alleviate suffering and pain and to bridge the gaps between people, between communities and between races.

Playing an active role in the local community has been a priority for Newtownbreda for many years. Pizza nights returned on 3 occasions over the summer and were welcomed and well supported by our neighbours. We also welcomed them to the Autumn Fair in September and to the Christmas lights switch on in December. Our friends and neighbours are made especially welcome at our many organisations.

English classes for asylum seekers and refugees continued on Tuesday evenings and an additional class for adults only was commenced on Wednesday mornings. Both are well supported.

We continued to support Claire Orr prayerfully and financially in her work with Wycliffe Bible Translators in Senegal.

Our Scout and Girl Guiding organisations, The 62nd Belfast Scout Group – Explorers, Scouts, Cubs, Beavers and Squirrels and the 19th Belfast Ranger Guides, Guides, Brownies and Rainbows met

throughout the year. Most of these organisations are full with waiting lists and all welcome many members from the local community. It was especially pleasing to see the church well filled with the young people and their families at the annual uniformed service in February.

Financial support for the United and World Development Appeals of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland amounted to £17748.

Financial support from our mission fund, and directly, to Belfast City Mission and to Wycliffe Bible Translators totalled £11200.

PRESBYTERY

The congregation was represented at regular meetings of presbytery by our minister and one of the elders and PW was also represented by an elder.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The minister and one of the elders attended the meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland held in Assembly Buildings, Belfast in June.

PROPERTY

Expenditure on repairs and maintenance during the year totalled £33535.

VOLUNTEERS

The Trustees wish to acknowledge their most sincere appreciation to all those who give freely of their time and talents serving the congregation and its members in the ways noted above. The Trustees consider that Newtownbreda Congregation has always been particularly well served by its team of volunteers and that blessing was especially evident throughout 2023.

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 congregational churches and 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 Commission's public benefit requirement statutory guidance.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The congregation's main sources of income are members' contributions through weekly and monthly envelopes to Freewill Offering, the Building and Repair Fund and the Mission Fund together with gift aid receipts on contributions. Enveloped contributions and related tax refunds were — Freewill offering £174135 (2022- £177745), Building and Repair Fund £24587 (2022 £25182), Mission Fund £17428 (2022 £19150). The total income of the congregation for the year was £249969 (2022 £249867).

Total expenditure amounted to £193271 (2022 - £242463) leaving an overall surplus for the year of £56698. There was a surplus of £3755 on restricted funds. The surplus on the General Account (Unrestricted) was £52943.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

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

As the congregation's total income does not exceed £250000, the Trustees have elected under Section 64(3) of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 to prepare a receipts and payments account and a statement of assets and liabilities.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to 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 16 January 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

Bruce Robinson - Trustee

Denis Guiler - Trustee