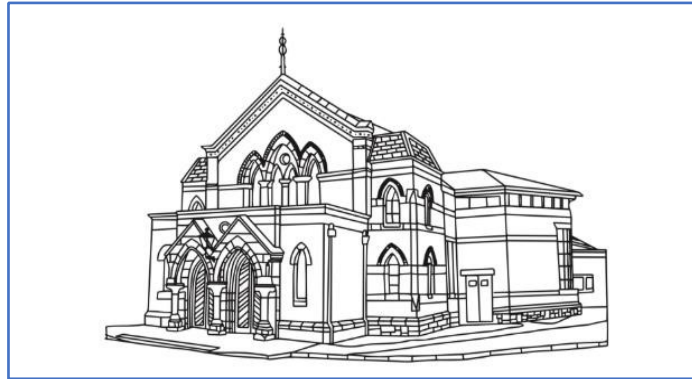


# WHITEHOUSE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland



## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

For the year ended 31 December 2023

Registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (NIC104435)

WHITEHOUSE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
A Congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Ireland

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT  
For the year ended 31 December 2023

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 INFORMATION

**Charity Name:** Whitehouse Presbyterian Church

**Registered Charity in Northern Ireland No.:** NIC104435

**Contact Address:** 143-145 Shore Road  
Newtownabbey  
Co Antrim  
BT37 9SY

### CHARITY TRUSTEES:

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

### Kirk Session members:

**Moderator:** Rev. Stephen J. Lowry  
**Clerk of Session:** Maurice Finlay

Mark Cairns	Helen Lindsay
Jackie Davison	Wallace Lowry
Jim Forbes	Allan McBride
Lisa Hall	Bobby McClung (Retired)
Arthur Halligan	Isobel McDowell
Julian Halligan	William McDowell
Shirley Haslett	Betty Morris
Frances Jackson	Kim Stockman
Ann Kirkwood	Muriel Torrens

### Congregational Committee members:

Tom Beck	Veronica Holland
Anne Boyd	Louise Lowry
Dermot Boyd	Sarah McClean
Jackie Crawley	Carole McDowell

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT For the year ended 31  
December 2023 (cont.)**

David Creaney	Charles McDowell
Ingrid Crowe	Anne Porter
Rhonda Devonport	Florence Richardson
Jennifer Dodds	Chloe Scott
Barbara Ewart	Mandy Spence
Anne Finlay	Lisa Taylor
Deborah Halligan	Mandy Thompson
Donna Hamilton	Alan Watson

All members of the Kirk Session are also members of the Congregational Committee

**PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS**

<b>Minister:</b>	Rev. Stephen J. Lowry
<b>Pastoral Worker:</b>	Mrs Kim Stockman
<b>Clerk of Session:</b>	Mr Maurice Finlay
<b>Congregational Secretary:</b>	Miss Helen Lindsay (MBE)
<b>Congregational Treasurer:</b>	Mr Tom Beck
<b>Children &amp; Family Worker:</b>	Miss Chloe Scott

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER:** Ian Murray & Co  
27 Joymount  
Carrickfergus  
Co Antrim  
BT38 7DN

**BANKERS:** Danske Bank Ltd  
Abbeycentre  
Newtownabbey  
Co Antrim  
BT37 9UH

(cont'd)

## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT For the year ended 31 December 2023**

### **STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT**

#### **The Kirk Session**

The charity trustees of the congregation are the members of 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 also 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 four times a year.

To be chosen for the office of the eldership in the congregation a person must be a voting member and a regular attendant on its ordinances. The selection of those proposed to be called to the office can be either by the Congregation or by the Kirk Session.

#### **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. Whitehouse Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the North Belfast Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The membership of the Presbytery consists mainly of the active ministers of congregations assigned by the General assembly, ministers who have retired from active duty and an elder appointed by the Kirk Session of the congregation.

#### **The General Assembly**

The General Assembly is the supreme court of the Church, representing in one body the whole Church and acting as its supreme legislative, administration and judicial authority, in dealing with all matters brought before it. The General Assembly is normally constituted during the first week in June for worship and to conduct 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.

Whitehouse 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

## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT For year ended 31 December 2023 (cont'd)**

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 Mission of Whitehouse Presbyterian Church is: - To  
worship God together  
To follow Jesus Christ  
To share the Good News of his love in the power of his Spirit

To this end, we commit ourselves: -  
To make our resources available  
To work to improve community relations  
To care for the needs of the wider world

### **ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES**

The congregation meets for worship every Sunday and visitors are welcome to join. The Sacrament of the Lords Supper is observed on several occasions during the year and all those who have been baptised and who have made a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are admitted to the Lord's Supper. The congregation holds regular bible study meetings. There is a wide range of organisations and activities that meet during the week; these include: Young Life, Boys Brigade, Girls Brigade, Presbyterian Women, and Fun @ Tots.

News about church activities can be obtained in four main ways:

- Information sheets are distributed at Sunday services which detail Church activities during the coming week.
- A church website ( [www.whitehousepc.org](http://www.whitehousepc.org) ) combines information about the church to bring the Church's message to a wider audience.
- A telephone line (028 9036 9852) allows people to contact the Church during office hours
- A church Facebook social media site.

### **ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

#### **Worship and Prayer**

Sunday worship begins with the Sunday Prayer meeting which assembles in the Session Room and is followed at 11.00am by a joint service of worship involving the adult congregation and our Children's Sunday Groups. At the mid-point of the service, the Children's Sunday Groups move to adjoining halls to explore faith in a manner appropriate to their age groups. During the week the Bible study provides an opportunity for members to meet together for fellowship, to study the scriptures and for prayer.

As well as our regular services during the year we acknowledged God's gift of life at 1 (1) Sacrament of Baptism, and gave thanks for faithful service and sought to comfort those who have been bereaved during the year.

## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT For year ended 31 December 2023 (cont'd)**

At 31 December 2023 there were 155 (157) communicant members and 242 (242) families connected with the congregation. The average weekly attendance at morning worship was 145 (125).

### **Pastoral Care**

Members of the congregation who are unable to attend church due to sickness or age are visited on a regular basis by the Minister, Assistant Minister, Pastoral Worker, elders or by one of the congregation's pastoral visitors.

### **Mission and Outreach**

The congregation supports mission both locally and overseas. The church is involved with the other churches in the area supporting the local foodbank in Greencastle Methodist, Newtownabbey Street Pastors mainly in the Glengormley area, and the church supported financially the outreach in several local secondary school's scripture unions.

The congregation has a sincere commitment for overseas mission. Links are being developed with Fields of Life including contributing to the charity both financially and in assignments. Specifically, we supported prayerfully and financially a school in Uganda.

Both the local and overseas mission work mentioned above are supported through the generous giving of the congregation through the Mission Fund envelopes and the contribution from other events.

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 congregation in the areas of worship, discipleship, global mission, outreach, leadership and pastoral care.

The congregation also contributed to the denominations annual World Development Appeal, Christian Aid, Leprosy Fund, Tear Fund and the Moderator's Appeal.

### **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 congregations 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.

## **FINANCIAL REVIEW**

The 2023 Whitehouse Presbyterian Church Accounts have been produced on an Accruals Accounting basis.

### **Overview**

The closing balance in the “Unrestricted” fund was £406,177 (up £43,273) from £362,904 in 2022). There was a net £3.8k decrease in the closing balances in the Church’s three main “Restricted” funds (Property / Equipment (£58,263 from £59,448 - decrease £1.2k); General Mission (£37,131 from £39,694 - decrease £2.6k) and Youth £7,887 from £7,933 – no material change).

### **General fund**

The congregation’s main source of income is members’ contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering regular giving. There were 188 families contributing during the year (186 in previous year) donating a total of £96,803 (£88,080 in previous year).

In the Accruals Accounts produced, the 2023 Freewill Offering Contributions were also supplemented by a £16.1k accrual in respect of tax recoverable from HMRC from contributions received in 2023 from those members of the Congregation that have signed up to the Gift Aid Scheme.

### **2023 Charity Commission Submission**

The Church Charity Commission submission for 2023 was submitted to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland on 26 September 2023 prior to the submission date specified of 31 October 2023.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES IN RESPECT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the annual report and the financial statements of the congregation 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 congregation 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.

## **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 three month’s normal expenditure. The balance of £58,263 in the Property/Equipment Restricted Fund is retained towards meeting the cost of any future expenditure incurred in the purchase, refurbishment, repairs and maintenance of buildings, fixtures, fittings and equipment.

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT For the year ended 31 December 2023 (cont'd)**

**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 held 12 February 2024 and signed on its behalf by

**Name:**

**Maurice Finlay**  
**Clerk of Session**

**Name:**

**Helen Lindsay**  
**Congregational Committee Secretary**