

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

Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 December 2024

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC104498)

WOODVALE 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 2024 including a Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at that date.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Woodvale Presbyterian Church congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
64a Woodvale Road
BELFAST BT13 3BU

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC104498)

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

Reverend Keith Duddy (Retired May 2024)	Mr Paul Beggs
Reverend Angus Stewart	Mr Desmond Wonnacott
Mr Ian Campbell	Mrs Carol Dalzell
Mrs Marion Lamont	Mr David McNicol
Mrs Margaret Wilson (Elder Emeritus)	Rev Dr Bill Parker

VACANCY COMMISSION

Reverend Angus Stewart	Reverend Bill Parker
Mr David McNicol	Mr Trevor Long
Reverend Michael Rutledge	Mr Tommy McWatter
Reverend Colin Gamble	

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister	Reverend Keith Duddy (Retired May 2024)
Vacancy Convenor	Reverend Angus Stewart (From June 2024)
Clerk of Session	Mr P Beggs
Treasurer	Mr I Campbell

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Ian Murray & Co Ltd
27 Joymount
Carrickfergus

County Antrim BT38 7DN

BANKERS

Bank of Ireland
Belfast City Branch
BELFAST BT1 2BA

SOLICITORS

Cleaver Fulton & Rankin
50 Bedford Street
BELFAST BT2 7FW

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, as 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 the votes cast.

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. Woodvale congregation of the 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 to it by the General Assembly, ministers who have retired from active duty and an elder appointed by the Kirk Session of each 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 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.

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

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.

The congregation's mission purposes are stated in its Congregational Plan drawn up by Session in June 2019. This plan seeks to be faithful to God's own plan – a "master-plan of redemption centred on putting forward Christ at a particular time and in a particular way". Thus, our congregation is built on "a strong desire to glorify God, to imitate Him, and to obey His Word by putting Christ forward".

Accordingly, our work in Woodvale congregation is based on six projects:

- (1) **Evangelism** - that people may know Christ.
- (2) **Discipleship** - that people may grow in Christ and in His service.
- (3) **World** - that we might carry these aims into all the world.
- (4) **Family** - that families may know of Christ's love and our practical concern for them.
- (5) **Sunday** - that we might improve our use of the Lord's Day to worship God, to grow in the knowledge of His Word and in fellowship with one another, and to reach out to the community.
- (6) **Compassion** - that we might use all means available care for the hurting, support the needy, and demonstrate to everyone God's great kindness.

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES

The congregation meets for worship every Sunday and visitors are welcome to join us. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is normally observed on six 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. Normally, the congregation holds regular Bible studies and prayer meetings. Other activities include:

- Twiglets (Parents and Toddlers) (Finished April 2024)
- Girls Brigade
- BnB (Believe in Boys) (Finished April 2024)
- Women's Fellowship

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and prayer

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 11.00 am and 6.00 pm. On some Wednesday evenings we have a midweek time of worship.

At 31 December 2024 there were 45 communicant members and 129 families connected with the congregation. During normal circumstances the average weekly attendance at morning worship is 40.

At a congregational meeting on 13 May 2024 the elders and the congregation agreed that Woodvale Presbyterian should close. This decision was taken with deep regret. It is due to decreasing membership, extensive building repairs and reduced funds.

The Congregation agreed that the method of closure would be to ask the Presbytery of North Belfast and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland for permission to merge with the Presbytery of North Belfast.

Closure was agreed by the Presbytery of North Belfast in May 2024 and by the General Assembly in June 2024, with a suitable date for cessation of worship to be chosen by the elders/trustees in consultation with the congregation. Therefore, Woodvale Presbyterian Church will cease worship on 27 April 2025.

Woodvale will, however, continue as a congregation legal entity / charity after that point, until such time as the merger with the Presbytery of North Belfast can be arranged.

Pastoral care

As well as our regular Services during the year we have sought to befriend the lonely, assure the anxious, guide the doubting, and comfort the bereaved.

Members of the congregation who are unable to attend church due to sickness or age are normally visited on a regular basis by the minister and ruling elders.

Mission and Outreach

We share information and pray for missionaries overseas working with PCI and other missionary organisations.

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

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

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 General Assembly took place in Assembly Buildings from Thursday 20 June to Saturday 22 June 2024. It was agreed by the General Assembly that worship would cease at a suitable time agreeable to the congregation of Woodvale Presbyterian Church, Belfast.

Property

In line with Government guidelines our church building has been adapted for social distancing, ensuring the safety of our congregation.

Organisations

Please see below a brief summary of the organisations in Woodvale Presbyterian Church:

70th Woodvale Girls Brigade

January seen the girls return after our Christmas break, to prepare for the PE marking.

In February the girls collected £1170 for GB week. £874.20 was paid to GBHQ for administration fees. We appreciate all the donations especially during the continued cost of living crisis.

Our scripture course was "Gods Promises "with stories and quizzes showing that although we live in a world of broken promises we can be sure God will never break his promises. We are ever grateful to GBHQ for producing such interesting and fun activity books which hold the girls attention.

In April we held our display. It was well attended and enjoyed by us all.

A meeting was held in May regarding the future of the Church and we were deeply saddened to hear Woodvale was to close, obviously meaning GB could no longer function after closure.

July seen the wedding of our helper Emma Jane to Curtis. The Tiny Tots and Explorers did guard of honour at the Galgorm.

We welcomed the girls back in September. Due to closing down at the end of this session we did not take any new girls and some girls moved to other GBs. This session we have 4 Tiny Tots, 10 Explorers, 16 Juniors, 5 Seniors, 4 Brigaders, 3 associates, 1 helper and 6 Officers. This final session we will concentrate on fun and happiness. We are thankful for the many years of 70th, for wonderful friendships and amazing leaders.

In October we had St John Ambulance come to show the girls the inside of the ambulance and demonstrate some first aid. The older girls did some CPR.

In November we had a busy few weeks preparing for the final enrolment. Thank you to Reverend David Clawson for a funny, uplifting and encouraging service and to the congregation and families for their support on the day. The girls were as always, lovely in their uniforms.

The Junior section girls were all given £5 which they brought to Tesco to buy items for the food bank on World Kindness Day. The girls enjoyed doing something helpful to help the less fortunate in the community.

The Church Christmas tree was put up in December by the Senior and Brigaders girls and their Officers. The tree is magical especially to the younger girls, we love the time spent singing Christmas songs and getting photographs taken. We were able to have the Christmas PJ party on the last night before the Christmas break which is always great fun, especially the annual "snowball fight".

Thank you to all the helpers and Officers for their support and dedication to myself and the company. I thank God for the amazing people that support the Girls Brigade faithfully in prayer and deeds.

BnB (Believing Boys; Believe in Boys)

BnB continued to meet until Easter 2024 with a programme aimed at primary school age boys consisting of games, crafts and teaching from the Bible. A typical week would have seen around 12 boys regularly attending.

Twiglets (Parents and Toddlers)

This group met weekly until Easter 2024 and there was a regular attendance of around 8 babies and toddlers along with one or more adults, typically parents and grandparents. The programme provided activities and toys for the children and conversation with the adults. A breakfast was also provided each week. Before the session ended, each of the adults was presented with a special badged copy of the New Testament and Psalms provided through Good New For Everyone (formerly known as The Gideons).

Women's Fellowship

This group met on a semi regular basis until Spring 2024 for a programme of fellowship. "keeping in line" line dancing fitness and bible study. Typically 8 ladies would have been in regular attendance.

Volunteers

The Trustees wish to acknowledge their deep appreciation of those who have given freely of their time in the performance of various tasks, serving on committees, and helping with organisations and other church activities.

PUBLIC BENEFIT STATEMENT

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

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

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

The benefits are demonstrated through regular evaluation of the services and informal and ad-hoc feedback from members, their families, and members of the public.

The purpose does not lead to harm. The only private benefit flowing from our purpose is related to Ministers, Missionaries, Deaconesses, Irish Mission workers and Lay Agents who receive benefits as a result of their holding office or employment. However, this is incidental and necessary in order to further our charitable purpose. There are no other private benefits. The beneficiaries of this purpose are members, their families, other individuals that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is in direct and indirect contact with, the community in which pastoral services are provided and other communities throughout Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, and worldwide which benefit from our engagement with and support for both Christian and other secular organisations, charities and individual members of the public.

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

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering. There were 79 contributors during the year [89 in previous year, 2023] donating a total of £43,947 [£46,85 in previous year, 2023].

Total income of the congregation during the year was £57,177, compared to £170,800 in the previous year. The main reason for the change was the effect of a one-off sale of investments in 2023 that was not repeated in 2024. A mix of other factors including demography of our membership, reduced attendance and corresponding patterns of giving and differences in legacy income, grants and HMRC gift aid refunds between years were also involved.

Total expenditure was £75,494 [from £130,303 in 2023]. The reduction was largely as a result of decreased personnel costs.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

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

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

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

Approved by the Kirk Session at a meeting on 20 March 2025 and signed on its behalf by

Ian Campbell

Paul Beggs

Date 20/03/25

Date 20/03/25