

**BALLYSILLAN 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 (NIC104546)

**BALLYSILLAN 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

Ballysillan Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
773-774 Crumlin Road
Belfast
BT14 8AA

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC104546)

CHARITY TRUSTEES

The Charity Trustees who were trustees at the date of this report were:

Joe Anderson	Anita Henderson	Joanne Caswell
Anthony Fleming	Lorraine Anderson	Gervais Henderson
Billy Officer	Jeff Whitcroft	Harry Orr
Dave Currie		

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister	Dave Currie
Clerk of Session	Gervais Henderson
Treasurer Team	Lorraine Anderson, Rosemary Henderson, Hylda Lewis

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

David Hooks
250 Donaghadee Road
Bangor
BT19 6NH

BANKERS

Danske Bank
PO BOX 183, Donegall Square West
Belfast
BT1 6JS

SOLICITORS

Carnson Morrow Graham Solicitors
18 - 20 May Street
Belfast
BT1 4NL

BALLYSILLAN CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND 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 normally held on the second Monday of each month during September to June with occasional additional meetings for specified ministry discussions.

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. Current practice has been that Kirk Session has requested nominations from the voting members of the congregation and then Kirk Session deliberates and votes on these candidates.

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. Ballysillan 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 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 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.

BALLYSILLAN CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

The charitable purpose of the congregation is the advancement of religion.

Ballysillan 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.

The congregation's mission purpose is "to seek to continue as a vibrant, obedient, worshipping community of Jesus in North Belfast". We believe in the witness of the local church and as such we are not called to mark time. We are not called to maintain what we currently are. We desire to grow and believe that God has given us the capacity to engage with the challenges in front of us with both realism and creativity. Our church

- 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; and
- 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.

BALLYSILLAN CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES

The congregation normally meets for worship and teaching each Sunday at 11.30am.

The worship will be led by one of our worship leaders. They will have selected the worship material to fit in with the theme being preached on that day. Children and young people will begin the day with us but will usually leave after about 10-15 minutes to be taught in Sunday Club in an adjoining hall. We believe the sacrament of communion is an integral aspect of our church life and a witness to others of living faith.

Our aim every week is that everyone who comes to church will have had the opportunity to worship God, been prepared for works of service and have experienced the presence of God and the love of his family.

The following organisations and groups meet in our church halls:

- Sunday Club (primary school children)
- Youth Club
- Evergreens (for those over 50)
- Boys' Brigade
- Ozone (for women aged 18+)
- Banners Makers
- Girlzone
- Community Drop-In

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Minister

Dave Currie has continued as our minister through 2023.

Worship and prayer

This year we took the opportunity to observe communion on six occasions. The average weekly attendance at morning worship is 90 and the number of families who have some level of connection with our congregation is 210. The number of communicant members attending communion at least once during the year is 67.

BALLYSILLAN CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

Pastoral care

Pastoral visits are carried out by the minister and several elders with special attention given to the elderly who are unable to attend church. This may involve visits to private homes, hospital and Residential Care Homes.

Mission and outreach

At a local level the congregation is committed to having a witness outside of the church building and has a number of regular activities that try to project the Gospel message.

The provision of hampers for distribution by Social Services was continued, with 41 hampers prepared from donations by members of the congregation.

The congregation also contributes to special appeals such as those called by the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in response to disasters. 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.

Presbytery

The congregation was represented at the regular meetings of Presbytery by our minister and/or a designated elder. This provides an important link between the congregations and the wider structures of the church.

General Assembly

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland was held in Assembly Buildings, Belfast, in June 2023 and was attended by a representative elder and our minister.

Property

During the year work was carried to repair damp in the front staircase of the Church building. Plans are in place for the Gailey Hall but have been delayed by the resourcing of the contractor.

BALLYSILLAN CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

Organisations

The following is a brief summary of the activities carried out during the year in some of our organisations.

- **Sunday Club:** Around 15 children of primary school age meet on a Sunday morning during the regular church service. The Sunday Club would usually stay in church for the initial worship before departing to their hall. An alternating group of leaders would deliver a programme focused on Bible themes and characters alongside crafts and games.
- **Youth Club:** The Youth Club meets on Saturday evenings from September to June using the Gailey Hall, McCullough Hall and lounge for a variety of indoor games and activities. Numbers in this organisation have dropped since restarting in September.
- **Boys' Brigade:** This Christian organisation meets each Tuesday evening in several sections; Anchor Section (aged 6-8), Junior Section (aged 8-11) and the Company Section (aged 11-18). They carry out a varied programme as devised by the central BB organisation and their season culminates in an Annual Parents evening display. The boys are drawn from the local area and families of the congregation.
- **Evergreens:** a group tailored for those aged over 50 meet on a Monday afternoon to play bowls, board games, chat and have a cup of tea.
- **Ozone:** Ozone is for women of all ages to meet up in a relaxed atmosphere. They meet monthly in and out of the church for a variety of activities such as movie nights, coffee shops and trips out and about.
- **Banner Makers:** The Banner Making group make banners to display in the church and church halls to demonstrate God's love and goodness. They meet monthly to plan, design and make banners from a wide range of materials.
- **Girlzone:** this is a new organisation for primary school girls, taking over from the previous work carried out under the Girl Guide association.
- **Drop-In:** This is a new venture on Tuesday mornings and is open to all. Those attending take part in crafts, board games, pool, table-tennis and an opportunity for a good chat.

Volunteers

The Trustees wish to acknowledge their deep appreciation and gratitude of the invaluable service of those who lead with dedication the range of activities throughout the church. We are aware that some of our members give their time over several aspects of the congregations work and life.

Thanks and appreciation must also go to our Congregational Committee as they administer our funds and care for our property to keep it fit for purpose.

**BALLYSILLAN CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND
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.

**BALLYSILLAN CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND
TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering. There were 103 contributors during the year, (2022 - 101) donating a total of £70,392 (£71,868 in previous year, 2022).

Total Income of the congregation during the year was £124,623, compared to £124,680 in the previous year.

Total expenditure decreased from £127,020 to £118,806, primarily due to reduced spending on repairs and renovations.

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) 2008 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 12th February 2024 and signed on its behalf by



Joanne Caswell (Charity Trustee)

12th February 2024



Billy Officer (Charity Trustee)

12th February 2024