

## **Ardstraw Parish Church**

### **Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2022**

The trustees present the annual report and statements of Receipts and Payments and Assets and Liabilities for Ardstraw Parish Church for the year ended 31 December 2022.

#### **Structure, Governance and Management**

##### ***Governing Document and Constitution of the Charity***

Chapter III of the Constitution of the Church of Ireland governs Parishes and Parochial Organisation. The Select Vestry members are the Charity Trustees

##### ***Recruitment and Appointment of Select Vestry (Trustees)***

All members of the Church of Ireland who are over the age of 18 and are either resident within the parish or live elsewhere but have been accustomed members of the congregation for at least three months, may register as members of the general vestry of the parish, allowing them to attend and vote at meetings of the general vestry and to stand for election to the select vestry. Meetings of the general vestry are held at least once a year. The Select Vestry is elected as part of this General Vestry meeting. The Select Vestry will hold their positions for a period of one year. Select Vestry members may be re-elected annually and there is no limit on the number of terms which may be served.

##### ***Pay and remuneration***

The Incumbent of the Parish stipend is paid directly by the Diocese, which is in accordance with figures approved by the General Synod of the Church of Ireland together with approved office and locomotory allowances.

##### ***Organisational Structure***

The Select Vestry is responsible for the day to day management of the parish. The select vestry consists of the member of the clergy serving in the parish, the churchwardens, the glebe wardens and generally not more than twelve other members of the general vestry elected at the Easter Vestry.

The Select Vestry is chaired by the incumbent or other member of the clergy officiating in the parish. Select Vestry members are responsible for making decisions on matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding how parish funds are to be applied.

The Select Vestry meets at times fixed by the members or by the diocesan synod. Special meetings may be convened at any time by the chairperson or the churchwardens. In 2022 the Select Vestry met 3 times during the year and the average attendance was 67%.

##### ***Objectives and Activities***

The charitable purpose of the Church of Ireland is the advancement of religion.

## **Ardstraw Parish Church**

### **Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2022 (continued)**

The principal function of Ardstraw Parish Church is to support the advancement of the Christian religion by promoting, through the work of Ardstraw Parish Church the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Being open to and engaging with society as a whole and offering support for those needing help are fundamental to the practical delivery of the benefits of Christianity.

As a result of activity in the pursuit of the advancement of the Christian religion, Ardstraw Parish Church has custody of property and of records, materials and artefacts of significance to the cultural and religious heritage and maintenance of which is undertaken by the Select Vestry of Ardstraw Parish Church.

### **Achievements, Performance & Public Benefit**

The Parish of Ardstraw exists for the purpose of the advancement of the Christian religion in the Newtown Stewart area. To implement this purpose, we provide many services to our local community. The main function of the Parish is to provide opportunities for parishioners and other members of the community to worship God, Sunday by Sunday. To this end, the Parish provides a regular Sunday morning worship service each Sunday at 11.00am. This enables members of the community to partake in the sacrament of Holy Communion which is celebrated on the first Sunday of each month, and to be taught from the Bible every Sunday. Of course, our worship is open to anyone who wishes to come, from all backgrounds and all faiths or none. In recent times we have welcomed not only people from a Christian background, but also those of other faiths including Baha'i, Buddhist and those who have no belief at all. We are, of course, welcoming to those of all races, genders and orientations. In practice the vast majority of our worshippers are from a Church of Ireland background, but our Church welcomes all to the Lord's Table in the sacrament of Holy Communion. On other Sundays the main service is "Morning Prayer" which is a more simplified service of readings, hymns and prayers.

Pastoral care is provided by the Rector, assisted by the parishioners. This includes home visits, hospital visits, counselling where needed, and a listening ear where someone just needs to talk. Parishioners and others are regularly remembered in prayer. Pastoral care is provided at times of difficulty e.g. bereavement and at times of celebration e.g. a marriage or baptism. Our Church has an open, welcoming non-judgemental attitude to baptism in that we welcome all who come to be baptised and refrain from attaching conditions to their participation in the sacrament, as some Churches do.

Mission and outreach include a Youth Fellowship group which meets on Thursday evenings during term time and is open to the entire community and is geared towards teenagers. Usually around a dozen young people attend this group each week. There is also a Confirmation class, which is held on Thursday evenings. A similar number of young people attend this group.

Both of these groups are aimed at outreach to teenagers and young people in order to share the faith with them and encourage them in this important stage of their life. The Mother's Union is an outreach group comprised of the ladies of the Church (although it is open to men also). In practice our branch in common with most branches has an entirely female membership. As well as supporting the families of the parish, the Mothers' Union supports the wider community in various ways. Members knit "Trauma Teddies" for use when children are admitted to hospital. A child is

## **Ardstraw Parish Church**

### **Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2022 (continued)**

given one of the teddies and this can be a comfort to a scared and ill or injured child in the strange and intimidating environment of a hospital ward. Kit bags are also collected and distributed to hospitals containing emergency supplies of necessary items such as toothpaste, soap, etc. These are given to people who have been admitted to hospital suddenly and do not have such items with them. In addition, the Mothers' Union fundraises in support of mission at home and abroad. They provide a contact centre where children of estranged parents can meet with the parent whom they no longer live with in a safe and comforting environment. Mothers' Union provides "Away from it all" breaks or days out for families whose family life is going through a difficult period. The Parish supports a number of orphans financially as part of the Tyrone Protestant Orphan Society. This provides "no strings attached" financial assistance for children who have lost one or both parents. Grants are usually received in August and before Christmas.

Several times each year, the Parish provides a free lunch for seniors and those who are prevented from attending Church due to illness or advancing age. Transport is provided to and from these events free of charge by Church members.

Since Easter 2020 we have been financially supporting the community of San Jorge in Cebu City, Philippines, by providing donations to enable food to be purchased and distributed among poor families in Cebu.

The Parish operates a Charity Shop in partnership with Cancer Focus. This provides many services to the community, not least in providing a place where unwanted items can be reused and resold to the benefit of others. It provides opportunities for people to volunteer their time and talents in the service of the wider community. It also provides a place for people to come and chat and meet other people. And not least, of course, the shop raises a substantial amount of money which supports the work of Cancer Focus.

The Parish is very conscious of the duty of care that we have to those who participate in our events and use our premises. We have a strict safeguarding policy in place which protects our Children's Ministry. This is regularly reviewed and training is frequently available in the Parish. The Safeguarding Policy is reviewed every three years by the Diocesan authorities to ensure that our young people can participate in all Church activities confident of the protection they deserve.

In addition, several community groups not affiliated with the Church use the Parish Hall throughout the week. These include the Day Care Centre on Wednesdays and the local branch of the Women's Institute who meet in our building once every month.

A significant number of people request access to the Parish Records each year. These are held in the Parish Office and can be accessed free of charge by appointment with the Rector. Church buildings can also be accessed at any time by appointment with the Rector or a member of the congregation.

## Ardstraw Parish Church

### Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2022 (continued)

#### Compliance with Public Benefit

The Parish has given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities entered into during the year have helped to achieve the Parish's objectives and activities, as well as providing public benefit in whatever way we can. We hope to continue to do so for many years to come.

#### Financial Review

Total income of the Parish during the year was £68,032 (2021: £57,149) and total expenses were £77,750 (2021: £81,381) leaving a deficit of £9,718 for the year ended 31 December 2022. The Parish continues to be in a healthy state as at 31 December 2022 with total cash funds of £35,352.

A detailed analysis of parish income and expenditure is set out on page 8 to the financial statements.

#### Going Concern

The trustees have reviewed the budgets for the year ahead and are satisfied that there are adequate funds in place to ensure that the Parish can continue its activities and the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022 can be signed off as a going concern.

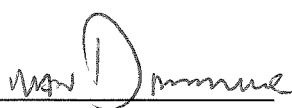
#### Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the statement of receipts and payments and statement of assets and liabilities in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland with Income of less than £250,000 requires the trustees to prepare a statement of receipts and payments and a statement of assets and liabilities for each financial year.

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

#### Signed on Behalf of the Trustees



Rev. Ivan Dinsmore

Date 11/11/2023



Mrs Dawn Pinkerton

Date 11/11/23