

RICHHILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's Constitution, the Charities Act 2008 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019).

Objectives and activities

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

Richhill 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.

Richhill Presbyterian Church exists to lead people to saving faith in Jesus, to bring them to maturity within the fellowship, and to encourage them to worship God in Spirit and Truth, and with lives of service. This involves our 5 core purposes....

- 1) Evangelism - Jesus' Great Commission of Matthew 28 compels us to go into the world and make disciples.
- 2) Discipleship- The Christian life is not a plane ticket to Heaven, it is a passport to serve in Jesus' new kingdom. We are to grow in Christlikeness and experience sanctification.
- 3) Fellowship – The Christian is not to be a hermit but rather part of a worshipping community. God has graciously set up His Church as a body of His people who serve Him.
- 4) Worship - Our worship is to be a sacrifice of praise to the one who is worthy – God, our Creator and Redeemer.
- 5) Service – God in grace gives us good works of service to bring glory to His name and serve others.

Our Values:

- 1) Christ centered - At RPC we believe Jesus is the Way the Truth and the Life. He is the only hope for the nations and it is His gospel we proclaim.
- 2) Genuine Worship – Our praise seeks to incorporate contemporary worship songs alongside the traditional hymnody.
- 3) Reformed teaching - We have a Reformed perspective on theology which means we believe the Bible teaches certain things about God and man, the world and church. These distinctive views can be seen in our preaching, praying and community life.
- 4) Presbyterian ethos - Our leadership subscribes to the Westminster Confession of Faith and we practice a Presbyterian form of governance.

Public benefit

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Activities

The congregation met for worship every Sunday, morning and evening, Visitors are made very welcome. Kirk Session agreed to have additional dates to serve the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. From March 2023 this was monthly, excluding July and August.

Organisations:

- Sunday School/ Grid (Bible Class)
- Adult Bible Class... an opportunity for adults to be taught the foundations of our reformed faith. (at Sunday school time)
- Sunday crèche ... a safe, secure interactive environment for babies/pre nursery so that parents can benefit from the worship and teaching on a Sunday morning.
- RPC Kids...children's church where kids enjoy their own praise time and hear Bible truths. (nursery to P3)
- Place... a Sunday night Bible based youth outreach encouraging fun and fellowship as they are discipled and find belonging in our church family. (y12- age 22)
- Ignite... a safe environment to interact with friends, play games, go on away trips and have the opportunity for regular Bible input.(yr 8 – 11)
- Toddle Inn... a place where babies/ pre nursery children with their parent/ carer meet and enjoy social/play interaction.
- Ambassadors' football partnership... coaching sessions for primary/secondary age children.
- Zone P1-7 ...fun,games and Bible presentation
- Women's Bible Study a weekly time to study God's Word.
- Men's / Women's Ministry.... Encouraging the congregation to connect and grow in their faith.
- Midweek/growth groups/LOLMD groups... Bible study and fellowship.
- GLEE...a support group for young adults with learning disabilities.
- Bowling Club
- Tuesday Club...a weekly space for retired folk within our church family and local community.
- WASPS...a support group for widows and single people.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Achievements and performance

1) Worship and prayer

> The church family meets for worship each Sunday at 11am and 6:30 pm with tea, coffee and fellowship after the morning service. This is an important aspect of how we engage together as a church family. The average morning attendance is approx. 450 and evening approx. 200.

> We continue to stream online both morning and evening services to facilitate and encourage those who are unable to attend in person. Average morning views are 200- 250 and evening views are 100-150.

> CDs are also distributed to those unable to access YouTube

> In September '23, Growing Young Disciples held an all day conference aimed at equipping young and old in our congregation ie parents, grandparents, children, key leaders and volunteers to deal with the current issues of identity, gender, technology, sexualisation, media and relationships.

> In October we were delighted to hold our newcomers' lunch held every other year. This is an opportunity for those who have recently joined RPC to get to know staff and elders.

> In June '23 we welcomed 22 people into full church membership.

>We acknowledged God's gift of new life at 5 Sacraments of infant Baptism, 8 adults were also baptised. We conducted 3 marriage services, and gave thanks for faithful services and sought to comfort those who had been bereaved during the year.

> At 31 December 2023 there were 415 communicant members and 132 families connected with the congregation.

> A consultation team, appointed by Armagh Presbytery, visited RPC in Spring '23. Overall the consultation team was extremely encouraged to hear how the Lord is at work amongst us. RPC is a vibrant and growing church and we have much to thank the Lord for.

2)Property:

> The following recommendations were made in the consultation team's architectural report :

Replacement of 6 double glazed window units .

New front and rear doors as well as an inside garage door. All of this work has been carried out at the manse.

> Other minor maintenance issues at the church are to be addressed.

> The proposed construction of a new annexe was put on hold by Committee in December 2023 with alternative options to be explored.

3)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 part time pastoral minister. Rev Wilson Gordon, a member of the congregation, who is our voluntary Pastoral Care minister and also by our assistant minister Jeff Gawn.

>Elders and pastoral Care team members also offer practical support when required. All are supplied with a weekly CD of Sunday Worship.

> Kirk Session appointed a small working group to deal with staff issues and well being.

> A Code of Conduct for leaders and volunteers was circulated in December 2023.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

4) Mission and outreach

Mission and outreach events continue to be central to the purpose of the church.

At a local level the congregation and its organisations exist to provide care and Christian love to the local community. Many unchurched families attend the weekly organisations.

> Annual outreach events are held such as Holiday Bible Club which ran for 4 consecutive mornings in August reaching almost 200 children from nursery to P 7.

> Ambassadors hosted a free week of football camp in July with over 200 primary school children in attendance at the local football pitch.

They hold family friendly services to which many unchurched come.

> An Addictions Support Group meets monthly in our church facility to offer help and support to those struggling with a variety of addictions.

> A Christianity Explored course is held annually in the village café.

> The congregation supports the United Appeal for Mission which is a central fund of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. We surpassed our target of £21,126. 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.

> Our Mission fund envelope collection enables us to give generously to the work of God's Kingdom at home and worldwide. £98,180 was dispensed to our mission and charity partners.

RPC continues to support prayerfully and financially our specific missionary partners in Krakow and Spain. Small teams have gone out to work alongside our Spanish and Polish partners.

Presbytery

The monthly Presbytery meetings are attended by the minister and one representative elder. This provides an important link between the congregations and the wider structures of the church.

General Assembly

The General Assembly meeting took place in June 2023 with a session held on the Saturday to facilitate those unable to attend due to work commitments.

Volunteers

The Trustees wish to acknowledge their deep appreciation of those who give freely of their time by serving on committees and helping with organisations and other church activities.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 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 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 or 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 results are set out in detail on pages 11 to 22. The charity returned net incoming resources for the year of £66,323 (2022 - £22,011) leaving unrestricted funds of £1,740,271 (2022 - £1,838,094) and restricted funds of £472,462 (2022 - £308,316).

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering. There were 282 contributors during the year donating a total of £277,612 (2022 - £252,283). An increase of 10.03% from the previous year.

The total net assets of the congregation at the end of the year was £2,212,733 restricted and unrestricted. Increase of 3.09% from the previous year.

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Reserves policy

The Trustees have considered the level of unrestricted reserves that is appropriate to hold taking account of current and ongoing commitments. It is the policy of the Trustees to hold at least 12 months normal expenditure. At the year end the unrestricted reserves were £1,740,271 with cash balances of £786,782.

The trustees consider it prudent to hold cash reserves of at least £300,000 as the funding of its present activities is dependent on the ongoing financial support of members.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Structure, governance and management

The church is governed by the congregation's governing document; The code, the book of the constitution and government of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mr M McHugh

Mr T Graham

Rev A McNeely

Mr L Brownlee

Mr T Ellison

(Resigned 30 January 2023)

Mr Glen Evans

(Resigned 18 June 2023)

Mr E Hanna

Mr D Milligan

Mr D Parr

Mr M Vallely

Mr W Diffin

Mr S Cardwell

Mr S Thompson

Mr R Cregan

Mr A Graham

Mr D Black

Mr S Strain

Mr S Todd

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 congregations. 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 at monthly/ six weekly intervals.

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. Richhill Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the Armagh 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.

Organisational structure

The day to day running of the charity is overseen by the trustees.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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.

Other matters

At a congregational meeting on 29/11/23 RPC agreed to appoint the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Holding Trustees Company as the new trustees for RPC, replacing the Armagh Presbytery Education Board.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

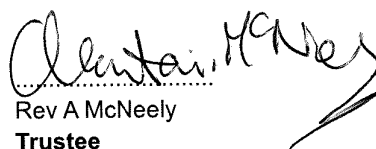
Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.



Mr M McHugh
Trustee



Rev A McNeely
Trustee

Date: 27/8/24