

**SECOND DROMARA CONGREGATION OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND**

**Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 December 2023**

SECOND DROMARA CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT 2023

The Trustees present their Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2023 including a Statement of Assets and Liabilities at that date.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Second Dromara Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
4 Begney Hill Road
Dromara
Dromore
Co Down
BT25 2AT

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105110)

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

Mr Les Carson

Mr Herbie Chambers

Mr Wilby Hanna (resigned October 2023)

Mr Richard Kernaghan

Mr Alan Marshall (resigned October 2023)

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister: Vacant

Clerk of Session: Mr Herbie Chambers

Treasurer: Mrs Irene Burrows

Secretary: Mrs Roberta McDowell

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Kelly Gillespie, (Ivan Shannon & Co, Chartered Accountants, 39 Church Street, Ballynahinch, Co Down, BT24 8AF)

BANKERS

Danske Bank, 62 – 66 Bow Street, Lisburn BT28 1YS

SOLICITORS

W G Maginness & Son Ltd, 68 Bow Street, Lisburn, BT28 1AL

1. 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 interests 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 responsibility for handling the temporal affairs of 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. Meetings of the Kirk Session are held at least twice in each year or as required.

To be chosen for the office of the eldership in the congregation a person must be a voting member and a regular attendant of 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 the support of two-thirds of the those who vote.

Presbytery

Under the Presbyterian Church in Ireland form of governance 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.

Second Dromara congregation of the Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the Dromore Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The congregation was represented at regular meetings of the Presbytery by the Convenor and one of the elders. This provides an important link between the congregation and the wider structures of the church.

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, administrative 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.

2. DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

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

Second Dromara 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.

Second Dromara congregation's mission is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever as we point people to Jesus so that, by God's grace, they will come to follow Him and live all of life for Jesus.

Our vision is to be a welcoming church family to all people of all backgrounds who will:

- love God with all our hearts and love others as much as we love ourselves
- clearly teach and joyfully grow in the truth of God's word, the Bible
- make disciples of Jesus who are equipped to live out their faith in the real world, day by day.

In Second Dromara congregation we seek to live out our mission and vision as Jesus' followers as we:

- reach out to the world with the gospel of Jesus. We do this through our words and actions so that others will see and hear Jesus through us
- build up disciples of Jesus so that Jesus' followers "become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fulness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13). We do this through teaching God's word in a variety of settings, both formal and informal; as we meet to pray together; and as we walk with one another through the joys and sorrows of life
- send out disciples of Jesus, whom he will "equip... for works of service" in the world (Ephesians 4:12). We do this through ongoing training and support to equip us to be Jesus' servants who are a blessing to the world.

3. ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES

The congregation meets for worship every Sunday at 11.00am and everyone is welcome to attend whether members of the congregation or not.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was observed on four occasions during the year. All who have been baptised and who have made a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are admitted to the Lord's Supper.

In addition to services each Sunday, the congregation holds weekly Bible study and prayer meetings and has a wide range of organisations, which are open to anyone of appropriate age and / or gender to attend. These include:

SECOND DROMARA CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT 2023

- Shine on Sunday for children of nursery / primary school age
- Sunday Bible Class for young people of secondary school age
- Holiday Bible Club for children of primary school age
- Dromara Kid's Club
- A Youth Group, known as BANG (Building a New Generation)
- Girls' Brigade
- Boys' Brigade
- Little Lambs - a group for parents / carers and toddlers
- The Living Room
- Presbyterian Women
- Bowling Club.

In May 2023, Rev Bob Allely was appointed Stated Supply for the congregation.

In August 2022, Rev Howard Gilpin stepped down as Convenor of the Vacancy. In October 2023 Rev Dr Allen Sleith assumed this role.

In December 2022 Mrs Gwen Doran retired after 71 years' service as church organist. We give thanks to God for her many years of faithful service. We give thanks also for three members of the congregation who willingly agreed to assume responsibility, on a rota basis, for playing at Sunday services during the year; for the musicians and singers who formed a praise band, known as Revive; and, towards the end of the year, the reformation of the choir, which had been disbanded during the Covid pandemic.

4. ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and prayer

During 2023 the congregation met for worship each Sunday morning at 11.00am.

Mid-Week prayer and Bible Study meetings were held on Wednesday evenings at 8.00pm.

At 31 December 2023 there were 178 families under the pastoral care of the congregation and 134 communicant members. The average weekly attendance at morning worship during the year was 105.

Pastoral care

Members of the congregation, including those who are unable to attend church due to sickness, age or infirmity were visited by the Convenor, the Stated Supply Minister or one of the elders.

Outreach

During 2023 Second Dromara congregation contributed financially to 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

SECOND DROMARA CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT 2023

undertake mission and outreach on a denominational basis beyond what the congregation would do on its own.

Second Dromara congregation has also continued to participate in Dromara Connect, the Christian outreach group, comprising a number of local churches from the village and surrounding area. The group, which is volunteer run and led by committed Christians, holds regular prayer meetings and other Christian gatherings and organises events and activities which serve the needs of the local community.

In conjunction with other local churches, Connect organised a two-week Tent Mission in June 2023. Second Dromara congregation was responsible for organising meetings on two of the evenings and had lead responsibility for an evening event for teenagers attended by approximately one hundred young people from across the community.

The final phase of financial support from The Henry Smith Charity, together with ongoing financial pledges and donations from members of the congregation, enabled the continued employment of a part-time Community Outreach Worker during 2023.

Key elements of the Outreach Worker's role during the year included establishing a monthly All Age Service; continuing to develop Café Hope; working alongside volunteers to run various organisations and activities for children and young people; growing connections within the local community; and, where needed, providing some pastoral care for people within the congregation.

Café Hope, our Sunday evening Outreach programme, met in the Connect Hall on the first and third Sundays of each month from January to April and again from September to December.

It provides a relaxed and informal setting where people of all ages can meet, chat and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee or a milkshake, listen to live Christian music and hear about the hope found in Jesus. The attendance on Sunday evenings ranged from thirty to fifty people of all ages both from the congregation and the wider community. During the first part of the year the programme centred on the help we can find in Jesus when life feels tough and included testimonies from some Café Hope regulars about how the Lord has helped them during difficult times. From September – December the programme looked at the issue of Identity – our and Jesus's.

In June, eighty-seven people attended a BBQ held at the Connect Hall. Many of those who attended were not church members but came along because of connections made through one or more of our organisations. Ten adults and four young people also participated in a Hope Explored course organised during the year.

The **Shine Holiday Bible Club** is an important means of reaching out to children within the wider community. It met from 26th June – 2nd July 2023 from 6.45pm – 8.15pm each evening with approximately seventy children, aged 4 – 11 years, in attendance throughout the week. This year's theme, Wonder Lab, used home-grown material,

SECOND DROMARA CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT 2023

drama, song, memory verses, talks and quizzes to explore God's amazingly complex and wonderful creation and how it helps us understand the Good News of Jesus.

On Friday evening sixty-four children as well as many adults attended a Family BBQ and Challenge Games Night, held in the Dromara Community Hall and Lagan Park complex. On Sunday 2nd July an all-age service took place in the church hall with over 120 people present. Alongside twenty adult leaders, six young people helped run the Holiday Bible Club each evening with a number of other volunteers from the church providing juice and biscuits each evening and helping with the BBQ.

Outreach work continued over the summer of 2023 with thirty young people and six leaders participating in a number of events. In addition, fourteen families enjoyed a coach trip to the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum at Cultra followed by some fun time in Bangor.

In December 2023, as well as an Evening of Carols in the Connect Hall and Carols by Candlelight in the church building, more than forty people from the church and the community joined together to sing carols at various prearranged spots around the village finishing with Christmas refreshments in the Connect Hall.

Property

The Church Committee continues to provide oversight, maintenance and development of the congregation's buildings to ensure they remain fit for purpose. In addition to routine servicing of fire alarms, fire extinguishers and boilers and normal grounds maintenance work, some minor electrical repairs were undertaken at the manse during the year.

Organisations

Dromara Kids' Club

Dromara Kids' Club meets every Monday evening during term time from September - May, the younger age-group (Years 3 and 4) from 6.30 – 7.30pm and the older age group (Years 5 – 7) from 7.30pm – 8.30pm. In total forty-one children registered as members during 2023.

The aim of the Club is to give children a safe and fun place to spend time with their friends and to communicate the good news of Jesus to them. Each evening there are fun group games followed by a 3-week rotation of crafts, games and baking in the hall kitchen while football takes place in the main hall.

Little Lambs

Little Lambs Parents and Toddlers Group meets in the church hall each Tuesday morning from 10.30am – 12 noon from September – May during term-time. The aim of the group is to help babies and toddlers develop social and physical skills through play, craft and singing and to provide opportunities for parents and carers to meet, chat and relax in a Christian environment.

SECOND DROMARA CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT 2023

With 30 children registered in 2023 and an average attendance of 20+ babies and toddlers each week it is a busy and purposeful morning, enjoyed by parents, children and volunteers alike. The programme during 2023 included a Teddy Bear's Picnic at Easter, a coronation-themed party in May and a Christmas party where the children were entertained by a face painter and a balloon modeller and received gifts from Father Christmas, including a book telling the story of the Nativity.

The Living Room

The Living Room, a drop-in for parents with their primary-aged children and toddler siblings re-opened in September, running on Tuesday afternoons from 2.00pm – 4.00pm during term-time in the Connect Hall. It provides a safe, dry, and warm space where children and parents can meet with others. As well as toys and games there is space for the children to complete homework with tea, coffee, milkshakes, and nibbles available for all.

Each week 35 - 45 adults and children attend, not only from Dromara Primary School, but also from Fairhill Primary School and St Michaels Primary School, which are located in neighbouring settlements.

Girls' Brigade

The Girls' Brigade meets from September to March on Tuesday evenings from 6.30pm-8.30pm in the church hall.

To end the 2022/23 session a successful parents' night was held in March 2023, at which presentations were made to two former officers who had completed, in total, 85 years as members of the company.

The new session began in September 2023 with thirty-five girls and leaders, including a number of new members. The annual enrolment service was held in October with a good attendance by the girls, as well as parents and friends of the company.

A variety of activities took place during the year, including Bible study, cookery and crafts. A Christmas party with Jump, Jiggle and Jive finished off 2023. The theme for the 2023/24 year is 'Ulster Scots' so the programme also included opportunities for everyone to learn some Ulster Scots words and phrases and this theme will be taken forward into 2024 with plans for a special Ulster Scots Social in February.

Boys' Brigade

1st Dromara Boys' Brigade is under the oversight of four Dromara churches, namely First Dromara Presbyterian, Second Dromara Presbyterian, Dromara Reformed Presbyterian and St John's Church of Ireland. The Junior Section of the Company meets in Second Dromara church hall on Wednesday evenings from mid-September to the end of March.

Thirty-three boys, supported by four leaders, attended in 2023 and enjoyed a range of activities including drill, physical recreation, games, and craft, with teaching by various

SECOND DROMARA CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT 2023

methods to explain the basics of Christianity as we seek to fulfil the Boys' Brigade objective i.e. 'the advancement of Christ's Kingdom among boys'.

BANG

BANG met on fifteen occasions during the year with an average attendance of ten young people. Meetings are usually held in the Connect Hall where the young people enjoy some fun activities and consider what God says in His Word, the Bible. Other events enjoyed by the group included a number of night-time walks and trips to the beach. Thirteen young people along with leaders (and their children) attended a weekend away to Rostrevor Youth Centre. Four members of BANG are involved as junior leaders in Dromara Kids' Club.

Presbyterian Women (PW)

The PW meets on the second Monday of each month from September – March. In 2023 between 10 – 15 women attended meetings where they heard from a variety of speakers including a Presbyterian Minister who told of his conversion from Roman Catholicism; a PW member from another congregation who shared her experience of visiting the Holy Land and a representative from Kids4School which provides support to enable children in Tanzania to receive an education.

During February donations received at a successful Fashion Show attended by members of the church family and friends raised funds to help support the work of PW both at home and abroad.

Through these meetings the women are encouraged in their continued work to reach out to others and share God's love as well as enjoying the friendship and support of each other.

Bowling Club

The Bowling Club resumed in September 2023 after the summer break with a total of sixteen members, including two new members.

Club play continued on Thursday evenings with the usual pre-Christmas cup competitions as hotly contested as ever. Several friendly fixtures have been arranged with other clubs from January onwards and, to finish the season, the Annual Awards Dinner will be held in March 2024.

Volunteers

The Trustees wish to express their sincere appreciation to all those who give freely of their time and talents to serve Jesus whether through their work on committees; leading and helping with organisations; playing the organ or as a member of the choir or praise band; managing the sound and video recording systems; meeting and greeting visitors; helping with refreshments after church services, at Café Hope and other events; cleaning and caretaking duties; or any of the numerous other related and equally important activities that are required.

5. 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 those who are sick, disabled or bereaved).

Generally, the above benefits are delivered locally by congregation 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 using noticeboards, printed material, press advertisements, 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 relates 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 with whom the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is in direct and indirect contact, 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 statutory guidance on the public benefit requirement.

6. FINANCIAL REVIEW

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the weekly Freewill Offering. In 2023 124 families contributed to the Freewill Offering (2022:127). Contributions increased by £6,622 (2023: £59,915, 2021: £53,293).

The congregation's total income in 2023, including restricted and unrestricted funds, was £106,965 (2022: £124,741), an overall decrease of £17,776, due mainly to the ending of a grant from The Henry Smith Charity which substantially funded the church's outreach work. In 2023 unrestricted funds totalled £84,108 (2021: £77,648) and restricted funds totalled £22,857 (2021: £47,093).

SECOND DROMARA CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Total expenditure, including of organisations, in 2023 was £90,256 (2022: £77,863) an increase of £12,393. Payments from the General Fund (unrestricted) totalled £49,525 (2021: £39,504), an increase of just over £10,000 due to a range of factors including inflation, mileage costs and the purchase and installation of new sound and video systems in the church building. Payments from restricted funds, which include the funds of the various organisations linked to the church as well as the Outreach Fund totalled £40,731 (2021: £38,359), with the majority of spend associated with the Outreach Fund.

7. 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 the approval of the financial statements to meet commitments which will arise in the year from the date of the signing of 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.

8. STATEMENT OF TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

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

As the congregation's 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 payments 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.

This report and the accompanying accounts were approved by the Trustees at a meeting held on 4/3/24

Signed on behalf of the Trustees by



Herbie Chambers
Clerk of Session



Richard Kernaghan
Trustee