

Ardglass Congregation of the Presbyterian Church
in Ireland

Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements
for the year ended December 2023.

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105124)

Ardglass 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.

Ardglass Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland,

Kildare Street, Ardglass.

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105124)

Charity Trustees

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

Rev Owen Patterson

Miss Isobel Brown

Mrs Irene Cousins

Mr Norman Morrow

Mr David Hunter

Principal Office Bearers

Minister: Rev Owen Patterson

Clerk of Session: Miss Isobel Brown

Treasurer: Mr Derek Cousins

Independent Examiner:

Mr Norman Elliott, 13 English Street, Downpatrick, BT30 6AB

Solicitors:

J Murland and Co, 15 English Street, Downpatrick, BT30 6AP

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Structure and Management

The Kirk Session

The Charity Trustees of the Congregation are the members of the 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 Sessions 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 least twice a year 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 the Kirk Session. Members are elected if they obtain two-thirds of the votes from those who are eligible to vote.

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.

Ardglass Congregation has been assigned to the Down Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The membership of the Presbytery consists mainly of the active ministers of congregation is 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.

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Trustee Annual Report (cont'd)

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.

Description and Purpose

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

Ardglass Congregation is a congregation in the Presbyterian Church of 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 to teach on matters of Christian Faith and practice.

The Congregation's mission is:

by the grace of God, to see Christ's Kingdom grow in the lives of men, women and children. It is our desire to fulfil Christ's great commission of Matthew 28:19 to see people of all ages and backgrounds becoming fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

1. We desire that people will clearly understand Jesus' message of salvation.
2. We desire that those who grasp that message will grow in their love, devotion and service to Jesus.

The congregation aims to live out its mission and vision as a family of God's people by being:

- A bible centred community, living lives that are based on God's Word and seeking to please Him in all that we do.
- An outward looking community that seeks to reach out and welcome people from every background and that seeks to share the Good News of Jesus Christ by our words, welcome and actions.
- At the centre of our local community by being part of it and being relevant in the issues and problems that we see to help change.

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Activities and Objectives

The congregation meets for worship every Sunday and visitors are welcome to join. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is observed on four 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.

The congregation has a range of organisations including:

- Sunday School/Children's Church
- Presbyterian Women
- Flower Arranging
- Lenten Bible Study

Achievements and Performance

WORSHIP AND PRAYER

The congregation normally meets for worship on Sunday mornings at 10am.

As well as our regular services, during the year we acknowledge God's gift of new life at Sacraments of Baptism and gave thanks for faithful services and sought to comfort those who had been bereaved during the year.

At 31st December, 2023 there were 35 communicant members and 44 families connected with the congregation. The average attendance at worship is 35.

PASTORAL CARE

Members of the congregation who are unable to attend church due to sickness or age are visited on a regular basis. Those who have been bereaved are also provided with support and prayer.

MISSION AND OUTREACH

At a local level the congregation supports Downpatrick which is the base for the community foodbank. It is staffed by members from all churches. This foodbank satisfies a great need in the community.

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The church was full for the annual Carol Service with people from across the community attending.

The congregation, through its Facebook page, continues to reach out to the local community.

The congregation seeks to support the local community through allowing use of its facilities and resources. The Hall has been used by some local groups.

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 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, providing grant support for the upkeep of Church premises, assists with the running costs of Union Theological College, the Church's training college for ministry students, and financially supports congregations 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 congregation and the wider structures of the Church.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The minister and one of our elders were nominated to attend the meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland held in the Assembly Building, Belfast, in June.

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ORGANISATIONS

PW meets monthly from September to April, providing ladies with the opportunity for fellowship and fun through a varied programme. They were inspired and challenged through hearing about the work of different people and groups. The annual PW service was held in May and the ladies had a meal at the end of the season.

VOLUNTEERS

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

Public Benefit Statement

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland meet 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 the spiritual and moral development and opportunities for response to Bible teaching. In turn, this framework leads to the 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 using noticeboards, printed material, press advertisements, websites and social media or in other ways.

The benefits are demonstrated through regular evaluations 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 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,

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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 Commission Public benefit requirement statutory guidance.

Financial Review

The Congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through weekly freewill offering.

There were 30 contributors during the year 2023.

A total of £13030.46 was donated in 2023.

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 congregation's 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 receipt 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 for safeguarding the assets of the congregation and hence for taking responsible steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Kirk Session on 8th October 2024

Signed on its behalf by:

Isobel Brown

Owen Patterson

