



BALLYGRAINEY 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 (NIC105138)

BALLYGRAINEY 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

Ballygrainey Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
461 Gransha Road
Bangor
Co Down
BT19 7PX

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105138)

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

Rev James Rogers*	Alex McMaster
Rachel Boyle	Lyn McMaster
Leslie Cree	Valerie Scott
David Donnan	Mervyn Shaw
Robert Houston	William Spence
Trevor Magowan	James Turtle
Elizabeth Matthews	Keith Young
Brian McDowell	

* added 3 February 2023

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister: Rev James Rogers*
Clerk of Session: Mr Brian McDowell
Congregational Secretary: Mr Bert Houston
Treasurer: Mr Peter McGimpsey

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Hamilton, Morris, Waugh
34 Dufferin Avenue
Bangor
Co Down BT20 3AA

BANKERS

Ulster Bank
Killeen Avenue
Bangor
Co Down BT19 1NB

SOLICITORS

Russell & Company
11 Lower Mary Street
Newtownards
Co Down
BT23 4JJ

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 held once a month, 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 by the Kirk Session. Members are elected if they obtain two-thirds of those who 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. Ballygrainey Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the Ards 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.

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.

BALLYGRAINEY 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.

Ballygrainey 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, by the grace of God, to be a Biblical, Christ centred community, loving Jesus and others, serving Jesus and others and sharing Jesus with others.

Our vision is, by the grace of God, to be an inclusive, welcoming community of Christ's people of all ages, which:

- 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;
- 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.

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES

The congregation usually meets for worship every Sunday and visitors are welcomed to join. Services are also live streamed on to the internet. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is observed on five 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 holds a number of Bible Study and Prayer meetings and has a wide range of organisations including:

- Presbyterian Women
- Sunday School
- Boys Brigade
- Young Life
- Konnect
- Seniors Fellowship
- Mothers and Toddlers Group
- Bowling Club
- Badminton Club

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

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and Prayer

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 11.00am. Evening services are held from time to time, often jointly with neighbouring congregations. A midweek Wednesday meeting held twice each month at 7.30pm provides an opportunity for members to come together for fellowship, to study the Scriptures, and for a time of praise and prayer.

As well as our regular services, during the year we acknowledge God's gift of new life at Sacraments of Baptism, we conduct Marriage Services, and give thanks for faithful service as we seek to comfort those who have been bereaved.

At 31 December 2023 there were 224 communicant members and 209 families connected with the congregation. The average weekly attendance at Sunday morning worship was 180.

Pastoral Care

The church places a high value on pastoral care for its members. Such care is offered to all members of the congregation and to the local community if a person approaches the church for help. Members of the congregation who were unable to attend church due to sickness or age were visited on a regular basis by the Minister, Elders, Deaconess, and other members.

Mission and Outreach

The Session of the church actively encourages every member ministry. At a local level the congregation seeks to impact and support the community through allowing use of its facilities and resources, supporting the North Down Foodbank and through the spreading of the Good News of the Gospel. An annual outreach to local children, the Holiday Bible Club was held in August with approximately 30 children in attendance.

At a wider level, the congregation supports the United Appeal for Mission which is a central fund of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (contributing £10,500 in 2023). 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, 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 contributed to the denominations annual World Development Appeal (£2,351 in 2023), the Moderator's appeals, and other special appeals throughout the year. The congregation also supported a number of external missions and agencies amounting to a total of £6,878.

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

Presbytery

The congregation was represented at the regular meetings of Ards Presbytery by the Minister and one of the elders. This provided an important link between the congregation and the wider structures of the church.

General Assembly

Along with the Minister, one of our Elders was nominated to attend the meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland held in Assembly Buildings, Belfast, in June 2023.

Property

The Church Committee continues to provide oversight and maintenance of our suite of buildings to ensure they remain fit for purpose. In addition, general maintenance was carried out to the church buildings and halls during the year. Necessary maintenance and repairs were also carried out in the manse throughout the year.

Organizations

- Sunday School (Lighthouse Club) - approx. 15 children attend on a weekly basis, during the Sunday morning services.
- Konnect Kids – approx. 14 attend a midweek meeting for children.
- Konnect Youth – approx. 8 attend a midweek meeting for young people.
- Young Life - approx. 60/70 teens attend each Saturday night, and enjoy a varied programme of games, activities, Bible reflections and refreshments.
- Mothers and Toddlers (Tweenies) - a safe environment where people from the congregation and local community can come with their children, interact with others, relax and socialize. There were on average 25 infants with accompanying mums, grannies and child-minders attending each Wednesday between 10am and 12 noon.
- Bowling Club - The Club meet each Thursday evening, holding tournaments as well as playing home and away fixtures against other local clubs.
- Boys' Brigade - There are over 30 boys registered in our BB Company which meets on Friday nights. A range of activities is offered each week, including life skills, Bible study and sports activities.
- Presbyterian Women (PW) - The 35 members of PW meet every month to listen to various visiting speakers and enjoy activities together.
- Thursday Afternoon Fellowship meets monthly except during the summer. Up to 30 senior ladies and men enjoy fellowship and activities including guest speakers, music and quizzes.
- Badminton Club – members meet weekly for recreation and fellowship.

Non-members of the congregation were always very welcome to attend any of these organisations.

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

Volunteers

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

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 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.

BALLYGRAINEY 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. One hundred and sixty two contributing families during the year donated a total of £98,988 [£99,784 in previous year, 2022].

Total Income of the congregation (including appeals and bequests) during the year 2023 was £180,934 compared to £196,525 in the previous year.

Total expenditure (including that of organizations) was £210,873 during 2023 compared to £171,614 in 2022.

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

RISK REVIEW

A review of major risks has been undertaken by the Trustees and systems and procedures implemented to manage identified risks. The principal risks are in relation to the likelihood of reputational damage and financial risks associated with the expectation of ongoing financial support from members.

These risks are mitigated by the Trustees and the Congregational Committee, regularly monitoring the various activities of the congregation at stated meetings and by encouraging members in their regular giving.

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) 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.

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

Approved by the Kirk Session at a meeting on Tuesday 10th September 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

James Rogers
(Minister)

James Rogers

Date: 10th September 2024

Brian McDowell
(Clerk of Session)

Brian McDowell

Date: 10th September 2024