

## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

The Trustees present their Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2023 including a Balance Sheet as at that date.

## **REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

Ballydown Presbyterian Church a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland  
Castlewellan Road, Banbridge, Co. Down.

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105146)

## **CHARITY TRUSTEES**

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

Elmer Armstrong  
Ian Montgomery  
Liam Rutherford  
John Campbell

Samuel Magowan  
Samuel Martin  
James Martin  
William Porter

## **PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS**

Minister  
Clerk of Session  
Treasurer

Rev Liam Rutherford  
Ian Montgomery  
James Ringrose

## **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER**

**S.M.Vint & Co., 8 Newry Road, Banbridge, BT32 3HN.**

## **BANKERS**

**Danske Bank, Newry Finance Centre, 58 Hill Street, Newry, BT34 1AR.**

## **SOLICITORS**

**Trevor McBurney & Co., 37-39 Rathfriland Street, Banbridge, Co. Down, BT32 3LA.**

## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

### **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 Sessions 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 ministers in active duty in the congregation, has no deliberative but only a casting vote.

Stated meetings of the Kirk session are held monthly.

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. Ballydown Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the Iveagh 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.

## **TRUSTEES 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**

Ballydown 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: "Reflecting Christ. Reaching People. Renewing lives."

#### **-REFLECTING CHRIST**

*Our mission is to reflect Christ's desires and character. We want people to see Jesus 'the Light of the World'. We are His lights reflecting His loving and life-giving qualities.*

#### **-REACHING PEOPLE**

*Our mission is to make disciples, as Jesus commanded. We want to find ways of making meaningful contacts with people in our community and to share God's love with them.*

#### **-RENEWING LIVES**

*Our mission is to see God's Spirit take God's Word and transform lives. We want to see lives renewed as testimony to the power of the Gospel.*

## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

### **ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES**

The congregation meets for worship every Sunday and visitors are welcome to join. The Sacrament of the Lords Supper is observed on six 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 wide range of organisations including:

- Creche and Sunday School
- Youth Club
- Girls' Brigade
- Boys' Brigade
- Youth Fellowship
- Presbyterian Women
- Small Groups

### **ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

#### **Worship and prayer**

Normally the congregation meets for worship each Sunday at 10.30am and once a month at 7.30pm. During the week the Small Groups provide an opportunity for members to meet together for fellowship, to study the scriptures and to pray for one another and the wider needs of the community.

During the year we acknowledged God's gift of new life at baptism, we conducted marriage services and funeral services. We also marked harvest and other key times in the Christian calendar including Christmas and Easter.

At 31 December 2023 there were 301 communicant members and 219 families connected with the congregation.

The average attendance at Sunday morning worship was around 370 persons of all ages. Creche, Kidzone and Sunday School all run during the service to meet the spiritual needs of children of all ages. Prayer Ministry is offered at the close of the service. We also serve tea and coffee after the service to allow for informal fellowship.

#### **Pastoral care**

Members of the congregation who are unable to attend church due to sickness or age are normally visited by the minister, elders or by one of the congregation's pastoral visitors.

## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

### **Mission and outreach**

At a local level the congregation seeks to share the gospel of Jesus Christ both formally and informally. This is achieved through our regular church services, online services, uniformed and non-uniformed organisations and through the various clubs that we run as well as helping to support the local Food Bank and various charitable organisations such as the Blythswood Shoebox Appeal.

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 and to do mission and outreach on 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.

### **Presbytery**

The congregation was represented at the regular meetings of Presbytery by our minister and / or one of the elders. This provides an important link between the congregations and the wider structures of the church.

### **General Assembly**

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

### **Property**

The church continues to maintain the property to a good standard

### **Organisations**

**Small Groups:** Ten small groups have met in the church premises and around our district on a weekly basis, averaging 14 people in each.

**Youth Fellowship** met on Sunday evenings and exists for teenagers to learn more about the gospel, worship together and enjoy various games and social activities and a weekend away. Average attendance 35.

## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

Youth Club meets on Friday evenings with an average of 35 teenagers attending and enjoying all sorts of activities including football, board games, pool, basketball, table tennis and various video games.

Boys' Brigade in Ballydown is made up of three sections- Anchor Boys (12 enrolled), Junior Section 11 enrolled) and Company Section (12 enrolled). The Boys' Brigade sections have sought to fulfil their mission of "Extending Christ's Kingdom Among Boys" through their badge work, Bible Study and development of life-skills.

Girl Guiding in Ballydown closed in June of 2023. We are grateful to those who served in leadership of the Girl Guides and appreciate all the hard work that went into creating a varied program of activities for the girls.

Girls' Brigade began in September 2023 and is made up of five sections. The girls range in age from 4 to 16 years old supported by 16 leaders. Ballydown GB is affiliated to GBNI as 377<sup>th</sup> GBNI Company and Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> October was the first Enrolment Service. The GB meets weekly on a Tuesday to fulfil their mission which is, "To help girls to become followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, and through self-control, reverence and a sense of responsibility, to find true enrichment of life."

Creche is split into three – Baby Creche (0 to 12 months), Junior Creche (1 to 2+ years) and Toddler Creche (2+ to 4 years) and runs during the Sunday Service.

Worship has been led each Sunday by a team of musicians and praise leaders.

The Puppets Ministry has presented Bible stories to children - presented mainly by our teenagers. They have featured on special occasions such as Easter, Children's Sunday, Christmas and the Organisations' Enrolment Service.

Camera Club has met fortnightly and exists to educate its members about photography and taking better pictures. They have organised occasional field trips and created projects for members to complete.

Sewing Bees has about a dozen ladies meeting to complete craft projects.

Presbyterian Women has met the needs of ladies of the congregation with an emphasis on both spiritual and practical activities. The PW prays for and supports overseas mission.

About 18 men (18 years and up) played football on Thursday evenings from April onwards to keep fit and enjoy some social interaction.

The Carers' Group helps those who are caring for their family members and normally meets once a month.

## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

Lift Groups are small meetings of three to four people meeting for prayer on an informal basis.

Other men's and women's ministries have been established to help to maintain the personal links within our congregation and to encourage fellowship.

By way of outreach into our community we held meetings in a local coffee shop (Ground Coffee Shop on Newry St, Banbridge) to run course such as "Hope Explored" and the "Alpha Course." These courses serve as introductions to the Christian faith.

### **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.

## **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.

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

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.

## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

### **FINANCIAL REVIEW**

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering. There were 177 contributors during the year [ 168 in previous year, 2022] donating a total of £112,898 (£109,376 in previous year, 2022)

Total Income of the congregation during the year was £270,447, compared to £265,531 in the previous year.

Total expenditure increased from £260,701 to £266,758.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES IN RESPECT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

The Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the congregations and the financial activities for that year. In preparing the financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Funds will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the funds transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the congregations and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities (1 January 2015)". 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.

## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

### 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 these 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.

### RESERVES POLICY

The Trustees have considered the level of unrestricted reserves that it is appropriate to hold taking account of current and ongoing commitments. It is the policy of the Trustees to hold between three and six month's normal expenditure. At the year end unrestricted reserves were £86,912 which represents a high level of reserves. The Trustees however, consider it prudent to hold reserves at this level as the funding of its present activities is dependent of the ongoing financial support of members.

### 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.

Approved by the Kirk Session at a meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024 and signed on its behalf by



Rev Liam Rutherford  
Minister



James Ringrose  
Treasurer