

WARRENPOINT CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

Trustees' Annual Report *(continued)*

Year ended 31 December 2023

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 at least twice in each 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 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. Warrenpoint congregation of the Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the Newry 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 the 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.

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

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

Warrenpoint congregation of the 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 the members to play their part in fulfilling God's mission to our world.

The congregation's mission purposes are "by the grace of God and in the power of the Spirit, to help people of all ages, nationalities and backgrounds become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ and fully committed to the life, fellowship and mission of our church" involving:

- A commitment to prayer
- A commitment to effective discipleship of all believers

WARRENPOINT CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

Trustees' Annual Report *(continued)*

Year ended 31 December 2023

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE *(continued)*

- A commitment to making Sunday worship services attractive to all
- A commitment to engaging more people in the study of God's Word
- A commitment to reaching out to our many members on the fringes of church life
- A commitment to evaluating our children's and youth ministry
- A commitment to personal and corporate evangelism
- A commitment to building relationships in our community and addressing real needs
- A commitment to mission beyond Newry
- A commitment partnering with others for the sake of the Gospel

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

During 2023, activities resumed, albeit not to the levels being conducted per covid. However the congregation resumed to meeting for worship every Sunday and visitors were welcomed to join. During the worship service primary school children leave for their own activity, children's church. The Sacrament of the Lords Supper is observed on several 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 regular bible study meetings and has a wide range of organisations including:

- Children's Church
- Mothers and Toddlers
- Mid-Week Bible Study Group
- Prayer Group
- Holiday Bible Club.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and prayer

The congregation met for worship each Sunday at 10:30am. During the week (from October to May) a prayer and bible study group meet. The Bible Study meeting provides an opportunity for members to meet together for fellowship, to study the scriptures and for a time of prayer. As well as our regular services during the year we acknowledge God's gift of new life, and during the year we had no new Sacraments of Infant Baptism. There was one marriage service during the year. We gave thanks for faithful services and sought to comfort those who had been bereaved during the year. At 31 December 2023 there were 20 regular communicant members and 55 families (33 contributing) connected with the congregation. The average weekly attendance at morning worship is approximately 25.

WARRENPOINT CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

Trustees' Annual Report *(continued)*

Year ended 31 December 2023

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE *(continued)*

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 minister and elders. The minister and one elder will also visit our elderly and the sacrament of communion is served to those unable to attend morning worship.

Mission and outreach

In 2023 a week of outreach during the summer for children and young people took place. The leaders provided a holiday bible club and outdoor activities for young primary school children on a cross community basis in Warrenpoint.

Church Hall Activities

The congregation normally opens its church hall to outreach to cross community activities such as the Tag Group, an organisation who runs activities for a group of young people with learning difficulties. The hall was also used on an ad hoc basis but other community group support society.

Christmas Related Activity

The Children's church normally also holds a Christmas party each year for local children some of whom attend church and some who do not, and presents are given to all. The congregation normally provides some type of Christmas related activity for congregational members and friends. Each year we provide Christmas parcels to two charities, which can change from year to year. Some of these activities took place in 2023.

United 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 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 the congregation in the areas of worship, discipleship, global mission, outreach, leadership and pastoral care. The congregation through its mission fund and over and above the United Appeal for Mission also contributes to the Moderators disaster Appeal, the World Development Appeal and Presbyterian Children's Society. United Appeal was supported as usual in 2023 and our honorary amount was donated.

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 meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland held in Assembly Buildings, Belfast, in June.

Property

Some minor works were undertaken during the year.

WARRENPOINT CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

Trustees' Annual Report *(continued)*

Year ended 31 December 2023

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE *(continued)*

Organisations

The children's church is all part of morning service and after their address the children leave for activities in the church hall, which is supervised by a rota of four ladies of the congregation, under the direction of the leader church elder Mrs Heather Gray. The Mums & Toddlers group normally meets on a Monday morning from September to June. On average 15-25 children come with their parents or guardians from the wider community. A soup lunch for the congregation, organised by the Sunday school leaders took place after Easter. A special service for children and families followed by a BBQ was very well attended in June.

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. 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.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering. There were 38 contributors during the year (38 in previous year, 2022) donating a total of £19,966 (£18,003 in previous year, 2022).

Total Income of the congregation during the year was £41,982 (2022 - £41,414). Total Expenditure of the congregation excluding capital expenditure during the year was £27,251 (2022 - £79,451). The Net expenditure for the year to 31 December 2023 was £14,731 (2022 – Expenditure -£38,037) .

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Trustees' Annual Report *(continued)*

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FINANCIAL REVIEW *(continued)*

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 is appropriate to hold, taking account of current and ongoing commitments. It is the policy of the Trustees to hold at least three month's normal expenditure. At the year-end unrestricted reserves were £57,001 (2022 - £51,398) which represents a higher level of reserves. The Trustees, however, consider it prudent to hold reserves at this level as the funding of its present activities is dependent on the ongoing financial support of its 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 of 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.

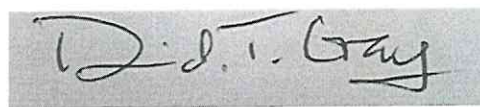
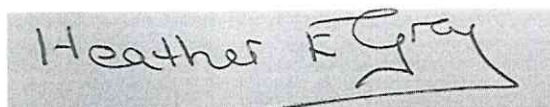
As the congregation's total income does not exceed £250,000, the Trustees have elected under Section 64(3) of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 208 to prepare a receipts and payment account and a statement of assets and liabilities.

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.

Approved by the Kirk Session at a meeting on 14/10/24 and signed on its behalf by

Heather Gray
Trustee

David Gray
Trustee



Date: ... 14 10 24.....
