



MARKETHILL 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 NIC105190

MARKETHILL 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

Markethill congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
Fairgreen Road
Markethill
Co. Armagh

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland **NIC105190**

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

Dr Pamela Marshall
Mr Jackie Hamilton
Mr Ronnie Totten
Mr Philip Johnston
Mr Harry Alderdice

Rev Norman Smyth
Mr Ronald Mills
Mr Robert Donaghy
Mr Trevor Lockhart

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister
Clerk of Session
Treasurer

Rev Norman Smyth
Mr Trevor Lockhart (appointed Oct 2023)
Mr Ronnie Totten

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Wylie Ruddell
37 Main Street, Markethill, Armagh, BT60 1PH

BANKERS

Danske Bank
45-48 High St, Portadown, Craigavon, BT62 1LB

SOLICITORS

Fisher Mullan
8 Trevor Hill, Newry, County Down, BT34 1DN

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 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 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. Market Hill 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.

2. DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

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

Markethill 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 her members to play their part in fulfilling God's mission to our world.

The congregations' vision statement is:

“To know Jesus Christ, reflect him in our lives and help others to know him”

As a church we will aim to fulfil our Vision by:

- i) Glorifying God as a worshiping fellowship;
- ii) Growing more like Jesus as a maturing fellowship;
- iii) Making disciples as a mission centred fellowship;
- iv) Reflecting Jesus in our lives as a caring fellowship;
- v) Being forward looking as a fellowship that trains and nurtures leaders;
- vi) Being people focused as a fellowship that values all age groups and backgrounds; and
- vii) Being world focused as a fellowship with worldwide interests

3. 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 two 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 but not limited to:

- Sunday School
- Bible Study
- Youth Club
- Mothers and Toddlers
- Girls Brigade
- Bowling Club

4. ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and prayer

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday morning and on a Sunday evening as advertised. During the week the Bible Study 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 acknowledged God's gift of new life during Sacrament of Baptism services, we conducted marriage services and sought to comfort those who had been bereaved during the year.

Pastoral care

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

Mission and outreach

Markethill is a rural village that continues to develop and grow, new housing developments meaning new families have come to live in the village, our aim is that through the outreach work of the congregation that these people will come to hear the gospel message of the Lord Jesus Christ. As a congregation we are eager to continue with and further develop our Christian influence and make an impact for Christ in this community.

Our congregation also has an interest and supports the advancement of Christ's kingdom across the world. This support is demonstrated through special services, regular prayer in Sunday morning worship for others and by financial support.

The congregation during 2023 supported 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 congregation in the areas of worship, discipleship, global mission, outreach, leadership and pastoral care.

The congregation and its organisations also contributed financially to a number of other external missions and agencies during 2023 including:

- The World Development Appeal
- The Presbyterian Children's Society
- European Mission Fellowship
- Tear Fund

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 are normally nominated to attend the meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland held in Assembly Buildings, Belfast.

Property

The Church Committee continues to provide oversight and maintenance of the congregation's buildings to ensure that they remain fit for purpose.

Organisations

Bible Study & Prayer Meeting

Held on a Wednesday evening in the Lecture Hall the Bible study is an informal setting, with open discussion and prayer topics that cover wider world as well as local congregation issues.

Bowling Club

Attended by both people from the congregation and from the local community. Held in the Small Memorial Hall with other clubs visiting for matches.

Bright Hour

Held in the Lecture Hall and attracts older people from both the congregation and the community. Stimulating events and speakers, dealing with real issues facing older people. A cup of tea at end promotes fellowship and interaction.

FUSE Youth Club

Held in the Small Memorial Hall it attracts young people from varying backgrounds. An epilogue with a spiritual message is held each evening during the club. Events such as bowling and outdoor activities are organised during the year.

Girls' Brigade

Held on a Tuesday evening in the Small Memorial Hall the Girls Brigade draws girls from a wide spectrum of the community. Events and activities are organised that engage and challenge the girls. An important Bible based outreach and witness to young girls in the local community.

Presbyterian Women

The PW is the primary ladies group in the Church, drawing members from all age groups. Provides fellowship, and spiritual support and development.

Sunday School & Bible Class

Held each Sunday morning before Church and attracts children from both the congregation and the wider community. This is a key activity in bringing the Gospel to young people.

Tots Time

Play group for pre-school children where mothers can have fellowship and get to know others in the community and those from the Church, in a relaxed environment.

Youth Fellowship

A Christ centered outreach, among the youth in the congregation. Addresses issues facing young people from Biblical perspective. Promotes fellowship among our young people.

Craft n Craic

This group provides a place on Tuesday mornings for folks from the congregation and the community who enjoy handicrafts to work on their projects and enjoy a cup of tea together. Numerous knitted items have been made and donated by the group to maternity wards and nursing homes around the Province and to overseas charities.

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.

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 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.

6. FINANCIAL REVIEW

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering, donating a total of £ £95,246 in 2023 up from £91,929 in 2022.

Total Income of the congregation during 2023 was £190,678 down from £237,079 in the previous year.

Total expenditure during 2023 was £196,806 up from £165,429 in the previous year.

7. GOING CONCERN

The trustees are of the opinion that the congregation has sufficient resources at the date of approving the financial statements to meet commitments which will arise in the following year, subject to the continuing support from members, to fund on an ongoing basis the congregation's current activities and other financial commitments. The activities of the congregation are dependent on ongoing contributions from its members.

8. 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 on 1st October 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

Mr T Lockhart



1st Oct 2024

Mr R Mills



1st Oct 2024