

TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BANGOR
a Congregation of The Presbyterian Church In Ireland

Trustees Annual Report

for the year ended 31 December 2023

Registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland NIC:105214

TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BANGOR
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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

The Trinity Presbyterian Church, Bangor congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
Main Street, Bangor BT20 5AF.

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC:105214)

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

PRS Blair	RMcM Hunter
H Blair	R Irvine
L Brant	EF Jardine
TM Boal	G Kennedy
C Booth	W McCorkell
D Carson	D Moore
C Devenney	Rev S Orr
J Ferguson	S O'Neill
N Fitzsimmons	C Vincent
S Fitzsimmons	P Swann
R Gamble	K Neely
A Glenn	A Walker
GE Harding	I D Wallace
N Hunter	R Willis

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister	Rev Stephen Orr
Clerks of Session	Dr Gordon Kennedy, Mrs C Vincent
Treasurer	Mr. Peter Blair

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INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Mr. Andrew Nicholson, 25 Moira Drive, Bangor, BT20 4RW

BANKERS

Danske Bank, Bloomfield Shopping Centre, South Circular Road, Bangor, BT19 7HB

SOLICITORS

The Kirk Session has not engaged the services of a Solicitor for several years. Should this be considered necessary in the future, either Presbytery advice will be taken, or a local Solicitor specialising in the subject (e.g. employment, liability, contract) will be appointed.

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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 congregations. All members are entitled to propose, speak and exercise equal votes at meetings, except that the Moderator, who is 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 regular intervals. 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. Trinity 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.

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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

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

The congregation's Vision is to be "A faith community of disciples, who want to become more like Jesus and introduce others to him."

The congregation aims to live out its Mission and Vision "By exploring how we can spend more time with Jesus in a way that makes us more like Him as a springboard to developing missional attitudes and practices."

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES

The congregation met (actually or virtually) for worship every Sunday and visitors are welcome to join. The Sacrament of the Lord's 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 meetings for Bible-study and prayer and has a wide range of organisations including:

- A range of uniformed and non-uniformed youth organisations; and
- Adult organisations which provide opportunities for spiritual, missionary and pastoral support.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and prayer

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 10.30 am and on occasional Sundays at 6.30pm. Home groups and mid-week meetings (alternate weeks) provide 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 at Sacraments of Baptism, we conducted marriage services and gave thanks for faithful services and sought to comfort those who had been bereaved during the year.

At 31 December 2023 statistics were gathered. As a church family of 216 families claiming connection, with 171 contributing families (248 contributing individuals); with 234 persons under 59 years of age and 170 seniors, 90 members between 60-79 and 80 members of 80years+ the church family profile is clearly intergenerational, with much opportunity for sharing the wisdom of the years alongside energy and contemporary vision coming upwards. This is recognised by Consultation Committee as a healthy profile with much opportunity for growth through outreach and serving within the fellowship. 235 Communicants is a strong current statistic with obvious potential for growth for the current 30 in Sunday School and Bible Class.

The average weekly attendance at morning worship was 125, with encouraging numbers of worshippers in the post-COVID era. On-line media was also provided for those wishing to worship from home.

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, elders or by one of the congregation's pastoral visitors.

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Mission and outreach

At a local level the congregation has identified 4 areas of mission and outreach with in our local community. These include:

- Our “front lines” in the places we work and socialise
- The parents of children and young people who attend our youth organisations
- The local business community
- The opportunities presented by the development of the local Harbour Ward.

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, assists 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.

Three families associated with the church are engaged in overseas mission in South East Asia, the Philippines and New Zealand.

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 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

During the 2023 - year significant maintenance work was carried out to the roofs of the church building and church halls.

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Organisations

Youth Organisations

Our youth organisations have fully resumed the normal operating model following the removal of COVID restrictions during 2022.

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.

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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 232 contributors during the year (239 in previous year, 2022) donating a total of £138,644 (£130,361 in previous year, 2022)

Total Income of the congregation during the year was £220,480, compared to £220,249 in the previous year.

Total expenditure increased from £232,118 to £248,336.

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

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- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable standards, identify these standards, and note the effect and reasons for any material departure from those standards; and
- 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.

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.

The Trustees acknowledge the ongoing devastating impact of the coronavirus pandemic on society and remains confident that reserves are sufficient to meet our financial commitments until a state of normality returns.

RESERVES POLICY

The Trustees aim to generate reserves which would cover 12 months of commitments and expenditure. The Trustees consider that the amount of reserves will be dictated by future donations and planned expenditure and have processes in place to review income and expenditure on a regular basis.

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RISK REVIEW

A review of major risks has been undertaken by the Trustees and systems and procedures implemented to manage identified risks.

The principle risks are in relation to the

- Likelihood of reputational damage
- Legal risks in the areas of Child Protection, Health & Safety, Food Preparation and Data Protection
- 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 17th September 2024 and signed on its behalf by

Mrs Claire Vincent

Clerk of Session (Business)

Mr Peter Blair

Treasurer