



First Bangor Presbyterian Church a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Trustees Report
for the year ended 31st December 2023

Registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland NIC105217



First Bangor Presbyterian Church a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements
for the year ended 31st December 2023

Contents

Charity Reference and Administrative Details	1
Trustees Annual Report	2 - 9
Independent's Examiner's Report	10
Statement Of Financial Activities	11
Balance Sheet	12
Notes to the Accounts	13 - 25



First Bangor Presbyterian Church a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
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for the year ended 31st December 2023

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

Miss Avril Lang	Mr James Wallace	Mrs Wilma Sloan
Miss Susan Hamilton	Mr John Stevenson	Mr Ron Crangle
Mr Andrew Thompson	Mr Gary Rodgers	Mr Roy Mccullough
Mr Brian Jones	Mr Robin Dixon	Mr Simon Kelly
Mr Brian Sloan	Mr Nigel Kennedy	Mr Trevor McMechan
Mr Clifford Browne	Mrs Anne Kennedy	Mr Mark Hamilton
Mr Denis Smith	Mr Noel Corbett	Mrs Anna Harbinson
Mr George Monaghan	Mr Owen Hare	Mrs Daphne Gilmore
Mr Graeme Crangle	Mr Robert Crangle	Rev David Stanfield
Mrs Gladys Brown	Mr Ian Marshall	Rev Mairisine Stanfield
Mrs Helen Sloan	Mrs Sheila Brown	Mrs Joy Hare

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister	Rev Mairisine Stanfield
Associate Minister	Rev David Stanfield
Clerk of Session	Mrs Anne Kennedy
Treasurer	Mrs Joy Hare

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

BANKERS

Danske Bank
Bloomfield, Bangor

SOLICITORS

McCoubrey Hinds Solicitors
61 Main Street
Bangor
BT20 5AF



First Bangor Presbyterian Church a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

for the year ended 31st December 2023

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

STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT

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, and other ministers in active duty in the congregation, have no deliberative but only a casting vote.

Stated meetings of the Kirk session are held on the first Tuesday of September, November, December, February, March & May

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. First Bangor 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.



First Bangor Presbyterian Church a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

for the year ended 31st December 2023

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

First Bangor 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 to be a vibrant worshipping community known for our passion for Jesus and compassion for people. 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 compassion 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.



First Bangor Presbyterian Church a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

for the year ended 31st December 2023

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES

The congregation meets for worship every Sunday and visitors are welcome to join in. 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 meetings in small groups to help people grow in faith and pastorally care for one another and has a wide range of activities and organisations including:

- Discipleship Groups A source of discipleship and pastoral care in small groups
- Big Tree House (BTH) Children's ministry on a Sunday
- Big Tree Collective (BTC) Youth & Children's ministry
- Boys' Brigade & Girls' Brigade
- Dorcus & Presbyterian Women (PW) Groups for women
- Bowling Clubs With groups for both men & women
- Pathfinders A social and activity-based group for men
- Luncheon Club Socialising around a meal, for senior citizens
- Model Railway Club Community built around an interest in model railways

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and prayer

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 11.00am. There are opportunities for prayer in the Prayer Room or the Sanctuary every day from 9.00am to 5.00pm as well as specific times when people gather for prayer (currently Tuesday & Sunday mornings). During the week small groups and other courses provide an opportunity for members, and anyone else who would like to join in, to meet together to grow in faith, enjoy fellowship, study the scriptures and pray.

As well as our regular services during the year we acknowledged God's gift of new life at 3 Sacraments of Baptism, welcomed 4 new families, gave thanks for faithful service and sought to comfort those who had been bereaved during the year.

At 31 December 2023 there were 347 communicant members and 610 families connected with the congregation.

The average week attendance at morning worship is 440.

Pastoral care

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



First Bangor Presbyterian Church a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

for the year ended 31st December 2023

Mission and outreach

At a local level the congregation:

Offered regular opportunities to participate in the ALPHA and Christianity Explored Courses.

Partnered with nearly 50 other churches in the surrounding area to support Storehouse North Down and the Kiltonga Christian Centre, ministries supplying food, clothing and furniture to those in need.

The congregation 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 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 ministers and / or one of the elders. This provides an important link between the congregations and the wider structures of the church.

General Assembly

The ministers 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

The Salters Trust: The property in Annes Court is rented out to generate income to be used for our charitable purposes according to the conditions of the Trust. The rent received from Ulster Estates Ltd has reduced in line with the agreement between us just over £44k to just over £38k.

The other property owned by the congregation, 'The Manse', is used as accommodation for the Minister.



First Bangor Presbyterian Church a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

for the year ended 31st December 2023

Organisations

Big Tree House (BTH) Our children's ministry on a Sunday. This involved children of primary school age and included learning to worship God through music, talking to Him in prayer and growing relationship with Him through experience, activities and teaching (average attendance 30).

Big Tree Collective (BTC) Sunday Morning This youth ministry on Sunday mornings offered the opportunity for discussion and learning that supplemented the discipleship training on Saturday

Big Tree Collective (BTC) Sunday Evening Our youth ministry on a Sunday evening was geared towards the discipleship of Years 8-14 at secondary school (average attendance 18).

The Girls' Brigade met on Wednesday nights and is for girls aged between 3-18 years old. The badges that they worked towards included attendance at GB, Church attendance and the section badge. For the section badge girls participated in activities like: studying the Bible; PE, badminton, netball, touch rugby; baking, Brigade knowledge, felting, healthy eating; running a coffee evening for family and friends, and visiting the elderly. The GB has about 110 girls and leaders.

The Boys' Brigade worked with around 80 boys between the ages of 4-18 and met every Friday evening from Sept to April. The younger boys enjoyed games, craft and stories. The Junior boys played football, worked towards being awarded badges, went on trips to Elite Archery and the Police Station. The older boys enjoyed a wide range of activities, sports and trips to Elite Archery & Karting. Their badge work ranged from cooking, robotics, learning about our community to learning to play the ukulele. Many also worked towards the Queens Badge and the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme.

DORCAS A craft making group for women of all ages that meets on Thursday mornings (average attendance 25).

Presbyterian Women (PW) Met on the 3rd Tuesday of each month to learn about and support mission projects (average attendance 30).

Model Railway Club A group that is currently all male that met every Wednesday evening and also both hosted and exhibited at Exhibitions (average attendance 20).

Bowling Clubs Met at various times each week for both men and women.



First Bangor Presbyterian Church a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

for the year ended 31st December 2023

Volunteers

The Trustees wish to acknowledge their deep appreciation of the more than 130 volunteers 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.



First Bangor Presbyterian Church a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

for the year ended 31st December 2023

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering. The contributions during the year was £275,592 compared to £269,183 for the previous year.

Total income increased to £401,142 compared to £385,106 the previous year.

Total expenditure increased to £448,706 compared to £418,793 the previous year.

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

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.



First Bangor Presbyterian Church a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

for the year ended 31st December 2023

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 at least 6 months normal expenditure. At the year end unrestricted reserves were £238,884. The Trustees consider it prudent to hold reserves at this level as the funding of its present activities is dependent on 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 10th October and signed on their behalf by Rev. Mairisine Stanfield & Mrs Anne Kennedy