

ST COLUMBA'S 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

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

St Columba's congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
10 Killaney Avenue, Lisburn, BT28 1QU.

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105238)

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

Ellen Hillen
Myrtle Ferguson
Lexi Burrows

Ronnie McAuley
Rev Rodney Cameron
Shirley Harrison

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister
Clerk of Session
Treasurer
Secretary

Rev Rodney Cameron
Ellen Hillen
Valerie Nettleship
Myrtle Ferguson

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

McCleary & Co Ltd
Chartered Accountants
Garvey Studios
14 Longstone Street
Lisburn
BT28 1TP

BANKERS

Ulster Bank Ltd
Bow Street
Lisburn
BT28 1BN

**ST COLUMBA'S CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND
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SOLICITORS

Carson McDowell LLP
Murray House
14 Murray Street
Belfast
BT1 6DN

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 on average 5 times per year – 4 times in 2023.

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.

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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. St Columba's congregation of the Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the Dromore 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: Mrs Ellen Hillen represents our 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, administrative 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.

St Columba's 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 mission purposes is as a congregation we commit ourselves to worship which puts God at the centre, opens us up to His love, faces us with our shortcomings and, making known His forgiveness, frees us to grow through His grace. We commit ourselves to becoming a fellowship where we care for and encourage one another, using and developing the gifts that God has given us as we respond to His call to the young.

**ST COLUMBA'S CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND
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We commit ourselves to loving service to the community in which we are set, and to the world around us, witnessing to Christ, caring for a needy world, working for peace that God intends, and exercising a responsible stewardship for the environment.

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 four 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

- Presbyterian Women
- Afternoon Club
- Parent and Toddler Group
- Line Dancing Exercise Class
- Kids Club
- Stitch and Enrich
- Drop-in Coffee Morning
- Drop-in Lunch (Monthly)

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and prayer

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 11.30am.

As well as our regular services during the year, we gave thanks for faithful services and sought to comfort those who had been bereaved during the year.

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At 31 December 2023 there were 42 communicant members and 170 families connected with the congregation. The average weekly attendance at morning worship is 45.

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.

Mission and outreach

The congregation has been sharing God's word to the local community through:-

Door Step Ministry – The pastoral care team continue to build on the door-step ministry started during lock-down with regular visits to housebound and those in need. Gift packs which include a spiritual message in the form of a "reflection" or a pamphlet or book is given along with the church magazine and a gift of food or flowers.

Annual Harvest Appeal – Donations to the local food bank were provided to help local families in need. This was continued through the year when a specific need was required.

Annual Christmas Gift Appeal – Donations were placed on a Christmas Tree and all proceeds were divided over the Moderators Appeal, and a benevolent fund to support prisoner needs such as personal items for prison visits, and any other needs required in the community.

In conjunction with Salt Factory Sports, a children's outreach programme ran on Thursday evenings with up to 30 children attending each week. This included a Holiday Bible Club for a week during July 2023.

We made financial contributions to:-

World Development Appeal

Earl Haig Fund

Christian Aid

Moderators Appeal for the Turkey Earthquake.

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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, assists with the running costs of Union Theological College, the Church's training college for ministry students, and financially supports congregations in the areas of worship, discipleship, global mission, outreach, leadership and pastoral care. In 2023, St Columba's donated £3,100.

Presbytery

The congregation was represented at the regular meetings of Presbytery by Rev Rodney Cameron, our minister and Mr Ronnie McAuley. This provides an important link between the congregation and the wider structures of the church.

General Assembly

The minister and elder, Mr Ronnie McAuley attended the meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland held in Assembly Buildings, Belfast, in June 2023

Property

Church Buildings:

The refurbishment of the floor in the Main Hall was completed.

A replacement boiler was purchased.

Continued upkeep of gardens and external areas are ongoing.

Manse: Removal of overgrown trees.

Day to day upkeep and maintenance.

Organisations

Children's ministry (Sunday School) is delivered on a Thursday evening through the Kids Club initiative which is run in conjunction with Salt Factory Sports.

This allows us to reach children in the community that would not be in attendance on a Sunday.

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PW meet on the 2nd Tuesday of the month with an average attendance of 15. Guest speakers included the PW President and a retired deaconess from PCI. The group led Sunday morning worship on Mothering Sunday and hosted the annual Christmas Carol service attended by visitors from other PW groups in the Lisburn area.

The Afternoon Club and Stitch and Enrich meet alternative Wednesday afternoons with approx. 12 regular attendees. The club is open to anyone in the local community and the ladies enjoy visiting speakers; quizzes; bring & buy sales and cinema outings. The group go on at least 2 trips per year.

The Mid-Week bible study meets on a Wednesday night and gives people the opportunity to study and discuss scripture. At least half an hour is set aside for prayer, where the group bring specific people and situations before God. Throughout the year we hold a series of 6 - 8 week bible studies which are open to all.

The Kids Club runs during school term time and meets on Thursday evenings for Primary School age children. Attendance ranges from 15 - 30 children, who participate in games, share in a Bible reading, and complete a related activity sheet.

The Parent and Toddler group in conjunction with Bryson Care is attended by mothers and grandmothers from within the church and from the local community. It runs every Friday morning and has opened up a new opportunity for the church to connect with young families.

Weekly Drop-in and Monthly Lunch is an opportunity to reach out to church members and the wider community. Regular attendance has resulted in new friendships forged and during this periods of austerity, has provided a warm space for people to meet.

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.

**ST COLUMBA'S CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND
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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.

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FINANCIAL REVIEW

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering. There were 73 families contributing during the year (83 families in previous year) donating a total of £33,992 (£34,912 in previous year)

Total Income of the congregation during the year was £66,851 compared to £66,899 in the previous year.

Total expenditure increased from £69,311 in 2022 to £72,285 in 2023.

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.

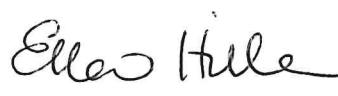
As the congregation's total income does not exceed £250,000, the Trustees have elected under Section 64(3) of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 to prepare a receipts and payment account and a statement of assets and liabilities.

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 2 May 2024 and signed on its behalf by


Rev Rodney Cameron

2 May 2024


Ellen Hillen

2 May 2024