

**First Presbyterian Church SAINTFIELD a congregation of the
Presbyterian Church in Ireland**

**Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 December 2023**

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SAINTFIELD
a 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 Balance Sheet as at that date.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

First Saintfield congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
21 Main Street, Saintfield BT24 7AA

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland NIC105242

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

Ken Finlay	Lorraine Fleming
Ken Glover	Paul Jackson
Graeme Mackenzie	James McBriar
Mervyn McBriar	Don McCallion
Norman McMordie	David Robinson
Ivor Taylor	

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister	Rev Dr Sam Bostock
Clerk of Session	Paul Jackson
Treasurer	Lorraine Fleming

AUDITOR OR INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

R Savage & Co, 2 Crossgar Road, Saintfield BT24 7JB

BANKERS

Danske Bank, 32 Main Street, Saintfield BT24 7AB

SOLICITORS

Murlands Solicitors, 15 English Street, Downpatrick BT30 6AP

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

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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 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 monthly, September to June (in normal circumstances).

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 Presbyterian Church Saintfield has been assigned to the Down 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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TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

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 Presbyterian Church Saintfield 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

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield is called to glorify and delight in God, to proclaim the gospel of the crucified and risen Christ, and in the power of the Spirit, to advance the kingdom that God is building in our community and around the world.

By the grace of God, and for the glory of God, First Presbyterian Church Saintfield is a fellowship of kingdom-minded disciples, evangelising in the Saintfield area, and multiplying gospel ministry to the world. Our life in Christ is developed and expressed through expository preaching, corporate worship, kingdom-centred prayer, small groups, spiritual care, Christian education, missionary work, and mercy ministry.

A Fellowship of Kingdom-Minded Disciples

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield seeks to grow as a God-centred, Spirit-filled fellowship of loving disciples in Christ who apply the gospel to all of life and share a total commitment to advance the kingdom of God in our community and our world.

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*** Corporate Worship**

As the centre of congregational life, First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will proclaim God's Word through expository preaching and glorify the crucified and risen Christ through God-centred worship.

*** Spiritual Care.**

The minister and elders will oversee a coordinated structure of church oversight that offers effective spiritual care to each member of the church.

*** Small Groups**

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will prioritise maximum participation in Bible study small groups as the church's primary communities for spiritual care, Christian discipleship, neighbourhood outreach, and kingdom-centred prayer ministry.

*** Christian Community**

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will assist people in pursuing Christ-centred relationships by providing church based opportunities for fellowship and discipleship, by encouraging every member to use his or her gifts in the ministry of the church, and by encouraging affinity groups that meet on the basis of a common life interest.

*** New Members**

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will use its membership process to communicate its strategic vision, to receive each new member into spiritual care, and to connect each new member to a small group and a place of service in the ministry of the church.

*** Leadership Development**

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield, through the teaching elder, will identify and train spiritual leaders who are active and effective in sharing the gospel, teaching the Bible, showing mercy, praying for the work of God's kingdom, and discipling growing Christians.

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*** Marriage and Family**

Under the general oversight of the elders, First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will promote strong marriages by preparing couples for marriage, encouraging enrichment opportunities, offering training in effective parenting, and giving crisis care.

*** Children's Ministry**

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will grow a new generation of kingdom-minded disciples by engaging children in the worship of the church and giving them comprehensive training in Bible, theology, prayer, stewardship, service, and missions.

*** Youth Ministry**

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will develop kingdom-minded disciples by engaging young people in the worship of the church; by giving them comprehensive training in Bible, theology, prayer, and apologetics; and by engaging them in personal involvement with missions and mercy ministry.

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will develop supportive links with schools in the Saintfield area and schools to which students from our church attend, encouraging Christian teachers and the work of Christian organisations and outreaches in those schools.

*** Mercy Ministry**

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will promote a holistic vision of the kingdom of God by training and mobilising members to share the gospel in deed and word as a necessary expression of faith in Christ. First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will integrate people with disabilities into the life of the church by providing access to corporate worship, Christian education, and congregational fellowship and by giving each member an opportunity to use their gifts in Christian service.

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will serve the poor, the homeless, the divorced, the elderly, the lonely, and others in our immediate neighbourhoods who are broken and broken-hearted, developing new ministries in response to emerging needs.

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*** New Ministries**

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will pray for, plan, fund, and oversee new ministry initiatives that have the strategic potential to reach people who live, work, and visit in our area.

*** Information Technology**

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will train and equip technicians and use every available and appropriate means of broadcast and information technology to communicate the gospel worldwide.

*** Building**

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will devote sufficient funds for the regular maintenance and ongoing upkeep of the facilities God has provided for us to use in ministry.

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will maximise the utility of its facilities for ministry by maintaining good stewardship of its present buildings and develop the property to facilitate the growth of new and existing ministries. (See the report on Property, pg 11.)

In order to take advantage of strategic opportunities to advance the kingdom of God, First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will periodically encourage members to participate in extraordinary seasons of sacrificial giving for ministry and facilities.

*** Personnel**

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will organise its staff and Session to execute effectively the strategic vision of the church.

*** Budget**

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will present a budget that is structured according to its mission and apportioned according to its strategic priorities.

*** Stewardship**

As an expression of gratitude to God for the grace we have received in Jesus Christ and in order to support the ongoing work of the church, First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will

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foster a culture of generous stewardship and assist members in learning to give ten percent or more of their gross income to kingdom work.

Mission.

*** Evangelising Saintfield**

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield seeks to be a transforming presence in the Saintfield area by reaching the various communities that live, work, and visit with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will cultivate a congregation-wide vision for the ministry of God in our area, supporting local missionaries and developing strategic partnerships with ministries that are effective in gospel outreach through word and deed.

*** Presbytery Mission**

In cooperation with the Down Presbytery Mission Plan, First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will encourage its members to join with other churches in our area in providing leadership, funding, and support to evangelise the Down District.

*** Supporting other Churches**

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will spread the gospel in Ireland by providing primary funding and sending kingdom-minded disciples to support churches that share First Presbyterian Church Saintfield's commitment to expository preaching, corporate worship, children's ministry, missions, and mercy ministry.

*** Multiplying Gospel Ministry to the World.**

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield seeks to advance the kingdom of God worldwide by engaging every member in mission, sharing resources for the ministry of Christ in word and deed, and sending workers to partner with other Christians in building the kingdom to the ends of the earth.

First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will cultivate a global vision for the kingdom of God by integrating missions at every level of congregational life, engaging every member in the missionary work of the gospel, and developing leaders and teams for short term and long term service.

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In partnership with other Christians, and in support of indigenous Christian leaders in other countries, First Presbyterian Church Saintfield will provide support for its own members called into missionary service overseas and will give priority to mission supported by PCI, evangelising unreached people groups, caring for orphans, extending theological education, publishing Christian literature, and providing emergency relief and medical care. (See the report from the Mission Action Group.)

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ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES

The congregation meets for worship every Sunday and visitors are welcome to join. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is normally observed on 3 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

- Badminton Club
- Boys' Brigade
- Catering Ministry
- Children's Ministry
- Girls' Brigade
- Knit and Natter
- Mission Action Group
- Mission Shop
- Mums and Tots
- Touch Team
- Youth Ministry

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and prayer

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 11.00am and 7.00p). During the week the Bible Study/small groups provided 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 seek to comfort those who had been bereaved. We will acknowledge God's gift of new life at a Sacrament of Baptism, or a Thanksgiving service and we conduct marriage services when required.

At 31st December 2023 there were 188 communicant members and 245 families connected with the congregation.

The average weekly attendance at morning worship was 150.

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Pastoral care

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

Mission and outreach

At a local level the congregation reaches out to many young people in the local community through our various youth organisations. The Mission Shop provides a point of contact for the community and funds raised go to help missionaries in Northern Ireland, London, the Czech Republic, Romania, Italy, Portugal, Kenya, Guatemala and East Africa. Our Mums and Toddler group and Knit 'n' Natter attract many from the Saintfield area and beyond.

The church engages in the town open night at Christmas, providing tea, coffee and traybakes with a place to sit down away from the bustle of the busy street. Literature on the true meaning of Christmas is distributed along with a warm invitation to all our Christmas celebrations. The church is also involved at Saintfield Show, assisting the Presbyterian Rural Chaplaincy in cooperation with Second Saintfield Presbyterian church and Trinity Boardmills church.

Our Ukrainian family were with us for all of 2023 and continued to live in our adjoining 'cottage'.

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, assist 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.

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 congregation and the wider structures of the church.

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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

Our major projects during 2023 were:

- The completion of the reroofing of the Church and Guildhall and associated works
- Further work on the manse including decoration, sanding of the floors, refurbishing the kitchen and new blinds, in preparation for our new minister and family.

All general maintenance and repairs were carried out as required.

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Organisations

Badminton Club

The Badminton Club meets on a Thursday night from 8.00 – 10.30 pm. Our numbers continue to grow. We have thirteen male and twelve female members playing gents doubles, ladies doubles and mixed doubles. We have beginners and experienced players with an age range of sixteen to sixty, with members coming from Saintfield and many of the surrounding towns. This year we played in the Presbyterian league.

Club nights also give us a time to socialise and chat thus building friendships which show why the club has survived over forty years.

We hope to resume in September and new members of all abilities are always welcome.

Boys' Brigade

Approximately 60 boys attended the Boys' Brigade each week across the three age groups. The regular meetings took place on Tuesdays for the weekly winter session and normal BB programme was delivered.

Company section training for summer Duke of Edinburgh expedition teams has commenced with training in camp craft, navigation and first aid having been completed. This year there is keen interest with a good number of Duke of Edinburgh participants with bronze, silver and gold expeditions planned over the course of the summer.

Catering Ministry

The Catering Ministry is a ministry provided by church members which offers refreshments for families, relatives and friends after a funereal which has been held in the church. This ministry ensures that families do not have to consider catering at such a difficult time and allows families and friends time to chat and catch up in a warm and caring environment.

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Children's Ministry

Kidzone meets every Sunday morning from September to May and runs over the summer from June-August, with smaller numbers attending. The children meet in the minor hall for children's ministry for approximately 45 minutes. There is a broad range of ages that attend from P1 to P7, the numbers of children attending has increased significantly with 20-30 children attending each Sunday. This has resulted in a busy room with lots of excitement and chat amongst the children which is great to see!

Kidzone is run by 5 teams over the year consisting of a group leader and 3 or 4 other team members. We are so thankful for the Christian teaching and planning that each team brings to Kidzone every month. The biblical focus in Kidzone is facilitated by Sam's teaching in church and has a biblical focus each month so that children and parents can link in at home. The structure of Kidzone often includes welcome/prayer, game, song, story, worksheet/craft, and memory verse. It is a busy room with each team building a relationship with the children and supporting them during their time in Kidzone.

It is great to see so many children coming out each week. It is our hope that Kidzone will continue to grow and evolve with God's guidance.

Girls' Brigade

The GB meets every Monday evening with girls aged from 3-18 years. We have approximately seventy girls and twelve leaders from our own church, neighbouring churches and from the local community. Each night we have Bible stories/Bible class and other activities such as baking, sports, craft etc. We organise an outing each year for each section and we also take part in various activities organised by the GB District. For the older girls we run the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme and expeditions take place during the summer months. We also have an annual GB night away after the display which approximately 20-25 girls attend each year.

GB 2023 – 2024

In September 2023 we were able to run a Duke of Edinburgh Bronze practice and qualifying expeditions with four girls completing this. This allowed them to develop better friendships and gave them opportunities to camp and cook outdoors along with their improving their navigating and team work skills.

From September we recommenced our weekly GB meetings and welcomed many new members as well as welcomed back our girls from last year. We met each week between September and March and with a variety of games, crafts etc being enjoyed along with

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weekly bible studies for all girls. In March we took 25 of the girls for an overnight trip to Culcavy, Hillsborough and they had a very enjoyable time.

During the year we took part in various GB competitions, our Brigaders did well in the district Badminton competition and the Explorers had great fun in the district Team Games event. Our Seniors came runner up in the district Futsal competition and our Juniors won the district heats of the Team Games and came third at the NI finals.

We held a Family Night in March for all the parents to see a little bit of what we have been doing in GB this year and to present the badges to the girls. There was approx. 97% attendance at this event.

Knit and Natter

Knit and Natter runs every Monday morning throughout the Year, from 10am - noon. The group is open to all ages. We offer tea, coffee, chat and fellowship to all members, whilst they work on a craft of their own choice and members are encouraged to share their knowledge and skills within the group. Our group is comprised of individuals from the church congregation and the local community. We encourage all members to enjoy the company of others and the chat, even if they don't work on their craft project every week. The ladies enjoy other social outings together and a few times this year we have shared a meal or breakfast together at other venues. We are able to avail of the church minibus to help with transport to these outings. The group membership is approximately 15 ladies with most members not being part of the congregation.

Ladies' Fellowship

The Ladies' Fellowship has not recommenced regular meetings since the pandemic. As a group we supported Presbytery PW events and hope to go on a trip in the summer.

Mission Action Group (MAG)

The focus of the MAG Group in First Saintfield, is to encourage the congregation's interest in support for Mission both at home and abroad and to uphold the partners in fellowship and prayer.

MAG members meet quarterly in March, June, September and December and currently have a membership of 10 people from the congregation. The membership reflects different elements of knowledge/skills from across the church family and their input to meetings is very valuable as they are comprised of a combination of Kirk Session members, Mission Shop Staff and differing age groups from across congregational families.

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Additional meetings are occasionally convened at other times of the year for discussion around other Mission developments or important issues that need the groups attention.

Members are responsible for the management of funds which include profits made through the church Mission Shop and non-directed financial gifts donated directly for mission work through the church. Minutes are taken of meetings and records of these are kept on file for reference.

Each member has responsibility for linking with a mission partner who is supported by funds from MAG. The link members provide feedback and updates to the congregation from our mission partners.

The levels of funding to Mission Partners are kept under review to allow for any fluctuations in their income whether from the shop profits or from individual giving from the congregation. This year again has seen many changes to the requirements of Mission Partners, including Cost-of-Living adjustments. The UK Inflation Rate has steadied somewhat within recent months, but the group have endeavoured to keep up to date with the changing financial needs of partners and have increased funding substantially to many, to support them in their work.

Mission Shop

The Mission Shop, which rents premises on Main Street Saintfield, was established in 2002 to raise funds to support missionaries from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and other Christian charities, as stated in the Mission and Outreach section. The Shop closed for 18 months in March 2020 due to the pandemic and re-opened in June 2021.

We receive donations of clothing, books and household items from our local community and further afield. Our Christian ethos is clear for all to see, from our shop sign to the huge world map behind our shop counter, showing the location of our many Mission Partners around the world, who benefit from funds raised by the shop. We also display leaflets and literature around the shop on issues such as Women's Aid, Christians against Poverty & counselling services, to help those customers who need help and support.

The shop is run totally by volunteers - some from 1st Presbyterian Church Saintfield and others from the local community, who are happy to abide by the ethos of our Mission Statement. We have many new volunteers who have joined us since the shop reopened, as well as some who worked in the shop prior to the Pandemic.

This year again, we have had several young people from Girls' & Boys' Brigade, joining us on Saturday afternoons for community experience as part of the Duke of Edinburgh scheme. Coming from all walks of life, our volunteers bring a wealth of experience and fresh ideas to the shop. They enjoy the opportunity to meet new people and form new friendships, as well

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as knowing their efforts are helping to raise funds for our mission partners all over the world.

The shop is bright, welcoming and really doesn't feel like the average charity shop. This is largely due to a small team of devoted volunteers who meet 1-2 times per week, to sort through donations, tidy, rearrange shelves and clean - so that the shop continually looks fresh and interesting. We have high standards in the quality and condition of all items we sell. As a result of this the shop is busy every day it is open, with many regular customers returning weekly.

The shop is run very much as a team effort, with each person having an equal and valued role to play.

We have forged links with our local schools, social services, other churches and those involved in reaching out to the migrant communities in our midst.

We are keen to help those who find themselves in need of our support, by providing clothes, toys, baby goods and household items to families in need, or at a time of crisis, free of charge. As well as being able to help those at home, we have also supported other churches and charities in different parts of the world.

We see the ministry of the Mission Shop as being threefold.

It provides much needed funds for our mission partners and charities worldwide.

It provides a great opportunity to reach out into our local community to touch the lives of those who are lonely, bereaved, facing hardship or struggling with mental health issues. Often, a smile, a kind word, a cup of tea and the offer of prayer from one of our lovely volunteers, can make all the difference to someone's otherwise bleak day.

It provides friendship, support and fellowship for the volunteers, who often are struggling with trials of their own.

The Mission Shop Is a beacon of light shining in the heart of our community for the Lord. It is covered in prayer daily and it is our prayer that all those who enter it may find a warm welcome, peace and see God's love first hand, in the people they meet there.

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Mums and Toddlers

Mums and Toddlers provides a morning session of play, craft activity, refreshments and singing time. Mums, dads, grandparents, carers and friends are warmly welcomed. We attract people from across the community in Saintfield and from outside Saintfield.

Normally each Wednesday morning we have on average twenty-two adults and thirty children attending. We hope everyone feels part of the church family and weekly all are made aware of events happening within the church, from the church calendar.

Touch Team

The Touch Team was a group of people who wanted to show God's love, in practical ways, to members of the congregation as well as the wider community. Our desire was that all members of our church family feel cared for and valued.

Sadly, after lockdown ended the leader, secretary and many other members of the team resigned from their roles, due to a variety of reasons such as health issues, new family commitments & changes in circumstances. Unfortunately, it hasn't been possible to recruit replacements for these roles. As a result of this, the Team has been unable to function in the way it did prior to lockdown.

Members previously involved in manning the Prayerline, delivering baby Bibles and sending cards, have continued with their roles.

Also, some members have continued with visitation of those who are ill or housebound, all of which has been much appreciated by the recipients.

At present, it would seem likely that The Touch Team will be replaced by a new Pastoral group, which it is hoped will reach out to members of the church family in need of help, support and friendship. This is currently being considered by the Kirk Session.

Youth Ministry

Youth Ministry activities from January 2023 to April 2023 consisted of running a bi-weekly programme of Sunday morning breakfast and bible study before church. A group of 10 young people met up each time. We also got together for social evenings to various locations and events at least every two months.

The same format continued from September 2023 to December 2023 with an increased number of young people in the new term, seeing 13 young people meeting up each time.

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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.

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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 notice boards, 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 205 contributors during the year (233 in the previous year, 2022) donating a total of £102,157 (£93,652 in 2022).

Total Income of the congregation during the year was £324,591 compared to £342,078 the previous year.

Total expenditure was £269,341 (£650,223 last year due to paying for renovations before all the funds were raised).

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 congregation 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 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 congregation 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.

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GOING CONCERN

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 due to the level of the closing balance in the main account. There are no outstanding debts or borrowings and no pending legal actions against the church. Subject to the continuing support from members to fund on an ongoing basis the congregation's current activities and other financial commitments, the Trustees feel that the congregation can financially continue as a going concern.

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 six month's normal expenditure. At the year-end unrestricted reserves were £122,820 (£110,006 the previous year), which the Trustees feel is sufficient for the ongoing funding of its present activities, which are dependent of 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, financial risks associated with the expectation of ongoing financial support from members and data risks. These risks are mitigated by the Trustees, and the Congregational Committee by:

1. regularly monitoring the various activities of the congregation at stated meetings.
2. encouraging members in their regular giving.
3. having a Child Protection policy in place and providing training with respect to the policy in all organisations.
4. having taken all reasonable steps to hold personal data securely both by the church and all church organisations, as, following GDPR, the safeguarding of personal data is paramount.

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Approved by the Kirk Session at a meeting on *18/6/2024* and

Signed on its behalf by



Rev Dr Samuel Bostock (Minister)

Signed on its behalf by



Mr Paul Jackson (Clerk of Session)