

**ELMWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
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 2022 including a Balance Sheet as at that date.

**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

Elmwood congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland  
105 Ballymacash Road  
Lisburn  
Co. Antrim  
BT28 3ET

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105264)

**CHARITY TRUSTEES**

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

Rev. Andrew Thompson	Miss. Helen Johnston
Mr. David Acheson	Mr. Brian Magowan
Rev. David Bruce	Mr. Ian Maxwell
Mr. Colin Campbell	Mr. Gordon McEvoy
Mr. Gareth Connolly	Mr. Peter McKechnie
Mr. Mark Donnell	Mr. Ivan Murdock
Mr. David Graham	Mr. Ronnie Nesbitt
Mr. Nelson Gray	Mr. Mark Noble
Mr. John Henderson	Mr. David Ravey
Mr. Philip Henderson	Mr. Michael Shields
Mr. David Jess	Mr. John Stanage

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**PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS**

Minister  
Clerk of Session  
Treasurer  
Secretary

Rev. Andrew Thompson  
Mr. Mark Noble  
Mr. Ian Maxwell  
Mr. Brian Magowan

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER**

John McCleary FCA  
McCleary & Company  
Garvey Studios  
14 Longstone Street  
Lisburn  
Co. Antrim  
BT28 1TP

**BANKERS**

Danske Bank  
45-48 High Street  
Portadown  
Craigavon  
BT62 1LB

**SOLICITORS**

WG Maginess & Son  
68 Bow Street  
Lisburn  
BT28 1AL

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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 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 eight times each year.

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's 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. Elmwood 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 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, 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**

Elmwood 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 'Demonstrating God's presence in our community'. Depending on God's grace, we seek to share Jesus by:

- Celebrating His greatness
- Teaching His Word
- Showing His love
- Equipping His people to serve Him in the world.

In living out its mission and vision as a family of God's people, the congregation seeks to be guided by the following values:

- Prayerful reliance on God
- Helping people to connect with God
- People matter to God, and so they matter to us
- Active membership of the worldwide family of God
- Reflecting God's heart for the world

In all of this we seek to be Biblical, intergenerational, outward-looking and innovative, while at the same time mindful of our heritage and place as part of the wider Presbyterian family in Ireland.

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**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 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 bible study meetings, mainly in small groups, and has a wide range of organisations including:

- Sunday School
- Youth Club
- Youth Fellowship
- Boys' Brigade
- Girls' Brigade
- Presbyterian Women
- Seniors' Club
- Mothers and Toddlers
- Men's Fellowship
- Young Adults

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

**Worship and prayer**

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 11.30am and 6.30pm. During the week the Bible Study and Home Group programme 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 there was one Sacrament of Baptism during the year, as compared with none in the previous year. At 31 December 2022 there were 225 communicant members and 235 families connected with the congregation.

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

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**Mission and outreach**

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 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 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 October 2022.

**Property**

With a lessening of the restrictions required by the Covid 19 pandemic and the subsequent return of more regular church activities, the amount of maintenance and repair work in the church buildings increased a little during the year. In addition to minor maintenance and repair work in different parts of the building, work was carried out also on the roof. In particular, a regular schedule of clearing the roof guttering has reduced considerably the problems associated with water ingress during heavy rain and stormy weather. A complete repainting of the outside of the buildings was undertaken and this included repairs to boast plasterwork in a couple of areas.

The major work undertaken during the year was a complete refurbishment of our 'Reflections' room which included the provision of windows, cavity wall insulation, new room heaters, the replacement of the small kitchen area, new lighting and ceiling panels and new carpet and decoration. New and refurbished furniture was provided also.

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Some additional A/V equipment was purchased, and parts of the manse were redecorated and repaired.

The pastoral care of the congregation has been maintained by the Minister, Rev Andrew Thompson, Deaconess, Roberta Irvine, Elders and a dedicated team of volunteers. The Kirk Session and Congregational Committee maintained their normal pattern of meetings throughout the year. The Minister, Kirk Session, Congregational Committee and all Church leaders look to the future with confidence and with the enabling power and presence of God in His service and to His Glory.

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**Organisations**

The regular weekly organisations and activities in the congregation could be categorised in the following broad areas:-

**(a) Youth & Children's Ministry**

Uniformed organisations seek to provide for the social, physical and spiritual development of children from 3-18 years. The pattern of meetings and numbers attending have been significantly affected by Covid-19. The Girls' Brigade has an average weekly attendance of 130 across the sections, while the equivalent number in Boys' Brigade is just over 100. The Christian education of children is sought through a Sunday School group (JAM; average attendance 30) which meets prior to the morning service; during the service there is also age-appropriate teaching in Children's Church (attendance up to 20 children). Development of young people is further sought through the provision of a Youth Club (The Wood; average attendance 20) and a Sunday evening Youth Fellowship group (average attendance 15).

**(b) Outreach**

The congregation seeks to build bridges into the local community through a thriving Adult/Toddler group, and a small Parent-Infant project (run in conjunction with Barnardos).

**(c) Fellowship**

The congregation seeks to offer opportunities for various groups to come together to learn and share with one another. The Presbyterian Women's group meets monthly for a varied programme with an average of 50 ladies in attendance. Also meeting monthly, the Just Men group brings an average of 12 men together on a Saturday morning for breakfast and an informative talk given by a member of the congregation. A seniors' group, Young at Heart, also meets weekly, providing a varied programme for a group of around 35 senior members. Finally, up to 100 members of the congregation are involved in a Home Group programme, which sees small groups meeting weekly to study the Bible, pray and share encouragement and fellowship.

**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.

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 178 contributors during the year [compared with 186 in 2021] donating a total of £193,031 [£198,092 in 2021]. The majority of members pay their offerings through electronic bank transfers.

Total Income of the congregation during the year was £276,132, compared to £263,350 in the previous year. Total expenditure increased, from £212,145 to £262,312.

**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 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.

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**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 net current assets 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 months' normal expenditure, as the funding of its present activities is dependent of the ongoing financial support of members. At the year-end unrestricted reserves were £119,530, which equates to just under six months. The trustees consider it prudent to have the net current assets at a level equivalent to six months' expenditure.

**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 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023 and signed on its behalf by

Mr. Mark Noble



23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023

Mr. Brian Magowan



23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023