

GROOMSPORT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Annual Report 2023

This is the Annual Report for 2023 of Groomsport Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

Classification: Religious Designation

Charity Number: NIC105278.

Address: - 35 – 37 Main Street

Groomsport

BT19 6JR

Trustees during 2023:-

(Appointed on 29.2.2016)

Alastair McQuoid	Graham Wilson	Lowry Manson
Hilary Knight	Jane Black	Audrey Thomas
June Kirk	John Todd	Brenda Boyd
William McCreedy	Samuel Ferguson	Ivan Crawford
Alan Chestnutt	Elaine Nixon	Margaret McCreedy
Fiona McCreedy	Stewart Holland	David Purce
Richard McCreedy	Mary Corry (Resigned 22.8.23)	Paul Dalzell (Minister)

(Appointed 22.9.19)

Sharon Goldie

Roy McWhinney (Resigned 25.9.23)

Michael Steele

(Appointed 27.11.22)

George Purdy

Maureen Stewart

Chris Thompson

Our governing body

Our governing body is the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and we are constituted by The Code of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

The purposes of our charity

“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.”

Appointment of Trustees

The Kirk Session of Groomsport Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland appoint new Charity Trustees. All Elders on Kirk Session are Trustees for our charity and are appointed at a meeting and asked to fill in the required Registration Form which is then input into our Registered Charity number NIC105278 by Elaine Nixon.

Public Benefit Statement

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland meets the public benefit requirement by providing benefit to its members and 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 understand of the 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 congregational churches and 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 monitored 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, Deaconess, 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 organisation, charities and individual members of the public.

Statement of activities

Hold services of worship and other religious activities. These, and all that follows, are open to anyone of the appropriate age and/or gender to access, without regard to whether they are member of our congregation. Through prayer, support our members, our own Church, other Christian Churches, the community and leaders in society and government. Organise meetings and events that promote our charitable purpose. Participate in the life of the local community. Participate in and support what the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the supervising Presbytery does. Support secular and Christian organisations and charities through volunteering, providing accommodation, financial gifts and prayer.

Kirk Session Report 2023

In reporting on the year that is past, we are thankful to God for all His many blessings to us. In particular we continue to have a vibrant, enthusiastic and committed core of members attending worship each Sunday, and for this, as a Kirk Session, we are most grateful.

It is perhaps helpful to remind ourselves of a few of our many duties as a Session:-

The Kirk Session shall - (a) watch over and promote the spiritual interest of the congregation, and of persons not connected with any congregation who are within its bounds; (b) ensure a scheme for pastoral care is in place in the congregation, in line with current General Assembly guidelines; (c) seek to further the contribution of the Church to Christian witness and service in the local community; (d) authorise such measures of practical co-operation with other Churches as may involve the life and work of the congregation.

A quick look through the Minutes of our stated meetings will hopefully demonstrate our commitment to attending to these duties.

In January, Rev Dalzell reported that with regard to the vacancy of Regent Street PC in Newtownards a call has been made to Rev Anne Tolland and that her installation date is Friday 31st March. This successfully concluded a protracted period of work for Rev Dalzell.

In February one of many reports to Session was made by Sharon Goldie on forthcoming arrangements for our Children's Ministry – Kidszone. Session wishes to pay tribute for all the work in the vital ministry by Sharon and all the leaders throughout the past year.

In March a letter was received from Evelyn Shaw, secretary of World Day of Prayer in which she thanked our congregation for hospitality and help in the holding of the 2023 service in our church. Also at this time Anne Buchanan informed us that she was giving up the post of Freewill Offering Convenor for reasons which are all very understandable. We thanked Anne and made a small presentation.

In April a Thinking Day (Guides service) on Sunday 23rd April 2023 was much appreciated by all as a very beneficial service of worship.

In June a Congregational Meeting was held in the church to seek the authorisation of the congregation to increase the proposed expenditure on the Refurbishment Project, previously agreed at £600,000 by the additional sum of £50,000. This was agreed.

Also in June, (and also on other occasions during the year) Rev Denis Campbell, our Pastoral Assistant, conducted worship during a period of Rev Dalzell's annual leave. Rev Campbell, who carries out this ministry, including of course congregational visitation, in his gifted and articulate manner is a real blessing to us all for which we are most grateful.

In September we were saddened to receive a letter from Mrs Mary Corry in resignation as an elder; however we were pleased that she would continue to pastorally care for the members in her allocated district. Roy Mawhinney also resigned as an elder and we expressed our gratitude to him for all his energetic involvement in our church life and witness.

Session agreed to form a Task Group to implement a plan to fully utilise the refurbished Halls when completed in Spring 2024.

Kirk Session has been consistently encouraged by the generosity of the congregation which enabled the Mission Committee, under the very able convenorship of Dr Michael Steele to make donations in excess of £50,000 to a range of organizations during the year. Michael's interesting and positive report will be included in the Annual Directory

Session received a Report by trustees of McCaw Trust that ongoing work was taking place for the best use of the funds and thanks were expressed to Chris Thompson for the preparation of a flow chart detailing the necessary provision for stage payments to be made to the Building Contractor during the refurbishment (2 weeks ahead of schedule at that time)

October

Jim and Lynn Magee stepped down as agents for Presbyterian Herald after many years of acting in this capacity. Stephen and Janet Dawson agreed to take over this responsibility and we are grateful to them for so willingly doing so.

Hilary Knight informed Session that she and another member of PW had recently attended the Women's Meeting in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in response to an invitation and had been made most welcome.

November

Special thanks were conveyed to Rev Dalzell by Groomsport Remembrance Day Committee for his contribution to the planning of the Annual Parade and leading worship.

Session decided to implement changes to the production of Eagle Wing Magazine, meaning it would be printed inhouse in Newsletter form. We are grateful for all the work Amanda Mawhinney has undertaken on our behalf.

A Praise Service took place on Sunday 19th November, a wonderful evening led by Donaghadee Community Choir.

December

The choir, under the musical directorship of John McIlwaine performed at our annual “Carols by Candlelight” service. Session is most grateful to John and the choir for all the leading of praise throughout the year at our Sunday morning worship.

The process for appointing a new Clerk of Session, to replace Alastair McQuoid, was begun. Alastair’s term of office expires at the end of February 2024 and he wishes to pay tribute to all the support he has received during the past five years. Fortunately, Alastair has not been required to call overmuch on the assistance of the Deputy Clerk, Audrey Thomas, but when necessary she had been very willing and gracious in her assistance. Kirk Session expresses deepest thanks to all those taking part in the many organisations of our church, whose activities are detailed elsewhere in our Annual Report

In conclusion, we pay a large tribute Rev Dalzell to whom we are indebted for carrying out the leadership of weekly worship and pastoral work among the congregation in such an exemplary fashion. We thank Paul for another year of ministry (aided of course by his wife, Catherine) in which we have received rich blessings.

Alastair McQuoid

Groomsport Presbyterian Church

March, 2024