

**BALLYKEEL 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 Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at that date.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Ballykeel Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
23 Crebilly Road
Ballymena
BT42 4DN

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105290)

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

Mr Francis McKendry	Mr David Moore
Rev Dr Martin McNeely	Mr Andrew Houston
Mr Thomas Simpson	Mr Gregory Baird
Mr Ian Fretwell (Retired 28 November 2023)	Mr Trevor McMullan
Mr John McVicker	

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister	Rev. Dr Martin McNeely
Clerk of Session	Mr Thomas Simpson
Secretary	Ms Marie Shiels
Treasurer	Mr Michael Scroggie

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Mr John Finnegan
Potter Finnegan Limited
Unit 25 The Courtyard Business Park
190 Galgorm Road
Ballymena
BT42 1HL

BANKERS

Danske Bank
1-2 Broadway
Ballymena
BT43 7PE

SOLICITORS

McKervill Neilly
1 Broadway Avenue
Ballymena
BT43 7AA

**BALLYKEEL CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND
TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

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 Sessions 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 congregations. 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 six times in 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 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. Ballykeel congregation of the Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the Ballymena 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.

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

The charitable purpose of the congregation is the advancement of religion.

Ballykeel 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.

**BALLYKEEL CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND
TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)
DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE (cont'd)**

The congregation's mission purpose is to be a Church of God's people, called to share and show the Gospel of Christ in every part of our lives, in every place and by the grace of God; and to help people of all ages become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ. 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 concern for others.
- is committed to the historic Christian gospel as revealed in the Bible.
- is relevant to people of south Ballymena and further afield.

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.

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 and has a wide range of organisations including:

- Sunday School
- Youth Fellowship
- Midweek Meeting
- Pensioners Dinner
- Community Service
- Several bible study groups

An AGM took place on 24th February 2023.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and prayer

The congregation normally met for worship each Sunday at 10.00am. During the week, the Thursday 1030 Bible Study provided an opportunity for members to meet for fellowship, to study the scriptures and for a time of prayer. There has been an encouraging core of 15 or so members meeting midweek for the 1030 meeting. There are 5 new Bible study groups – 3 men, 1 mixed and 1 women's group. The Women's Fellowship also re-started with an average of 27 members.

The Church year of 2023 has seen considerable encouragement in the life of Ballykeel Presbyterian. Of particular note is the number of new members who have joined, both through transfer and profession of faith. There has also been 3 baptisms and a steady increase in the number of children involved in the life of the congregation. The atmosphere and sense of fellowship on Sundays as well as through the week has been warm and welcoming.

Some new initiatives have brought specific increase to the outreach of the Church. A very successful Alpha course was run on Sunday evenings during the spring. This saw up to 40 people gather round tables to explore the Christian faith. A good number came from the local community. A new outreach called the Well has commenced on Wednesday mornings. This gathering is aimed at people who are free during the day to pop in for a cup of tea, refreshments, and conversation. It has attracted a good number of people – again, mainly local – with a good spread of ages.

All of the usual ministries of the Church have continued well, from small groups to prayer meetings, to Young Life on a Sunday night for teenagers. Overall Ballykeel Presbyterian are in a good position both to celebrate 50 years of witness in 2024 and navigate a new era of vacancy, following the call of the Rev. Dr. Martin McNeely to mission work in County Donegal.

**BALLYKEEL CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND
TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)
ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (cont'd)**

Worship and prayer (cont'd)

As well as our regular services during the year, we conducted 3 marriage services and gave thanks for faithful services and sought to comfort those who had been bereaved during the year.

At 31 December 2023 there were 90 communicant members and 160 families connected with the congregation. The average week attendance at morning worship is 120. The regular evening service gathers up to 25 people.

Normal business meetings including kirk session and committee meetings have taken place throughout the year.

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

At a local level, the congregation serves by practical witness, prayer, pastoral visitation, local mission, and outreach in Ireland and overseas. We support a wide range of mission including Bible teaching, Youth work, practical aid, and translation.

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, 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.

The congregation also contributes to the denomination's annual World Development Appeal, Sunday School project and any other special appeals.

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 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 June.

Property

During the year the heating pumps were replaced at a cost of £6,000. £1,800 was spent of hedge removal and £1,750 was spent on general church repairs. There were no other major replacement or renovation works.

Organisations

Youth fellowship	attendance 12	every Sunday evening
Sunday School	attendance 30	every Sunday morning

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.

**BALLYKEEL CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND
TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

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 Commission's Public benefit requirement statutory guidance.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering. There were 81 contributors during the year (2022: 85) donating a total of £51,030 (2022: £50,788).

Total Income of the congregation during the year was £104,950 compared to £95,002 in the previous year.

Total expenditure increased from £110,293 in 2022 to £120,811 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 29 February 2024 and signed on its behalf by



Rev Dr Martin McNeely

Trustee



Thomas Simpson

Trustee