

BALLYGOMARTIN CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

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

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105294)

BALLYGOMARTIN 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

Ballygomartin Presbyterian Church congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105294)

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

Glen Jordan
Raymond Cummins
Wesley McCreedy

Georgina Chestnutt
David Weir

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister
Clerk of Session
Treasurer

Rev Glen Jordan
Raymond Cummins
Wesley McCreedy

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Mr R Eakin
18 Farm Lodge Road
Greenisland, Co Antrim
Northern Ireland BT38 8XH

BANKERS

Ulster Bank Limited
185-189 Shankill Road
BELFAST BT13 1FH

SOLICITORS

Holmes & Moffitt Solicitors
289 Shankill Road, BELFAST BT13 1FT

**BALLYGOMARTIN 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 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 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 at least twice in each year or as appropriate.

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. Ballygomartin congregation of the Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the North Belfast 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.

BALLYGOMARTIN CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND 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






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

Ballygomartin 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 purpose is to:

Worship Jesus – Growing in His love, Going in His name

The congregation continues to live out its mission purpose as a family of God's people by:

-  Having mission as a priority in our prayer life
-  Continuing to develop fellowship within the congregation
-  Encouraging day-to-day witness by members of the congregation
-  Creating opportunities for contact with people from the neighbourhood
-  Co-operating and partnering with Glencairn City Mission

- **Having Mission as a priority in our prayer life:** we have a sincere concern for those who do not yet know Jesus as Saviour. Set congregational prayer times are Sunday 11am and at the Wednesday Midweek meeting. We have a school prayer team which visits the 4 Primary Schools in our district on Wednesday at 10am (during the school year) and a group of church members who pray in the Prayer Circle.

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

- **Continuing to develop fellowship within the congregation:** a warm fellowship where friendship and acceptance are experienced is essential. We want to be attractive to those who are feeling lonely and isolated and to those who have little or no experience of a loving and supportive community.
- **Encouraging day-to-day witness by members of the congregation:** every believer is encouraged that their contribution is crucial to the mission of God. Through our ordinary lives and interaction with people, the Lord uses the lives of every believer to His glory.
- **Creating opportunities for contact with people from the neighbourhood:** For example: bus trips during the year, social events, use of the premises by other organisations and entities, school prayer groups, Christmas Carol services with 3 local Primary Schools.
- **Co-operating and partnering with Glencairn City Mission:** we have a combined service with Glencairn City Mission each year at Harvest, as well as a combined the Sunday School summer trip. We hope to continue to work together, to co-operate on issues of common concern and enjoy joint activities where appropriate.

We want to be sensitive and ready to respond to new opportunities for mission; to be flexible to drop some approaches and add others as the Lord leads. In fact, we **expect** change in response to the leading of the Spirit of God.

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

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES

The congregation meets for worship every Sunday and visitors welcome to join. The Sacrament of the Lords Supper was observed on alternate months 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 and prayer meetings and has a wide range of organisations including:

- SHinE (Children's Church) and Sunday School
- Spark and Blaze
- Girls Brigade, Boys Brigade
- School Prayer Team & Prayer Circle
- Praise Band and Singers
- Presbyterian Women
- Ladies Fellowship
- Kintsugi Hope
- Supper Club

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and prayer

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 11:30am. The midweek Bible Study provides an opportunity for members to meet together for fellowship, to study the scriptures and for a time of prayer.

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

At 31 December 2023 there were 56 communicant members and 111 families connected with the congregation. The average weekly attendance at morning worship was 45.

Pastoral care

Members of the congregation who are unable to attend church due to sickness or age were contacted by phone or with home visits on a regular basis by the elders and minister. This also included visits to Care Homes and Hospital visitation.

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

Mission and outreach

During the year £9,357 has been donated to external missions and charities by the church and its organisations.

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 congregations in the areas of worship, discipleship, global mission, outreach, leadership and pastoral care.

The congregation also contributes to the denominations Moderator Appeal, Presbyterian Children's Society and other special appeals. Organisations within the church make donations to other charitable groups.

Presbytery

The congregation was represented at the regular meetings of Presbytery by our minister (Convenor) 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 is nominated to attend the meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland held in Assembly Buildings, Belfast, in June.

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

Organisations

There follows a brief summary of the organisations in Ballygomartin Presbyterian Church.

Presbyterian Women (PW) – The PW meets on the second Thursday of each month from October through to April and at present has 14 members attending on a regular basis. In 2023 we had a variety of speakers. Our opening speaker, David Weir, one of our church elders spoke on the subject of this year's motto - 'Being transformed'. Subsequent talks were on a range of topics including: how women are seen in different cultures, the measure of faith and interpretation of the psalms through emotion. 2023 continued to be much more informative in terms of the world we live in today.

42nd Ballygomartin Girls' Brigade – The Girls' Brigade company has a current membership of 110, consisting of 90 girls and 20 leaders. We meet each Monday night from September to the end of April. Our average attendance per week is approximately 95.

We have a wide range of activities for the girls which vary from week to week but include Bible Class, games, dance, crafts, cookery and badge work. We have also had some fun planting bulbs, a fire pit and s'mores night and a trip to the cinema, to name a few. Each week our Brigaders run a tuck shop with funds going to our chosen charity of the year.

As well as our weekly activities we like to have different events for the girls. In January we had a praise night for the company with our church Praise Band, which was a great night with the girls engaging in lots of singing. In April we were delighted to have our first display and prize giving since COVID. The girls looked fantastic in their costumes and put on amazing performances.

We re-opened in September 2023 with a fun night having a play bus and inflatables. In October we had our Autumn parties with Jump, Jiggle and Jive for the younger girls, a trip to Mauds for some ice-cream for the Juniors and pumpkin painting/carving and pizza for the older girls. A few of the leaders attended the District line-dancing and supper night which was great fun. Our annual enrolment took place in November with the girls taking part in the service with singing, reading and mime. At Christmas we had our parties with a snow globe, disco and face painting and a visit from 'Princess Bella'. The Juniors and Seniors had a Crazy Clay workshop and the Brigaders enjoyed some Christmas treats and a chat.

It has been great year of fun and fellowship together.

53rd Boys Brigade – The Boy's Brigade meet each Friday evening. There are 10 boys aged from 4-18 years and 3 Officers. The main objective is to tell boys about the Lord Jesus Christ and we have a bible class each meeting night. Other activities on a Friday night include drill, games, badge work and handcrafts.

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

Supper Club – There were 2 events run by the Supper Club in 2023: a Scottish Night in January and a Christmas Praise Night (with an early taste of turkey, ham and stuffing in the Christmas Bap supper!) both run in conjunction with the Praise Band. There are generally between 40-60 attendees at each function and they are popular with church and non-church attendees alike. The funds raised after expenses at the various events were passed on to a charity caring for people in Northern Ireland with Motor Neurone Disease and Street Beat – a local group working with teenagers and young people in our area.

Praise Band and Singers – Worship is led each Sunday by either the Praise Band, or the Praise Band and some guest singers from the congregation. We began a new 'Praise Unleashed' initiative every few weeks when the morning service had a strong emphasis on praise and congregational participation. The Praise Band is made up of twelve members: four singers and five musicians on lead guitar, bass guitar, drums and keyboard, one member on the sound desk and two others who manage the audiovisual presentation. During 2023, the band generally met on two evenings each month for practice sessions and led the musical worship at the morning service every Sunday. The Praise Band also contributed to events in the Supper Club and Girls Brigade

A group of singers (between 6 and 11 members of the congregation) join together with the Praise Band for singing every couple of months. They practice for special occasions such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter but also for Supper Club Praise Nights. All the singers are young at heart with a zest for music and praise and enjoy meeting for practice but also to have fun and friendship with one another.

SHinE – In 2023 SHinE had nine children aged 3-11 attending each week. They were taught by a team of seven leaders who work on a rota basis. Our programme ran on a Sunday morning from January to December excluding the summer months of July and August. Our activities each week were based on a story from the Bible followed by a short chat to encourage life application. Afterwards, there were practical activities which were relevant to the story: crafts, memory verses, puzzles and worksheets. We also enjoyed singing and playing games. In June, at a morning worship service, the boys and girls were each presented with a gift in the form of a book from the church. In October they contributed to the church Harvest display by making some lovely scarecrows. We ended 2023 by hearing the Christmas Story and making Christmas crafts for our friends and family.

SPARK/BLAZE - In 2023 we launched our new children's clubs, SPARK and BLAZE. They took place on two Tuesday nights of each month. A team of around 16 people were involved in the organisation and running of the clubs. At SPARK, we had an average of 15 boys and girls aged from 4 to 10 years old. Our hour-long programme consisted of games, crafts, Bible stories and singing. Each child was also given a snack. At Christmas we had a puppet show and all the children received a gift.

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

BLAZE was attended by 5 young people aged 11 and 12. We provided a relaxed programme which included bowls, Drum Fit, crafts and board games. The young people enjoyed pizza and sweet treats and the opportunity to chat and get to know each other. We ended each evening with a short epilogue.

Sunday School – Sunday School meets each Sunday afternoon from September to the end of April. There were twenty-five children on the roll book in 2023 and the five teachers have all completed their Duty to Care course and have taken their refresher course from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The Sunday meeting lasts for an hour during which time the younger children have the opportunity to sing, take part in drama, listen to Bible stories and complete art work. The older children have Bible Study where they can discuss aspects of faith. They come together in December to perform in the annual nativity play and for Children's Day earlier in the year when the children take the service. The Sunday School reaches out with the message of God's love and the children from the Sunday School normally participate in Church family services throughout the year.

Sunday School is under the supervision of the Superintendent, Sunday School teachers and Kirk Session.

Ladies Fellowship Group - Ladies Fellowship meets every Monday afternoon in Ballygomartin Presbyterian Church, from 2 – 4pm. The group welcomes all women from the congregation and the surrounding area. We meet over tea and coffee, with the aim of encouraging each other in our individual walk with God. Some ladies come for the company of their sisters in Christ, while an added dimension for others, is participating in learning a new craft skill, or developing a skill they already possess. *Tea/coffee, chat, craic and craft are the order of the day!*

The ladies are involved in making knitted/crocheted hats and scarves, which have been donated to a local charity, who provide support for homeless people. Another local charity which we support is "Flourish and Bloom Pregnancy and Wellbeing". For this charity, we crochet/knit baby blankets, cardigans and hats; and also provide items such as nappies, baby vests, sleepsuits etc and items to help the mums to-be. This charity helps teenage mums, single mums or any mum in distress.

Jewellery making and calligraphy is also being taught within the group. The women are sharing their skills with each other, and there is a great sense of achievement. Monday afternoon is a wonderful opportunity for the ladies to support and encourage each other in their faith; to develop friendships and new skills, with the added bonus of supporting our nominated charitable organisations.

Kintsugi Hope – This is a new initiative in the church as Ballygomartin Presbyterian has become the first Presbyterian Church in Ireland, to partner with the Christian Mental Health Charity, Kintsugi Hope. This enables us to run Kintsugi Hope Well-being Groups, both in the church and the wider community; which are for people of faith, no faith or other faiths.

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

Everyone is aware that life is tough, more so for some than others, but there will be occasions in all our lives, when mental health will suffer. Most people will accept that we have a measure of physical, emotional and spiritual health, on a continuum from good - to very poor. Yet few understand that this applies to mental health too. At some point on life's journey, we may develop mental illnesses. The stigma associated with mental illness and some Christians attitude to it, prevent many from seeking the help they so desperately need. Mental illness is "no respecter of persons."

As a partner we have been able to avail of Kintsugi Hope's excellent training and all the materials it provides, to run a 12-week Well-Being programme in our groups. The programme includes discussion topics such as: anxiety, depression, shame and guilt, loss and disappointment, anger, self-acceptance. This is not a counselling service or therapy, neither are we there to 'fix' anyone.

A safe and supported space is provided in which people can: talk in confidence, within their peer group so that all may grow and flourish; access information and simple techniques to help; show ourselves some self-care and self-compassion, thus enabling us to have better mental health; know how to seek help earlier rather than later.

Two groups of women have been peer mentored within a faith and a non-faith setting. It has been amazing to watch as the women grow in confidence, bond with each other, developing lasting friendships. Being able to discuss their triumphs and struggles knowing that, "what is said in the room, stays in the room" - it is a beautiful thing to watch as these women blossom.

Coffee Morning – This is normally held on Tuesday mornings and is open to everyone for coffee, scones and chat.

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.

**BALLYGOMARTIN 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 Commissions Public benefit requirement statutory guidance.

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

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering. There were 93 families contributing during the year [92 in previous year, 2022] donating a total of £42,962 (£40,049 in previous year, 2022).

Total income of the congregation (including organisations income) during the year was £78,162 in 2023, compared to £71,721 in the previous year. Total expenditure increased from £72,588 in 2022 to £160,859 in 2023.

The difference in expenditure between 2022 and 2023 is mainly attributed to major plans of work in the church buildings: a central heating replacement project and asbestos survey and remediation.

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 congregations total income does not exceed £250,000 (as defined by CCNI ARR03), the Trustees have elected under Section 64(3) of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 208 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 17th March 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

Name RAYMOND CUMMINS

Name GEORGINA CHESTNUTT

Date 17th MARCH 2024

Date 17th MARCH 2024