

CHURCHTOWN 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

Churchtown congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
Tamlaght Rd,
Tamlaght O Crilly,
Maghera
Co. Londonderry,
BT46 5XW

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (105342-0)

Charity Trustees

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

Mr Harry Armstrong	Mr George Graham
Mr Willis Armstrong	Mr William Lamont
Mr Robert John Bloomfield	Rev Richard Morrison
Mr Stanley Bolton	Mr Christopher Rowe
Mr Keith Dundas	Mr Junior Whyte

Principal Office Bearers

Minister	Rev Richard Morrison
Clerk of Session	Mr Christopher Rowe
Treasurer	Mrs Sylvia Rowe

Independent Examiner

Ian Johnston (A.F.A.)
Stevenson & Wilson Chartered Accountants
22-30 Broadway Ave,
Ballymena,
Co. Antrim,
BT43 7AA.

Bankers

Danske Bank,
Po Box 183,
Donegall Square West,
Belfast,
BT1 6JS.

Solicitors

Burnside & Logue Solicitors
43 Main St,
Maghera,
Co. Londonderry,
BT46 5AA.

CHURCHTOWN 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 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 normally held bi-monthly, or as is deemed necessary.

To be chosen for the office of the eldership in the congregation a person must be a voting member and a regular attendant at 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. Churchtown 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 each 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 minister of each congregation, retired ministers and a representative elder appointed by the Kirk Session of each congregation.

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

Description and Purpose

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

Churchtown 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 congregation's mission statement is as follows *"by God's grace, we as a gospel shaped congregation within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, seek to make and equip disciples of Jesus, through the proclamation of God's word, to the glory of God."*

The congregation aims to live out its mission 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 were welcome to join. The Sacrament of the Lords Supper is observed on four 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 and prayer meetings and has a wide range of organisations which seek to reach and disciple those involved. The organisations include:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| - Sunday School & Bible Class | - Youth Fellowship |
| - Children's Church | - Men's Fellowship |
| - Creche | - Presbyterian Women |
| - Holiday Bible Club | - Friendship Group |
| - Boys Brigade | - Choir |
| - Rainbows, Brownies & Guides | - Walking Group |

Achievements and Performance

Worship and prayer

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 12:00 Noon (11:00am in July & August) and on the first and third Sunday each month at 7:00pm. A time of prayer is held before each service of worship. During the week there is a midweek meeting on Wednesday evenings at 8pm, providing an opportunity for members to meet together for fellowship, to study the scriptures and for a time of prayer. During the year we saw five members of the congregation pass away and we sought to comfort those who had been bereaved.

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

At 31 December 2023 there were 141 communicant members and 136 families connected with the congregation. The average weekly attendance at morning worship was 120, and evening worship on the first and third Sundays was 40.

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, the elder for that district or by a member of the congregation. We also provide online livestream and CD ministry where each worship service is recorded and available to those who could not attend or are housebound. Members of the congregation are willing and proactive in supporting the practical needs of others where they arise. Efforts are made to engage with members of our local community who need pastoral support.

Mission and outreach

Our weekly services of worship are open to everyone in our community and beyond as they are streamed and made available online. During the course of the year certain worship services have a particular theme (e.g. Back to School, Harvest, Christmas and Easter) providing an opportunity to invite members of the community to join with us on these occasions. Events happening within Church life are promoted through leaflet drops, our monthly announcement sheet, church website and social media through our Facebook page.

Our varied range of organisations provided an opportunity to engage with young and old from within the congregation through their carefully planned programmes. They also gave an opportunity to reach out to the local community with many of our youth members having no connection to the congregation.

We enjoy excellent relations with our neighbouring churches. We shared some joint midweeks with Drimbolg Reformed Presbyterian and we supported the local Church of Ireland congregations in Tamlaght O Crilly and Innisrush at their special services held during the year.

The annual week of Holiday Bible Club and Youth outreach on the first week in August provided an opportunity to reach large numbers of children and youth from the wider community. This has proved to be a great way of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with children and youth, as well as making good connections with families in the area.

The church seeks to support local schools and engage with the staff and pupils there. Our minister regularly takes part in assemblies in two Primary Schools and occasionally in a Secondary school, as well as helping out with breakfast club once a week.

In December we had a Christmas tree put up in the village and were able to host a 'lights switch on' event and outreach in the local community. There was singing from the community choir, a Christmas message from the Church of Ireland minister, and festive refreshments and entertainment. Funding from Mid Ulster Council helped to make this event possible.

The congregation supported the United Appeal for Mission which is a central fund of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland ensuring that its target is met each year. This 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.

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

The congregation supported other Mission groups/people. This included the work of the Belfast City Mission, with particular interest and focus on Andy and Iris Williamson who serve in Ballysillan. The congregation generously supported the BCM Christmas Gift Appeal in December. Churchtown also continued their gospel partnership with a church in Moldova through European Mission Fellowship. We welcomed their Director and his wife to lead a Sunday Service in March where we heard about the ongoing needs and work in that region. We committed to support this work prayerfully and financially. At the end of the year the total given through our midweek weekly offering and evening services was divided among a number of mission agencies/groups.

In order to encourage young people being involved in short, or longer term, missionary work, locally or overseas, provision is made to financially support them.

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. Our minister took on responsibility for convening the Youth and Children's ministry within Presbytery.

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 in Belfast in June.

Property

The Congregational committee continue to provide oversight for the upkeep of our church buildings, graveyard and farm land. Having prayerfully considered the need for additional and improved facilities, the congregation agreed to proceed with plans for a new church hall adjacent to the graveyard.

Organisations

Sunday school & Bible Class – Throughout 2023, with the exception of the summer months, Sunday school/Bible class met each Sunday morning from 11:00-11:45am. From January to June 2023 the children were taught the word of God in four classes/one Bible class. Our annual Children's Day services were held on Sunday 4th June. The Sunday School/Bible class concluded in June with a family trip to Castlerock beach. Following a summer recess, classes resumed in September 2023, when 22 children and young people enrolled which can be broken down as follows:

- Sunday school (aged 4-11) - 13 children with 3 teachers
- Bible class (aged 12-18) – 9 young people with 2 teachers

During the calendar year, each child received an Easter Egg, end of session prize and Christmas gift. In December 2023, our Sunday School/Bible class pupils enjoyed a Christmas trip to Soft Play and Bowling at the Jet Centre Coleraine followed by food at McDonalds.

Each year Sunday School/Bible Class have a mission project where money is collected by the children in Smartie tubes. Our total contribution at 31 December 2023 to support European Missionary Fellowship through the work of Mihai and Irina Chisari in Moldova was £500.

Youth Fellowship - Renew youth fellowship met fortnightly between September and June usually in the Church Hall with approximately 10-15 young people from year 8 up and we have 3 leaders. Our nights usually start with ice breakers followed by a bible-based talk and bible study to help challenge, encourage and equip the young people in their everyday life. Over this we have had people come in to speak about their involvement in mission work including football and video production. We also had a trip to crazy golf and an end of year water fight and pizza night.

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

1st Tamlaght O' Crilly Boy's Brigade – our Boys' Brigade company is attached to the three local churches. From September to March the boys in all sections met each Monday night. The boys in Anchors and Juniors enjoyed a varied programme including bible study, games and craft. The Company section also participated in bible study, enjoyed sport activities and learnt new skills. The BB year concluded with a parents evening on Monday 25th March. Following a summer recess, BB meetings resumed in September for all three sections with a programme as outlined above. On 4th September 1st Tamlaght O'Crilly Boys' Brigade enrolled 5 Anchor boys, 5 Junior boys and 7 Company section boys. 1 Company Section boy received his Presidents Badge at parents evening.

Tamlaght O'Crilly Rainbows, Brownies & Guides – All girls in Rainbows, Brownies and Guides participated and engaged in different activities each week, such as; craft, sport, games, cookery and scripture related activities. In January 2023, the BB invited us along to a talk from the PSNI which the girls really enjoyed. We ended the 2022/23 year with a tea evening where the girls surprised their family and friends with a flash mob. From September to December 2023, they enjoyed joining with Tamlaght O'Crilly Boys Brigade for enrolment and Harvest services as well as singing carols around the tree and our Christmas party. Each unit is continuing to work towards badges on a variety of different themes. Numbers are continuously changing and we currently have 8 Rainbows, 4 Brownies and 4 Guides.

Holiday Bible Club – this involved a week of outreach from 31st July to 4th August in the 'Big tent' in the manse field. This was preceded by a Worship service in the tent on the evening of Sunday 30th July. From Monday to Friday nightly meetings were held for Primary school age children following the theme The Big Rescue – studying how God rescued Jonah and God's salvation plan through Jesus' death and resurrection. This meeting was followed each evening by 'Youth Week' from 8.30pm for those of secondary school age+. This event comprised of special activities - including Beatboxing, water games and Beat the clock and also had food, praise and an epilogue each night. On the Friday evening a family night/barbeque and Barn Dance was enjoyed by children and parents/friends. Various prayer times to commit this work to the Lord were held throughout the week. In total, across both age groups, 149 children/young people enrolled during the week. Our week of outreach concluded with a Holiday Bible Club Family service in church on Sunday 6th August.

Presbyterian Women – Women connected to the congregation met each month from January to April and September to December 2023. PW provided a varied programme tied into the theme for the year, Being Transformed. The ladies enjoyed times of fellowship together and were given the opportunity to hear about, and support, local and global mission. Our program consisted of: Gift night where we heard about the three local ministers' wives, Dr Michael McBride Consultant anaesthetist working on the Mercy Ships, Beth Montgomery from Asia Link, Pamela Forrest who shared her testimony with us, an evening out enjoying tea, cakes and crafts, pudding night, Sandra Anderson sharing how God stood by her in tough times, our 50th Anniversary in the Lodge Hotel Coleraine and Judith Hooks – Beauty from Ashes (Fire Lily). Some of our ladies attended the Irish Women's Convention. The PW Service in September was led by Sharon and Melvin Kelly and the praise was led by the PW choir.

Men's Fellowship – Men connected to the congregation met each month from January to April and September to December. The varied programme and range of guest speakers provided an opportunity for friendship and fellowship. The men enjoyed their annual joint sports night in Drimbolg Church hall which was a fun but competitive night. The half time talk was given by Stanley Little. The annual dinner in February was held at Toast in Cullybackey with Rev John Coulter sharing at it. Some men attended Cunnady's Wellbeing Evening in March which proved to be a very helpful and encouraging evening. The visit to Hill's farm Ahoghill gave an insight into the running of a large modern dairy farm. The men enjoyed food together before George Barkley gave a relevant and challenging message from God's word. September saw the men bring out their competitive side again as they took part in a Karting Grand Prix in Kilrea. George Graham brought an epilogue to all present. In October the Churchtown men were joined by a group of men from Ballysillan as they tried air rifle shooting in Cunnady Orange Hall. An interview with one of the men showed how God had been at work in his life. A guest panel and pizza night, which included two of our own members and a former MLA, was an uplifting evening and a time of good fellowship with one another. Average attendance at each event was 20 men

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

Friendship Group – This group met monthly from January to March and from September to December. They enjoyed a varied programme of speakers and activities which always ended with chat over a cup of tea. The following details our speakers for the year: January – Michael Saunderson; February – Lorraine McGrath; March – John Porter; September – Norman Worthingham; October – Maud Steele; November – Isaac Thompson and the year finished in December with Phylis Hayes as our speaker at our Christmas lunch in the manse.

Walking Group – This provided an opportunity for members of the congregation to meet monthly on a Sunday afternoon for a casual walk. This provided an opportunity for conversation and deepening of friendships. Some of the locations include: Roe Valley Park, Garvagh Forest, Maine Riverside Walk, Portglenone Forest, Castlerock beach and Portballintrae Board walk.

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.

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.

CHURCHTOWN 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 96 contributors during the year (2022: 91) donating a total of £65,010 (2022: £60,959).

Total Income of the congregation during the year was £138,132 compared to £115,590 in the previous year.

Total expenditure increased to £120,877 from £95,999.

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, 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 20th March 2024 and signed on its behalf by



Name: Rev Richard Morrison

Date: 20/03/2024



Name: Christopher Rowe

Date: 20/03/2024