

**New Row Presbyterian Church
a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland**

**Trustees Annual Report
for the year ended 31 December 2023**

Registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland NIC105351

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

The Trustees present their Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2023 including a Balance Sheet as at that date.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

NEW ROW Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
Church Office
Society Street
Coleraine
BT52 1LA

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC 105351)

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

Aubrey Beggs	Derek Hunter
Richard Burns	Pat Hunter
Mark Callaghan	Rosemary Lyttle
Adrian Cochrane	Rev. Jonathan McKane
Ruth Cochrane	Mervyn Moore
Timothy Connor	Neil Morrison
Sylvia Gibson	Alan Morrison
John Graham (retired 31/10/2023)	Chris Murdock
Nigel Hamilton	Evan Reid
Bobby Holmes	Lorraine Simpson
Robin Humphries	

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister	Rev. Jonny McKane
Clerk of Session	Mr. Adrian Cochrane
Treasurer	Mr. Mark Harvey
Congregational Secretary	Mr. Mervyn Moore

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

QUALIFIED INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Campbell Ritchie
Chartered Accountants
21 Warnock's Lane
Coleraine
BT52 1TH

BANKERS

Ulster Bank
30 The Diamond
Coleraine
BT52 1DP

SOLICITORS

Anderson Gillan Barr Solicitors
41 New Row
Coleraine
BT52 1AE

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 held monthly in September, October, November, January, February, March, April and May and at other such times for other such purposes as deemed appropriate by The Code.

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

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT (cont'd)

The Kirk Session (cont'd)

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. New Row Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the Coleraine and Limavady 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 ministers of each congregation, retired ministers and a representative elder appointed by the Kirk Session of each congregation.

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

New Row 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 **Connecting Growing Serving Changing**.

When Jesus said 'I am the true vine', He was teaching His disciples that they could not do anything without being bonded to him; that nothing apart from the vine can bear fruit. In the same way we, as a church family, seek to do the same as the disciples by

CONNECTING with God and one another in fellowship,

GROWING together in faith,

SERVING the living God, the community and each other and in doing so hope to be

CHANGING as individuals and as a Church into the likeness of Christ so that we in turn might bring change to the world around us as people come to know Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES

The congregation meets for worship every Sunday and visitors are welcome to join. The Sacrament of the Lord's 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 Bible Club
- Horizon Bible Class
- Youth Fellowship
- Ladies' Friendship Circle
- Thursday Café and Soup Lunch
- Indoor Bowling Club
- Boys' Brigade
- Girls' Brigade
- New Row Men
- Home & Small Groups
- Wednesday with the Word, Bible Study
- Coffee Outreach & Drop In
- New Row Women (formerly Presbyterian Women)
- Creche
- Girls Nights Out
- Mums and Tots
- Choir

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

- The congregation meets for worship each Sunday at 11.00am. Evening services are held at 6.00 p.m. monthly and on other occasions as arranged.
- Morning services are live streamed on You Tube to facilitate shut in, elderly and infirm members. CD recordings of the morning service are mailed or delivered by the Ministry Team to members without an internet facility.
- We united with other town churches for a Watchnight Service on New Years' Eve organised by the Coleraine Gospel Partnership.
- Small Groups meeting in the Church Halls and Home Groups provide opportunities for members to meet for fellowship, study of the Scriptures and Prayer.
- A Congregational Prayer Time is held monthly. Those attending are provided with Prayer Topics embracing the work of the congregation, the wider work of PCI and other missionary agencies and personnel.
- An early Tuesday Morning Prayer time (7.00am to 8.00am) commenced in December for a trial period.

- **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**
- **ACTIVITIES AND PRERFORMANCE**
- During the summer Evening Prayer times were held on the first Sunday of June, July and August. The evenings focused on specific prayer as follows:
 - June: summer youth work and outreach, representatives of SU Impact Millburn Team were invited and contributed to the meeting.
 - July: a walk around the town centre, stopping at specific locations to offer prayer for schools, businesses, churches and homes.
 - August: focus on PCI Global Mission
- In November the congregation gathered for an Evening of Prayer focusing on the Persecuted Church.
- As well as our regular services during the year, we acknowledged God's gift of new life at two Sacraments of Baptism. We conducted two marriage services and gave thanks for faithful services and sought to comfort those who had been bereaved during the year.
- Due to our vacancy situation no persons were admitted to Full Church Membership.
- At 31 December 2023 there were 361 communicant members and 326 families connected with the congregation. The average attendance at morning worship was 160.
- The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was celebrated in April and October.
- Other Communion Services were held in January at the commencement of the New Year, Good Friday and on the first Sunday evening in September to mark the beginning of the new church session.
- A Hope Explored course focusing on the life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus was held on the first Sunday evenings of October, November and December.

Pastoral care

- Members of the congregation who are unable to attend church because of illness, infirmity or age are visited by a member of the Ministry Team which comprises the Minister and Church Worker (female). The Ministry Team is supported by Elders who visit in their Districts as needs arise.
- Those in hospital are visited by The Ministry Team offering prayer and support to patients and relatives.
- Meals are provided and taken to those who are ill, convalescing from illness and the recently bereaved.
- Christmas Gift Packs including a plant, Christmas Tract, Christmas card and Church Calendar are delivered to members who are aged, infirm and in Nursing/Care Homes.
- Various Social media groups helped to keep members updated with church news and information and forthcoming events.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Mission and Outreach

At a local level the congregation's mission and outreach included the following:

- Our weekly Tuesday morning Coffee Outreach and Drop which is open to passers-by and others who may wish to call in for tea/coffee and have a chat with one of the volunteers. The aim of the Drop In is to attract the lonely, unemployed, and those looking for someone to talk to.
- In response to the Cost-of-Living Crisis, six "Winter Warmer Evenings" were held in the church halls during January and February. Typically 20-25 persons, including church members and others from the local community, attended the evenings and were provided with a warm space and a hot meal. Following the meal there was time to meet and make friends whilst enjoying some board games.
- Members of the congregation continue to support the work of the Causeway Foodbank through regular donations of food items. To meet the increased demand due to the Cost-of-Living Crisis, members of the congregation responded generously to appeals for food items at Harvest and Christmas.
- Members of the congregation responded to an Acacia Path appeal for shoes and items of winter clothing for distribution to immigrants who had been housed in the local area.
- Thursday Café provides a venue for friendship and is open to everyone including visitors and friends.
- New Row is a member of the Coleraine Gospel Partnership comprising nine other churches and Christian Groups in the town. The Partnership aims to equip and mobilise members of the local churches for mission.
- A number of community groups/bodies continue to make use of our halls for events. This helps to introduce non church goers to the church environment and buildings.
- Our Minister participates in leading assemblies in a local primary and grammar school and sits on the Town Centre Forum.
- We are prayerfully and financially committed to the work of E3 North Coast Schools Worker who encourages Scripture Union groups in local schools and facilitates the formation of new groups.
- Eight of our young people serve on Summer Mission projects run by Exodus, CSSM, Child Evangelism Fellowship and United Beach Mission.
- Membership of our Girls Brigade and Boys Brigade companies includes significant numbers of young people having no church membership. This provides opportunity to connect with parents of such young people.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Mission and Outreach contd.

- Members of the congregation participated in Carol singing at the front of the church during the Christmas period. Passersby and shoppers were served with hot punch, shortbread and candy canes. A Christmas message and invites to our Christmas services were also distributed prompting a number of useful conversations.
- Our widely publicised Space Academy Holiday Bible Club for children in P1 -P7 age group was held in June. It attracted a significant number of children from our church family as well as visitors

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.

As well as a local mission involvement, the Congregation supports the work of PCI Council for Mission in Ireland as follows;

PCI Council for Mission in Ireland

During the year the congregation prayerfully and financially supported the work of;

- Rev. Dr Keith McCrory and the congregation in Maynooth Community Church.

The congregation also supports prayerfully and financially other mission personnel and groups including:

- Majed and Anna Tinawi involved in producing Bible Commentaries and working with Syrian and Ukrainian refugees in Poland.
- Scripture Union Northern Ireland involved in schools work and CSSM's locally and around the Province.
- Presbyterian Children's Society offering financial support to families in need.
- Members of the congregation also supported the annual Christian Aid Week collection.
- The congregation contributed to the 2023 Annual PCI World Development Appeal, "Starting from Scratch" supporting Christian Aid and Tearfund helping people in Sierra Leone and Bangladesh who have been forced to leave their homes and land and start their lives from scratch.
- During the year members responded financially to Disasters Emergency Committee Appeal for the Earthquake affecting Turkey and Syria.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Mission and Outreach contd

- Christian Unions Ireland working in Universities and Colleges supporting students to reach fellow students with the good news of Jesus.
- European Mission Fellowship, Norway.

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 a nominated Elder attend the meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in June 2023

Property

No major repairs or refurbishment was carried out in 2023.

Organisations

Thursday Cafe meets twice monthly. On the second Thursday tea, coffee and scones are served in an informal cafe style arrangement with those attending enjoying friendship and chat. The cafe attracts up to 25 persons including church members, friends and visitors. A special coffee morning in September helped to raise financial support for NI Hospice.

On the fourth Thursday of the month a Soup Lunch and dessert is served in the church hall. The lunches are hugely popular and are attended by 40+ persons including visitors and some who frequent our Tuesday Drop In. Following lunch those present retire to The Link for tea and coffee and a presentation or talk by a guest speaker.

Our Indoor Bowling Club has a membership of approximately 20 men and ladies and is open to non-Church members. The club meets weekly on Monday evening for social interaction and bowling and occasional friendly games with other clubs.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (cont'd)

Organisations (cont'd)

Friendship Circle. A group of about 20 ladies meet on the first and third Thursday of each month for friendship, refreshments, crafts and knitting. As well as woollen hats for use in the Neonatal Unit at Antrim Hospital, the group has undertaken a number of small projects including knitting decorations for display at our Harvest and Christmas services. Garments including hats and cardigans were sent to Malawi under the auspices of Occasional visiting crafters introduce new skills and projects. Financial donations were made to Spud Bears Ministries, Tearfund and NI Hospice.

Boys' Brigade Company. Membership comprises 13 Anchor Boys (5-8 years), 16 Junior Section Boys (8-11 years) and 20 Company Section Boys (11-18 years).

In the absence of a Captain, the work is co-ordinated by a Company Chaplain, assisted by 6 Leaders. During the session boys participate in a varied programme of activities including Bible Class, games, badge work and craft work. 7 boys are currently working toward their Queens Badge/Presidents Award. During the session Junior Section boys visited the local Fire Station. Two Junior Section teams won the Battalion Quiz and 5-a-side football competitions and went on to compete in the NI Finals.

Girls' Brigade Company. Membership comprises 8 Explorers (age3-P4), 6 Juniors (P5-P7), 2 Seniors (1st Form -3rd Form) and 3 Brigadiers (4th Form -6th Form). The work is overseen by the Company Captain assisted by 2 Officers and 6 helpers. During the evening the girls typically enjoy games, crafts, badge work and Bible Class. Two Brigaders are working towards their Brigader brooches and are helping in the Explorer Section which will contribute towards their Queen's Award.

Youth Fellowship. Meets on Sunday evenings and caters for young people of secondary school age. Approximately 25 young people participate in Bible Teaching, games, refreshments and social activities. During the session the young people enjoyed

- end of session BBQ at the Manse
- a "Question and Answer" evening when a team of church leaders answered questions on topical subjects asked by the young people.
- an overnight stay in the church halls with breakfast.
- A Christmas Dinner cooked and served by leaders in the church hall after which everyone attended our service of Readings and Carols

Sunday Bible Club meets during the morning service with up to 15 children of primary school age leaving the service after their Up Front talk. The SBC Session commenced in September with parents, children, leaders and helpers sharing together in a breakfast served in the church hall.

During the summer months several events were organised for parents, children and friends including

- Picnic in the Park after Children's Day service.
- Football fun evening, games and barbeque at a local primary school
- A visit to the Damhead Railway for train rides, bouncy castle and Barbeque
- Christmas Party.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (cont'd)

Organisations (cont'd)

Horizon Bible Class meets before the morning service on Sunday. Up to six young people of secondary school age meet for refreshments, Bible teaching and fellowship.

Creche. Supervised facilities are available each Sunday for young children whilst parents attend the morning service.

The aim of **New Row Men** is to encourage and build friendships among men of all ages through a varied weekly programme of Bible Study and social activities. During spring and early summer, the men enjoyed a number of outdoor events which last summer included a visit to The Gobbins, Ulster Aviation Society Museum, fishing, a series of Beach walks and a walk up Slemish Mountain.

Home/Small Groups. Approximately 47 members attend seven Home/Small Groups which include; four Ladies' Bible Study Groups, one mixed group, a Men's Group and a young adults group for those in year 13+ age range. Group membership varies between 4 and 10 persons. The groups meet weekly throughout the autumn, winter and spring months for Bible study, discussion, fellowship and supper.

Wednesday with the Word is a morning Bible study attended by 30+ senior/retired members and friends. The meetings which commence with tea and coffee attract a number of members from neighbouring churches. Invited speakers conduct monthly series of Bible studies from September to Easter. CD recordings of the talks are provided on request for further study or for those who were unable to attend a meeting.

Our "Drop In", takes place on Tuesday mornings and is overseen by a team of volunteers from the Congregation. Its purpose is to provide a meeting place for those in need, lonely and seeking company. Those who "drop in" enjoy company, conversation and refreshments. Christian literature is freely available and those who attend are encouraged to participate in wider church activities. In response to invitations a few patrons attended our Christmas Services with one or two attending Sunday worship. 2023 saw a significant increase in numbers with 20+ attending.

New Row Women (formerly Presbyterian Women) meets monthly from September to March. Around 35 ladies enjoy a socially informal magazine type programme and refreshments. Proceeds from An Afternoon Cream Tea and a Soup Lunch, served after the annual church service, provided financial support for various Mission Projects and missionaries.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (cont'd)

Organisations (contd.)

Ladies' Nights Out take place during the summer evenings when ladies and invited friends enjoy outdoor activities which included, beach walks, Pitch and Putt, Art in the Afternoon, outdoor bowls and a walk around the University of Ulster Campus Trail, Christmas plate painting. Most events concluded with the ladies gathering in a local café for coffee. The purpose of the evenings is to build friendships among ladies and to encourage others on the fringe of church membership to become involved. Care for the family Mums Night Out

Mums and Tots. After a couple of summer taster events, weekly meetings commenced in September. Its purpose is "a safe space for kids to play and grownups to find community" around 17 mums (or grandmas!) and tots attend for play, refreshments and social interaction. Many useful connections have been formed with those attending.

Choir leads worship on alternate Sundays morning services and on special occasions including Easter, Harvest, Christmas.

Volunteers

The Trustees wish to acknowledge their deep appreciation of those who give freely of their time by serving on committees and helping out with our 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 Facebook 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.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

PUBLIC BENEFIT STATEMENT contd

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

Total income of the congregation during the year was £244,145 compared to £237,767 in the previous year. Total expenditure of the congregation during the year was £214,777 compared to £219,318 in the previous year. Retained net income for the year was £19,961 compared to £22,428 in 2021. Net reserves at 31st December 2022 were £1,065,566 compared to £1,045,605 in 2021.

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 judgments 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 congregation 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.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

GOING CONCERN

The funding of the activities of the congregation is 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. To a certain extent we have more control over what we spend and we therefore keep under constant review our expenditure to ensure that, as far as possible, it is commensurate with what our members contribute to church funds.

RESERVES POLICY

The Trustees have considered the level of unrestricted reserves that it is appropriate to hold taking account of current and ongoing commitments. It is the policy of the Trustees to hold at least one month's normal expenditure. At the year-end unrestricted reserves amounted to £46,971 which sustains them at a higher level than this policy. The Trustees, however, consider it prudent to continue to keep reserves at this level as the funding of its present activities is dependent on the ongoing financial support of members.

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 to maintain or increase their regular giving.

Approved by the Kirk Session at its meeting on 14th May 2024 and signed on its behalf by

(Rev. Jonny McKane)



(Adrian Cochrane)

