

St Marks Church of Ireland, Augher

Trustee's Annual Report

For the year ended 31 December 2023

Charities Number: NIC105366

Reference and Administration Details

Charity Name: St Marks Church of Ireland Augher
Charity Registration Number: NIC105366
Contact Address: The Rectory
10 Augher Road
Clogher
BT76 0AD

Trustees:

Reverend Olivia Downey	Miss T Higginbotham	Mr Desmond Millar
Mrs M Crawford	Mrs D Morgan	Mr C Montgomery
Mr W Crawford	Mr D Morgan	Mrs J Rankin
Mrs C Egerton	Mr N McFarland	Mrs L Wright
The Late Mr J Egerton	Mrs R McKeown	Mr R Wright
Mrs A Graham	Mrs Judith McLaren	

Principal Office-bearers

Rector:	Reverend Olivia Downey
Rector's Churchwarden:	Mr Roy Wright
People's Churchwarden:	Mrs Carolyn Egerton
Rector's Glebwarden:	Mr Clive Montgomery
People's Glebwarden:	Mr Desmond Millar
Church Secretary:	Mr Norman McFarland
Church Treasurer:	Mrs Lisa Wright

Independent Examiner

Allan Montgomery & Company
Chartered Certified Accountants
100 Main Street, Fivemiletown, BT75 0PW

Principal Bankers

Ulster Bank Ltd
55 Main Street
Clogher, BT76 0AA

Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2023

The Trustees present this Annual Report and Statement of Receipts and Payments and Assets and Liabilities for St Marks Church of Ireland Augher for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Objectives and Activities

The charitable purpose of the Church of Ireland is the advancement of religion.

The principal function of St Marks Parish Church is to support the advancement of the Christian religion by promoting, through the work of St Marks Parish Church the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Being open to and engaging with society, as a whole and offering support for those needing help are fundamental to the practical delivery of the benefits of Christianity.

As a result of activity in the pursuit of the advancement of the Christian religion, St Marks Parish Church has custody of property and of records, materials and artefacts of significance to the cultural and religious heritage and maintenance of which is undertaken by the Select Vestry of St Marks Parish Church.

Achievements, Performance & Public Benefit

St Marks Parish Church of Ireland herein called 'St Marks COI' seeks to fulfil its purpose in support of weekly services on Sunday morning's comprising of a mix of Holy Communion, Morning Prayer, Family Service and Baptism together with various other special services during the year e.g. Lenten, Harvest Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas. Pastoral care is provided for all parishioners and those in the wider community.

During 2023, there was one Baptism, one Wedding and one Funeral.

3 Candidates from St Marks Parish were Confirmed at a Confirmation Service held at St Macartan's Cathedral Clogher on 19 November 2023. To prepare for Confirmation these former Sunday school candidates attended a six-week Confirmation class facilitated by the Rector.

Having come through the COVID-19 pandemic it has to be noted that some are not rushing to return to how things were. Several parishioners have gotten used to the convenience of online worship or have simply checked out altogether and the immediate challenge is to get people to see the church as a community requiring their involvement.

St Marks continues to identify a vital role to play in the post pandemic recovery, expanding their contribution as an important community hub that is a key place of comfort and refuge in times of crisis.

A range of other activities are usually provided by St Marks COI either by the church directly or through various church organisations e.g. Annual Harvest weekend with supper, Sunday school, Knit Stitch & Natter, Mothers Union and Choir.

Arrangements are always made to ensure that all Sunday school youth received a pastoral gift at Christmas time which include a social gathering.

The Annual Carol service was held slightly different in that it was held in the afternoon, on the 17 December with Sunday school playing an active role, afterwards parishioners enjoyed refreshments and fellowship.

Reverend Olivia Downey holds the position of Chairperson to the Board of Governors of the local primary school and a number of members of the Parish serve on Board of Governors as well as PTFA (Parents, Teachers, Friends, Association) which supports and encourages the work of the local school, helping to maintain good standards and practices. In addition, Reverend Olivia continued to partake in regular assemblies in our local schools.

St Marks COI supports the work of other charities and missionary work by either making donations or holding special collections in respect of the same. Christian Aid, UCB (United Christian Broadcasters) Ltd, The Poppy Appeal and other charities receive financial and prayerful support from the Parish.

The activities outlined above demonstrate how St Marks COI continues to implement its charitable purposes (i.e. the advancement of religion) and meets the public benefit requirement. Benefits to members of the public include contributing to spiritual well-being of participants and the reinforcement of Christian values.

St Marks COI outreach extends widely and is particularly effective through Rites of Passage ceremonies such as baptism, marriage and burial which often extend into wide areas of the local community. All are opportunities to reinforce Christian values and aspects of good citizenship. The Rector has a sensitive involvement in the local community.

The Trustees' (who have a responsibility for the upkeep of Church, Church property, Graveyard, Rectory and Church Hall), continue to exercise their stewardship by ensuring the necessary remedial repairs to the surrounds of the Parish Church and rectory are regularly maintained. As part of that stewardship, the Trustees' address any necessary repairs as required to the hall, to ensure that all facilities are welcoming, safe and usable by members and the wider public.

St Marks COI has mitigated any potential harm from the activities through the implementation of the Church of Ireland Safeguarding Trust Policy. The parish has undertaken, with guidance from the Church of Ireland, to implement GDPR in accordance with current legislative requirements.

The Parish has given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidelines on public benefit to ensure that the aforementioned activities, as described, prove evidence of how St Marks COI continues to implement its charitable purposes, the advancement of religion, and meets the Public Benefit requirement.

Financial Review

- The principal source of income of St Marks COI continues to be from Donations and Plate Collections.
- The principal expense of St Marks COI is in respect of payments regarding Diocesan Costs/Assessment.
- St Marks Parish excess of receipts over payments for the year ended December 2023 was £1,656.
- St Marks Parish Church continues to be in a satisfactory financial state as at 31 December 2023 with total cash funds of £59,484.
- St Marks Parish Church aim to retain sufficient reserves to meet its expected future expenditure requirements as well as potential future capital projects.

Going Concern

The Trustees have reviewed its planned expenditure for the year ahead and are satisfied that there are adequate funds in place to ensure that the Parish can continue its activities and the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023 can be signed off as a going concern.

Structure, Governance and Management

- Governing Document and Constitution of the Charity

As outlined in Chapter III of the Church of Ireland Constitution which governs 'Parishes and Parochial Organisation'. The Select Vestry members are the Charity Trustees.

- Recruitment and Appointment of Select Vestry (Trustees)

All members of the Church of Ireland who are over the age of 18 and are either resident within the Parish or live elsewhere but have accustomed members of the congregation for at least three months, may register as members of the General Vestry of the Parish, allowing them to attend and vote at meetings of the General Vestry and to stand for election to the Select Vestry. Meetings of the General Vestry are held at least once a year. The Select Vestry is elected as part of this General Vestry Meeting. The Select Vestry will hold their positions for a period of one year. Select Vestry members may be re-elected annually and there is no limit on the number of terms, which may be served.

- Organisational Structure

The responsibilities of the select vestry include that day to day management of activities and decision-making within the Parish.

The Select Vestry consists of a member of the clergy serving the Parish, Churchwardens (known as the Rector's Churchwarden and the People's Churchwarden), the Glebewardens and up to 12 additional

parishioners who are registered members of the general Vestry for the Parish and elected to the Select Vestry at the General / Easter Vestry.

The Select Vestry is chaired by Clergy within the Parish. Select Vestry members are responsible for making decisions on matters of general concern and importance to the Church / Parish including how funds are to be applied.

The Select Vestry meet at times fixed by Clergy / Members. Special meetings may be convened at any time by the Chairperson of the Churchwardens. In 2023 the Select Vestry met many times during the year and the average attendance was excellent.

- Compliance with Public Benefit

The Parish has given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities entered into during the year have helped achieve the Parish's objectives and activities, as well as providing public benefit.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the statement of receipts and payments and statement of assets and liabilities in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland with Income less than £250,000 requires the trustees to prepare a statement of receipts and payments and a statement of assets and liabilities for each financial year.

The trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Parish's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the assets and liabilities of the Parish. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Parish and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Signed on Behalf of the Trustees

Trustee 1 *O Downey*
Rector

Trustee 2 *L Wright*
Church Treasurer

Date **10 September 2024**