

**HAZELBANK CONGREGATION
OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND**

**Trustees Annual Report
For The
Year Ended 31 December 2023**

HAZELBANK 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

Hazelbank Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
Hazelbank Road
Coleraine
BT51 3DY

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105540)

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

Rev. David Henry Brown	Mr. Christopher Harold Alexander
Mr. Edward Frederick Kilgore	Mr. Lyle Jamieson Hunter
Mrs. Rosaleen Ramsey	Mr. David James Kane O.B.E.
Miss Jill Curry	Mr. James Kenneth Ford
Mr. Robert Luke Blair	Mr. Peter Philip Graham
Mr. David Sampson	

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister	Rev. David Henry Brown
Clerk of Session	Mr. Peter Philip Graham
Treasurer	Mr. David Sampson

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

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

**Olive K Wallace ACMA, CGMA
101 Coolyvenny Road
Coleraine
Co. Londonderry
BT51 3SF**

BANKERS

**Ulster Bank
The Diamond
Coleraine Co. Londonderry
BT52 1DP**

SOLICITORS

**Anderson, Gillan, Barr Ltd
41 New Row
Coleraine,
County Londonderry
BT52 1AE**

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

1) 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 minister in active duty in the congregation, has no deliberative but only a casting vote.

Stated meetings of the Kirk session are held a minimum of 5 times 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. Hazelbank congregation of the Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the Coleraine & 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 the congregation.

HAZELBANK 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.

2) DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

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

Hazelbank Congregation 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.

Our Mission Purpose

Hazelbank Presbyterian Church, grounded in the scriptures, exists to love and honour God through faith in His Son by the power of the Holy Spirit; and to enable the members of His family to play their part in fulfilling God's mission to our world 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 this time and place.*
-

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.*

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

3) ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES (Some activities below suspended from March 2020 due to COVID-19)

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
- Bible Class
- Youth Fellowship
- Girls' Brigade
- Hazelbank Toddlers
- Crèche
- Presbyterian Women
- Fit 4 (Ladies) (No meetings during 2023)
- Nursing Home Ministry (Suspended all of 2023)
- Bowling Club
- Holiday Bible Club
- Men's Outreach
- Home Bible Study Groups
- Monthly Community & Congregation Drop In Coffee Morning

4) ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

50th Anniversary: During 2023 a number of special events were held to celebrate the 50th Year of the congregation the highlight being our Anniversary Service in March attended by the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland Rev Dr. J.A. Kirkpatrick. Former Ministers and members attended along with representatives from other local churches and the Mayor of Causeway Coast & Glens Council. Other Anniversary events included Men's and Ladies Breakfasts with guest speakers, a special weekend of Harvest Services and Teachings and an exhibition of Creativity showcasing the many talents of the members of our congregation.

Worship and prayer

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 11.am and 6.30pm. Due to Covid 19 the evening service has been suspended. During the week Bible Study/House Groups provide an opportunity for members to meet together for fellowship, to study the scriptures and for a time of prayer. Every other Wednesday a Prayer Meeting is held in the church hall. Everyone is welcome to attend for as long or as little as they can. We pray for our town our community and our congregation.

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

As well as our regular services during the year we acknowledged God's gift of new life at Sacraments of Baptism, we conducted 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 189 communicant members and 170 families connected with the congregation. The average weekly attendance at morning worship is 60.

COVID-19

Early 2020 saw the arrival of the worldwide COVID-19 Pandemic. Along with many other venues, churches and church buildings were required to close as non-essential contact with others was not permitted. In response to the forced closure we started to provide a pre-recorded service which became available on YouTube and Facebook on the Sunday morning. Later that year with the purchase of new equipment we moved to livestreaming on the "YouTube" social media platform meaning we could stream our church services live on Sunday mornings.

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 and/or District Elders.

Mission and outreach

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 denominations annual World Development Appeal, which has partnership links with indigenous churches, Christian institutions and international mission agencies in more than 25 countries around the world. The Council for Global Mission is tasked with enabling the coordination and delivery of global mission and provides a supportive bridge between local congregational life and its global context.

ZOMBA Action Project

In addition Hazelbank congregation supports the Zomba Action Project along with Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council and our partner agency on the ground Emmanuel International.

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

Since 2005 Hazelbank has funded a wide range of life-changing projects in the Zomba area, samples of which include;

Feeding programmes during times of crop failure and extreme hunger, many of which were aimed at widows and orphans.

Supply of mosquito nets to communities to avert the risk of malaria.

Provision of shallow wells in villages to supply clean water.

Provision of bicycle ambulances to improve transport of the sick in rural areas.

Refurbishment of a local orphanage.

Education scholarships to provide disadvantaged pupils with secondary school education for 5 years

Supply of goats to villages to encourage small scale farming and food production.

Help in completing of the Chipalawe orphan project.

Help in completing of a primary school at Chinimwali.

Beekeeping projects for suitable villages have been extremely successful in the recent past and each project costs around £500 to set up. This project included the supply of equipment, bees and training. The money realized from the sale of the honey harvested from this project will be shared amongst households participating in the project. This will raise their living standards as they will be able to purchase fertilizer and boost their crop harvests next season.

Project for Harvest Offering 2021 and 2022

Following a proposal from the local Zomba Action committee the Trustees agreed to mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of Hazelbank Presbyterian Church coming up in 2023, by undertaking a special larger project, spanning over two years, which would create a building which could be identified with our church which has consistently supported the people of Zomba for almost two decades.

The idea of a 'Hazelbank Child Care Centre' would involve the provision of a new building, comprising a 2-room centre plus integral store, brick built with a cement mortar plaster, under a corrugated zinc roof. There will also be an outdoor kitchen and toilet, a well and pump and a garden, with fertilizer and seed to help provide supplementary feeding for the children.

Mosquito nets will be provided to the guardians of the attending children.

Training in child care, educating pre-school children and hygiene will be provided for the Volunteers. This building will also be used for community meetings and civic activities, health clinics and agriculture meetings etc.

2023 Harvest Update: In August 2023 three members of our congregation along with other members of the Zomba Action Committee travelled to Zomba where they officially opened the Hazelbank Child Care Centre.

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

Foodbank

Following months of discussion and planning Hazelbank joined with our close neighbours in the Elim church to set up a foodbank in partnership with the Trussell Trust. This foodbank serves the “Heights” area of our town and supplies emergency food for local people in crisis. Volunteers from both churches attended training covering a number of issues including Safeguarding and the foodbank went “live” in December 2021. Throughout 2023 the Foodbank has continued to operate and bring relief to many families in need in the area. A leaflet drop was carried out in the Heights area to make residents aware of the Foodbank and it’s also highlighted in local posts on Facebook Social Media

Samaritan’s Purse (Operation Christmas Child)

Samaritan’s Purse is an international relief and development organisation that works through local churches to proclaim and demonstrate the love of God amongst communities in Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Thousands of churches, schools and businesses across the UK take part sending shoeboxes containing child’s toys, hygiene items, school supplies and small clothing items (hats, gloves etc.). Every year our congregation fill a large number of shoeboxes which are then transported to a central location for distribution. Due to Covid restrictions in 2020 an online option was set up and now contributors can build an online shoebox by sending an electronic payment from their bank. This has proved very popular.

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

The Church Property Sub-Committee regularly reviews the fabric of its suite of buildings and brings recommendations to the Church Committee for work required to the premises. The church committee undertakes preventative maintenance and repairs any damaged property or equipment on a timely basis. During the year £7,306 was spent on repairs and maintenance of our church buildings and Manse.

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

Organizations

Presbyterian Women

Presbyterian Women (PW) is an organization within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland that enables, encourages and equips women to become Disciples of Christ. PW is open to women of all ages and stages of life were they are able to come together to grow in their faith through bible study, prayer, teaching and through growing in community together.

Youth Fellowship (Did not meet in 2023)

Youth Fellowship caters for those who are 1st year Secondary Education into their early twenties. It meets each Sunday evening from 6:15- 7.30pm. Members have a time of bible study as well as some fun time together around fellowship and food. Some of the Youth Fellowship have one to one mentoring to help them grow in their Christian faith. Members also attend outside events organized for youth fellowships including MAD held in Coleraine University.

Girls Brigade

The Girls' Brigade Company is a Christ-centered uniformed organization for girls which aims to teach girls to seek, serve and follow Christ through craft, games, Bible study and other fun activities. Our Company meets on Thursday nights during September to March. Over forty girls are currently registered.

Hazelbank Bowling Club

Having been formed in 1973, the Hazelbank Presbyterian Church Bowling Club is the oldest recreational organization attached to Hazelbank Presbyterian Church. On average 20 - 25 members of various ages meet on Tuesday and Saturday evenings at 7.30pm in the Church Hall, and enjoy an evening's fellowship together from September through to Easter. Membership includes non-members of Hazelbank Presbyterian Church. New members of all ages are always welcome. The Club participates in the Bannside League which entails a weekly match against clubs from various Churches and Halls in the Triangle area.

Hazelbank Toddlers

Hazelbank Toddlers Group is for pre-school children, and as well as catering for the little ones, it aims to provide the opportunity for parents/carers to relax and make friends. You are very welcome to join us in the Church Hall every Thursday morning, during school term at 10:00am-11:00am.

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Nursing Home Ministry (Suspended from March 2020 due to COVID-19)

A team from Hazelbank also visits local Nursing Homes regularly with many older people enjoying the worship and fellowship on a regular basis.

Midweek Bible Study

Small groups meet informally in homes where, although they are studying the Bible, there is also good fellowship in a relaxed atmosphere. Each group has a slightly different 'character' but they are all the same in that everybody is made very welcome but nobody has to contribute orally to the discussions or prayer times. Not only is there an opportunity to grow in faith but a valuable element is getting to know other members of our congregation really well and developing friendships.

Men's Ministry

Our men's group meet in a local restaurant for breakfast and fellowship on the first Saturday of every month. Trips to events and attractions are also held and these are open to all men whether or not they have a connection with the church

Monthly Coffee & Buns Morning

A Drop In Coffee & Buns Morning is held on the first Saturday of every month for the local community and congregation

Volunteers

The Trustees wish to acknowledge their deep appreciation of those who give freely of their time by serving on committees and helping with organizations and other church activities. Currently around 70 people are involved in the various tasks.

5) 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

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

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.

6) FINANCIAL REVIEW

Total Income for 2023 was £166,855 (£159,036 in 2022). The congregations' main source of income is member's contributions through the weekly Freewill Offering. There were 104 households contributing during the year (109 in previous year, 2022). Total donations amounted to £160,705 (£155,137 in previous year, 2022), these figures include Gift Aid Refunds and contributions for Special Offerings.

Having replaced the church sound system in 2022, outgoings decreased in 2023 to £144,605 (£160,307 in 2022). During 2023 our congregation collected and distributed a total of £24,684 to external and PCI based religious projects, a few examples include:

Digging Deeper: A local initiative partnering with the Mountsandle Christian Fellowship operating in the immediate vicinity of the church. Volunteers help householders to maintain their garden.

European Mission Fellowship, supporting a church plant in the city of Aarhus

Zomba Action Project (including the new Child Care Centre)

Tear Fund

The Heights Foodbank

PCI World Development Appeal

PCI United Appeal

Stand By Me (working in 11 countries rescuing children)

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

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) 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 on 12th March 2024 and signed on its behalf by

(Name) 

(Name) 

(Date) 12/03/24

(Date) 12/03/24