

PORTRUSH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

The Trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the book of the constitution and government of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016).

Objectives and activities

Portrush 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 Charity's mission is: - **For the Glory of God to present the gospel so that others will become true disciples of Jesus Christ.**

To make this mission a reality, the Charity is committed to the only God-given means of achieving it - the Word of God taught and preached simply, compassionately, and faithfully.

This mission guides the Charity's Vision, which is **to see as many people of all ages come to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and grow to become Useful Active Serving members of His church.**

The congregation normally meets for worship every Sunday and visitors are welcome to join. It provides a centre for worship for the many visitors who come to Portrush throughout the year. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is observed on eight occasions during the year. 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 prayer meetings, and has a wide range of organisations including:

- Sunday School
- Youth Fellowship
- Boys' Brigade
- Girls' Brigade
- Tea and Tots
- Presbyterian Women
- Choir
- Craft Group
- Bowling Club
- New Beginnings: a charity shop as a community service

Achievements and performance

Worship and prayer

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 11am and 6.30pm. During the week a range of Bible study groups provides an opportunity for members to meet together for fellowship, to study the Scriptures, and for a time of prayer.

As well as our regular services during the year we acknowledged God's gift of new life at four Sacraments of Baptism, gave thanks for faithful service, and sought to comfort those who had been bereaved during the year.

At 31 December 2023 there were 253 communicant members and 196 families connected with the congregation. The average attendance at morning worship averaged 250-300 from September to May and 450-500 from June to August. Online attendance, an imprecise measure, varied between 150 & 250.

PORTRUSH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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, elders or by one of the congregation's pastoral visitors subject to Covid regulations. Video and audio recordings of the morning service are distributed weekly to those unable to attend, and communion services held, as appropriate, in people's homes. Since the beginning of the pandemic, all in-person morning services have been live-streamed. Counselling is available for all members of the church family, as required, and is provided by members of the Ministry team, and there is a strong emphasis on the distribution of practical support for those in need.

Mission and outreach

At a local level our mission is expressed by our worship, which is a key element of expressing our love for God. Our worship is therefore inclusive of age and style, and allows those whom God has so gifted to creatively express their love by these gifts.

We promote fellowship within the church and encourage each member to see his/her responsibility to be a catalyst for fellowship, caring, sharing, praying, encouraging, and visiting. This also challenges us as to our responsibility to develop fellowship with Christians outside our church. This is the basis for our outreach to the whole local community in caring service and evangelism, not only as individuals and families, but through the activities of the organisations listed above and below.

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, assists 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.

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

Early in 2023 serious leaks in the pipes for the central heating of the church led to the replacement of those pipes and the complete resurfacing of the rear car park, under which the pipes were laid.

PORTRUSH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Organisations

In addition to our Sunday School, our Youth Fellowship and our Home Bible Study Groups, there are a number of thriving organisations. In-person activities for these organisations resumed in early autumn as pandemic restrictions eased. Our Home Bible Study Groups and Youth Fellowship met online in the earlier part of the year. The local branch of Presbyterian Women met monthly during autumn and winter in support of missionary and discipleship work in the church. Our Girls' Brigade Company meets each Monday with, on average, thirty girls of ages from four to eighteen attending. Our Boys' Brigade Company meets each Friday during the autumn and winter terms, with over twenty five boys of the same age range regularly attending. Each organisation provides a range of activities of games, crafts, Bible teaching, and so on. Our Tea and Tots group meets every Friday morning in our halls. Fifteen children and their carers are regular attenders. These organisations have participants from throughout the community, as does our Bowling Club, which meet once a week in our halls with between fifteen and twenty regular attenders. We also have a craft group with a dozen members, who make craft items to distribute to those in need both at home and abroad.

Reality 3:16, our Worldview programme, met regularly throughout the year, in person in Reality 3:16 House, with participants from all over the province engaging in significant study of the Christian faith in relation to our modern world.

Volunteers

The Trustees wish to acknowledge their deep appreciation of the more than one hundred church members and others who give freely of their time by serving on committees and helping with these 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 with whom the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is in direct and indirect contact, 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.

PORTRUSH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

The Kirk Session has had regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit requirement statutory guidance.

The congregation of Portrush provides facilities for other Churches and Christian groups from far and wide for trips and events, and for conference facilities.

The church also maintains, through the efforts of our Property committee, the extensive Grade 2 buildings on our Main Street Portrush site, which represent some of the most important heritage buildings of the town and area.

Financial review

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering. There were 137 contributing families during the year (2022: 126) donating a total of £113,485 (2022: £112,317).

Total income of the congregation during the year was £306,416, compared to £257,666 in the previous year.

Total expenditure increased from £237,430 to £285,505.

Going concern

The activities of the congregation are 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.

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 were £64,498, which represents a higher level of reserves than required by this policy. The Trustees however, consider it prudent to hold reserves at this level as the funding of its present activities is dependent of 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 in their regular giving.

Structure, governance and management

The Charity is an unincorporated organisation.

The Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mr B G H Simpson

Mr R S Medcalf

Mr S A McCartney

Mr W A Duncan

Mr W R Dunn

Professor J H Gillespie

Mr W C Harpur

Rev J A Kirkpatrick

(Resigned 31 August 2023)

Mr S Medcalf

Mr D McMillan

Mr W S Peake

Mr S P Vandevyver

Mr R Scott

Rev P Boyd

(Resigned 31 August 2023)

Rev Dr J Coulter

(Appointed 1 September 2023)

PORTRUSH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

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 at least five times a 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. Portrush 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 of 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 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.

The Trustees' report was approved by the Kirk of Session and signed on its behalf by

Professor J H Gillespie

Trustee

Dated: 30 January 2024



Rev Dr J Coulter

Trustee

Dated: 30 January 2024

