

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

Trustees Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2023

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105625)

**LISBELLAW CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND
TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

The Trustees present their Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2023.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Lisbellaw Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105625)

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

Rev. Rodney Beacom
Mr. Stephen Gaston
Mr. Samuel Carrothers

Mr. Desmond Gamble
Mr. Alan Murphy
Mrs. Elizabeth Irvine

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister
Clerk of Session
Treasurer

Rev. Rodney Beacom
Mr. Stephen Gaston
Mrs. Elizabeth Irvine

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Mr. Richard Trimble

**LISBELLAW 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.

Meetings of the Kirk Session are held as appropriate.

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 support of those who vote.

Presbytery

Under the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's 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. Lisbellaw congregation of the Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the Omagh 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.

**LISBELLAW 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, administrative 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

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

Lisbellaw 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 *"To know God, to be known by Him and to make Him known"*.

LISBELLAW CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND 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 twice a 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 fortnightly prayer-meetings and joins with its sister congregations for fortnightly Bible Studies. Other organisations include:

- Sunday School
- *Presbyterian Women*
- Women's Friendship Hour

Worship and prayer

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 10am. During the week the Bible Study or Prayer-Meeting provides an opportunity for members to meet together for fellowship, to study the Scriptures and to pray as a corporate body.

As well as our regular services during the year, we sought to comfort those who had been bereaved. There were no baptisms.

At 31 December 2023, there were 80 communicant members and 61 families connected with the congregation. The average weekly attendance at morning worship is approximately 50.

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 or elders. A Pastoral Care Team supports those in need in various ways e.g. providing meals and taking people to appointments.

Mission and outreach

Aside from organisations which meet regularly, our congregation hosts a number of one-off spiritual and/or social events, most of which are promoted in conjunction with our sister congregations e.g. a dinner which was attended by around 60 people. The mission and outreach of the congregation extends further afield, with financial and prayerful support being given on a sustained basis to various Christian organisations, namely *Asialink*, *Scripture Union*, the *Christian Institute*, *Prison Fellowship* and *Child Evangelism Fellowship*. Other causes that are financially supported include the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's World Development and United Appeals, the International Meeting-Point, the Presbyterian Children's Society, the *Earl Haig* Fund, a local food bank and the *Blythswood* Shoebox Appeal.

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

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. The minister and representative elder are members of the Presbytery's Strategic Planning Group.

General Assembly

The minister was nominated to attend the meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, held in Assembly Buildings, Belfast, in June.

Property

There were no major refurbishment or repair projects during the year.

Organisations

Each Sunday, our Sunday School welcomes around 15 children to our hall and, in June, we host a four-day Children's Bible Club, which is open to children from the wider community. That week culminates in a barbecue for the children and their parents. About 10 people attend the fortnightly congregational prayer-meeting on a Wednesday evening and, on the alternate Wednesday evenings, up to 11 of our congregation join with members of our sister congregations for Bible Studies. *Presbyterian Women* (again a joint organisation with our sister congregations) meets about half a dozen times each year, with an average attendance of 25, although that figure increases markedly for a fork supper, which is attended by many other ladies in our congregation, for the Visitors' Evening, to which other women's groups are invited, and for the annual dinner. The joint Ladies Friendship Hour gathers on the first Thursday of each month, with an average attendance of about 16, although those numbers are again swelled in two outings for afternoon tea in December and June. The PW group also host four 'Walk and Talk' events in May and June, which can

see up to 40 people go for a walk, enjoy a healthy supper and hear a short Christian devotional message.

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.

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

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 and social media channels.

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 Commission's Public Benefit requirement statutory guidance.

**LISBELLAW 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.

The total income of the congregation during the year was £55,065.52, compared to £49,775.81 in the previous year.

Total expenditure increased fractionally from £50,149.88 to £50,634.17.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

As the congregation's total income does not exceed £250,000, the Trustees have elected under Section 64(3) of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) to prepare a receipts and payment account.

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 Thursday, 26th March, 2024 and signed on its behalf by

[Name] Rev. Rodney Beacom

[Date] 18th July, 2024