

# **UPPER CUMBER CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND**

**Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements  
for the year ended 31 December 2023**

**Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105636)**

**UPPER CUMBER 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**

Upper Cumber Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland  
15-17 Cregg Road  
Claudy  
BT47 4HX

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105636)

**CHARITY TRUSTEES**

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

Mr Alan Lindsay	Mr Robert George Wilson
Mr Kenneth Haslett	Mr John Andrew Clarke McFarland
Mr Arthur James McFarland	Mr John Haslett
Mrs Olive Witherow	Mr Wesley Haslett
Mrs Jennifer Campbell	Mrs Arlene Moore

**PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS**

Minister	Vacant
Clerk of Session	Mr John McFarland
Treasurer	Mr Arthur McFarland

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER**

Mr Alistair Sterritt, 46 Edenreagh Road, Eglinton, BT47 3NQ

**BANKERS**

Danske Bank, PO Box 183, Donegal Square West, Belfast, BT1 6JS

**SOLICITORS**

RG Connell & Sons  
13 Main St, Limavady, County Londonderry, BT49 0EP

## UPPER CUMBER 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 congregations. All members are entitled to propose, speak and exercise equal votes at meetings, except that the Moderator, the ministers in active duty in the congregation, has no deliberative but only a casting vote.

Stated meetings of the Kirk session are held at least twice in each year or 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 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. Upper Cumber congregation of the Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the Derry and Donegal 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.

## UPPER CUMBER 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.

### DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

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

Upper Cumber 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 purposes is *by the grace of God, to help people of all ages become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ. Our vision is, by the grace of God, to be an inclusive, welcoming community of Christ's people of all ages, 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.*

## **UPPER CUMBER 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 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
- Youth Club
- Youth Fellowship
- Junior Bible Club
- Bowling Club
- Book Club
- Presbyterian Women
- Men's Fellowship
- Walking Group
- Rainbows/Brownies/Guides
- Pampered & Prepared Ladies Meetings
- Saturday Morning Bible Study Group

### **ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

#### **Worship and prayer**

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 11.40am. During the week the Bible Study 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 3 Sacraments of Baptism and gave thanks for faithful services and sought to comfort those who had been bereaved during the year. There were no marriage services during the year.

At 31 December 2022 there were 220 communicant members and 100 families connected with the congregation. The average week attendance at morning worship is 55.

#### **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 elders.

## **UPPER CUMBER CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND**

### **Mission and outreach**

At a local level the congregation reaches out to the local community through its organisations which are open to all. We support local and international mission organisations, holding regular fundraisers for charity.

### **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, 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, Sunday School project and any other special appeals.

### **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**

No major repairs or refurbishments took place

### **Organisations**

Youth Club meets every Saturday night for a range of activities and also go on regular trips. Approx 30 children attend Youth Fellowship meets monthly on Sunday nights having regular discussions, movies nights etc. Approx 25 young people attend. Junior Bible Club meets monthly on Friday evenings. We have crafts, games, stories for primary school age children. Bowling Club meets every Tuesday night. It competes in the local churches league. There are approx 20 members. Book Club meets approx every six weeks. Having read a chosen novel, it is then discussed. There are around 10 members meeting in various homes.

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

Presbyterian Women meets monthly and has various speakers and fellowship times. There are around 15 ladies of all ages involved. Men's Fellowship meets on an ad-hoc basis for movie nights, karting and clay pigeon shooting. Most events are aimed at encouraging men from the community to come along. There are usually around 30 men who attend.

Walking Group meets weekly. Members and friends choose a local walk/forest and enjoy a stroll and a cup of tea afterwards. There are usually about 15 people involved.

### **Organisations**

Rainbows and Brownies meet weekly in the church buildings. Pampered & Prepared is a ladies outreach that meets each week in May or June. It is open to the whole community. There are a range of activities including craft, beauty therapy, health, cooking and walking. A local speaker addresses the ladies before they have supper. Around 70 ladies attend.

Saturday Morning Bible Study Group meets monthly. Ladies come for breakfast and discuss a short Bible Study together.

### **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.

### **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 notice boards, 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.

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

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.

**UPPER CUMBER 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. There were 88 contributors during the year 2023 donating a total of £38,985.

Total Income of the congregation during the year was £113,385 which included a bequest of £40,000.

Total expenditure was £36,548.

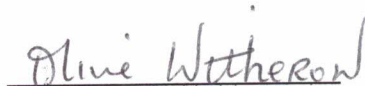
**STATEMENT OF TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

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.

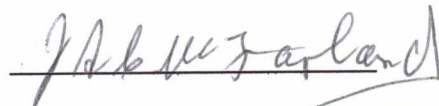
The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the congregation's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time its financial position. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the congregation and hence for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

Approved by the Kirk Session at a meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024 and signed on its behalf by



Olive Witherow

Trustee



John McFarland

Clerk of Session