

**FIRST CASTLEDERG 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**

First Castledearg congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland  
18 Garvetagh Road, Castledearg, Co Tyrone, BT81 7QA

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105659)

**CHARITY TRUSTEES**

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

Mr James Emery  
Mr Robert Rutledge  
Mr James Young

Mr Milton Porter  
Mr David Young  
Miss Lavinia Nelson

Mr Drew Nelson  
Mr Gareth Sproule

**PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS**

Minister:	Convenor Rev Bobby Orr
Clerk of Session:	Mr Robert C. Rutledge
Treasurer:	Mrs Helen Lowry

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER**

Kathryn Mitchell (for Watson & Colhoun)  
Unit B15 Omagh Enterprise Centre, Great Northern Road, Omagh, Co Tyrone, BT78 5LU

**BANKERS**

Ulster Bank  
29 Abercorn Square, Strabane, Co Tyrone, BT82 8AL  
Danske Bank  
South Business Centre, 45-48 High Street, Portadown, Co Armagh, BT62 1LB

**SOLICITORS**

Thomas Elliott & Son  
c/o A F Colhoun & Co, 41 Dublin Road, Omagh, Co Tyrone, BT78 1HE

**FIRST CASTLEDERG 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 four 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. First Castledearg 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.

## **FIRST CASTLEDERG 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.

First Castledearg 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 congregations mission purposes is:

'Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.'

***Philippians 1: 27***

The congregation aims to live out its Mission and Vision as a family of God's people by:

- Conducting ourselves in a manner that is worthy and commending of the gospel by the quality of our lives.
- Living out the gospel in church and in the community.
- In Christ's strength and power we can live for Him (i.e. Why should people believe the gospel if they cannot see Christ in us?)
- Making our prayers more united and maintain that unity.
- Focusing on health, not on growth as our issue is not how to become bigger. We do not say to a child by this time next year you have to be this height or in five years you have to be so big. Rather we say we will look after you, provide you with food, care and exercise. If the body is healthy, it will grow and become mature.

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

### **DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE (cont'd)**

So our mission plan is to identify issues in our congregation which have contributed to its health, remind ourselves of them, and seek to put them into practice, in striving to forward the message of the Gospel. We will also want to take time to SWOT by looking at our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

### **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 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 bible study meetings once a month and has a wide range of organisations which meet over the winter months including:

- Sunday School
- Presbyterian Women
- Bowling Club
- Girls' Brigade
- Boys' Brigade

### **ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

#### **Worship and prayer**

The congregation normally meets for worship each Sunday at 12 noon. During the month 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 5 Sacraments of Baptism, we conducted 3 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 412 communicant members and 160 families connected with the congregations. The average weekly attendance at morning worship is 84.

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

### **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 holds an annual collection for missionaries. It supports a local Scripture Union worker. Locally the church outreaches through fundraising and hold a summer bible club for those of primary school age- none of which were able to happen again this year.

### **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 October.

### **Property**

The new church hall is doing very well.

### **Organisations**

#### *Sunday School*

The Sunday school which consists of 43 pupils and 9 teachers meets on a weekly basis. The children support the Sunday School Project and also a project in Zomba. The Christmas party is well attended.

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

**Organisations (cont'd)**

Presbyterian Women

Presbyterian Women meet monthly. They do a variety of activities around the theme for the year. They are out and about for other events and enjoy supporting others.

Bowling Club

The Bowling Club meets on a weekly basis and is also attended by those from the wider community.

Girls' Brigade

The Girls' Brigade meets on a weekly basis.

Boys' Brigade

The Boys' Brigade meets weekly. Each of the annual events add that extra touch, with an enrolment service, an inspection and display.

**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.

**FIRST CASTLEDERG 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, 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.

**FIRST CASTLEDERG 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 136 contributors during the year (2022: 136) donating a total of £41,117 (2022: £43,754).

Total income of the congregation during the year was £129,324 compared to £133,987 in the previous year.

Total expenditure decreased from £95,566 to £87,971.

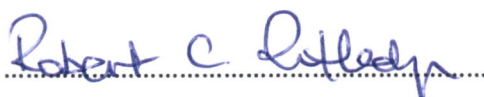
**STATEMENT OF TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

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 congregation's 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 and signed on its behalf by:



Mr Robert Rutledge

Date: 12/09/2024



Mr David Young

Date: 12/09/2024