

Dromore Reformed Presbyterian Church

Charity Account Report 2023



Charity Account Report for Dromore Reformed Presbyterian Church
for the year ended 31st December 2023.

Charity Details

Dromore Reformed Presbyterian Church
14 Brewery Lane
Dromore
Co.Down
BT25 1AH

Charity Registration Number: NIC106256

Charity Trustees

Rev Philip Dunwoody
Dr Raymond Steen
Mr Raymond Gamble

Principal Office Bearers

Minister	Rev Philip Dunwoody
Session	Dr Raymond Steen
Clerk of Session	Mr Raymond Gamble
Deacon / Secretary	Dr Gareth McKeeman
Deacon / Treasurer	Dr Alan Ball
Deacons	Mr Gavin McCaughan + Mr Brian Rankin Mr Stephen Hawthorne + Mr Timothy Frazer Mr John B Bell

Independent Examiner Mr William McCollum FCA

DROMORE SESSION REPORT 2023

The Session acknowledges and gives all glory to God for His love, mercy, grace and ever-present help towards the congregation during another year. Psalm 23, which describes Christ's care for the flock, reminds the session to take heed to the care of the flock and stirs us to continue to seek to proclaim Christ as king in Dromore (*"See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord"* – Colossians 4:17).

The Lord has graciously enabled the congregation to share the gospel through Guest Services, Psalm singing and outreach in the town during the year. Opportunities to speak of Christ have been joyfully taken up by the congregation and Session has been delighted to receive report of repentance and faith in Christ as a result of the simplicity of preaching the gospel (1 Corinthians 1:21).

Session

The Session met on 9 occasions during the year. Pastoral care and spiritual oversight of the flock has continued to be Session's priority in line with the biblical direction to watch over the flock (1 Peter 5:1–2). The spiritual needs of the congregation were prayerfully considered at Session meetings. The physical needs of the congregation were also considered in liaison with the Diaconate.

Session met in the home of Mr John Somerville on a number of occasions. Session records its appreciation of the kindness and hospitality shown by the Somervilles in making their home available.

Rev. Prof. Robert McCollum stepped down as an interim elder on the Session of the Dromore congregation. We thank Mr McCollum for his wisdom, grace and 4 years' faithful and diligent service. Session wish Mr McCollum every blessing in his continuing roles in the Reformed Theological College, Woodstock RPC and in particular his recent appointment as Interim Moderator for Trinity RPC.

Prayer

At the commencement of the year, a Day of Prayer on 7th January was attended by many in the congregation, either in person or by Zoom. Session has also been encouraged by the growth in attendance at the regular prayer meetings for midweek and before Sabbath worship.

Worship

The congregation meets twice each Sabbath for corporate worship. Average morning attendance in 2023 was 53, with a high of 69 and a low of 25. Average evening attendance was 35, with a high of 57 and a low of 22. Session encourages everyone, where possible, to attend morning and evening services.

a) Preaching

Mr Dunwoody faithfully completed his series, preaching through Revelation and also preached in the Psalms, John, Jonah and a series of 17 sermons on Abraham. In December he commenced preaching in Matthew. In addition, Mr Dunwoody has begun systematically

reading through the book of Exodus. Session notes and records its thankfulness on behalf of the congregation for the diligent, prayerful preparation made by our minister in the preaching of the Word. Mr Dunwoody took 3 pulpit supplies, had one pulpit exchange and took 6 weeks of holiday.

b) Sacraments

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was observed on 4 occasions during the year (12th March, 12th June, 10th September and 10th December). An average of 32 members partook of the Sacrament, a slight increase from 30 in 2022. Communion Preparation Services were held on each preceding Friday evening.

c) Psalmody

Session records its thanks to the Precentors, Mrs Lynsey McKeeman, Mr Stephen Hawthorne and Mrs Barbara Gamble for their ongoing work. Session was encouraged to note the time of Psalm singing on the last Sabbath of the year.

Midweek Meetings

Midweek meetings were held on Wednesday evenings. Bible Study and prayer times were held in Brewery Lane on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays.

Home Groups continued throughout the year with a break during the summer months and holiday seasons. Again, these meetings have provided opportunity for biblical discussion, prayer and fellowship. Hospitality from hosts has been much appreciated.

Fellowship Meetings

A weekly Body and Soul meeting (Mondays), a monthly Men's Fellowship (Tuesdays), and a monthly Ladies' Fellowship (Thursdays) continue to be a source of encouragement and blessing. Session records its thanks to those members who contribute to the organisation and success of the fellowship meeting programmes.

Church Weekend

A church weekend was held in September and Rev. Peter Loughridge from North Edinburgh RPC preached a series of sermons on "Ordinary Heroes" recorded in the scriptures. The weekend activities were held in Dromore High School. Session records its thanks to the members involved in the planning, preparation and delivery of the weekend.

Church Outing

The congregation met at Kilbroney Park at the end of June for a time of informal fellowship and barbecue for the church and friends. Session records its thanks to the Diaconate for making the necessary arrangements.

Outreach

Guest services were held on 4 occasions with an encouraging attendance, particularly of young people. A 3-night mission was also held in August and an evening of Psalm singing was held with visitors from various denominations, travelling from many areas.

a) Black Saturday

A bookstall was held at the Black Saturday in Dromore in August and books supplied by the Covenanter Book Shop were sold in the demonstration field. Session records its thanks to the Bookshop for its assistance. In addition, copies of the tract "What is a Protestant?" by Rev. David Silversides were distributed by members of the congregation. Session is grateful to Rev. Joey Dunlap for his support and to the members of the Loughbrickland RPC congregation who also attended and helped with the tract distribution.

b) Literature Distribution

In August, invitations and scripture tracts were distributed to each home throughout the town. Session appreciates the help of members of the congregation in this outreach ministry.

c) Streaming Ministry

Sermons continue to be streamed each week via YouTube and are listened to by many beyond the bounds of the congregation. Session has once again been encouraged to hear of people benefiting and being blessed through this ministry. Session appreciates all who help with streaming and controlling the PA system.

d) Monthly Lunch

The Lunch Group continued in 2023 with good attendance and good support from members of the congregation. Session records its thanks for the work of Mrs Isabel Patterson supported by other members who faithfully support this work in coordinating this event for the seniors in the congregation and for other others in the community.

e) Nursing Home Outreach

A new ministry commenced in Mountvale Nursing Home, consisting of Mr Dunwoody and a group of members from the congregation attending the home, monthly on Sabbath afternoons for a bible reading, exposition, prayer and psalm singing. This has been well received, particularly from elderly believers who relish the opportunity for worship and fellowship.

Monthly Supper

Session thanks all those who help in the preparation and serving of the monthly supper after evening worship.

Instruction of the Young

a) Sabbath School

Session appreciates the commitment of the teachers (Dr Elizabeth Ball, Mr Stephen Hawthorne, Mrs Catherine Rankin) in preparing and teaching the lessons, the supervision and direction given by the superintendent, Dr Gareth McKeeman, in all aspects of the Sabbath School.

b) Adult Bible Class

This class is led by Raymond Gamble. The class is regularly attended by a number of young adults, although all are welcome. The class has been given an overview of the teaching of each book of the Bible and the Westminster Standards (currently the Larger Catechism).

Covenanter Youth

The Joint CY, which is comprised of young people from our congregation, Dromara, Lisburn and Bailiesmills, met monthly throughout the year with up to 30 young people in attendance. The Session records its appreciation of the work of our minister, his wife, Hannah and Mrs Lynda Agnew in this regard, along with the work of the leaders from the other congregations.

Arrows

The primary school-aged children continue to meet monthly throughout the year for family outings. Session records its thanks to Mrs Ruth Silversides for her work in organising these times.

Pastoral Visitation

Session sought to visit all members and families during the year. Pastoral visitation will resume in early 2024.

Membership Changes

It is with sadness that session records the death of Mrs Joyce Frazer 19th August 2023. Joyce was a wonderful godly lady and was a faithful member and is greatly missed.

Mr Neville and Mrs Jane Dawson joined Beeston Free Church near Nottingham.

In December, Miss Lynda Bell married Mr David Agnew. Session extends its congratulations to the couple, praying that they may know God's blessing as they start their new life together.

Diaconate

The Session are thankful for the work the Deacons have carried out during the year. The diaconate has not only continued to ensure that the church's property is maintained, but they have also continued to balance the use of both Brewery Lane and the High School with all the practical implications of using two sites for worship.

Having spent considerable time prayerfully considering what is the best accommodation option to support our desire to see Christ's kingdom extended, the Diaconate concluded that providentially, the best option currently available to the congregation is the redevelopment of the existing Brewery Lane site.

At a congregational meeting on 4th June, plans for a renovation of the building at Brewery Lane were recommended to the congregation. Members were invited to comment on the proposal before a closed ballot took place. Session was pleased to note 25 out of 27 members voted "Yes" to the proposal.

In addition, a significant amount of work has been done in relation to applying for planning permission to renovate and extend the building at Brewery Lane to accommodate the needs of the present and, Lord willing, future congregation.

Conclusion

Session has been encouraged to see the growth in grace of Christ's people during the past year. Session encourages all to be constant and fervent in prayer, to continue to rejoice in the LORD and above all to love one another.

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honour. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality – Romans 12: 9-13

Mr Raymond Gamble (Clerk of Session)