

1. Introduction

This document is the annual report for Rathfriland Reformed Presbyterian Church, Northern Ireland Charity Number NIC106596. This report relates to the calendar year 2023.

2. Purpose

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

Rathfriland Reformed Presbyterian Church is a congregation of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland. The Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland exists to honour and worship God and to share the good news of Jesus Christ His Son.

3. Structure

Session

The charity trustees of congregation are the members of the Session, which consists of the minister and one ruling elder of the congregation. In case of vacancy (where a congregation has no minister), an acting minister from within the Presbytery (Interim Moderator) is a member of the Session.

Elders and ministers are chosen by a vote of all communicant members of the congregation. Election of elders, calling of ministers and transaction of Session business are carried out in accordance with the 'Code', the Book of Government and Order of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

Wider Governance

In the Presbyterian form of church government practised by the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland, each local congregation belongs to a Presbytery. Rathfriland congregation belongs to the Southern Presbytery of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland. The membership of each Presbytery consists of the active and retired ministers of the Presbytery, along with a representative elder from each member congregation. The Presbytery is responsible for the spiritual oversight of the congregations within its care and meets a minimum of four times per year.

The highest court of the Reformed Presbyterian Church is its Synod, which consists of the membership of all the presbyteries of the church. The Synod meets at least annually to

transact the business brought to it by its constituent presbyteries and Synodical committees.

Committee Members

The committee members are responsible for the temporal affairs of the congregation, including matters related to the finances and property of the church. Committee members are elected by a vote of all communicant members of the congregation and are accountable to Session for their activities.

Volunteers

The congregation relies on the generosity of volunteers in giving their time to assist with a range of activities in the church, including work with children and young people, provision of hospitality, raising the singing and management of the audio ministry.

4. Activities

Public Worship

Within the period covered by this report, Rathfriland Reformed Presbyterian Church has provided public worship services for instruction and devotion, held regularly at 12.00 Noon and when advised at 7.00pm in the evening, which are open to all. A midweek meeting was also held as advised.

The Lord's Supper was observed once in the past year. Participation is open to all who have been baptised and who make a credible profession of saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The work of the Sabbath School carried on each Sunday and was led by our two Sabbath School teachers Mrs. Janice Bell and Mrs. Felicity Henning.

The Women's Fellowship continued during the year with Bible studies and various other activities. This was well supported by the ladies of the congregation.

A new venture was started with the men in the form of a men's breakfast, and this was held on two occasions during the year.

Pastoral Work

For the first half of 2023 home visitation was carried out by Rev Paul Flynn and by our Interim Moderator Rev Peter Dundee in the second half of the year.

Denominational Activity

Representatives of the church Session attended Presbytery meetings regularly, and the annual denominational Synod.

Contributions were made to central Synodical funds for general expenses (such as training of ministers and youth work).

Outreach and Mission

As noted above, nationwide and overseas mission work was supported financially through contributions to denominational funds (Reformed Presbyterian Missions).

Financial Support

Youth Work

Instruction of children and young people in meetings of Sunday School, Bible Class and church services as well as opportunities for informal fellowship. All leaders and volunteers in the youth work have gone through Access NI vetting.

Church Property

The church property is in good condition after the completion of renovation work and work carried out to meet health and safety and disabled access requirements. Regular cleaning of the meeting house and hall took place, along with upkeep of the church grounds and maintenance as required.

Recordings

The services of worship are recorded and are accessible via CD's. These recordings provide access to the pulpit ministry to those who are unable to attend public worship due to ill health or other circumstances.

5. Public Benefit

Rathfriland Reformed Presbyterian Church meets the public benefit requirement by providing a place for worship (through weekly services of worship and other meetings), by increasing awareness and understanding of religious beliefs (through public preaching from the Holy Scriptures, literature distribution, pastoral counselling and youth work), and by engaging in and supporting missionary and outreach work in the Rathfriland area and overseas.

The work of the church in fulfillment of its purpose does not lead to harm. The only private benefit is for Ministers and others who may receive benefit as a result of their employment. Such benefit is incidental to the work and purpose of the congregation.

The Charity Trustees have had regard to the Public Benefit to the Charity Commission's Public Benefit statutory guidance.

6. Financial Situation

The congregation's main source of income is members contributions through the weekly Freewill Offering. Total receipts in the year were £33,839 (£33,369).

Total income of the congregation during the year was £78,610 compared to £65,313 in the previous year.

Total expenditure increased to £239,586 from £33,684 in the previous year.

7. Useful Information

Contact Details

Rathfriland Reformed Presbyterian Church
% Mr. Ray Morrison (Clerk of Session)
10 Castle Fields
Rathfriland
BT34 5BN
028 40630237

Charity Trustees

Rev. Peter Dundee
Mr. Ray Morrison

Bankers

Ulster Bank
22 Bridge Street
Banbridge
BT32 3JT

Solicitors

Fisher & Fisher
1 Newry Street
Rathfriland
BT34 5PY

Independent Examiners

S.M. Vint & Co.
8 Newry Street
Banbridge
BT32 3HN

8. Statement of Trustees 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.

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.

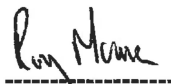
As the congregation's income does not exceed £250,000, the Trustees have elected under Section 64(3) of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 to prepare a receipts and payments account and a statement of assets and liabilities.

Trustee



Rev Peter Dundee

Trustee



Ray Morrison