

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) In Ireland, Lurgan Preparative Meeting

Annual Report & Accounts for year ended 31st
December 2023

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Lurgan Preparative Meeting

Trustees (at 31st December 2023)

David Gamble

Heather Brown

Anne Gamble

Registered Address

c/o David Gamble

Beechford, 41 Bowens Manor

Banbridge Road

Lurgan BT66 7RT

Email address

lurgan.quakers@gmail.com

Charity number

NIC 107083

Bankers

Danske Bank

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Trustees' Report for year ended 31st December 2023

Introduction

This report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and in line with the guidance produced by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

Constitution and governance

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) In Ireland, Lurgan Preparative Meeting is governed by its governing document which was agreed by the Preparative Meeting on 9th April 2017. The Meeting was registered as a charity by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland on 18th May 2018.

The Trustees, of whom there should be not less than two, are appointed at the Annual General Meeting. They are appointed for a period of up to three years and are eligible for re-appointment for a further two terms. Trustees who served during the year ending 31st December 2023 were as follows:

David Gamble (Clerk of Trustees)

Heather Brown

Anne Gamble

The Trustees are responsible for the policies, activities and assets of the charity. No Trustee received any remuneration for services as a member of the Board of Trustees and the charity has no employees.

The Trustees have put in place a data protection policy and a child protection policy, both of which are reviewed annually.

Purposes of the charity

Lurgan Preparative Meeting is established by Lurgan Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends in Ireland. It is primarily a Meeting for Worship that practises in accordance with the principles of the Religious Society of Friends, also known as Quakers.

We are based in a Meeting House at Johnston's Row in Lurgan. As well as the main meeting room where we meet for worship on a Sunday, we also have a kitchen, and tea room.

The purpose of our charity, as set out in our governing document, is the advancement of the general religious purposes of the Religious Society of Friends by the following means, in so far as they are exclusively charitable:

- i. Strengthening the Christian understanding and religious development of the Quaker meeting both in the geographical area of the Preparative Meeting and beyond;
- ii. Contributing financially and practically to the relief of suffering at home and abroad;
- iii. Providing for the pastoral care of individual Members and Attenders including assistance to those in need

At 31st December 2023 we had a total of 35 members as well as around 6 regular Attenders.

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During the year there has been a good spirit of worship in our meeting with a usual attendance of 12. We have welcomed a new attender and her son to meeting: they come regularly and have joined us for refreshments afterwards.

Some of our members have experienced health issues as they age so we express our concern and care for one another in tangible ways.

One such member was Heather Brown, our treasurer, who had an illness at the end of June during which she was hospitalised. She is now reluctantly resigning as treasurer and other posts of responsibility too. We have valued Heather's competent contribution and steady management of our meeting funds so we wish her well and will give her all the support we can in her recovery.

Early in the year we were sad that an attender, Dennis Thompson, passed away on 20th February after a short illness. He came regularly to Lurgan meeting and ministered most acceptably. We miss his humour, his friendliness and presence. A burial took place on 13th of May of Ian Raphael whose parents were members and are buried in the Lurgan burial ground.

We continue with tea/coffee and chat on the last Sunday of the month. On Sunday 3rd December, after our meeting for worship, we joined with some Lurgan Monthly Meeting Friends to have a Christmas meal in the Pot Belly restaurant in Tullylish. This was a most enjoyable occasion and we were glad that Margaret Livingston was able to be present. Before Christmas visits were made to Friends unable to attend meeting.

Another social occasion was at Grange meeting in July. As a meeting, we visited Grange Friends on Sunday and attended their meeting. Then we had our picnics outside in the courtyard as it was a lovely sunny and warm day. Grange Friends were most hospitable and shared food with us. This event was our annual outing.

During the year we maintained the premises and some Friends helped to sort the boiler room during the week. Pointing of the verges of the porch of the Meeting-house was done. Keys of the FMH and the gates were obtained and distributed to key holders.

In the winter months, Monthly Meeting was held by Zoom at 7 30 pm.

A training session for Safeguarding was held in our meeting house on the morning of Saturday 18th November for Ulster Quarterly Meeting Safeguarding representatives. Training was provided by a police trainer and introduced by Elizabeth Dickson. The clerk attended this session.

The normal duties of the Meeting such as the appointment of Friends for the Safeguarding of Child Protection, keeping and auditing of financial accounts and the reading of Advices were attended to.

"Friends believe that the same Spirit which guided the ministry of Jesus, the prophets and the apostles, remains alive and at work in the world today." Quaker Life and Practice 1;14.

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Looking forward

We continue to nurture and care for the Members and Attenders in our Meeting. The maintenance of our burial ground continues. We try to keep aware of how we can support our local community and have supported Craigavon Food Bank

Public Benefit

The trustees of Lurgan Preparative Meeting are pleased to confirm that they have complied with their duty to have regard to the public benefit requirement statutory guidance of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

Our public benefit has been demonstrated in a number of ways over the past year:

- We hold regular Meeting for Worship every Sunday morning and these Meetings are open to members of the public as well as our own members and regular attenders – these Meetings provide spiritual nourishment and deepen the Christian experience and understanding of those who attend;
- We provide financial support to Quaker Service, Irish Quaker Faith in Action and a range of other charities from regular collections at our Meetings - in 2023 an amount of £4,300 was given to charities, a £2000 increase from last year

Financial Review

Our financial statement for the period 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023 is attached to this report and our income for that period was £21,913.70, expenditure was £14,582.24 and our closing balance at 31st December 2023 was £96,417.33

The highlights of our finances in the past year included:

- Membership subscriptions increased slightly £5160 (2023) compared to £5010 (2022)
- Our National & Provincial Charge due to Ireland Yearly Meeting was increased in 2023 to £2294 compared to £1468 (2022)
- The value of our investments at 31st December 2023 was £142,456.17 compared with £145,286.43 at 31st December 2022: and income from these investments during the year amounted to £ 8036.41 (2023) compared to £7801.42 (2022). We see the decline as due to the recent financial climate and hope there will be improvement in the future.

Declaration

This report was approved at the Annual General Meeting on February 4th 2024 and is signed on behalf of trustees.

David Gamble
Clerk of Trustees