



Trustees' Annual Report

Financial year from 1st January 2023
to 31st December 2023.

Grace Baptist Church is a member of the Association of Baptist Churches in Ireland and registered with the Charity Commission Northern Ireland NIC107371.

Trustees' Annual Report

The Trustees present their Annual Report and Financial Statement for the financial year from 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023.

Reference and Administrative Details

Grace Baptist Church, Kinross Avenue, Belfast, BT5 7GG
Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC 107371)
Email: gracebaptisttullycarnet@outlook.com

The Trustees

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

Mr. Mark White (Chairperson and Elder)
Mr. Ross Flynn (Secretary)
Mr. Robin Francey
Mr. Philip Hanna

Independent Examiner

SJO Accountants
37 Movilla Street
Newtownards
BT23 7JQ

Bankers

Northern Bank Ltd T/a Danske Bank
Knock Branch
520 Upper Newtownards Road
Belfast
BT4 3HD

Structure, Governance and Management

Grace Baptist Church follows its Constitution (last updated 18th June 2019) and, as of 31st December 2023, had 16 members.

The Elders (1) and Deacons (3) serve as trustees, with Elders handling spiritual matters and Deacons overseeing practical affairs.

Leadership aims to support the Church's spiritual health and encourage community involvement.

Trustees meet monthly except in July and August.

All roles are voluntary, making it difficult to track hours contributed, but the Church relies greatly on its volunteers.

Association of Baptist Churches

Grace Baptist Church belongs to the Association of Baptist Churches in Ireland. Though autonomous, it receives support and guidance from the Association Director and staff.

Objectives

Grace Baptist Church seeks to honour Jesus Christ by encouraging worship, teaching Scripture, fostering fellowship, prayer, and evangelism.

Members actively share the message of Christ and support the growth of His Kingdom.

The Church's main charitable goal is to promote the Christian faith in line with Scripture, its Doctrinal Statement, and Baptist principles.

Achievement and Performance

The following are short summary reports from each of the major areas of ministry.

Sunday School – GraceKIDZ

There were around 10-15 children who attended sporadically, with a core of around 10 children who attended regularly.

Activities include singing, Bible stories, games and crafts followed by some juice and biscuits.

In June we held our end of term BBQ where children and parents joined in with fun and games followed by Burgers, sausages, salad, cold drinks and tea and coffee to finish.

Campaigners

Campaigners Youth and Children's Ministry is a uniformed, evangelical, and inter-denominational youth organization. Through a diverse range of activities, its goal is to introduce children and young people to Jesus Christ as their Saviour and nurture their personal faith and relationship with Him.

In Tullycarnet, Campaigners gather on Monday nights during school term time. The program is divided into age groups: children aged 3 years to P2 join the Eagles Clan, P3 to P6 are in the Junos Clan, P7 to Y9 make up the Inters Clan, and those from Y10 up to age 18 belong to the Craftsmen.

From January to May, average weekly attendance for the Eagles grew from 15 to 20 children. Junos maintained steady numbers, with 14–15 attending regularly. There were only two participants in the Inters group.

A successful parents' evening was held on 19th May 2023, where families celebrated the achievements of the Clansmen together.

Since September, there have been 30 registered Eagles, resulting in a waiting list and about 25 attending each week. Junos had 16 registered participants, Inters had 2, and there was 1 Craftsman, with attendance remaining consistent across these groups.

Parent and Toddlers – GraceTOTS

The GraceTOTS Parent and Toddler group meets on Fridays during term time and typically welcomes around 20 parents and grandparents each session.

The staff have established personal relationships with attendees and value the Church's ongoing prayers for opportunities and courage to share the Gospel.

As some children approach nursery age at the end of the summer term, certain

families transition out of the group, while new families are welcomed each September.

Connections fostered within GraceTOTS have led to families enrolling their children in Campaigners and GraceKIDZ.

The dedication and commitment of our volunteers are essential to the success of GraceTOTS; the group relies heavily on their invaluable support to operate effectively.

Summer Outreach KIDZClub & Football coaching

Our Summer Outreach took place during the week commencing 7th August in the evenings. There are two streams to this, in the church building we had approx. 60 children attending Summer KidzCLUB, and approx. 20 children on the Hanwood Pitches at Summer Football Club.

Summer KidzCLUB, we taught the children the Gospel message over 4 evenings using the theme of Sea Explorers. At Summer Football Club, the children went through football skills training and games, paired with a scripture-based team talk.

Many of the families attended the fun night and BBQ on Friday evening, and some families also attended church and lunch on Sunday morning.

It was good to see new families attending these outreaches, and growth in GraceKIDZ and Campaigners following these events.

Church Ministry

Grace Baptist Church gathers every Sunday morning for worship, ministry, and communion.

In addition to these weekly services, we hold regular Bible Study and Prayer meetings on Wednesday evenings, except during July and August.

Everyone is welcome at our gatherings, whether or not they are church members. We also organise a monthly Ladies' Fellowship/Outreach event called "Women Together," which takes place on the first Tuesday of each month from September to June.

Our church continues to collaborate with leaders of three other local churches for prayer and to explore ways to jointly share the Gospel within the Tullycarnet area. For example, on Good Friday, we hosted a special communion and fellowship evening where attendees from various local congregations came together to worship, pray, and break bread.

During Christmas, we arranged several events: a Nativity Play performed by children and leaders from our children's ministries; a Community Carol Service featuring children's participation; a Christmas Family Movie night; and a joint

Candlelight Carol Service at Tullycarnet Presbyterian Church alongside other local churches.

Special events are held throughout the year, publicised via social media and street invitations. We often distribute Gospel literature and small gifts to passers-by during community activities.

Over the past year, we have welcomed new faces, shared the Gospel, and invited guest Bible teachers to our meetings. Our Sunday services, Wednesday studies, and various special occasions have flourished thanks to the dedication and support of those committed to serving our church family.

Warm Space

Our Warm Space outreach began as a direct response to the growing need within our community for a place where people facing high heating and food costs could find support. At first, attendance was low, but after about a month, more people started coming. Now, we regularly welcome between 30 and 40 attendees. During each gathering, we serve warm soup and sandwiches, followed by desserts like apple pie, cheesecake, or chocolate cake, along with tea or coffee. Although we initially provided free newspapers, we soon stopped since few were interested—they much preferred engaging in conversation with one another. This outreach has been especially uplifting for us, as we've noticed that many attendees are not regular churchgoers.

First Steps Nursery

The “First Steps” Nursery group was initially based at Tullycarnet school. When the school closed, they reached out to us about using our facilities. This coincided with a time when our church was exploring ways to become more open to the community. We wanted to challenge the perception that church is only for religious people.

The timing worked out well: the Nursery found a new location to operate, and we were able to further our efforts to welcome the wider community into our church. The Nursery runs during regular school term times, operating Monday to Friday from 9:15am to noon.

We have found it surprisingly easy to integrate this activity within our church, and we hope that it continues to flourish as part of our ongoing commitment to serve the community.

Missions and Charity

Throughout the year, we made charitable donations totalling £3757 which was approx. 12% of our income for the year:

- We contributed £500 to the Baptist Association's Earthquake appeal.
- During our Harvest Celebration, we donated long-life food items to Dundonald Foodbank along with £200 in cash.
- At the Community Christmas Festival, we hosted a stall supporting Marie Curie and raised £100.
- We continued our support for Fireblade Ministries with a donation of £780.
- Our ongoing contributions to the Alzheimer's Society (Elf Day) amounted to £600.
- We gave £50 to the Royal British Legion as part of our continuing support.
- For Tell Romania's relief work, we provided a donation of £300.
- St John's Ambulance received £100 from us in support of their efforts.
- Reachacross Missions benefited from a £200 contribution.
- Asialink Missions also received £200 in support.

- **Church Membership**

On 1st January 2023 there were 16 members of the Church.

Public Benefit Statement

The Church has regard for the Commission's guidance on public benefit. The charity meets the public benefit requirement by providing benefit to its members and the general public in making the Christian Gospel known through the advancement of religion. The teaching provided by the Church leads to spiritual and moral development for those who are affiliated. In turn this leads to practical expression of Christian beliefs and standards in the community.

Public activities are announced through social media, print, word of mouth, and invitations.

The Church expects no harm from the charity's activities. Trustees have implemented safeguards, including AccessNI checks for those working with youth.

We follow Commission guidance to ensure our activities serve the charity's purpose

and beneficiaries. Currently, no individuals receive private benefit.

Beneficiaries include Church members, their families, those they interact with, children and families in outreach activities, and the wider Tullycarnet and East Belfast community.

Finance

The main source of income for the Church is free will offering from members and those attending the Church Services, accounting for more than 50% of income in 2023. In the year 2023, the Church recorded a Nett decrease in funds of £2,925. There was a closing balance of £61,040.91 on 31st December 2023.

The report of the Church Accounts was prepared by the Church Treasurer, Mr. Mark White, and presented at the AGM.

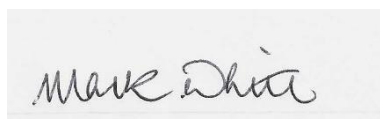
Liabilities and Assets

The Northern Baptist Corporation serves as the property holding trustee for Grace Baptist Church located on Kinross Avenue, Tullycarnet. There is no outstanding finance on the building, and the land comes with a freehold lease valid for 10,000 years.

The current insurance policies value the building at £1,674,020.27; however, no recent survey or valuation has been conducted.

This concludes the Annual Trustees' Report for the period from 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023.

Signed:

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark White".

Mark White

Elder at Grace Baptist Church