

# FINAGHY BAPTIST CHURCH

## Trustees' Annual Report

Year Ended 31 December 2023



<b>Name of Charity:</b>	Finaghy Baptist Church (FBC)
<b>CCNI Number:</b>	107403
<b>Address:</b>	1 The Hawthorns, Finaghy, Belfast, BT10 0NA
<b>This report relates to the Financial year:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2023 to 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2023

### **Purpose:**

"FBC acknowledges the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ over His Church and exists to glorify the triune God by maintaining and promoting His worship both individually and corporately. FBC members devote themselves to the teaching of Scripture (the Bible), to fellowship, to communion and to prayer. FBC is also committed to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ among the general public, in accordance with biblical principles and practice, especially in Finaghy, South and West Belfast and Dunmurry, but also throughout the world. FBC members commit, with the help of God, to witness to the love of God, to the saving and sustaining power of the Lord Jesus Christ and to work for the extension of His Kingdom.

The principal charitable object of FBC is the advancement of the Christian faith according to the teachings of Scripture as reflected in FBC's Doctrinal Statement. Secondary charitable objects include, the prevention and relief of poverty, the teaching of children, young persons, and adults to live lives which are law abiding, moral and godly, the support of mission work at home and abroad including evangelism and projects aimed at improved living circumstances and the provision of loving practical care and support to both FBC members and to local communities in which FBC people live."

### **Public Benefits:**

- The advancement of religion.
- The prevention or relief of poverty.
- The advancement of citizenship or community development.
- The relief of those in need by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage.

### **Activities and Achievements and Impact**

Having established the benefit of having our Sunday morning services online, we continue to make this available to the congregation to include those unable to get out, for whatever reason. We also hold almost weekly prayer times on a Sunday evening as well as an opportunity to meet in Small Groups in someone's home for Bible study and prayer during the week. This allows us to support, encourage, learn and pray for one another. There are also a number of special events throughout the year, including Easter, Harvest and Christmas activities.

We send regular information, regarding activities and prayer, by email to allow for effective communication, but also send by post for a few older members of the congregation without

access to email, to ensure they are not excluded. We meet weekly for refreshments after the service and once a month eat lunch together, enjoying food and fellowship with one another.

Our seniors meet monthly for a delicious soup lunch and a chance to catch up together with a short Bible talk. This is very much appreciated by all who attend each month, as it combats the isolation and loneliness some of them feel. We are very thankful to those who make this possible. Our Pastor and Elders also visit with the elderly and sick in particular, as needed.

Our children and young people are catered for in a variety of ways. During our Sunday morning service, we have age appropriate sessions for those in primary school as well as those who are pre-school. This allows the parents to concentrate on the main service, knowing their children are well cared for. These are well attended, and we have had quite a number of new babies in 2023. On a Sunday evening the youth meet together in a safe space for their own time of fellowship, learning and fun together. They also have a variety of outings throughout the year, this allows them to connect and brings a sense of belonging.

During the summer there is also an opportunity for our children and young people to attend a week-long event called Crossroads. This is a joint venture run by Scripture Union NI alongside several of the local churches working together. During this week Finaghy is buzzing with the excitement of these events.

There are a small number who join with other churches in the locality to pray once a month and to enjoy breakfast together, this allows us to support and encourage one another and show our unity even as different churches.

We continue to collect food for the SW Belfast Foodbank on a regular basis with a special emphasis on harvest Sunday in October. We also participate in filling shoeboxes for Samaritan's Purse which go to children around the world, although most of these were filled online this year.

We support a number of our members prayerfully, financially and with encouragement as they live overseas, sharing their lives and their faith. We encourage them when they are back in Northern Ireland and spend time to support and care for them practically and pastorally. We love to see them engage with FBC and know it benefits us as we learn about their lives overseas.

Each year, we also walk around the local community singing Carols and distributing some Christmas goodies and invites to our activities, especially to our Carols by Candlelight. This was well attended by our congregation and some local families too. It was lovely to be able to chat to people from the local community to build relationships and celebrate together over seasonal refreshments after the service.

#### **Finances:**

The financial position of FBC at the end of the financial year 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 was,

**Overall Income: £118,035**

**Overall Expenditure: £126,633**

We claimed Gift Aid on any eligible income and in total we received **£15,399**

Our Annual accounts for 2023 will be examined and reported on by our Independent Examiner, Gwendolyn Stone.

### **Charity Trustees:**

The FBC Trustees consist of FBC Elders, the FBC Treasurer and the FBC Secretary. The Treasurer and Secretary are appointed by the Elders and Deacons (FBC Officer Holders) normally from among their number, or if no one from that number is able to accept either of these responsibilities, the Elders and Deacons shall nominate for either appointment a person from the church membership who, in their opinion meets the qualifications to fulfil such an appointment. In these circumstances appointment to such a post shall confer the Office of Deacon. Those duly elected as Secretary and Treasurer may remain in position until their Office as Elder and / or Deacon cease. Office Holders are usually elected by the members of FBC at the Annual General Meeting.

### **The Finaghy Baptist Church Trustees are:**

Gary Ellison	Pastor
Sally-ann Hamilton	Secretary
Ashley Eves	Treasurer
Joel Hutchinson	(Resigned May 2024)

### **Trustees Statement:**

The FBC Trustees are aware of the Charity Commission Northern Ireland Public Benefit guidance and have carried out the activities of an FBC Trustee with due regard to it.

### **Governance:**

FBC is an independent Baptist church, voluntarily affiliated with the Association of Baptist Churches in Ireland for support and advice. The church is governed by its Constitution, updated and formally agreed upon at the Annual General Meeting of the church members on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

### **Private Benefit:**

The only private benefits flowing from our purposes are the provision of stipend for any pastor of the Church who will also assume the role of Trustee and paid employment for the personnel required to support the work of the Church. Such stipends and salaries are necessary to enable the Church to provide the pastoral and administrative support required to fulfil the stated purpose, and any incurred expenses are incidental.

### **Mitigation of Harm:**

The following individuals have been appointed from among the members of FBC to advise the Trustees in key areas:

Hazel Morrow	Safeguarding Coordinator
Andrew Robinson	Health & Safety Officer

The Safeguarding Coordinator leads a Safeguarding Team who help to ensure the protection of children and vulnerable adults in our care. The Safeguarding Team ensure the careful implementation of our Safeguarding Policy.

The Health and Safety Officer advises the Trustees on the Health and Safety Policy including risk assessments and fire prevention. FBC offers regular training to help prevent harm or

accidents and to ensure our public benefits can be carried out safely. The church also has a GDPR policy in place.

These appointed members provide updates for each Trustees meeting, including a detailed report annually.

**Signed on Behalf of the Trustees:**

This annual report has been agreed upon by all FBC Trustees as a true representation of the activities, achievements and situation of FBC at the end of the financial year 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.



**Secretary:** Sally-ann Hamilton

**Date:** 17/10/24



**Treasurer:** Ashley Eves

**Date:** 17/10/24