

# **The Religious Society of Friends in Ireland**

## **Lurgan Monthly Meeting**

### **Annual Report and Accounts for year ended 31/12/2023**

#### **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 Monthly Meeting is governed by its governing document which was agreed by the Meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2020. The Meeting was registered as a charity by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

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 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 were as follows:

Lesley Burney

Anne E Gamble

Jane E Lutton

J Arnold Lutton

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 Meeting has put in place a data protection policy, based on guidelines from Ireland Yearly Meeting, which is reviewed regularly.

#### **Purposes of the charity**

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

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 in the geographical area of responsibility of the Monthly Meeting;

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 of Preparative Meetings, including assistance to those in need.

At 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 we had a total of 132 members as well as 12 regular attenders

### **Our activities during 2023**

The three Preparative Meetings of Lurgan Monthly Meeting have carried out the duties as they are set out in Chapter 4 of Organisation and Christian Discipline during 2023 and the Child Safeguarding reports have been sent to the Clerk of Ireland Yearly Meeting Education Committee.

We are pleased to report that all three Meetings have increased in size, albeit by a small amount, over the course of the year. Our Preparative Meetings, Bessbrook and Lurgan, continue to meet weekly and Moyallon opens its doors on each of the first, and third Sundays with the addition now of the fifth Sundays which are well attended. More than 40 Friends meet over the three Meeting Houses each month.

All three Meetings have had to contend with ill health amongst its Friends during the past year but the strength of the community has helped keep everyone afloat. We are small but spiritually strong and have a good relationship within all three Meetings. A number of Friends came together for a Christmas lunch in a local restaurant, organised by Lesley Burney. This is proving an enjoyable annual event. Another joint venture is, of course, our annual open Ministry & Oversight session where, in 2023, we heard Ann Loney talk on our Quaker inheritance.

Our numbers for Monthly Meetings have been quite sparse and we are still looking at how we can encourage more Friends to attend, especially in the winter months, as many are not keen to drive at night. In 2022 we tried afternoon meetings which

didn't get a good response so in 2023 we tried Zoom in the evenings but, again, this did not seem to work well. We will look at this again at our April 2024 Monthly Meeting and, hopefully, be able to bring a positive update in next year's report.

Lurgan Monthly Meeting welcomes 38 adult Friends and one child in total to their Meetings.

## **Looking forward**

We look forward to God's continued blessing on our Meetings in 2024 and we hope to see growth in Christian understanding and spiritual experience in all our Meetings.

## **Public benefit**

The trustees of Lurgan Monthly 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:

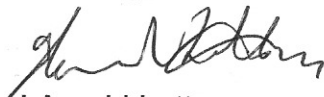
- We ensured that our Meetings hold regular Meetings for Worship and these Meetings are open to members of the public as well as our own members and regular attenders – these Meetings provide spiritual nourishment and deepen the Christian experience and understanding of those who attend;
- Using legacy and bequest funds that have been left to the Meetings, we provide financial support to those in need within our Meetings and for other charitable causes;

## **Financial review**

Our financial statement for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 is attached to this report and shows that we had a small surplus of income over expenditure of £420.10 for the year. As a result, our total current funds at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 increased to £8816.36 compared with £8396.76 at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022.

## **Declaration**

This report was approved at the Annual General Meeting on 11th September 2024 and is signed on behalf of trustees.



J. Arnold Lutton  
Clerk of Trustees