

HAMILTON ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements of Hamilton Road Baptist Church ("the Church") for the year ended 31 December 2023.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's constitution, the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019).

Objectives and activities

The Church acknowledges the headship of Jesus Christ over His Church and exists to glorify the triune God by maintaining and promoting His worship both individually and corporately.

- i. The principal charitable purpose of the church is to present Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord in a contemporary, creative and caring way to people of all ages, circumstances and backgrounds so that they may, by faith in Him, be reconciled to God and, growing in grace through the Holy Spirit become part of a biblical community, worshipping Him and making a difference in today's world.
- ii. Arising from (i) above, the Church also acts to prevent or relieve poverty and relieve need among those in hardship; and
- iii. to advance education especially among children and young people. These objects may be pursued in the United Kingdom or abroad at the discretion of the Trustees.

The Church holds regular services for public worship, prayer, Bible study, preaching and teaching for all age groups, and provides pastoral care to the members of the Church through visitation and prayer. The Church organises meetings and events that promote our charitable purpose and participates in the life of the local community. Support is given to other Christian organisations and charities, locally and overseas, through volunteering, financial gifts and prayer.

The trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the public benefit guidance issued by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

Achievements and performance

The Church is committed to the spiritual, emotional and social wellbeing of all those engaging with the Church's ministry. This ministry is open to all members of the general public as well as those who join the Church in membership.

During the year the church membership rose from 308 to 314. Average attendances on a Sunday morning exceeded 300 and on a Sunday evening there were between 100 and 200 people, depending on the programme being run. Pastor McClaughlin continues his church ministry but was also appointed Principal of the Irish Baptist College in September 2023. To augment the Church's pastoral team a new Associate Pastor (Chris McGuire) was appointed with effect from the start of November 2023.

Sunday services are supplemented by a wide range of other activities that depend on a large number of volunteers who ensure their safe and effective organisation. For adults, these include:

- Growth Groups: About 14 groups offer spiritual and social support to approximately 200 people. They meet in people's homes and on church premises and continued throughout the year.
- Men's Ministry – 'Lads, Dads & Granddads': Offering a wide range of activities for men of all ages the year's programme, which was attended by 60+ men, included breakfasts, games nights, Chinese meals, curry nights and interviews.

HAMILTON ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

- Women's Ministry – 'Girls2Grans': This group brings together women of all ages for study courses, meals together and outings (e.g. to Hillsborough Castle). They have also hosted a Macmillan Coffee Morning and raised money for a medical scanner for a clinic in Africa.
- Young Adults Ministry: Aimed primarily at those in their 20s and 30s it provides an opportunity to mix socially in people's homes and also with those from other churches.

The Church offers Christian teaching to all ages and seeks to show practical expressions of Christian belief in the local community by providing assistance to those experiencing hardship, ill health, bereavement and in old age. This work includes:

- Pastoral Care Team: The Church employs two women's pastoral care workers part-time and a volunteer supervisor. They provide support on a one-to-one basis and assist the church's volunteer pastoral care team.
- Meeting Point: This is a monthly meeting attended by 30 to 40 seniors. The programme includes visiting speakers, music, afternoon tea and some visits to local attractions.
- Memory Lane: In May 2022 the Church started a monthly service for those suffering from dementia and their carers. This is attended both by members and by people from other denominations and backgrounds. A team of 13 volunteers provides this service.
- Brew Dock: Three mornings a week the Church opens its coffee bar to passersby for free coffee, conversation and board games. Once a month a free lunch is also offered.
- Griefshare: A 13-week course was completed in February. This was attended by between 8 and 18 people who were coping with grief and bereavement in their lives. A further course is planned for 2024.
- Nursing Home Ministry: Once a month a team attended the Carnalea Clinic to hold a service and provide friendship and support to residents.
- Overseas Mission: The church supports workers in Europe, North Africa, Asia and South America. They are involved in a range of missionary, social and educational projects, often ministering to the most deprived in the societies where they are located.

The Church also contributes to the education of children and young people through its own programmes and support for other like-minded agencies locally and overseas.

- Light House: Aimed at children from the ages of 3 to 14 this meets on a Sunday morning with other outings and projects held throughout the year. Approximately 80 to 90 children attend and they have raised money for projects in Peru, Kenya and Eastern Europe.
- Kids Academy: This has run in parallel with the Sunday evening programme for adults. Two teams of volunteers provide a range of activities for children of primary school age and have catered for up to 60 children.
- Live Wires: Between 70 and 80 children (many of whom have no other connection with the Church) gather on a Thursday evening for a varied programme of activities, while 20 to 30 parents stay for coffee and a chat.
- Pop-Ins: This aims to provide a friendly and welcoming place where parents/carers and their children can come once a week during term time. Numbers are dictated by the space available but the sports hall is usually full.
- Youth Ministries: The Church has a full-time youth director and runs a weekly youth club in addition to training older teenagers in leadership skills. A Youth Week was held in the summer and approximately 30 young people attend on a Sunday evening for Youth Academy.

HAMILTON ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Financial review

The results for the year are set out in detail on pages 7 to 18.

The Church recorded a net income for the year of £15,669 (2022 - £88,479).

At the year end cash at bank and in hand was £74,014 (2022 - £66,449).

At 31 December 2023, the total funds of the church amounted to £1,330,276 (2022 - £1,314,607). Closing unrestricted funds at 31 December 2023 were £1,329,228 (2022 - £1,312,149). This includes designated funds of £1,241,211 (2022 - £1,271,093).

Closing restricted reserves of £1,048 represents funds held in relation to the Mission fund.

Reserves

The trustees have established a policy whereby the income of Hamilton Road Baptist Church should be expended for its objectives at the earliest possible time.

Notwithstanding this, it is considered prudent that additional resources in the region of £99,111 - £198,221 (3-6 months) are required to cover ongoing expenditure and should be held in general funds. General funds at 31 December 2023 amount to £88,017.

Funds are also held for future Maintenance and Development activities.

Structure, governance and management

The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mr D Brown

Mr D Holley

(Resigned 29 March 2023)

Mr C Waugh

Mr D McCracken

Mr D Steele

Mr A Browne OBE

Mr K McIlwaine

Mr J McClaughlin

Mr A McAvoy MBE

The Church Constitution, agreed at the Church AGM in March 2018, defines the responsibilities, powers and proceedings of the Church trustees. The trustees normally meet four times a year and comprise the church elders, pastors, secretary and treasurer. They serve ex officio and their appointment is subject to a ballot vote by church members.

The pastors and elders also have responsibility for the spiritual life of the church and meet at least once monthly. They are assisted by the deacons, who have responsibility for day-to-day practical matters and they meet together with the church pastors and elders, as the church officers, at least six times each year. All appointments and significant items of church business, including the budget and expenditure, are submitted to general meetings of the church membership, of which there are three in the year. The Constitution also provides for special meetings to be convened in certain circumstances.

Contribution of Volunteers

The Church relies on the voluntary support of its members and adherents. Without this support many of the church activities would be unable to operate. It is not possible to place a monetary value on this voluntary support and, as such, it has not been recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

HAMILTON ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Future Plans

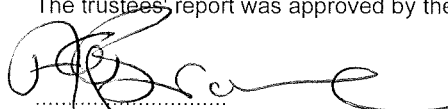
The Church has developed strong links with local Primary schools and hopes to build on these through projects such as 'The Amazing Journey' and joint events including a community carol service.

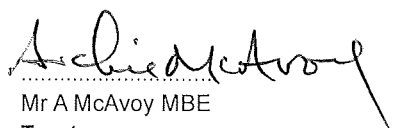
A full programme of teaching and other activities is planned for the coming year, under the heading of "Gather, Grow, Go". This includes a wide range of activities for children and young people and a number of social events for the whole church, including a church weekend in Castlewellan Castle and a summer barbecue in the grounds of Bangor Grammar School.

The Church will continue to support work elsewhere in Ireland and overseas and provide opportunities and funding for both short-term and long-term placements. These will contribute to meeting the twin objectives of poverty relief and the advancement of education, as well as our principal charitable purpose of promoting the Christian faith.

In recognition of the growing number of staff employed by the Church, a new staff handbook has been drafted and will be rolled out in 2024, with the aid of the church's employment lawyer.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.


.....
Mr A Browne OBE
Trustee


.....
Mr A McAvoy MBE
Trustee

Date: 12th June 2024