

**SECOND CASTLEDERG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
IN IRELAND
TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

The Trustees present their Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2023 including a Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at that date.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Second Castlederg Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland
55 Strabane Road,
Castlederg,
Co Tyrone,
BT81 7HZ

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105610)

CHARITY TRUSTEES

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

Rev Clarke Deering (30/10/2022-18/5/2023)
Rev David Reid (19/5/2023-31/12/2023)
Rev Robert McFaul (appointed 1/1/2024)
Mr Mervyn Buchanan
Miss Rosemary Craig BEM
Mr Alex Fletcher
Mr Bert Huey
Mr Jack Mitchell
Mrs Jean McMullan
Mrs Pearl Quigley
Mr David Thompson
Miss Sandra Thompson
Mrs Daphne Watt

PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS

Minister in charge:	Rev Robert McFaul
Clerk of Session:	Mr Bert Huey
Treasurer:	Miss Doreen McCain

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INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Hamill McIlwaine Chartered Accountants
28-30 Old Mountfield Road
Omagh
BT79 7BJ

BANKERS

Ulster Bank
Strabane Branch
29 Abercorn Square
Strabane
BT82 8AL

SOLICITORS

Babingtons Solicitors
74 Railway Street
Strabane
BT82 8EQ

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STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT

The Kirk Session

The charity trustees of the congregation are the members of its Kirk Session. Under the congregation's governing document, The Code, the book of the constitution and government of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the Kirk Session seeks to watch over and promote the spiritual interest of the congregation and of persons not connected with any congregation who are within its bounds. It ensures pastoral care is in place in the congregation and seeks to further the contribution of the Church to Christian witness and service in the local community. The Kirk Session has delegated to its Congregational Committee the temporal affairs of the congregation including administering all funds and property belonging to the congregation. Members of the Kirk Session are ex-officio members of the Congregational Committee.

The Kirk Session consists of the ordained minister and the ruling elders of the congregations. All members are entitled to propose, speak and exercise equal votes at meetings, except that the Moderator, the minister in active duty in the congregation, has no deliberative but only a casting vote.

Stated meetings of the Kirk session are held in January, March, May, September and November and as required.

To be chosen for the office of the eldership in the congregation a person must be a voting member and a regular attendant on its ordinances. The selection of those proposed to be called to the office can be either by the congregation or by the Kirk Session. Members are elected if they obtain two-thirds of those who vote.

Presbytery

Under the Presbyterian Church in Ireland form of governance the corporate oversight of a congregation is the responsibility of a Presbytery which superintends generally the spiritual and temporal affairs of the congregations assigned to it by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Second Castlederg Presbyterian Church has been assigned to the Omagh Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The membership of the Presbytery consists mainly of the active ministers of congregations assigned to it by the General Assembly, ministers who have retired from active duty and an elder appointed by the Kirk Session of each congregation.

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The General Assembly

The General Assembly is the supreme court of the Church, representing in one body the whole Church and acting as its supreme legislative, administration and judicial authority, in dealing with all matters brought before it. The General Assembly is normally constituted during the first week in June for worship and to conduct its business. At the end of business it is dissolved. The membership of the General Assembly consists mainly of the active ministers of each congregation, retired ministers and a representative elder appointed by the Kirk Session of each congregation.

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

Second Castledearg Presbyterian Church is a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The Presbyterian Church in Ireland, as a Reformed Church within the wider body of Christ is grounded in the Scriptures, and exists to love and honour God through faith in His Son and by the power of His Spirit, and to enable its members to play their part in fulfilling God's mission to our world.

The congregations mission statement is:

Second Castledearg Mission Statement

We are the church at the heart of the town, called by God to have a heart for Him, a heart for each other and for our community and our world.

A heart for God:

In worship; in praying together; in studying and reading His Word in the Bible; in learning together in Sunday School; in using our time and our gifts to serve Christ and others.

A heart for each other:

In welcome; in friendship; in our laughing together and our weeping together; a heart for each other as we encourage one another; bear one another's burdens; pray for one another; forgive one another and love one another.

A heart for our community:

As in GB we seek, serve and follow Christ together; as in BB we make it our aim to be sure and steadfast;

In the fellowship and friendship of bowls;

In the sharing of good news in Holiday Bible Club;

A heart for our community as we hear Christ's call to love our neighbour as we value our own life.

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A heart for God's world:

In PW as women meet to pray, to encourage and support mission at home and overseas; in our support for Tear Fund, Mission in Cambodia, United Appeal Projects, Operation Christmas Child; in giving to the Presbyterian Children's Society, World Development, Moderator's Special Appeals and the many personal opportunities to give and to care that Christ shares with us daily.

We are the church at the heart of the town, challenged to keep the Lord at the heart of all we are and ever hope to be.

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES

The congregation meets for worship every Sunday at 10.30a.m. with visitors often joining us for the Service especially at Baptisms and at Harvest. The Sacrament of the Lords Supper is observed in January, April and September during the year and all those who have been baptised and who have made a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are admitted to the Lord's Supper. The congregation holds a fortnightly Bible study meeting and has a wide range of organisations including

Sunday School
Girls' Brigade
Boys' Brigade
Bowling Club
Presbyterian Women

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and prayer

During 2023 the remaining safety precautions related to Covid 19 were removed and much of our normal Church life is back in place. The church choir is once more leading the praise along with our dedicated organist and they have been involved in preparing special music for Harvest and Christmas and the annual PW Service. Members of the congregation led the Christmas Carol Service and the Sunday School led the Nativity Service on a Sunday before Christmas. During the year, the congregation has started to have tea/coffee on the first Sunday of the month after the morning Service, provided by different teams of volunteers and this has not only proved popular, but also gives another opportunity to strengthen fellowship and friendships in our Church Family. Having re-instated the Offering during the Service as normal, this has given the opportunity to create different teams of collectors on Sundays involving a wide range of members of all ages. The congregation now has a Face Book page and work is underway to create a website page as well, providing opportunities to engage with our Church members and community.

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The Bible Study Group comprises both members of Second Castlederg and our linked congregation of Urney with 10-15 people attending our fortnightly meetings for study and prayer. During 2023 we completed a series of six studies called, "Jesus, Sacred Friend" and commenced another six-part series called, "Magnificent Jesus". Both questions and Minister's comments continue to be emailed to church members and a paper copy is also made available.

Our Sunday Morning Prayer Time is held before the Service and continues to be well supported as we remember those who are ill and bereaved and as we pray for our current vacancy and the appointment of a new Minister. Sunday School continues to meet during the Service and the crèche has been re-started to accommodate younger families.

The Sacrament of Baptism welcomes children into our Church family and in 2023 two children were baptised and we also met to give thanks for the lives of six of our members who died during the year. As of 31 December 2023 there were 301 communicant members and 192 families connected with the congregation.

Pastoral care

The Minister visits the sick and housebound on a regular basis and brings Home Communion to those who are unable to attend Sunday Worship. Members of Kirk Session have Elder's Districts and visit Church members several times in the year. In the absence of a Minister, it has not been possible to be involved in the monthly Services in a local Nursing Home. Pastoral visiting continues with the help of the Vacancy Convener and on occasions by the Minister Emeritus.

Mission and outreach

At a local level the congregation has a wide-ranging mission and ministry to the Castlederg community. Mission happens in many ways in our congregation. In our Youth Organisations we reach out to young people from the area, sharing the message of the Bible with those who have a link with their local church and those who have none. In June, we hosted 26 walkers from the cross-community Christian group, **Youth With A Mission (YWAM)**, who were walking the border between Rostrevor and Londonderry. We provided them with an evening meal and, with some other members of our church and the local community, joined them in worship after they had eaten. They 'camped' in our church hall for the night. Mission is also about serving and many of our members serve in local groups and committees that benefit the community in practical ways, such as Derg Valley Care. Contributions to our **United Appeal for Mission** that supports many individual ministries and projects at home and overseas raised £7,278.75, exceeding our Target of Honour which in 2023 was £6,756.74. The 2023 **World Development Appeal**, "Starting from Scratch", focussed on people who have been forced to leave their homes and land and start their lives from scratch. Conflict, climate change, land grabbing – these are just a few of the reasons for

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displacement. The Appeal highlights those who have been forced to leave the homes they've lived in and the land they've worked for; people and the funds raised will be used to provide support and training to enable those affected to rebuild their lives. Church members donated £1,320 to the 2023 World Development Appeal.

The Presbyterian Children's Society is all about changing lives in a positive way, but the Society relies on individuals and congregations to give and to make this change a reality. On average we each give less than the cost of a packet of cereal, but the Society provides grants of at least £1,000 per person per year and is helping around 400 families and 700 children. In 2023 donations towards the work of the Children's Society came to £630 an increase on 2022. In February 2023 we had a special **Tearfund** service. Our guest speaker was a representative from Tearfund, who spoke to us about the work of this Christian charity among disadvantaged people in different parts of the world. Following the service, a soup and sandwich lunch was enjoyed in the church hall. A special collection was taken up which raised £888 for Tearfund.

The Church Committee is divided into a number of sub-committees, including Finance, Property, Health & Safety, Technology and Communications, Catering and Fund-raising and Events. During 2023 the Fund-raising and Events Committee organised various events to raise funds such as a Coffee Morning in May which raised £1,856; a Craft Fair in October raising £1,270 and a Fireside Quiz on Bible Characters which raised £406. The annual collection for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal at the Remembrance Service in November raised £257.50.

Overseas, the congregation supports the missionary work of **Khmer School of Language (KSL) Mercy Project** in Cambodia, through the sale of used clothing and in 2023 this raised £1,707. We are grateful that this project has been so well supported by the church and local community. The money raised is used to help purchase approximately 500 school uniforms for severely disadvantaged village children (this enables them to receive an education and a meal per day and greatly reduces the risk of them being sold into the sex trade in Thailand). Each child also receives a supply pack (pencils, exercise books, etc.) at the start of the school year. Children are not allowed to go to school if they do not have a uniform. If their parents cannot afford a uniform, then the children cannot go to school and parents see them as having no future, so are tempted to sell them to the sex trade. These villages are incredibly poor - most people barely have enough money for one meal a day and live in extremely basic accommodation. A lot of these children would not be able to go to school without support from the project.

The KSL team also lead special Christian outreach events in their villages at Easter and Christmas, bringing some sweet treats to distribute, as well as regular visits throughout the year to preach the gospel.

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The project also supports three students in higher education with fees costing approximately £500 per student per year. One university student is in their final year this year and is looking forward to gaining meaningful employment when their studies are finished. This is a great achievement and could not be attained without the support of this project. The three students are grateful for the financial support which enables them to gain qualifications and enhances their opportunities in the work sector. All the money sent goes directly to the KSL Mercy Project. 100% of what we send is used by the project.

Holiday Bible Club 2023

Our annual Holiday Bible Club was held in July 2023 over three evenings. This church outreach invited all primary school age children from our church and in the local community. 46 children came along.

This year the children learnt about some of the parables Jesus told. The programme included Bible stories, quizzes, memory verses, songs, games and a craft. The craft related to the story the children had learnt that evening. Each evening, the children had juice and biscuits and particularly enjoyed finishing off the week with ice-cream and jelly.

Presbyterian Women (PW) 2023

Our PW encourages women in their Christian life and invites them to know God's presence as they meet in fellowship and love. The PW group in Second Castlederg Presbyterian Church seeks, through the Grace of God, to be a blessing in our homes, our church, our community and in the wider world. Our PW group, to which all ladies from our congregation are invited, usually meets on the third Monday evening of each month, October to April. Between 12 and 16 ladies attend.

Every second year, at the AGM, the ladies elect a PW Committee consisting of a Leader, Deputy leader, Secretary and Treasurer, plus four other members. The present Committee was elected in April 2022. In June 2023, the PW Committee had a meeting to plan the PW programme for the 2023/2024 session. The PW Committee organised a programme of worship, reflective devotions, guest speakers, fund raising and fun activities. We followed the PW theme for 2022/2023, "Deeper Together", from the "Inspirational" book produced by the PW Panel at Assembly Buildings in Belfast.

Our monthly speakers covered the following:

- Upcycling (local business woman)
- Smiles Foundation volunteer and testimony
- Ceramic Pottery demonstration (ladies made an individual piece) and epilogue
- Craft with a Christian theme (ladies made an individual piece)

Our Annual Fundraising event was a Gospel Concert held in March 2023.

In March and October 2023, representatives from the group attended the PW Link meetings for the Omagh Presbytery.

In April 2023, seven ladies from our group attended the Annual PW Rally, which was held in Clogherney Presbyterian Church.

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Alt Presbyterian Church PW celebrated their 70th Anniversary in April 2023 and this was attended by seven ladies from our group.

Our annual PW service was also held in April 2023. Our guest speaker was a Deaconess working with International Meeting Point in Belfast, which was the Home Mission project that the PW was supporting this year.

In October 2023, we celebrated the 70th Anniversary of the formation of our group. We organised an afternoon church service and afternoon tea. Other ladies from neighbouring PW groups and local churches were invited to attend. The guest speaker was a Deaconess.

Many of the ladies who attend our meetings subscribe to "Wider World", the PW magazine which is published quarterly.

During 2019 the ladies of our group decided to sponsor a child through the "Adopt-A-Child" charity. The child we sponsor is from Guatemala. The money we send (£240 per year plus £10 for a Christmas gift) to this organisation, contributes towards the cost of providing nutritional meals, dental, medical and pastoral care for the child. The ladies write to the child regularly, also sending Christmas, Birthday and Easter cards to show our encouragement, support and Christian love. In 2023 the child we had originally supported left the programme and we are now sponsoring another child.

In September and October 2023 the PW ladies, other members of our congregation, Urney congregation and the local community collected items for our annual shoe box appeal for the charity, Samaritans Purse. Committee members volunteered to shop for anyone who was unable to do so. 43 boxes were filled and collected. The shoe boxes containing suitable items for children of varying ages were subsequently sent to children in poorer parts of the world. These boxes brought joy, hope and Christian love to these children who have so little.

In November we organised a table quiz to support the work of Air Ambulance.

A local congregation organised a Christmas Tree Festival weekend and we contributed a tree to this venture.

During the year, ladies save money in their Mission boxes and this is sent to PW headquarters at Assembly Buildings, Belfast, for Home Mission, Overseas Mission projects and the support of Deaconesses.

Our annual fund-raising event, a bring-and-buy sale among our members, collections from our PW services and two bequests from deceased members, were the sources of our PW funds in 2023.

In 2023, charitable donations totalling £2,150 were made to the following:

- Smiles Foundation £100
- Air Ambulance £600
- Mission boxes £600
- Adopt-A-Child £250
- Parkinson's UK £100
- Second Castlederg Presbyterian Church £500

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Second Castledearg Girls' Brigade 2023

Girls' Brigade is a worldwide, interdenominational, Christian, youth organisation, for girls aged 3 to 18 years. We meet outside school hours and offer our young girls in the community an escape from the pressures of their everyday world. The company is run by officially trained volunteers. The Girls' Brigade programme is built on four headings, Spiritual, Physical, Educational and Service. The leaders present a balanced, age-related weekly programme suitable for the needs and interests of the girls, based on these four primary areas.

January: Seniors competed in the District Unihoc competition.

March: We attended the District Praise Service in Trillick after a lapse of three years due to COVID-19. We held our Display and Parents' Evening, the first since 2019 due to the pandemic. The girls put on a varied programme of singing, dancing, drama and choral speaking, which was well received by the audience. We held a pizza evening with fun, games and singing. Prizes and gifts were distributed to the girls.

April: We participated in our first GBNI colour run in Lurgan Park. The older girls and leaders thoroughly enjoyed the event.

May: We were represented at the King's Coronation parade along with other uniformed organisations and various local groups in our town.

September: We had our reopening night in the first week in September with large numbers of returning and new members for registration. Trainee sub officers attended GB webinars on safeguarding and theory knowledge. They attended a formal District Training Day and commenced practical work within the Company under the guidance of an officer. Trainee officers commenced the practical elements of programme-planning to record-keeping and administration as well as increasing their knowledge of GB and leadership in general. They performed the duties and responsibilities under a supervising officer who offered help and support as they gained company experience.

November: The company was represented at the Annual Remembrance Service and Parade by two sub officers. The company attended the joint GB & BB Enrolment Church Service.

December: Brigaders and Seniors had a Christmas trip to Foyleside shopping centre. The officers and leaders organised Christmas parties and refreshments for all sections. A welcome visit from Santa with the presents went down a treat.

Explorers had worship, songs, craft, no-bake cookery, games and stories with lots of visual aids as in big picture books, puppets and posters. The children's Bible was used with the very young girls and colour-in sheets, while the older Explorers followed the Biblical course set by the spiritual team of GBNI.

Juniors, Seniors and Brigaders had their GBNI scripture teaching and Bible class. These same sections enjoyed a variety of crafts, cookery, sport and Brigade knowledge in the weekly programme. Seniors and Brigaders participated in group challenges, teamwork and decision making.

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Second Castlederg Boys' Brigade 2023

The Boys' Brigade is one of the biggest Christian Youth Organisations in the UK & Republic of Ireland, committed to providing opportunities for boys to meet together and engage in a range of fun and developmental experiences. During 2023, the Northern Ireland branch (which includes companies in Donegal) broke away from the UK/Rol organisation and Second Castlederg Presbyterian Church Boys' Brigade started the new season in September 2023 under the auspices of The Northern Ireland Boys' Brigade (BBNI). The aim of Boys' Brigade is "The advancement of Christ's Kingdom among boys and the promotion of habits of Obedience, Reverence, Discipline, Self-respect and all that tends towards a true Christian manliness", by helping children and young people grow in confidence, gain a sense of belonging as part of a team, try new things, develop new skills, discover their potential, and learn about God's love.

Our company welcomes boys from the local area and a large proportion of these are not members of our Congregation. The company is divided into three sections: Company Section, for boys aged 11 – 18 years; Junior Section, for boys aged 8 – 11 years; Anchor Boys, for boys aged 4 – 7 years. Our Boys' Brigade groups normally meet each week from September to the end of March and all take part in a joint Girls' Brigade/Boys' Brigade enrolment service held each year in November or December. The season closes at the end of March with the annual Parents' Evening and Display, in which all the boys and leaders take part.

In 2023 all boys paid an enrolment fee of £10 at the beginning of the year and then paid a weekly subscription of £1.00. Other income came from donations made at the annual Enrolment Service and at the Parents' Night. In 2023, additional income was raised by a BB Week collection carried out by boys from the Company Section. From the income received, capitation fees have to be paid annually to BB Headquarters and the remainder is spent on supplies for weekly activities, transport to events and prizes for the end-of-year Parents' Evening.

Anchor Boys

The Anchor Boy Section of the Boys' Brigade meets weekly on a Wednesday evening from 6.30pm to 7.30pm in our Church Hall. The boys enjoy a varied programme throughout the year of Bible stories, games, crafts & cookery. They bring a weekly subscription of £1.00 which is then spent on prizes for Parents' Night, craft, equipment, supplies and general running costs. In November we had our annual enrolment service which was greatly supported by the boys and their parents. We also took part in a road show with Crown Jesus Ministries in November; this was a fantastic event which the boys thoroughly enjoyed. We ended the year with an enjoyable party and we look forward to 2024.

Junior Section

Junior Section meets on Friday evenings, with the boys taking part in games, including football, land, sea and air and team games in squads. They also had arts and crafts and cookery, along with Bible work, including mime, Bible quizzes and word searches.

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Additional activities in 2023 included two teams taking part in the West-Ulster 5-a-side football competition, and they were pleased to progress to the Northern Ireland finals evening. They also took part in the following events: Battalion parade and Church service; local area Quiz Kids competition; Crown Jesus Ministries Roadshow; Annual GB/BB Enrolment Service in Second Castlederg Church; the Christmas Light Switch-on in Castlederg town centre; visiting 'A Living Nativity' in Castlederg Methodist Church. In November, boys from the Junior Section, along with boys from the Company Section, represented the Company at the Remembrance parade in the town centre. They rounded off 2023 with a Christmas party in the Church Hall, with Father Christmas giving each boy a present.

Company Section

Company Section meets on Friday evenings after Junior Section. Each session begins with Bible Study and the boys regularly enjoy drill training, gymnastics (box work), football, volleyball and team games.

In 2023, Company Section boys took part in: the West Ulster Battalion volleyball tournament; the West Ulster Battalion Parade; the Castlederg parade to celebrate the King's Coronation and the West Ulster Battalion football competition. They also had a Table Quiz with a neighbouring Boys' Brigade Company. Two boys represented the company at the wreath-laying ceremony at the cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday in November and in the GB/BB Enrolment Service. They ended the year with a Pizza Night.

The older boys of suitable age may also prepare for their Presidents' and Queens' badges, which are the highest awards in the Boys' Brigade. This involves commitment and perseverance as the boys complete the various elements. For the Presidents' badge the elements are: a Core Activity, a Faith element, Adventure Days, 10 hours volunteering in their church or BB Company, completing a Skills Course and being an active member of their Company.

The Queens' Badge candidates must already hold a President's badge and enhance their personal development through expanding the skills, knowledge and experiences acquired in gaining the President's badge, extending these to activities outside their church or BB. This gives the boys a sense of purpose, develops a wide range of life skills outside the education system and teaches them teamwork as well as how to work individually to a specific timeframe. In 2023, four boys from our Company, who had been working through the different elements of the Queen's Badge, attended a Queen's Badge completion course in February and were subsequently awarded their Queen's Badges in March. Another three boys gained their President's Badge in March and began their preparation for the Queen's Badge when the new season began in September.

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Second Castlederg Sunday School

We encourage in our children an understanding of the importance of attending Church and Sunday School, putting God first in our lives, and the importance of prayer and praising God.

January-June 2023

We had twenty-eight pupils on our register and four leaders/teachers with one regular helper and five casual helpers. Lessons included the workbooks "Go Teach," The Good Samaritan, Easter, memory verses, and the Lord's Prayer.

We are continuing to adapt to encourage children to attend Sunday School. We purchased crafts from a catalogue, as well as planning our own crafts, linked to stories and memory verses. We are teaching more memory verses in a fun way, and incorporating more Christian songs and hymns for the children to listen to or sing. More games and activities are also included to illustrate or relate to the bible story, creating a more fun environment. We planted sunflower seeds in April and decorated the pots with Christian stickers.

In June we had our Youth and Young People's Service where the children took part in readings, prayers and short speaking parts. We used our Facebook Parent group to encourage attendance, provide dates and times, and to upload words of songs etc. Everyone performed Our God is a Great Big God, Jesus Loves Me and The Lord's Prayer with actions. One child sang The Lord's My Shepherd. We also presented Sunday School prizes. Younger children received Christian books and children moving to the senior classes [High School] received a Bible, while the older children received a £10 one4all voucher with book-marks, note-pads and pens with Bible verses included. The children were given their scrap book, which included photos and work they had done throughout the year. We had our barbeque after the service and monies collected went to Sunday School funds. In June we organised a picnic at Gortin Glen Forest Park.

In August we individually hand-delivered invitations to all parents to encourage and warmly invite all children back to Sunday School in September. We ensured that all parents were also invited to our Facebook parent group.

Sept 2023 - Dec 2023

We had thirty pupils on our register and seven leaders/teachers with two helpers and two teenagers helping. Teachers are organised on a rota, every other month. Lessons include the workbooks "Go Teach," – Moses, The Commandments, Harvest, Christmas, and memory verses. We selected a memory verse to focus on each month, and used crafts regularly, along with games and quizzes, to make lessons fun. We purchased a games-set and a parachute. We also got a filing cabinet to store books and equipment.

We discussed and created a lesson plan for leaders to follow. We also set up a WhatsApp group for leaders to share ideas, and keep everyone up-to-date each week.

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In October, we organised a trip to Jonny Rockos for parents and children. Ten children enjoyed soft play while five were bowling. Afterwards, the children had hot food, and parents had tea/coffee and scones.

The Sunday School children made a harvest bookmark with the message – Jesus will never ‘leave’ or forsake you. They were laminated and given out to the congregation as they were leaving church. Children also took part in our Christmas Service, performing a drama ‘Jesus’ Christmas Party.’ They sang Away in a Manger. One child also sang a solo – ‘It was on a Starry Night.’ Some children read a poem – Christmas is for Giving – and we gave baubles out to the congregation. The children had spent time in Sunday School making the baubles.

A Christmas Party was organised in the church hall. We played party games, had food and a visit from Santa. Everyone had a most enjoyable evening. Children were given selection boxes.

Photos and videos were added to the Sunday School Parents Facebook page throughout the year.

Second Castlederg Bowling Club

The Bowling Club meets on Wednesday evenings from 8.00pm until 10.00pm from January to March and from September to December. 2023 started with numbers increased from the previous year, with 18 players taking to the mats most weeks, about half of these being members of Second Castlederg Presbyterian Church and the rest from the surrounding district. There was a very mixed age demographic, with some teenagers joining their parents as well as a number of members of advanced age. Each adult member paid an annual fee of £20, but there was no charge for school children. The club made a donation of £200 to Second Castlederg Presbyterian Church.

Several of the younger members played in competitions at other clubs, while the older members, several of whom live alone, enjoyed the fun and companionship of competing in their home club against their friends and being able to have some social contact. Regardless of age, all the members enjoyed their cup of tea and biscuits, with the weekly chat and mutual support that is so important for all.

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Volunteers

None of this outreach, ministry and service to the community would be possible without the large number of people who volunteer to be involved in the work and witness of Second Castledearg. The Trustees recognise their commitment, dedication and their willingness to share their time and abilities. We also record our gratitude to the members of the Church Committee, past and present, for their faithfulness, hard work and the multitude of ways that they make a difference through the sharing of their time and the living out of their faith.

PUBLIC BENEFIT STATEMENT

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland meets the public benefit requirement by providing benefit to its members and the general public by making known the Christian Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ through the advancement of religion.

The direct benefits which flow from the purposes of the Church include the gaining of an understanding in Christian beliefs as set out in the Bible and in the Church's subordinate standards (the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Shorter and Larger Catechisms) leading to spiritual and moral development and opportunities for response to Bible teaching. In turn, this framework leads to practical expressions of Christian beliefs and standards in the local community such as through the care of those in need (including the sick, disabled and bereaved).

Generally the above benefits are delivered locally by congregations and their members, or are facilitated through presbyteries or are organised and delivered centrally. Local delivery is facilitated by central resources in almost all cases. Public access is made known through the use of noticeboards, printed material, press advertisement, websites, and social media or in other ways.

The benefits are demonstrated through regular evaluation of the services and informal and ad-hoc feedback from members, their families, and members of the public.

The purpose does not lead to harm. The only private benefit flowing from our purpose is related to Ministers, Missionaries, Deaconesses, Irish Mission workers and Lay Agents who receive benefits as a result of their holding office or employment. However, this is incidental and necessary in order to further our charitable purpose. There are no other private benefits. The beneficiaries of this purpose are members, their families, other individuals that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is in direct and indirect contact with, the community in which pastoral services are provided and other communities throughout Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, and worldwide which benefit from our engagement with and support for both Christian and other secular organisations, charities and individual members of the public.

The Kirk Session has had regard to the Charity Commissions public benefit requirement statutory guidance.

**SECOND CASTLEDERG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
IN IRELAND**

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The congregation's main source of income is members' contributions through the Weekly Freewill Offering which totaled £70,610 in 2023 (£63,826 in previous year). Total income for 2023 was £128,606 (£110,501 in previous year).

Total expenditure decreased from £102,705 to £78,481 in the year.

RESERVES

The Trustees of Second Castledearg Presbyterian Church have considered the level of unrestricted reserves that it is appropriate to hold, taking account of current and ongoing commitments. It is the policy of the Trustees to hold at least six months' normal expenditure. At the year end, unrestricted reserves were £92,488, which represents a higher level of reserves. The Trustees, however, consider it prudent to hold reserves at this level as the funding of its present activities is dependent on the ongoing financial support of members.

**SECOND CASTLEDERG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
IN IRELAND**

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the annual report and the financial statements of the congregation in accordance with applicable law and generally accepted accounting practice.

As the congregations total income does not exceed £250,000, the Trustees have elected under Section 64(3) of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 to prepare a receipts and payment account and a statement of assets and liabilities.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the congregation's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time its financial position. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the congregation and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the Kirk Session at a meeting on 03/04/24 and signed on its behalf by

Daphne M. Watt

Daphne Watt

AJ Fletcher

Alex Fletcher