

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

**Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 December 2024**

**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 2024 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 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 Castlederg 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 Castlederg 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;

In our invitation to all in the Castlederg community to join us for hospitality, warmth and friendship in our Friendship 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
Holiday Bible Club
Bowling Club
Friendship Club
Presbyterian Women

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Worship and prayer

The church choir leads 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 gathers for 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. Collecting the Offering during the Service is an opportunity to create different teams of collectors on Sundays involving a wide range of members of all ages. The congregation now has a Facebook page and work is underway to create a website 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 2024 we completed a series of six studies called, "Magnificent" and commenced another six-part series called, "Our Powerful Helper", which was followed by "Our Loving Father". The group is led by our Minister Emeritus and both questions and his 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 2024 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 2024 there were 308 communicant members and 196 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. Mission is also about serving and many of our members serve in local groups and committees that benefit the community in practical ways.

We have been aware of the increasing problem of loneliness among people in the local community, where several days may pass in which people do not see or speak to another person. This is now exacerbated by the increasing cost of living, requiring people to choose between 'heating and eating'. In an effort to reach out to the local community, our church began a 'Friendship Group', providing a friendly face and a snack in a warm and welcoming environment.

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In another effort to make a difference, for our Harvest Festival celebrations in October 2024, we asked our members to bring items that could be donated to a Foodbank and these were used for decorating the church instead of the usual floral arrangements. Three car-loads of food were taken to a local Foodbank for distribution in the community.

Contributions to our **United Appeal for Mission** that supports many individual ministries and projects at home and overseas raised £7,662, exceeding our Target of Honour which in 2024 was £6,228.

The 2024 **World Development Appeal**, “Hunger Pains; Scarcity to Abundance”, focussed on people across the world who are living below the poverty line and for whom the pain of hunger is a reality today. The Appeal aimed to supply the necessary funds to support Tearfund projects in Rwanda, Malawi, Bangladesh, Uganda and Burkina Faso and Christian Aid projects in Honduras, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone and also Burkina Faso. Church members donated £1,300 to the 2024 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 2024 donations towards the work of the Children’s Society came to £647.

The Church Committee is divided into a number of sub-committees, including Finance, Property, Health & Safety, Technology and Communications, Catering and Fund-raising & Events. During 2024 the Fund-raising and Events Committee organised various events to raise funds: In April, several of our members provided the catering at an Open Day at a local dairy. This profits from the catering raised £2,701 for our church Building Fund. A Coffee Morning in May raised £1,337 and a Table Quiz in October raised £940. An elderly member of our Church Family knitted small Christmas stockings containing a chocolate treat and these raised £93. The annual collection for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal at the Remembrance Service in November raised £341.

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 2024 this raised £1,550. We are grateful that this project has been so well supported by the church and local community.

In 2024 we helped support children receive a school supply pack (pencils, exercise books, etc., at the start of the school year) in four different provinces. It is compulsory for each child to have a school uniform and supply pack to gain entrance to school. If their parents cannot afford these items, then the children cannot go to school. Parents then see them as having no future and are tempted to sell them into the sex trade. These villages are incredibly poor - most people barely have enough money for one

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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.

Through the project this year, we also supported three high school students by contributing to their English language lesson fees and by paying fees for one third-level student who is in her final year of studying architecture. These 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 and is distributed to the areas of greatest need.

Holiday Bible Club 2024

Our annual Holiday Bible Club was held in July 2024 over three evenings. This church outreach invited all primary school age children from our church and in the local community. Forty children came along.

This year the children learned about some of the miracles of Jesus. 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.

Presbyterian Women (PW) 2024

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 Castledearg 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, which all ladies from our congregation are invited, usually meets on the third Monday evening of each month, October to April. Between 12 and 14 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 2024. In June 2024, the PW Committee had a meeting to plan the PW programme for the 2024/2025 session. The PW Committee organised a programme of worship, reflective devotions, and guest speakers. We followed the PW theme for 2023/2024, "Being Transformed", from the "Inspirational" book produced by the PW Panel at Assembly Buildings in Belfast.

Our monthly speakers included:

- Two ladies who told us about their lives and faith journey. They also reflected on the PW theme for the year
- Haven Project, Sligo
- Cake decorating

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Other events during the year were as follows:

- Our Annual Fundraising event was a night of music and poetry held in March 2024.
- In March and October 2024, representatives from the group attended the PW Link meetings for the Omagh Presbytery.
- In April 2024 six ladies attended the Annual PW Rally which was held in Mountjoy Presbyterian Church.
- Sion Mills Presbyterian Church PW celebrated their 50th Anniversary in April 2024 and this was attended by five ladies.
- During the year ladies from our PW group attended two visitors' events in Drumquin and Badoney Presbyterian churches.
- Our annual PW service was also held in February 2024. Our guest speakers were Rev David Moore and Mrs Elaine Moore from the West Belfast Special Project.
- In November 2024 we held a Visitors Evening with invitations sent to other PW groups and local churches ladies ministry groups. The theme of the evening was a Praise and Pudding night.

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

Since 2019, the ladies of our group have sponsored a child through the "Adopt-A-Child" charity. The child we sponsor is from Guatemala. The money we send to this organisation (£240 per year plus £10 for a Christmas gift) contributes to 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 September and October 2024, the PW ladies, other members of our congregation, Urney congregation and the 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 so. 36 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.

During the year ladies save, in their Mission boxes, money which 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, as well as collections from our PW services and two bequests from deceased members, were the sources of our PW funds in 2024.

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In 2024 charitable donations totalling £1,000 were made to the following:

- Mission boxes: £600
- Adopt-A-Child: £250
- Haven Project, Sligo: £150

Second Castledearg Girls' Brigade 2024

The aim of the Girls' Brigade, being a Christian organisation, international and interdenominational, shall be: To help girls to become followers of the Lord Jesus Christ and through self-control, reverence and a sense of responsibility, to find true enrichment of life.

The vision is that Girls' Brigade Northern Ireland will be recognised as a dynamic, relevant, Christ-centered organisation effectively reaching out to all girls to value, nurture and equip them for life.

The motto is 'Seek, Serve and Follow Christ'.

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 programme suitable for the needs and interests of the girls, based on these four primary areas.

The number of girls and leaders attending has been consistent. We have girls from our own congregation and also a large number attend from neighbouring churches. The company is divided into four sections. Explorers 3-7 years; Juniors 8-10 years; Seniors 11-13 years; Brigaders 14-18 years. We meet each week from beginning of September to end of March.

For the past three years GBNI has had an ongoing charity partnership with Habitat for Humanity Ireland.

During 2024, the Seniors and Brigaders engaged in a competition organised by our GBNI where they captured some of their favourite wonders of creation on camera, from sunsets to sunrises, pictures of the ocean, plants, forests, animals and mountains. The choice was very widespread. The one picture entry was attached to an A4 template and the girls were required to include why they chose the photograph and to express their views on what we should be doing to protect our world. Adjudication was based on both the photograph and explanation. There were several of our entries highly commended.

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The Explorers and Juniors participated in the GBNI art competition. Explorers used pencils, pens and paint to decorate a picture outline of a recycling lorry on a specially supplied template. Juniors, on a template, created and designed a poster encouraging people to shop/ donate/ volunteer at their nearest Habitat ReStore. They wrote a short explanation of why they chose the design and explained the importance of shopping, donating, and/or volunteering at Habitat ReStore.

Explorers and Juniors had team games organised by our District Executive. The girls enjoyed having lots of fun and fellowship at this event. Juniors had a trip to the annual pantomime which was well received and concluded with a visit to McDonald's. We attended the annual District Parade and Service. We held our Parents' Evening and Display where the girls put on a varied programme of singing, dancing, choral speaking and drama. We had a pizza evening with fun, games and friendship. Awards and gifts were distributed to the girls. Seniors and Brigaders attended a quiz and pudding evening organised by our District Executive. Senior unihoc and Brigader dodgeball were both popular events with these age groups.

A representation of both leaders and girls attended D-Day 80 Heroes Remembered in the local Parish Church. This was an 'open to all event' in the community. We were one of the uniformed organisations participating. In addition, there was a D-Day 80 exhibition and prayer trail where members were able to call at the church for a quiet personal prayer and reflection time.

The company was represented at the wreath-laying ceremony, parade and church service on Remembrance Sunday. We attended the joint Girls' Brigade and Boys' Brigade Enrolment Service.

We joined with youth groups, schools and the uniformed organisations at the Scripture Union Christingle Service held in the local Parish Church.

The older girls had a Christmas shopping trip to Foyleside 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, such as big picture books, puppets and posters. The children's Bible and colouring sheets were used with the very young girls, 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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Trainee sub officers attended GB webinars on safeguarding and theory knowledge. They attended a formal District Training Evening and commenced practical work within the company under the guidance of an officer. A trainee officer commenced the practical elements of programme-planning, record keeping and administration as well as increasing her knowledge of GB and leadership in general. The trainee officer performed the duties and responsibilities under a supervising officer who offered help and support as knowledge and experience continued to be gained.

Second Castlederg Boys' Brigade 2024

The Boys' Brigade is one of the largest 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. Two years ago, the Northern Ireland branch (which includes companies in Donegal) broke away from the UK/RoI organisation and Second Castlederg Presbyterian Church Boys' Brigade now comes under the governance 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 boys took part in the joint Girls' Brigade/Boys' Brigade enrolment service held in December 2024.

In March, the Junior and Company Sections took part in the Battalion parade. The season closed at the end of March with the annual Parents' Evening and Display, in which all the boys and leaders took part.

All boys pay an enrolment fee of £10 at the beginning of the year and then pay a weekly subscription of £1.00. Other income came from donations made at the annual Enrolment Service and at the Parents' Night. 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. In May 2024, the company held a barbecue and Old McDonald Auction to raise funds for company activities. This most enjoyable event was very well supported by parents, past members and friends of the company and enough money was raised to enable some extra activities to be held over the coming few years.

BB encourages boys to be conscious of the needs of others and, in October 2024, the boys collected non-perishable food items which were used to decorate the Boys' Brigade window for the Harvest Thanksgiving services in the church. After the evening service, these items were delivered to a local Foodbank for distribution.

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In November boys from the Junior and Company Sections took part in the wreath-laying ceremony at the war memorial during the Remembrance Day Parade in the town centre. Leaders and boys from these sections were also represented at 'D-Day 80 Heroes Remembered', a community event held in the local Parish Church to mark 80 years since D-Day during World War II.

Boys' Brigade NI – 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. Throughout the year, the boys enjoy a varied programme of Bible stories, games, crafts and cookery. In 2024, we hosted the Anchor Boy Fun & Games for all companies in our battalion and our A team came third. Everyone had a great night. We ended the year with an enjoyable party and we look forward to 2025.

Boys' Brigade NI - 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.

2024 began with a New Year trip to Jonny Rocko's and additional activities in 2024 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, where they were crowned Northern Ireland Champions. They also took part in two games and football nights at the Leisure Centre and the Battalion Junior Quiz. They rounded off 2024 with a Pizza, Movie and Party Night in the Church Hall, with Father Christmas giving each boy a present.

Boys' Brigade NI - 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 2024, Company Section boys took part in the West Ulster Battalion Company Section Competitions in Dodgeball, Volleyball, Football, Cross-Country Running and Ten Pin Bowling. They ended the year with a Pizza Night.

The older boys of suitable age may also prepare for their President's and King's 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.

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The Queen's 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 2024, three boys from our Company, who had been working through the different elements of the King's Badge, attended a King's Badge completion course in February and were subsequently awarded their King's Badges in March. Another three boys gained their President's Badge in March and began their preparation for the King's Badge when the new season began in September 2024.

Second Castledearg 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 2024

Thirty children and young people were registered (divided into three classes), six Sunday School teachers, two parent helpers and two teenage helpers.

We have two leaders for each group, working alternate months. Leaders are given a plan for each half term, following the Go Teach workbooks – focusing on the Miracles of Jesus, Moses, Easter, the Lord's Prayer, and celebrating special Sundays (communion, Mothering Sunday).

As well as listening to Bible stories and completing the relevant Go Teach lessons, leaders prepared crafts and colouring pages, linked to the stories and memory verses.

In June we had our Youth and Young People's Service; all children took part, sharing the story of Moses through drama and song. We used our Facebook Parent group to encourage attendance, provide dates and times and to upload words of songs etc. We also presented Sunday School prizes. Younger children received Bible storybooks and children moving to the senior classes [High School] received a Bible, while the older children received a £10 one4all voucher. Children with excellent attendance received a voucher for Wee Buns café. Children were given a scrapbook, which included photos and work they had completed throughout the year. We had our barbecue after the service and donations were given to Sunday School funds. Mr Whippy was invited along and everyone was treated to an ice cream.

In August we gave invitations to any new parents with children of Sunday School age, to encourage and warmly invite them to join us in September. We ensured all parents were also invited to our Facebook Parent group.

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TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)

Sept 2024 – Dec 2024

Lessons are taken from Go Teach Book 7 – Who is Jesus – The Bread of Life, The Light of the World, The Good Shepherd, and Joshua. We also focused on the Christmas story and learned 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 discussed and created a lesson plan for leaders to follow. We actively used the Whatsapp group for leaders to share ideas and keep everyone up to date each week.

Children also made harvest and Christmas crafts to take home. Sunday School decorated a window in Church for the Harvest Service, using items donated for a food bank as their decorations. A special Carol Service was organised for Sunday School children. The younger members performed a poem, The Christmas Story, everyone sang two songs and the older children did Bible readings.

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. At the beginning of 2024, a surge of new players increased our numbers from the previous year, with 26 players taking to the mats on some weeks. Some of these returned when the new season started in September and a steady core of about 18 players turned up each week. Approximately half of our bowlers were members of Second Castlederg Presbyterian Church and the rest come 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 £20.00, and there was a £10 charge for school children. The club made a donation of £250 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. The club was pleased to welcome some neuro-diverse members who have blossomed under the care and attention of the regulars and are delighted to be able to hold their own on the mats. 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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TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (cont'd)**

Friendship Group

This group began in November 2024 in response to an increasing awareness of the problems of loneliness in the area, and a desire to reach out to any in the local community who would like to join us for a chat and a cuppa in a well-heated space.

The group, which meets one morning per month in the Church Hall, had its first meeting in November. This was attended by 20 people, with a mix of male and female guests from all parts of the Castledearg Community. The second meeting at the end of December had a similar number of attendees and both meetings were much enjoyed by everyone. As well as the lively conversation, we have, so far, been able to provide an item of interest: in week one, those who were interested made a Christmas decoration, while in December we had a sing-song, led by an accordionist. It is intended that the group will continue to meet each month in the future.

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, their 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.

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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 with whom the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is in direct and indirect contact, 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.

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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 £74,003 in 2024 (£70,610 in previous year). Total income for 2024 was £144,027 (£128,606 in previous year).

Total expenditure increased from £78,481 to £90,146 in the year.

RESERVES

The Trustees of Second Castlederg 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 £120,231, 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.

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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 1/5/25 and signed on its behalf by

Daphne M. Watt

Daphne Watt

Alex Fletcher

Alex Fletcher