

## TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

The trustees present their annual report for the year ended 31 December 2023 as follows;

**Registered Charity name :** Dungannon Baptist Church

**Charity Registration Number :** 108901 (Registered on 18 July 2022)

**Registered address :** 45 Railway Road, Dungannon, BT71 7AA

**Trustees in office on the date the report was approved were as below:**

Richard Alhadeff (Pastor)

Richard Hyland

Desmond Henderson (Treasurer)

Sandra Green (Secretary)

Chris Green

John Beattie

Nathan Cruise

In addition to the above, the following person served as a Trustee during 2023, but has since stepped down from the position as Elder and consequently as Trustee on 19 April 2024:

Stephen Forsythe

Given the nature of their responsibilities, the duly appointed Elders and Deacons (collectively referred to as the "Office Bearers"), serve as the Charity Trustees in accordance with The Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2022. The Church Members' Meeting, acting in accordance with the Church Constitution, shall appoint, remove and accept the resignation of Charity Trustees. Appointment to the role of Charity Trustee will terminate on cessation of holding the office of Elder or Deacon. There must be a minimum of three Charity Trustees at all times and a quorum of one third of all Trustees is required in order to make a decision.

The Charity Trustees shall be responsible for the governance of the Church and fulfilment of its purpose as set out in the Church Constitution and referred to hereunder, acting according to the will of God as discerned by the Church Members' Meeting and in accordance with the specific and general directions of that meeting.

### **Purpose and Vision of Dungannon Baptist Church:**

Dungannon Baptist Church acknowledges the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ over his Church and exists to glorify the triune God by maintaining and promoting His worship both individually and corporately. Its members devote themselves to the teachings of Scripture, to fellowship, breaking of bread, prayer and evangelism. They commit, with the help of God, to witness to the saving and sustaining power of the Lord Jesus Christ and to work for the extension of His Kingdom.

The principal charitable objective of the Church is the advancement of the Christian faith according to the teachings of Scripture, the Doctrinal Statement and Baptist principles.

Our vision at Dungannon Baptist Church is:

G : to grow spiritually and numerically

R: be relevant in biblical teaching and application

A: to actively encourage members to use their gifts

C: to care for one another and to meet the needs of others

E: to evangelise our community and beyond with the gospel

We hold regular services for public worship, Bible Study, preaching and teaching for all age groups and provide pastoral care to the members of the church through visitation and prayer. We organise meetings and other events that promote our charitable purpose. As a church we participate in the life of the community, support other Christian organisations and charities through volunteering, financial gifts and prayer.

It is intended that the beneficiaries of the charity (Dungannon Baptist Church) are not only those who have committed to membership of the church, but also to those who attend the various activities of the church (details of which are included later in this report), from within the local community and beyond. Our hope is that through the church, the gospel message will be heard by as many people as possible, with no restrictions placed upon those who can benefit.

#### **Achievements and Performance:**

*“In setting our objectives and planning our activities for the year, the trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland’s guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities have helped to achieve the charity’s purposes and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries”*

The following is a summary of the main activities of Dungannon Baptist Church during 2023;

**Public Ministry:** In early spring we had a preaching / teaching series based on 1 Corinthians, focusing on distinctive doctrinal beliefs of the Churches in the Association of Baptist Churches in Ireland and included Communion, Baptism, Giving and Membership. Late Spring saw us looking at 1 John, followed in the summer period by a study of Psalms 42-52. As autumn arrived, the Pastor then commenced a series on Genesis 12 – 16 entitled ‘From Sinking Sand to Solid Ground’, following the footsteps of Abraham.

Sunday evening services included a varied programme with input from Baptist Missions, LMI and Crosslinks.

The year also saw our annual ‘Childrens Day’ and ‘Harvest Thganksgiving’ services and a number of other special services including ‘Churches Working Together’ as we joined for worship with other churches in Dungannon Town.

Approximately 35 people benefited from each of our Small Group Series which were held in the Spring and Autumn of 2023 and special evenings of prayer were held in September (and another planned for January 2024).

A Baptismal Service was held on 23 April 2023 where on profession of faith and at their request, the church baptised 3 people.

A number of families became regular attenders at our services during the year and this resulted in a great need for practical help and what a joy it was to witness many in the church family sacrificially and joyfully give towards these various needs.

Finally we give thanks to God for the addition of five new members into the church and in all things we give thanks to the Lord for another year in which we firmly believe that He continues to build his church and include us in His work.

**Youth & Community Worker:** Our Youth & Community Worker continued to be heavily involved with 'Reach' which mentors young people in different schools in the area, having a weekly presence in Dungannon Primary School. In addition to this he has attended a rotation of primary school assemblies in the local area and this has provided opportunities to communicate various activities organised by the church, to the children. He has attended the Senior Scripture Union at a local grammar school and also had the opportunity to share the good news of the gospel at Drumglass High School and Howard Primary School Carol Services.

We continue to have a good working relationship through our Youth & Community worker in his capacity as chaplain to Dungannon Swifts Football Club. Easter 2023 saw another very successful 'Football Camp', which afforded the opportunity to share the gospel with some 100 Primary School age children from various backgrounds over each of the 4 days. A number of people from Dungannon Baptist Church were present each day, helping the coaches, serving refreshments and engaging with parents as the opportunity arose. Again we thank God for opening this door to us as His Word goes forth.

**180:** Post Primary School young people continued to meet on Friday evenings as they studied God's word together. As new families came to church, the number of young people attending saw a small increase and we believe they continued to benefit through discussion as they studied the book of Acts together. During the year a number of off site activities were organised for this age group.

**Amazing Club:** Primary School age children continued to attend 'Amazing Club' on Friday evenings during the year and what a blessing it was to have some 17 children, some of whom had no church connection, come along. They have fun together, play games, sing songs, have a story, do a quiz or a memory verse and a craft, but most importantly, they hear of God's love for them. There is also enough time to enjoy juice and a biscuit together! We have also had movie nights with sweets and popcorn and the annual Christmas party again provided a wonderful opportunity to welcome the parents into the church for a chat and some refreshments. As a church, we are so thankful to God that he has provided a team of willing, enthusiastic and capable leaders who all have a big heart for the kids who come along to the club.

**Explorers:** On Sunday mornings during our worship service, our primary school age children met at 'Explorers' (our Sunday School). The number of children has almost doubled over the past year as new families come to church and as we speak there are now 23 children on the roll. We praise God for his blessings in this regard and also for the answer to prayer as 5 new leaders and 4 new helpers have been welcomed into the team.

Using material from 'Go Teach', the children hear stories from scripture and we pray that God will use these stories to help the children understand His wonderful plan of salvation and that they will come to know Jesus as their own personal Saviour. At Explorers they pray and think especially of those countries where Christians suffer persecution even today.

The childrens' collection last year supported the Kidd family as they ministered in Waterford and the money was used to purchase resources for their new Sunday School ministry. In our current year, the collection will be going to support the work of Crown Jesus Ministries who came along to Explorers at the end of October and with the help of Puppet 'Max' and some Lego, told the story of Jesus healing the paralyzed man and reminded us that Jesus' love has the power to forgive sin.

The year was rounded off with a joint Christmas Party with Amazing Club as mentioned earlier.

**Little Lambs:** Little Lambs is a parent/guardian and toddlers group which meets in the church on Monday mornings. This has gone from strength to strength over the past year as we thank God for how he has opened doors for us and brought new additions to the group. On some weeks there can be as many as 10 little ones. The morning activities are a mix of casual chat, snacks, devotion and prayer and as a church we do pray for continued growth and stamina for all concerned.

**Dungannon Baptist Womens' Ministry:** The women of the church continued to organise a number of events during 2023 as these gave an opportunity to bring along those who perhaps had no church connection or indeed who attended a different church. Events included a Movie night at church, a town walk followed by refreshments in a local coffee shop, a Breakfast in the church in September, a Prayer, Praise and Promises Event with Courtney Reissig via zoom on 19 October, an evening with the ladies from another local church followed by supper in November and to end the year, a Christmas event on 6 December when the ladies were pleased to welcome a guest speaker from Hope and Light ministry as she shared of her work with exploited women and children across Asia. Overall a very successful year as the ladies enjoyed fellowship with each other and extended God's love to others in the community.

**Mens' Ministry:** As with the ladies, the men organised events during 2023 which again afforded the opportunity to reach out to Christians and non Christians alike in the community. In Spring the men visited Harold Bennett's Flax Mill as they learned about the milling process. The evening included a talk by a retired businessman who shared about his own spiritual journey. The summer event took the men to Brackaville Footgolf & Community Golf Course in Coalisland and the evening concluded with a talk by one of our own men on how to 'Listen to our wives'. Our autumn event was a meal and talk by one of our own members regarding stress, rest and prioritising responsibilities. The talk included personal reflection and had real relevance to the 30+ men gathered, and most importantly, in testimony to the grace of God.

In addition to all the above church activities throughout 2023, we had the pleasure of hosting a summer holiday bible club led by a **Baptist Youth Team**. This was really well attended by primary school age children from the local area and culminated with a BBQ for parents and children. Again, central to this time of fun, the truth of the Gospel was conveyed to the children in an easy to understand manner. The Team also took the opportunity for outreach in one of our new local housing developments – Crannog Way – and at the time of compiling this report we have been blessed by seeing children from that area now attend our Amazing Club. Praise God for his goodness.

Finally, as a church, we have an ambassador to 'MensReach', a local initiative in Dungannon which aims to engage with the older men, catering for their physical, mental and importantly, their spiritual needs. Activities include a Games night, Walks, Walking Football and Bible Study Sessions. On average, 26 men attend the weekly walk and what a joy it was to see 44 men at the Christmas dinner. To sum MensReach up, it exists 'To help men find Jesus' and there is evidence to say that has been successful. As a church family we continue to prayerfully support this outreach.

In all we do as a church, we take very seriously the matter of Safeguarding, both in relation to children and young people and also in respect of vulnerable adults we may come into contact with. To this end, we do have a designated Safeguarding Officer and Deputy and those leaders / helpers involved in our various ministries have undergone Safeguarding training with refresher courses arranged as necessary.

Staff at Dungannon Baptist Church receiving a stipend or payment during 2023 included our Pastor, our Youth and Community Worker and Caretaker (the latter works approximately 5 hours per week and is the son of one of the Trustees during 2023 but who has since stepped down as mentioned at the start of this report). All payments were incidental to the Public Benefit. Regarding our financial position at year's end, no funds held by the church are materially in deficit and as can be seen from the church accounts, we entered 2024 with a credit balance of £33,590.32.

The trustees and members of Dungannon Baptist Church give much thanks to God for the faithful freewill giving by the congregation and His grace towards us as a fellowship in the year past and as we continue in 2024.

This report has been approved by the Charity Trustees of Dungannon Baptist Church.

Signed:  (on behalf of the Trustees)

Date: 13-05-2024 ..