

Eagle Wing



The Magazine of Groomsport Presbyterian Church

Autumn 2018

The *Eagle Wing* was the first emigrant ship to leave Ulster for America. She sailed from Groomsport in September 1636, carrying 140 Presbyterians in search of a life free from persecution in the New World. Fearful weather, however, forced them to return home after two months at sea. Although she did not reach her destination, the *Eagle Wing* became the inspiration for others to make their attempts and since those days, several million people have left our shores, taking with them their culture and traditions. These cultural links with America are celebrated each year at the North Down Eagle Wing Festival in July.

Our church magazine takes its title from this significant piece of local history. In 2002, Jennifer Hulme, a member of the congregation and well known local artist, created the cover design, which strikingly depicts the symbols of the wing, sail and cross.

We seek to be a welcoming community of God's people

*We believe our mission is to hear and share His Word and to reflect **God's unconditional love** - as we proclaim and celebrate the good news of Jesus Christ and strive to be a **welcoming, serving and reconciling community.**"*

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LETTER FROM THE MANSE



Just over 60 years ago, on 1st April 1957, the BBC fooled many with their report regarding the spaghetti harvest in southern Switzerland. The BBC news programme, *Panorama*, announced that, thanks to a very mild winter and the virtual elimination of the dreaded spaghetti weevil, farmers in the village of Ticino on the Swiss-Italian border were enjoying a bumper spaghetti crop. It accompanied this announcement with footage of Swiss farmers pulling strands of spaghetti down from trees.

At that time, spaghetti was relatively little known in the UK, and so huge numbers of viewers were taken in and many contacted the BBC wanting to know how they could grow their own spaghetti trees. To this question, the BBC diplomatically replied that they should 'place a sprig of spaghetti in a tin of tomato sauce and hope for the best.'

Thankfully, our farmers don't sow seed or place a sprig in the ground and then just hope for the best. There has to be preparation of the ground, the right time chosen to plant and the right seed planted, with ongoing 'care' of various kinds.

Similarly, sowing the seed of God's Word requires various kinds of preparation, diligence and ongoing work. All of us are involved in the sowing of this seed, and in the work that accompanies it in the life of our congregation.

As the various organisations start back, may I encourage all leaders - in whatever you are doing - to prepare well, and in your work, see that as sowing God's Word, his love, his compassion. Take time to water the seed that you sow with prayer. There will be an opportunity to do this together on Wednesday evenings, when we will meet for prayer at 7.30pm. Everyone will be made very welcome.

I want to thank sincerely Rev. Denis Campbell for all his work within the congregation, and for his wise counsel to myself, as he shared with us in ministry for the past year. Denis leaves us for Spain at the end of September, to minister for some weeks to a congregation there. We wish him and his wife Hilary God's blessing.

As I write this, we are also looking forward to the arrival of our new intern, Mr Ryan Pearce, from Princeton Theological Seminary - who, by the time you are reading this, God willing, will be ministering amongst us. Please remember Ryan in your prayers as he settles in to life in Northern Ireland and to sowing the seed of God's Word amongst us.

Finally, spaghetti may not grow on trees, but it is probably found in most homes, certainly in more homes than would have been the case in 1957. We are blessed to enjoy not just the local, home-grown and home-made produce, but also many varieties of food from around the world. Can I encourage you to come along to our Harvest Services, in which we will praise God and thank him for our local harvest and the blessings we now have of harvests from around the world.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Paul', written in a cursive style.

CONGREGATIONAL RECORD



DEATHS

20 March 2018 Mrs Marie Pook, Apt 3, 28A Main Street (11)
4 May 2018 Mrs Peggy Milling, 88 Ashbury Road (23)
6 August 2018 Mr James Goldie, 10 Nelson Park (10)
6 September 2018 Mr Bernard Wilson, 2 Leslie Hill Crescent (1)

“Blessed are they who die in the Lord”

At the start of a day,
who can tell what a day may bring forth?
Cause me therefore, gracious God,
to live every day as if it were to be my last,
for I know not but that it may be such.

Cause me to live now
as I shall wish I had done when I come to die.
O grant that I may not die
with any guilt on my conscience,
or any known sin unrepented of,
but that I may be found in Christ,
who is my only Saviour and Redeemer.

Thomas à Kempis

USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

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Princeton Intern	Ryan Pearce	07577 000978
Church Office	Tues, Wed & Fri 9.00-1.00	9146 2552 gportpc@googlemail.com

NEWS FROM THE PEWS...

Warmest congratulations to
Mrs Margie Alexander,
who celebrated her 100th birthday
on 2nd April this year.
See page 25



Congratulations to
Margaret and Billy McCreeedy,
and
Jung and Lowry Manson,
who celebrated this milestone
recently.



Many congratulations, also, to
Shirley and Stewart Lyle-Hall
on their
DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARY.
They were married in
Cooke Centenary Presbyterian Church
by Rev Dr Barkley on 12 June 1958.

At this time of year, we think of anyone starting
a new school, university or job. We hear that
Lois Goldie is going to Liverpool Hope
University to study Sport and Physical
Education with Disability, and we wish her well.

*Thank you all for your many prayers, good wishes, flowers,
cards, goodies etc. over the last six months, during Mike's
health issue/surgery. He is doing well and we thank God for
watching over him. Also, we very much appreciated Paul's
support with his visits, conversations and prayers. Again,
thank you all for your thoughtfulness and friendship.*

Joan & Mike Wortley



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EDITORIAL

As this is our Autumn issue, it is timely to think about harvests. In the *Letter from the Manse*, Rev Dalzell writes of sowing seed, of harvests from around the world – literal and figurative – and those within the work of our congregation. As the church choir practises for our Harvest Thanksgiving services, we prepare to recognise the long-term commitment of our organist and choir members in a special concert, details of which can be found on page 11. Ryan Pearce's internship represents a new chapter in our collaboration with Princeton Theological Seminary, and messages from his predecessors always assure us of plentiful harvests from seeds sown here in Groomsport. Matthew Steele has been to Uganda with a Christian charity expedition, and we have links to the Hope Christian Trust in Gaza, both of which you can read about – further sowing, with the promise of other harvests far from here.

The 'Wee Manse' has had a complete makeover – and of course, now has a new occupant. Meet Ryan on page 8 and read about the refurbishment of 25 Main Street on page 17. At the recent barbecue, as well as welcoming Ryan, a presentation was made to Rev Denis Campbell, who tells us about travelling shortly to Spain, to look after a congregation there.

Holiday Bible Club, along with our Community Day, drew in members of the public to our church premises and fellowship. The Tuesday Club is now based in our church halls, and provides regular activities – but primarily companionship – for people who are alone/lonely in our community; good seed sown, with welcome harvests, close to home. The familiar local countryside is the setting for Brian McClelland's latest story, which weaves family history through the fields and lanes of the Cotton. Within our church family, it's lovely to have news of one of our older members, Mrs Margie Alexander, and one of our youngest, Summer McWhinney.

As always, we are grateful for the photographic skills of Paul Miller and David Purce, and note that permission was sought and granted for these images to be used in our publication.

While working on this issue, we have been conscious of all kinds of storms, so threatening to harvests and general stability – several severe weather systems swirl across the globe; the Brexit blizzard continues to obscure the way ahead; at home, Storm Stormont has stalled somewhere off-radar; and dark clouds of disagreement currently hang over our denomination. Such storms can rock communities and alter familiar landscapes. The writer of Chronicles states, "...everything in heaven and earth is yours." Frail humans – even when tossed in life's gales – can still sow seeds of love and grace wherever they find themselves, trusting in the One "exalted as Head over all" to calm the tempests and bring in the harvest.

Hello, Groomsport! Or, as I have heard many people say so far, “Hiya!”

It is quite crazy how fast time has flown, isn't it? Just two weeks ago, I was descending the “Trapper Cabin Trail” to Chatterbox Falls in British Columbia to end my time as a mountaineering guide with Young Life's adventure camp Beyond Malibu. I was home in San Francisco, California for a week, then I traveled 22 hours in total to reach Groomsport around 3pm on August 26th. The jet lag of my travels hit me my first two days here as I slept for 20+ hours and tried to make up the sleep deficit that I have been running seemingly since before finals ended at Princeton Theological Seminary in May. All that to say, I am quite excited to be here!



I have been dreaming of starting this internship for quite a long time! I first found out about it my second semester at Princeton, over a year and a half ago! I am so excited that the moment is finally here, and I am thrilled to get to know each one of you as I go about my duties here. I'm sure most of you will get to know my story and call to ministry as we chat, but I wanted to offer a short summary so that you all can have some sort of framework for why I am the way that I am.

Growing up, my family moved around the United States quite a lot for my father's job in marketing. As a child, the constant shuffling of friends, places, sports, and communities was quite tiresome; however, in retrospect, I can see that the times that we moved around form the bedrock of my love for adventuring and exploring the world around me. I played a lot of sports growing up, but focused upon running cross country and track and field in high school. Additionally, I played club soccer — football here — as a left winger and center midfielder. You will probably see me running through the village throughout my time here, so be sure to encourage me to run a bit faster and work off the gluten free biscuits I have a fondness for. I am also an avid reader, and growing up, I simply wanted to live out an adventure like my friends Harry Potter, Bilbo Baggins, Percy Jackson, and all the other literary figures whom I spent time adventuring with through their various books.

I went to university at Washington State University and earned a Bachelors of Science in Neuroscience with a minor in Psychology and History. Side note: if anyone wants to wake up at 3 am and watch PAC-12 American football games with me, let me know. I will probably be doing so quite often as I am an avid sports fan, supporting the New York Mets for baseball, the New York Giants for American football, Manchester United for football, and the Golden State Warriors for basketball in addition to the Cougs for NCAA football. I also play golf quite badly, but I plan on being a regular at the driving range to improve. How do I fix a slice?

During university, I discerned a call to ministry and tested that call by taking a year after college to work in Seattle, Washington doing college ministry at the University of Washington through University Presbyterian Church. After three weeks, I knew that I was called to ministry and applied to Princeton Theological Seminary shortly thereafter. I have been attending there for the last two years and will finish my Masters in Divinity when I return. I love talking theology and philosophy in addition to discussing what I see God doing practically in my life currently.

While living in Seattle, I discovered that I was allergic to gluten in addition to my lactose intolerance. I often joke that the Lord is teaching me diligence by not allowing me to eat pizza, and I figured that information up front might help me to avoid getting sick while I live over here. If anyone has information on where to get a good gluten free pizza, please reach out. That is one of my favorite foods!

I look forward to developing as a minister and a friend across my time serving Groomsport, as well as getting to know each one of you. Help me out and introduce yourself and I will do my best to remember names. Also, feel free to reach out with questions whenever.

Blessings,

Ryan

Ryan Pearce
ryan.pearce@ptsem.edu

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 2018

As 2018 marks the 100th anniversary of the end
of World War One,
and **11th November** falls on a Sunday,
our morning service on that day will be at
10:30 am,
to enable us to have our
Act of Remembrance at 11.00 am.



RACE for LIFE

On 28th May, Jordan, Lois and myself set off to Stormont Park to join lots of other people doing the Race for Life. We had to do a 5k run/walk around Stormont. The idea was to do it in memory of anyone who had/has cancer. As our family has been affected, and we have lost friends to it, we wanted to raise as much money as we could for Cancer Research UK.

When we arrived, the atmosphere was amazing and the place was buzzing. We had to do our warm-ups in the park before beginning. We started at a steady pace, but very soon Lois was running on ahead! Jordan and myself ran for a bit, then walked the rest! After completing it in just over 45 minutes, we were presented with our medals. We were well chuffed!

We raised £280, which we were delighted with. Next year, we hope to do the 10k run - we'll need to start training now!!



Sharon Goldie



SPUD BEARS

You will remember that at the start of the summer season, we had a Moment For Mission, in which I made an appeal on behalf of the *Spud Bear Ministry* for small Teddy Bears, 6 - 8" high. Thanks to the very generous response from the congregation, nearly 200 little bears were donated. These

will hasten the recovery of the toddlers and children in various hospitals in Africa and China, as well as giving great comfort to young orphans.

As you can see in the photograph, you gave a huge variety of bears, etc, and these were packed into a big suitcase which David and I took up to Coleraine. Colin Davies was actually in the Far East, working away on behalf of the *Spud Bear Ministry* but his father was most grateful to all those in Groomsport who gave so generously.

So, many thanks once again, on behalf of all the sick children and orphans who will benefit from these little soft toys very soon.



Maureen Irwin



A SPECIAL RECOGNITION CONCERT
SATURDAY 24TH NOVEMBER 2018
7.30 PM

A special concert is to be held in the church. This is a celebration to say “thank you” for the long and excellent service provided by the members of the church choir, and also to pay tribute to our Organist and Choirmaster, John Ekin, who has served in this position for the past 30 years.



Our guests will be **The Miskelly Chorale**, a very highly regarded group of singers, who — under the guidance of their conductor, Edwin Gray — will perform a very entertaining programme. A light supper will be served afterwards in the Church Hall, to which all are invited.

Please put this date in your diary and come along to enjoy what promises to be a most enjoyable evening.



Walter Nelson Hall Complex

Last September, the booking process for halls within the Walter Nelson Hall Complex was changed. We now have a booking form, and a booking procedure, which make it easier to know who is using which hall and when. This means we can make use of the halls to full capacity, and it helps our caretaker, Ian McDonald, assist organisations with the preferred set-up for their meetings. After a few teething problems, this is now working successfully - both for our own organisations and for outside bodies which have requested use of our halls.



To book any room, or to borrow any item from the hall, please fill in the appropriate booking forms, which are available from myself by email, or from the office.

In May, we had a link meeting, when we asked all organisations to “spring clean” their cupboards and discard anything not needed. May I thank everyone for doing this and, now as the Autumn season begins, we are going to clear unwanted items from the halls, making them tidier for all to use.

I would like to express thanks to Ian, who has helped all organisations with set-up of chairs and tables, and has kept our halls tidy and clean throughout the year.

Any queries or requests regarding hall booking - please don't hesitate to contact me.

Ann Williams, Hall Convenor
annwilliams1bt@sky.com



Sunday School and Bible Class resumed on 9th September. This year we will be using the alphabet to guide us through stories from the Bible; for example, the letter A will be the story of Adam and Eve, while B will take us to the story of Bartimaeus, C to the Roman Centurion - and so on. Our carol service, therefore, appropriately takes us to J and, of course, Jesus.

Our GIFT DAY service will be on 9th December, with our CAROL SERVICE on 23rd December. We will then have a break for two weeks, resuming on 13th January 2019.

The number of children attending Sunday School has been small - but very enthusiastic - and we have a lot of fun together, learning from Bible stories, doing craft activities and even baking; and best of all, eating what has been made!

We will be delighted to welcome children from the age of 3 years to Sunday School, and those from year 8 upwards to Bible Class.

We want to thank the members of the congregation for their support and interest, and seek your prayers as we enter into another year.

Margaret McCreedy, Superintendent 028 9146 4361

Many of us need to be more like the little girl whom the farmer found lost in his meadow. The farmer said to her, "Don't cry; I'll take you home."

The child snuggled up to him, and with a smile, said, "I knew you would; I was waiting for you." "

Waiting for me?" said the man. "What made you think I was coming?"

"I was praying you would," she said.

"Praying? When I first heard you, you were saying A - B - C - D - E - F - G. What was that for?"

She looked up again and said, "I'm just a little girl. I was praying all the letters of the alphabet and letting God put them together the way he wanted to. He knows I was lost, and he knows how to put words together better than I do."

From Homiletics



MY VOICE ACTING EXPERIENCE ON PABLO

by Summer McWhinney

In July, Mum told me about a CBeebies show who were looking for voice actors. We emailed them and they asked me to audition. I was super excited! The next morning, I recorded my audition. I had to read from a script. I had to record it a lot because it needed to be perfect. I got a bit frustrated, but I knew if I got a part, it'd all be worth it. After a lot of recordings, we finally had the perfect audition and it was sent in.

We didn't get word back for a few days, and I was disappointed, thinking I didn't get the part. Everyone reassured me that this part was made for me and to hold on. I've wanted to do voice acting for a long time, but never got the opportunity. Then, four days later, I was having my dinner and Mum called me through. Mum said very excitedly, "The lady emailed me back and they loved your recording - you got the part!" I was shocked to hear that I actually got a voice acting job! I was really excited and happy that I could finally be on a cartoon.

The CBeebies people sent me a script for my part, for me to rehearse. I laughed a little bit at my part but I was grateful that I got one. I practised by myself, reading over my script. Finally the day came, and we went to Hollywood to record it. I had to go up the stairs very quietly because other people were recording in the building. I took a picture that I drew of the show *Pablo*, and we surprised them with the drawing.

In the sound booth, I was really nervous - what if I wasn't good enough? But I still did it. A lady spoke through a microphone and I could hear her in my headphones. I struggled on the part where I had to pretend to cry. Mum heard everyone chuckle as I found it difficult.



Afterwards, I showed the recording team my drawings (mostly my favourite cartoons) and the producer said that his friend worked on the show I was drawing (*OK KO Let's Be Heroes*). Everyone commented on my drawings and that they liked them, someone even said, "That's better than the artists here." Before I left, I was invited to go into the production room to meet the artists and the storyboard artist. I showed the artists my drawings, and I got to see theirs. Everyone was so nice to me. I was told that when this batch of episodes is finished, they will want me back in the autumn time to do more recording. Mum and I went shopping afterwards and I got a Pokemon plushy for my hard work. All in all, it was an amazing day and I can't wait to be able to voice act in the future. My episode of *Pablo* has not been aired yet. It is in Season 2 and I will let you all know when I find out the date.



HOLIDAY BIBLE CLUB

31 July to 3 September

Our church halls were buzzing all week, when about thirty primary school-aged children from our church family and the local community filled the halls with their singing, shouting and laughter, as they joined in our **Teambuilders** Holiday Bible Club.

Teambuilders teaches us how everyone can be part of Jesus's team. So through the week, we explored a number of Bible passages and characters.

First, we learnt from Paul's letter to the Corinthians that every member of the team is special and has a vital part to play, just as each part of the body has an essential role. Then we heard how Joseph was a dreamer and a big-head - which made him unpopular with his brothers; but God was able to use Joseph's talents to help others and he became a great team player and leader. Moses was another great leader, but he had to learn how to be a team player. We discovered how Jethro had to tell Moses he could not do everything by himself. He needed a whole team of trusted helpers to enable him to lead the Israelites. On the final day, we learnt about Jesus's team. Jesus chose twelve special friends to be on his team, to share and teach others about God's love. We also learnt that we, too, can be members of Jesus's team by reading our training manual, the Bible, listening to and following our coach, Jesus. Then we can be great teambuilders for Christ's Kingdom.

Every day, we all gathered together to hear the stories from the Bible, sing some highly energetic action songs and learn a memory verse. We divided into three teams for our craft activities and games, to allow children to work together with their own age group.



Our youngest team was called the 'Little Stars'. They coloured posters, made top hats to eat and decorated unique baseball caps to wear. They played lots of games together and took on our obstacle course around the car park with boundless energy.



The 'A Team' had the smallest numbers but were full of enthusiasm! They made enough delicious biscuits to share with everyone. They designed and built boats and tested them out in the deep waters of the paddling pool; all stayed afloat - at least for a little while!

'The Champs', our oldest group, were full of fun and energy! They enjoyed quizzes and went on a treasure hunt around the village. They made and modelled their own designer tee shirts, as well as showing amazing creativity and teamwork building junk art models.



We finished the week with our annual family barbecue. Some parents and grandparents completed an obstacle course, then everyone headed off to find the answers to our treasure hunt, before enjoying lots of food together. It was a fabulous evening to end a brilliant week.

Teambuilders could not happen without the commitment of the whole team. So a huge thank you to everyone involved - from those who planned, led and taught, to those who prepared food or swept the floors! To the children who attended, and the adults who brought them each day, and for the prayerful support of the congregation - thank you!

Every part of the team is vital and valued, and as a result we had a very successful teambuilding Holiday Bible Club.

Fiona McCreedy, Audrey Thomas and Sharon Goldie



Presbyterian Women

As we start a new church year, we in the PW are looking forward to our varied programme. We meet on the second and fourth Mondays of the month at 8pm in the Archie Agnew Hall, and invite anyone who is interested to join us. The programme until Christmas is below.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 24th September | Lady Sylvia Hermon |
| 8th October | Rachel Sloan:
<i>From Belfast to Brazil</i> |
| 22nd October | Hospitality Night: hosting local clubs for fellowship and supper, with entertainment by local soprano, Michelle Baird |
| 12th November | Stanley and Hazel Megahey:
<i>Knysna Church</i> |
| 26th November | Valentine Hodges:
<i>Bee-keeping at Ash Cottage</i> |
| 10th December | Christmas Party |

Remember, you do not have to be a member – if you care to join us for a particular speaker, you will be made very welcome.

In addition to our meetings, we are pleased to announce that we are having a

**Christmas Coffee Morning
on Saturday 24th November
from 10.30 – 12 noon**

Jennifer Boyd (Secretary)
02891 465760
jenniferboyd@mail.com



REFURBISHMENT of No. 25 MAIN STREET

Lowry Manson

Introduction and Background

As I start to write this article at the beginning of August 2018, four months of hard work have just finished and the refurbishment of our house at 25 Main Street, Groomsport is complete.

However, as with all successful projects, careful pre-planning is absolutely essential and accordingly, I began to write a paper on the proposed refurbishment of 25 Main Street during the 2017 Christmas holidays. This paper consisted of thirteen pages and included a General Description of the proposed refurbishment, together with Specific Requirements and Specifications, a Programme for the Works, along with sketches of the existing and suggested new kitchen and bathroom layouts, a sketch of the renovation of the outbuilding, and photographs relevant to all these areas.

This paper was finished in early January 2018 and it was then circulated to the members of the Sub-Committee, who had been nominated by the Congregational Committee. The paper formed the basis of our subsequent meetings, and it was then revised slightly at the end of January to reflect the Sub-Committee's decisions.

Main Contractor v Self-Management

One of the very important decisions the Sub-Committee took in early January was that, rather than appoint a Main Contractor, who would then be responsible for managing all the various sub-contractors, we decided to manage the contract ourselves. It was agreed that I would act as the overall 'Contract Manager' and that Ian McDonald would be appointed as the 'Clerk of Works'.

Subsequently, we also decided to strengthen the Sub-Committee - which originally comprised just four members of the Property Committee, viz Alastair McQuoid, David Purce, Richard McCreedy and myself - by adding Ian McDonald, Elaine Nixon-Shepherd and Ann Williams. Elaine and Ann approached me to offer their support in relation to the soft furnishings and other important items, and with Ian going to act as Clerk of Works, it was important that he also should be involved from the early stages.

Extent of the Refurbishment Work

Following meetings, when the 'General Specification' contained in my paper was fully discussed, the extent of the refurbishment was agreed. I then listed all the areas of work involved and identified various contractors, who would be asked to submit tenders for their particular specialist area of work.



It was considered extremely important to ensure that we could demonstrate that we were obtaining tenders and prices which were competitive and good value, and so for most items, we sought at least two alternative costs. However, for such things as the new kitchen and bathroom, we approached four contractors for both areas of work.

And so we obtained more than thirty different quotations, estimates and costings; then we reduced to nineteen "Costing Allowances", after we had examined each item in detail, when we were able to omit some quotes, etc, which perhaps did not meet the criteria, or were obviously out of line with other costings.

Then on Wednesday 14th March 2018, I presented all the 'Costing Allowances' to the Congregational Committee, and approval was given to proceed with the refurbishment contract, based on an overall cost of £35,000.00.

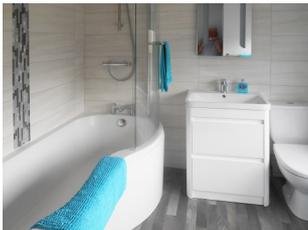
Just let me add that on that evening, I was able to demonstrate that very little money has been spent on No. 25 since we were gifted this property in 1986, and that if we had not been going ahead with the overall refurbishment, some £11,500.00 would be required for normal maintenance, repairs, re-wiring, re-decoration, replacing the heating system, and significant repairs to the outbuilding. New floor coverings, new furniture, new blinds and curtains were also required, at an additional cost of nearly £6,000.00.

The Refurbishment Contract

The Refurbishment Contract started immediately after Easter 2018, in the first week of April and the work continued almost constantly until the end of July – a period of four months. We were involved with twelve different contractors and suppliers, and at times the work was very intense, with so many different parties involved.

I will now list the various items of work which were included in the Refurbishment Contract:

A new kitchen has been installed, along with new wall and floor tiling. A new slim-line dishwasher, fridge and gas hob have been provided in the kitchen.



A new bathroom has been added, with a P-shaped bath and shower, together with vanity unit and WC.

The floor of the bathroom had to be strengthened due to serious top-notching of the existing timber floor joists and this also involved a new ceiling in the kitchen below.

A new fireplace and integral electric fire have been installed.

New gas heating has been provided.

The house and outbuilding were totally re-wired to meet latest standards and regulations and new LED lighting was provided in some rooms.

The house was stripped of all the old wall and ceiling paper and was totally repainted. The outside of the house was also repainted.

New light oak doors have been fitted internally.

The outbuilding has been totally revamped, with a new roof and supporting joists, etc, and new windows and doors have been provided. This acts as the utility room, with the washing machine, tumble dryer and freezer located here.



A new galvanised Circular Hollow Section support has been added to the canopy, as the existing CHS was badly rusted and had deteriorated significantly.

New planters have been provided in the front garden area, and the bed to the left of the entrance path has been planted out with shrubs.

The rear upper garden has been totally changed, with all the old overgrown shrubs and grass being removed; this is now covered in black polythene and pink pebbles; new fencing has also been provided, where appropriate.

The house has been re-carpeted throughout, with floor tiling in the kitchen and dinette, and vinyl in the bathroom and outbuilding.

Some of the existing furniture was able to be re-used, but a reasonable amount of new furniture was required.



New vertical and roller blinds, along with new curtains and poles, were also provided.

Some of the existing uPVC windows and doors needed attention.

Numerous miscellaneous items were also required, from soft furnishings to dinner sets, ironing boards to towels, kettles, toasters, microwave oven, etc.

Completion of the Refurbishment

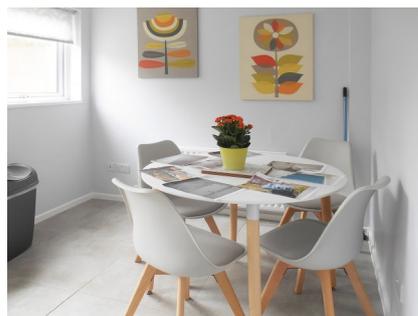
The refurbishment work was completed at the end of July 2018 and the house was open for viewing by members of the congregation on Friday 3rd and Saturday 4th August.

Thankfully, all those who took the opportunity to visit 25 Main Street were very impressed with the work which had been undertaken and we really appreciate the very positive sentiments expressed.

In finishing, I would like to pay a sincere tribute to the extended Sub-Committee, but it would be totally remiss of me if I didn't especially thank Elaine, Ann and Ian for their invaluable input into the successful completion of this project.

Thanks also to Mandy, our Hon Treasurer, who processed over thirty invoices and ensured that all our contractors and suppliers were paid promptly.

Finally, as Contract Manager, I promised the Congregational Committee that I would keep a tight control of all expenditure and it therefore gives me great pleasure to report that, not only did we finish this project on time, but we were also well within the approved budget.



We recently received this letter of acknowledgement for our ongoing collection of used stamps in aid of The Leprosy Mission NI:

LEPROSY DEFEATED LIVES TRANSFORMED



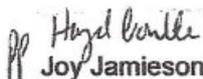
20/03/2018

Thank you for your donation of used stamps to The Leprosy Mission NI. We very much appreciate the time and effort that goes into making such donations. Please pass on our thanks to the various people who contributed to the donation. Every year, we are able to sell quantities of used stamps to local collectors and dealers. In 2017 we were able to raise £5317.00 in this way, to benefit the work and witness of The Leprosy Mission. We wouldn't have been able to achieve this without the help of churches, organisations, and individuals such as yourselves. This money really does make a difference to the lives of those affected by leprosy in India, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Nepal and Tanzania, where TLMNI supporters sponsor projects.

The Leprosy Mission is an international medical charity, working in over 30 countries. 2,300 field staff are caring for the needs of some 200,000 people affected by leprosy in TLM's own hospitals and programmes, or in partnership with churches, voluntary agencies, governments and international organisations.

Thank you for helping to bring healing and hope!

With every blessing,


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Office & Finance Manager

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I see Jesus in every human being. I say to myself, this is hungry Jesus, I must feed him. This is sick Jesus. This one has leprosy or gangrene; I must wash him and tend to him. I serve because I love Jesus.

Mother Teresa

COMMUNITY DAY, SATURDAY 18TH AUGUST

by Amanda McWhinney

On 18th August 2018, Groomsport Presbyterian Church held a Community Day. A group of very enthusiastic volunteers got together and put their all into making it happen.

Weeks of planning had gone into the Community Day project. It was organised by a lively team of enthusiastic volunteers, all with their own skills which they utilised in the best way possible.

The day itself kicked off with a busy coffee morning, where - as usual - delicious traybakes and scones were on offer. When the afternoon came, the team members worried whether anyone would show up. Those concerns were short-lived, as it was soon apparent it would be a very busy day indeed.

Before the event was officially opened, people began to drift in and work started early. As the hours wore on, the Walter Nelson Halls were alive with hundreds of visitors, all with one purpose in mind - and that was having fun. There were bouncy castles, tables with games and drawing books for the younger visitors; also face painting, candy floss, traybakes; we even had a visit from a number of motorcycle enthusiasts. Rev Dr David Irwin took a group of interested people on a walking history tour around the village and the teenagers got to make and enjoy their own pizza. The church was open to the public, with Rev Paul Dalzell in attendance to meet visitors. By the end of the event, it was announced that the Community Day was a roaring success.



In the evening, the Coffee Bar was opened up for members of the congregation to come down to listen to the music and watch the fireworks. An evening of chat, tea and more traybakes was enjoyed by those who were able to fight through the traffic to visit. At the gate of the halls, the Events Team set up a tea and coffee tent, selling refreshments, popcorn and candyfloss to the public on what turned out to be a busy evening for them. Although this had been an outreach project for the church, £370 was raised to help toward the costs of this wonderful day.

Everyone went home tired, but fulfilled, as they saw how the church family pulled together to make it a successful occasion.



BRING ME SUNSHINE...!

In October, 2013, I was in my last month in the parish before retirement. Retirement can be a stressful time for everyone, but especially for ministers. Hilary and I were in the middle of emotional farewells, as we prepared to leave the friends whom we had got to know so well over the past twenty-seven years. We were experiencing not only the strains of moving house, but of down-sizing, as we emptied our five-bedroom manse in order to fit our much reduced belongings into the little cottage in Helen's Bay. Then there were the poignant final curtain-calls: our last Harvest Thanksgiving, our last Holy Communion, our last church lunch and then, fighting back the tears, the last Sunday service.

As we experienced all these floods of emotion, we read somewhere about what is called 'a silver gap year.' Apparently, people beginning retirement sometimes take a year out in order to prepare mentally for the very different life that awaits them. We knew that this was exactly what we needed and that travel would be part of it. Hilary was in the last stages of booking a house on Naxos, our favourite Greek island, when out of the blue, we were offered the God-given opportunity of serving a small Church of Scotland congregation on the Costa del Sol. That was the beginning of a joyful relationship and we are now preparing for our fifth visit.

The church is in Fuengirola. Rather than have a full-time minister, they arrange for ministers to come out for short periods of service. The manse-apartment is near the market place and just one block away from the beach. The congregation has no church building, but they are warmly welcomed at the Jesuit community centre near the town square. It has the delightful name of *Lux Mundi*, meaning 'Light of the World'. The Jesuits allow the Scots to fly the Scottish flag outside the main door to attract people to the service. After worship in the bright and airy sanctuary, the congregation must leave promptly because another congregation is coming in for Mass in English. So we stroll down two blocks to the promenade and have coffee together in a café with a view out over the Mediterranean.



View from the manse

Among the activities of the congregation are a lunch in a local restaurant twice a year to encourage fellowship, and a Christmas coach trip to Gibraltar to attend the carol service in the Church of Scotland there - and to grab some

pre-Christmas bargains in Morrison's supermarket! As service to the community, Church of Scotland members are involved in the programme, centred in Lux Mundi, of providing free lunches for the homeless. Hilary and I host a morning Bible study group in the manse-apartment. Hilary's freshly made pancakes and coffee are an excellent ice-breaker.

The congregation is full of people with interesting stories to tell. At the beginning, fifty years ago, there were young families who had settled in Spain to work. Now most are retired folk, but very much 'active retired.' Some are permanent residents on the Costa, but even they flee back to Scotland in the scorching summer months. Some have two homes, in Britain and Spain, and alternate between the two. Of course there are also holiday-makers for whom worshipping with the ex-pats in Lux Mundi is an essential part of their vacation.



Some members of the congregation

I was thrilled when I recognised in the congregation a couple whom I had known at Queen's University in the 1960s and had not seen since. People also arrive for morning service from such exotic locations as Carrickfergus and Newtownards!

Fuengirola has a superb beach, but the town itself is rather over-developed, with too many high-rise hotels and apartment blocks. However, a short trip inland brings a tourist to some of the ancient delights of Andalusia. On occasions, we have escaped for short breaks to the historic cities of Granada, Seville, Cordoba and Cadiz. Moreover, a short trip into the hills takes one to beautifully quaint traditional Spanish villages.

Have you any plans to visit the Costa del Sol in October or November? Groomsport members seeking the sun will be warmly welcomed!

Denis Campbell.

*My name will be great among the nations,
from where the sun rises to where it sets.
In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to me,
because my name will be great among the nations,'
says the Lord Almighty.*

Malachi 1:11

A barbecue, held after the morning service on Sunday 2 September, was an opportunity for newly arrived Princeton Intern, Ryan Pearce, to meet some members informally over burgers and hot dogs!



A presentation was made to Rev Denis Campbell, in acknowledgement of his valuable contribution to the life of the congregation over the past year. Best wishes to Denis and Hilary, as they prepare for their time in a church in Spain.



COFFEE MORNINGS 2018



The summer coffee mornings have come to an end and they have been exceptionally well attended – the fellowship and ‘craic’ were super!

On the thirteen Saturdays, the magnificent total of £2,038.50 was raised – breaking all records!

A great big ‘thank you’ to all the ladies who hosted each week, tempting us with all sorts of delicious scones and tray bakes, and also to Margaret Campbell, who again made a gift of Fairtrade teabags and coffee.

Rhoda Martin

How Time Flies!

It is hard to believe I completed my first year as Caretaker on 31st August.

I would like to thank everyone for their support and encouragement throughout the year in helping with the smooth running of the organisations. I look forward to serving you for many years as I do not just see this as a job, but my way of doing a little part of God’s work in keeping His house clean and tidy and ready for worship.

Thank you all again.
Yours in Christ,
Ian McDonald



100 YEARS YOUNG!

Mrs Margaret Alexander - known as Margie - celebrated her 100th birthday on 2nd April this year. Rev. Paul Dalzell and his wife, Catherine, visited and on behalf of the congregation, gave her a gift of an Oriental Lily plant. Catherine and Paul found it a great privilege and blessing to spend time with Margie in her home on this very happy occasion.



Born in Belfast in 1918, a few months before the end of the First World War, Margie lived with her parents and sisters in Cyprus Avenue, before moving with her parents to Bangor West. She helped look after her father, who had Parkinson's disease, and cared for her mother when she, too, was unwell.

Having volunteered at Garnerville for a time, Margie was told by a teacher there that staff were being recruited for a new nursery school to be set up at Jennymount Mill, for the children of the workers. Margie, who loved children, went along for an interview one Friday; to her surprise, she was asked if she could start the very next Monday, the day the school opened! She worked there for seven years, and recalls that the children attended daily from 8.00am – 6.00pm, at a cost of 2s 6d per week. This was during the days when the once-powerful Ulster linen industry was falling into decline, and shortly after Margie left Jennymount, both mill and school were closed down.

Margie met her husband, Billy, in Bangor, and they married in 1964. They joined Groomsport Presbyterian in the early 1990s and Margie is very appreciative of the kindness of those representatives of the congregation who visit her.

She greatly values her caring family and friends, and says that she is fortunate to have enjoyed generally good health. She is glad to be able to look back over a long life filled with happy memories - of her 'wonderful' parents; her close bond with her sisters; a loving marriage; and great holidays, sometimes shared with good friends. Margie has also always loved being in her home, which she made a truly welcoming place; as she continues to live there, she believes that all of these factors are reasons why, at the remarkable age of 100, she remains so genuinely content.



THE TUESDAY CLUB GROOMSPORT

The Tuesday Club was formed in October 2017, for people who live alone, to try and overcome the problems of loneliness in the community. During my early time as volunteer with Arthritis care (still doing it), I came across severe loneliness amongst people – especially the elderly – and decided to try and do something about it. The club started under the title, ‘Groomsport Hobbies and Games Club’ – but that was too complicated a name, so we changed it to The Tuesday Club. We met in Groomsport Boathouse on October 3rd, with a general get-together, and welcomed fourteen people who came along. The following month, Alan Chambers, MLA, came to speak to us, and we had sixteen attending. By December, when we had our Christmas meeting, we had games and fun for eighteen.

As the months went by, we had the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service, the Commissioner for Older People, and the RSPB talking to us. We then were invited to use the Walter Nelson halls for our meetings, and in May we had twenty-six members. People do not stop being lonely during the holiday months, so we decided to keep going all year round and in June, Alan Pinkerton came to give us a very interesting talk on Scott of the Antarctic – as his grandfather had been involved in the expedition; he brought along some artefacts which had belonged to his grandparents, including a letter from the said Robert Falcon Scott.

July saw us sampling the delights of chutneys and jams, made by William Clendinning of Comber, and in August we just had a chat day, which was thoroughly enjoyed by the (now) thirty-four members.

We have had an outing to Bangor Walled Garden, with tea in the Heritage Centre, and a trip to Stormont with lunch in the Members’ Dining Room.

Ards and North Down Council awarded us a start-up grant to help with running costs, and we are holding a concert by the Police Choir of Northern Ireland, along with guest artistes, in Groomsport Presbyterian Church on Friday 19th October at 7.30 p.m. to help fill our coffers, after donations to the NI Air Ambulance and the two local churches – because we are a community, non-denominational group, and want to help the community in any way we can. We intend to hold one or two fundraisers each year and will choose a different local charity to support.

It is hard to believe that we will be celebrating our first anniversary soon. The year has passed so quickly. We intend to invite other groups, eg the Evergreens and Probus, to our celebrations, providing refreshments and fun for them. Sometimes the entertainment is quite costly, but with our fundraisers and grants we should manage these costs.

Our meetings start at 2 pm and all we ask is £2 from each member to help defray costs. We provide tea and tray bakes at every meeting.

We have already started to arrange next year's programme and look forward to welcoming many more members.

The programme for the rest of this year is:

October 9th Our first anniversary with **The Lilters and Sharon Dixon**

October 19th Concert with the **Police Choir of NI and guests**
(Groomsport Presbyterian Church, 7.30 pm)

November 6th *The Farming Year* with Howard McCutcheon

December 4th Christmas fun with the **Bangor Buoys**

Anyone who might be interested is most welcome to come along to see what we are about!



A new venture for the Tuesday Club is the showing of popular films.

The programme for October - March is below. There is no charge – voluntary donations only, to cover costs.

All sessions start at **2.00 pm** in the **Archie Agnew Hall**

23 OCTOBER	MRS MINIVER Greer Garson
27 NOVEMBER	GOODNIGHT, MR TOM John Thaw
18 DECEMBER	IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE James Stewart
22 JANUARY	MRS BROWN Judy Dench
19 FEBRUARY	THE QUEEN Helen Mirren
26 MARCH	THE SOUND OF MUSIC Julie Andrews

Mary Cargill

91474098 / 07484883486 marycargill123@btinternet.com
39A, Main Street, Groomsport, BT19 6JR

THE GIRL IN THE PINK FROCK

by Brian McClelland

After the story about Homelands, my ancestral home in the townland of Cotton (Cottown) near Donaghadee, in last year's Spring issue of *Eagle Wing*, I received an unexpected telephone call. It was from a member of the McClelland family who had documentation relating to Homelands which, as I related in the story, had passed from my side of the family to another, in unfortunate circumstances.

We met up for coffee and exchanged information regarding our respective family histories. For a genealogy buff like me, it was an extremely interesting session and I left with a bundle of documents, letters and photographs to peruse at my leisure.

Two items in particular grabbed my attention: one was a yellowing newspaper cutting from 1937. It related to a William McClelland. I should explain at this juncture that William's father, James Lyons McClelland, took legal possession of Homelands from his cousin and my great grandfather, Robert, back in 1901. By 1937, William had succeeded his father as the owner of Homelands. The newspaper extract is from the *Newtownards Chronicle*, dated 30th October, 1937 and, because of its far-reaching consequences, I am quoting it verbatim:

COTTOWN FARMER INJURED

Kicked on jaw by horse

Mr William McClelland, of Cottown, a well-known North Down farmer, was the victim of a serious accident on Tuesday evening.

Accompanied by his brother, Mr Henry McClelland, he was driving three young horses from Gransha to Portavo. Mr William

McClelland was leading the front horse and Mr Henry McClelland was driving behind when on the Ballycrochan Road, between the railway bridge and the Six Road Ends, they met a little girl in a pink frock.

The leading horse shied and lashed out with its hind legs, striking

Mr William McClelland on the jaw, rendering him unconscious, and inflicting serious injuries. Mr William Gribbon, of Bangor, who was passing, stopped his van, and he and Mr Henry McClelland got the injured man into the van and took him to Bangor Hospital.

This understated report, in all its starkness, succinctly captures the horror of the moment without the need to spell out the obvious – the spooked horse snorting fire, the bloody scene, the confusion and the frightened little girl. Who was this innocent child in the pink frock? Did she live nearby? Was she on her own or was her mother nearby? Is she still alive? All we know for sure is that she is caught up in an unfolding drama which will undoubtedly remain with her for the rest of her life.

Furthermore, did William recover fully from his horrific injuries? The second item, a letter dated 3rd November, 1949 – eleven years later – from the headmaster of Regent House School, Newtownards, to Mr W. McClelland, sheds some light on this particular question.

Dear Mr McClelland,

I hope you will pardon the liberty I am taking of writing to you about Lex leaving this school. His sister had mentioned the fact in the office yesterday so naturally I sent for Lex this morning to find why he was leaving.

He tells me that you wish him to leave at once to take up farming with you. He did not say much but certainly I got the impression that he would be very disappointed if he was not allowed to sit for his Junior Certificate before leaving. I fully realise the difficulties you may be in at home but I would ask you to re-consider the matter as I feel Lex deserves a chance to complete his Junior Course especially after his hard work and good progress up to now. For the sake of 7 or 8 months I think he might be given this chance and there is always the possibility that this Certificate might be of use to him, perhaps not in the immediate future, but later on.

He has been a good pupil in every way and I would certainly like to see him finish his Course and gain the reward of a Certificate which he well deserves.

Yours sincerely,

J. Macdonald

This is a sad little letter, I'm sure you'll agree. It's a sob story without the sobs, however, for these are people of stoic stock, resilient and adaptable. By this time, William has recovered to some extent from his terrible injury, but obviously feels he needs his only son, Lex (Alexander), to help him full time on the farm. Lex is about 14 or 15 years of age at this period of his life and, rather unfortunately, his education is bound to suffer if he is removed from Regent House, where he appears to be a model pupil. The harsh reality of the situation is clear to everyone involved – Lex is required to support his father on the farm which, eventually, he will inherit.

Perhaps an educated farmer back in the forties was a bit of a luxury when there was much farm work to be done. The main crops were potatoes, corn/oats and flax. The harvesting of the crops was a labour-intensive task and neighbours helped each other, working from

dawn to dusk, while weather permitted. When all was safely gathered in, packed Services of Thanksgiving were held in Ballygrainey Presbyterian Church.

The custom was (and likely still is) that the eldest male would come into possession of the farm upon his marriage. However, in this instance William, though not the eldest male, became the owner of Homelands. William's parents and siblings subsequently moved to Rock House, at Herdstown on the Newtownards to Donaghadee Road. Upon the death of Sandy (Alexander) McClelland, William's youngest sibling, in 1976, Rock House was sold.

William, himself, had died in 1975, leaving Homelands to Lex, who, along with his sister, Joyce, had remained unmarried. Unlike her brother, Joyce was able to continue her education and eventually taught history for many years at Glenlola. Perhaps some members of the congregation were taught by Joyce. I do know that one or two members actually taught with her at Glenlola. I call them the "Glenlola Mafia" - but don't dare tell them!

I have a curious little sequel to my tale, make of it what you will. One Saturday last year, in early autumn, Wilma and I were out for a walk along the Cotton's laneways, enjoying the fresh air and birdsong. It was a bright, warm day and we were actually talking at the time about Homelands and William McClelland's tragic accident all those years ago. As we were about to round the last bend, before coming into view of Cotton Village, I caught a glimpse of pink through the hedgerow.



It was a young girl in a pink frock. She was with her mother as it turned out, and a younger sister in a buggy. They were feeding clumps of grass to some horses by the field gate. For a fleeting moment I saw ghosts of yesterday – the startled horses and the girl in pink. Only now, rather than mayhem, it was a tranquil scene – yet rather unnerving for all that. We chatted and found that the family was called... yes, you've guessed it, "McClelland"! Nothing too strange there, I suppose, as the Cotton townland has remained a McClelland stronghold since the seventeenth century. Yet, taken in its entirety, I found the nature of the incident a remarkable coincidence and more than a little eerie. There again, these things seem to happen to me from time to time.

As a matter of interest, I should conclude by mentioning that the horses in the field that day were magnificent Clydesdales. Like all heavy duty workhorses, they are now a somewhat endangered equine species. I met a local man, a few years ago, who told me that he bred them for the Scandinavian market where, in an era of mechanised farming, they are highly prized.

*Life can only be understood backwards;
but it must be lived forwards.*

Søren Kierkegaard

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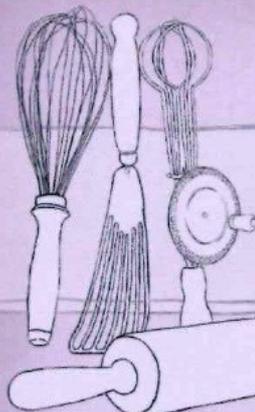


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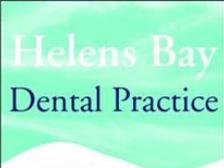
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TRIP TO UGANDA

Matthew Steele

During the summer months, I travelled to Uganda with Bangor Grammar School. We were partnered with the charity Abaana, which is a local Christian charity. Their goal is to provide a better future for deprived children across Uganda.



My journey began on 30th June, when 40 team members left from Bangor and travelled to Dublin airport. From there we took an 8-hour flight to the city of Addis Ababa in Ethiopia, and then a connecting flight on to Kampala in Uganda. We weren't travelling light as we were all asked to bring out an extra suitcase, filled with supplies such as school shoes, school bags and clothes, which Abaana could carefully distribute to the children.

When we arrived in Entebbe airport, we travelled by bus to the Abaana guest house. This would be our home and base of operations for the next week.

Our first week consisted mostly of two Abaana programmes, called "Street Reach" and "New Life Homes". In the morning, we would head to Street Reach. It provided a safe haven for street children during the day. Here, they could have the opportunity to have a consultation with a social worker, get medical treatment from a doctor, play games, interact with the team and at the end be provided with a meal (probably the only one for that day). A lot of the children even took the opportunity to simply sleep here, as it was a lot safer than sleeping on the streets.



After Street Reach in the mornings, we then headed over to New Life Homes for the afternoon. New Life Homes is essentially a boarding school made up of children brought in from Street Reach - who Abaana believe have a chance of integrating successfully back into society. Each afternoon, we would spend time talking to the children and hearing their stories. We also took time to improve the site they lived on by painting the walls and planting trees and shrubbery to make the place look better.

After a week in Kampala, we moved up north to a place called Coo Rom, where we would be camping at the local school. This is the school that Bangor Grammar raised a total of £70,000 for, and which was built back in 2015. Over the course of the week in Coo Rom, we spent time teaching the children and helped to organise different arts and crafts activities to do. Also, while we were there, we got the opportunity to lay the foundations for a new kitchen which would be of great benefit to the people at the school.



I would say, during this part of the trip, we were most out of our comfort zone, as there were no flushing toilets, no comfy beds, and limited water supply. Despite

these hardships, we made it through the week. I only had to endure it for a week, but this is the reality for the children here every day of their lives.

This trip was a real eye-opener for me and one that would reinforce my faith. It helped me to understand that, even in some of the worst situations in the world, God is working through charities like Abaana to make it a better and safer place.

I would like to say a big thank you to my church for your support and prayers throughout my Uganda trip.



KILTONGA CHRISTIAN CENTRE

Established in 2009, Kiltonga Christian Centre aims "to reach out to the heart of our community and share God's love with the people of the Ards Peninsula and beyond, both practically and spiritually." The focus is on helping local people - regardless of race or religion - who lack the immediate resources to provide for themselves, and on showing them, when they are at their lowest, that someone really cares. The Centre works in partnership with Storehouse North Down and receives referrals from Social Services, Women's Aid, the Simon Community, local agencies and churches, dealing with all such requests in absolute confidentiality.

We in this congregation have had a long association with Storehouse North Down and are familiar with the process of donating, sorting and distributing food parcels. In addition, Kiltonga Christian Centre provides free furniture, household goods, baby boxes and clothing. Furniture can be collected at a time arranged - chairs and sofas must comply with current fire retardant regulations.

For more information, to make a donation, or request assistance, telephone on **07748235009**, Monday to Friday, 9.00 - 4.00

Email: info@kiltongacc.co.uk

Facebook: **Kiltonga Christian Centre**



THE HOPE CHRISTIAN TRUST... GAZA

Thanks to your generous response at our coffee morning in May last, I was able to send a cheque for £1000 to Rev. John Angle for use in the Lighthouse School, Gaza. At that time, he was over in Gaza for around three weeks, giving encouragement and support to the 900-strong Christian community, and he subsequently sent me a full report on the situation.

During his time there, he experienced 14 hours of electricity cuts daily; water was contaminated, but drunk by many because of poverty; broken sewage systems - the Lighthouse School had sewage seeping through cracks in the playground as extraction pumps failed; people are living in tents or in the streets because their houses have been bombed and because of 50 per cent unemployment (and increasing), they cannot afford rented accommodation; those working for the Palestinian Authorities and many other organisations have not been paid for three months.

There is no reconciliation between the different parties and the people suffer. Add to this the sense of imprisonment, as people cannot get permission to visit in or out of Gaza. John himself got on the windward side of several tear gas canisters - as he says, not pleasant.

The world stands by lamenting, but nothing effective happens. As he says, one feels helpless when visiting Gaza, but there is always something that can be done at the individual level to support, encourage and bring blessing in the face of suffering, through going and giving to those in need. It can be done through knitting jumpers for children, through giving donations to the Anglican-led hospital, and through supporting classes and families in the school. Rev. John and Janet Angle will be returning there in October.

Thank you again. See overleaf for some further information.

Rosalind MacNeice



The text here reads:

play

Today I played outside by the tree near our home. It is not an olive tree. It is an orange tree. It is not ours. It is just near our building. Still, I pretend it is ours.

It was raining while I played, but under the branches it was not wet. When mother called me to come inside, I dropped my toy soldier on the ground.

Now it is night and I am afraid for him. I want him to be okay. At least the tree will keep him safe if the planes with the bombs come again tonight while we are all in bed. I think about one time that my mother came to my side when we heard the planes.

"Are you there, Saleem, dear?"

"Yes, mother, I am here."

"Let me hold your hand, Saleem."

"Don't cry, mother. Please don't cry. The planes will go away soon."

"OK, my son."

The following news has been received recently from Rev John Angle:

John Carlock, Director of the Lighthouse School in Gaza, could not get a visa to live and stay in Israel and move in and out of Gaza, so he has moved to Cyprus from where he can commute (short flight to Tel Aviv from Paphos with Ryanair, train to Ashdod and then taxi to Eretz and through the border). This is done on a three-month, renewable tourist visa. About three hours' travel time! He plans to visit every month or two for a couple of weeks to support the school.

Janet and I plan to visit the West Bank and ministries we are supporting as a Trust at the beginning of October, and also spend some time in Gaza.

Please pray into these situations and, if there is any way you can respond to the financial needs in Lighthouse School, it would be gratefully received, as things are not easy at the moment - particularly with many Evangelical Christians following the lead of Trump and the USA to isolate the Palestinian people, the withdrawal of funding for UNWRA (UN Relief & Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East), and the Palestinian Authority also squeezing Gaza for political reasons. This is added to the poor electricity and water supplies, shortage of food imports and few opportunities to leave Gaza, as well as problems with medical care and shortages. The followers of Jesus are caught up in all this and are suffering in a variety of ways as a result.

www.hopechristiantrust.org

From The Lighthouse School, marking fourteen years since its opening:

Fourteen years of God's goodness and faithfulness is the only reason we're still here and the only reason the Light continues to shine. Praise the Lord...in the midst of the darkness the true Light shines!

The mood is hardly celebratory in Gaza with the latest news concerning UNWRA and our government's decision to discontinue funding. "Irredeemably flawed" is how the State Department described this UN agency responsible for the education and medical needs of millions of Palestinian refugees. Over \$300 million dollars withheld will immediately affect schools, medical clinics and food distribution in the Gaza Strip. It will affect the most vulnerable in Palestinian society...the children. Two thirds of the population in Gaza are considered refugees and over half of the population is 16 years of age and under.

The Lighthouse School was started with the intention of helping the most needy and vulnerable in Gaza City's Zeitun neighborhood. Most of our students are refugees and come from very difficult circumstances. We reach a handful, 225 children and their families, and ease the burden somewhat on the Palestinian school system, already over-crowded and underfunded. Our budget is a tiny fraction of UNWRA's and yet we face the same challenges of funding. We begin the school year with financial needs and budget shortages that make month-to-month operations difficult. This in addition to the daily challenges of life in Gaza - a dwindling Christian community and political forces working against our efforts. I would call it "irredeemably flawed" as well if it weren't for the power of God, the hope that is available through Jesus Christ and a promise that rings as true today as it did when spoken, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Your prayers and support are appreciated and very much needed as we begin year 14.

To God be the glory!

GREETINGS FROM THE MILLER FAMILY

Hello from Missouri, where the summer heat has finally taken a break. Since our last note, life has turned quite exciting for our family - in both good and more challenging ways.



I am now firmly in my second year as Pastor at Trinity Presbyterian and I continue to enjoy the work I am called to here. While there is much I could say about our congregation, I will share one story that tells much about who we are. Over the past few months, we have become involved with a local mission project called Eden Village (after the Garden of Eden). This project is a response to the chronic challenges of homelessness in Springfield, where it is estimated that well over 200 people sleep on the streets every night. Eden Village, whose first resident moved in just over a week ago, will - before Christmas this year - provide permanent housing to 30 of the chronically homeless in Springfield. These are individual, free-standing homes built on the "tiny-house" model. At just under 400 square feet, they are small, but functional, fully furnished one-bedroom homes. Trinity has pledged \$30,000 over the next two years to fund the construction of "Trinity House" and to support its residents as they recover from years on the street. This is an ambitious project, one that we are thrilled to be part of. I could say so much more, but I will simply say that it is such a joy to be part of a community that seeks to live out the Gospel in such concrete ways.

On the family front, many of you will have heard of the health challenges of my father and Mary Erin's mother. While I wish I could say those have passed, unfortunately they are both still under medical care. My father continues to receive treatment for cardiac issues, which were compounded by a heart attack last weekend. He is now stable and home following another hospitalization and emergency surgery. It is hoped that he will undergo a procedure in late September to stabilize his heart rate and rhythm and reduce the reliance on medication.

Jeanne, Mary Erin's mother, was also in the hospital last weekend due to an infection. Thankfully, this has cleared and she is home again. After four rounds of chemotherapy, there is some good news in that her tumor has shrunk. Unfortunately, it still remains in an inoperable location, so it looks like another two months of chemo are in store, with the hope that the tumor will move to a location where the surgeons have some hope of removing it. So, for both of our parents, the situation involves a good deal of waiting - something some of us are better at than others.

David continues to be a source of great joy in our lives. At 2½, he is growing by leaps and bounds. He can now speak in two and three word sentences, letting us know what he wants ("More pears, please" and "Up, Daddy!" are favorites). He knows all his letters, can count from 1 to 19 consistently, and constantly surprises us with the new things he learns every day. A few weeks ago, he started going to pre-school (crèche) two days a week, where he is getting to spend more time with other kids his age, while giving Mary Erin the opportunity to work a few more days. While it is no surprise, he continues to love potatoes (like a good Ulster lad!), although during the local blueberry crop this summer, they might have temporarily moved into second place.



We continue to be deeply thankful for the time we shared with all of you in Groomsport, and the love you continue to show us through your prayers and your notes. It truly means the world. We miss you more than you can know.

Sending you all our very best,

Chris, Mary Erin, and David Miller
preachingpanda@gmail.com (Chris)

mebick@gmail.com (Mary Erin)

Greetings, Groomsport!

We hope this finds you all well. The Irmer family is doing great! Alison started her first day of fifth grade (P6?) after another fun summer. Alison continues to enjoy a variety of sports and activities. This summer, she attended the Philadelphia 76ers (our local NBA team) Basketball Camp, while I also helped to coach it. She also spent two weeks at a Presbyterian Youth Camp, where I was a camp chaplain for one of the weeks. This Fall, she is going to sign up for “AmeriKick,” which is a local martial arts class for her age. But music, art, and drama continue to be things that interest Ali as well.



Amelia also starts her first day of school, in that she has a new job! She finished three great years of being an office assistant in the Religious Ministries office at our local hospital and now becomes a Special Education Assistant for preschoolers. She is looking forward to a new challenge and a fresh opportunity to continue to impact the lives of those around her. Another exciting accomplishment for Amelia is that she recently completed her SCUBA certification! So, whenever the Irish Sea is warm enough, she'll be ready to explore it! One last exciting development is that Amelia is now officially recognized as a US citizen! For over a year now, with her residency card expired and with the current political US climate, we have felt uncomfortable leaving the country, unsure if Amelia would be let back in. Now, after loads of paperwork, we are free to travel internationally again. Does anyone know any places you'd recommend we visit?!

I continue to enjoy being the pastor of *Slackwood Presbyterian Church*. As I enter into my fourth year, I'm grateful to God for the people who are a part of our congregation and the neighborhood that surrounds us. We continue to reach out actively to our community through service projects, outdoor movie nights, and Summer Festivals. While we may not be growing in numbers yet, I do feel as if our congregation's faith continues to get deeper over time. One other notable item is that, this summer, I completed my first Olympic distance triathlon (1-mile swim, 27 mile bike, 6.2 mile run). It was quite the challenge, but I felt proud to have accomplished a personal goal and am grateful to be healthy!

Slackwood Pres is excited that Rev. Paul Dalzell and Catherine will be joining us as we celebrate 'Consecration Sunday' this Fall. It is a special time of the church year (the Sunday before Thanksgiving), where we express our gratitude for what God has done in the life of our church, and make new financial commitments, or pledges, towards our giving for 2019. We are thrilled to have Paul be our guest preacher after he finishes off his time at Princeton Seminary and to have both of them at our luncheon.

We miss you! We love you! And we look forward to seeing you when you come and visit us soon!

All the best,

Ryan, Amelia & Alison

(Intern 2014/15) rmirmer@gmail.com

As we have been preparing this issue, we have been very conscious of the effects of Hurricane Florence: our former Intern, **Rev Christa Brewer** - currently Associate Pastor in First Presbyterian Church, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, and usually a faithful *Eagle Wing* correspondent - contacted us to say that she would be unable to send an article this time, as she was having to evacuate in order to escape the worst effects of the storm.



Regular email updates assured us that Christa herself was safe, but there were obviously concerns about wind damage, power cuts, safety of property, and in particular, severe flooding. The slow advance of the 500-mile diameter 'monster' storm resulted in rainfall of a volume never before recorded.

On 15 September, Christa wrote that the eye of the hurricane was literally over her house, so she was naturally very concerned about what she would find when residents were eventually allowed to return home. Christa was able to go home shortly after this, and while there was some surface water around her area, her house is undamaged. This is not the case, however, for many in the Carolinas, and Christa has asked for our prayers for all affected by this catastrophic storm. We hope to have an update from her in our next issue.

Years ago, I worked at a summer Bible camp with my cousin Erik. As an evening staff meeting concluded, a sprinkle suddenly became a downpour. Counselors sprinted off toward cabins, while Erik and I, who didn't supervise youngsters, debated whether to wait out the storm.

We opted to run for it, but being visually impaired, I soon realized the sheets of rain, added to the dark, hindered my view. "I can't see!" I yelled through the wind to Erik. Immediately, he grabbed my hand, pulling me along. "It's okay!" he shouted back. "I can!"

The sensation of running blindly, yet feeling so secure, became a metaphor for me about what I can handle and accomplish through faith. When I let God grab my hand and guide me, even when I'm running through dark, stormy times, I experience peace. For though I cannot see what lies ahead, I know God can.

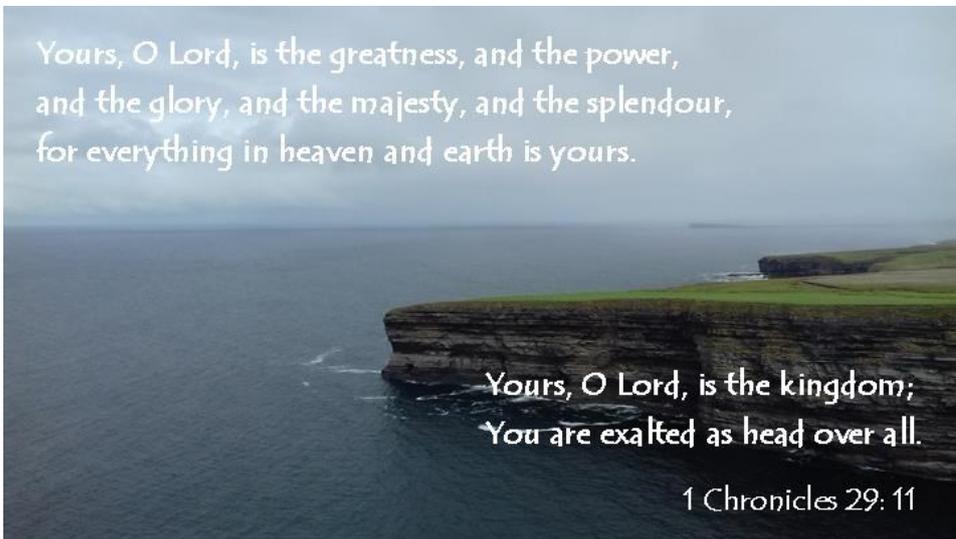
Heidi Mann

We are all angels with only one wing.
We can only fly while embracing each another.
Luciano de Crescenzo

We live in a society bloated with data, yet starved for wisdom.
We're connected 24/7, yet anxiety, fear, depression and
loneliness are at an all-time high.
We must course-correct.
E.K Lindsey

FORTHCOMING SERVICES

Sunday 7th October	11.30am	Communion Service
	6.00pm	Parish Church Harvest Thanksgiving
Sunday 14th October	11.30am	Harvest Service
	7.00pm	Harvest Service and Supper
Sunday 11th November	10.30am	Service of Remembrance
Sunday 25th November	11.30am	Uniformed Organisations' Day
Sunday 9th December	11.30am	Gift Day
	7.00pm	Advent Communion
Sunday 16th December	7.00pm	Carol Service



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday 26th September	1.00pm	Friendship Lunch
Saturday 6th October	10.30am	Leisure Group Coffee Morning
Friday 19th October	7.30pm	Concert, Police Choir NI
Wednesday 31st October	1.00pm	Friendship Lunch
Wednesday 21st November	1.00pm	Friendship Lunch
Saturday 24th November	10.30am	PW Coffee Morning
Saturday 24th November	7.30pm	Special Recognition Concert
Wednesday 12th December	1.00pm	Christmas Lunch