

Eagle Wing



The Magazine Of Groomsport Presbyterian Church

Autumn 2019

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.**”



C
O
N
T
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T
S

- Minister’s Musings 4
- Congregational Record 5
- News 6
- Editorial 7
- Word From The Clerk Of Session 8
- Letter From Our New Intern 9
- Farewell Ryan Pearce, Presbyterian Women 10
- Cruise On Lough Erne 11
- Making Disciples Of All Nations 12
- Sunday School & Bible Class 15
- Boys Brigade Flyer 16
- Youth Flyer 17
- Pyramid Rock 18
- Turnstones Community Drama Group, Tuesday Club 20
- Friendship Club Lunch, Friendship Lunch Dates 21
- Experience Of A Skydive 22
- Living With The Skydive 23
- The Tate Family, Lunch With Friends 24
- Badminton Club, Basic Hygiene Course 25
- Auction Of Promises 26
- Tales Of A Car Booter, Shoe Box Appeal, Spud Bears Update 27
- There Is Always Hope..... 28
- How Many Miles, Storehouse Update 29
- Update From Henry Coulter 30
- The Leprosy Mission, Heal Nepal Appeal 31
- Property Update 32
- The Nix Family Update 36
- Greetings From Missouri! 37
- Hello Groomsport! 38
- Weekly Activities In The Walter Nelson Hall Complex 39

I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen - not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else. *C S Lewis*

Minister's Musings

'Change and decay in all around I see!' These words perhaps sound a bit gloomy for an opening sentence and yet you probably know instantly the hymn from which I have taken them. Abide with me!

Abide with me has been sung in many and varied situations including being a key part of the traditional build-up to the FA Cup Final. This singing at the Cup Final has been the case since 1927. It is odd, when you think about it, that a crowd at a football match in all their post-modern diversity find singing this Christian hymn so compelling, a hymn that was written in the middle of the nineteenth century by an Anglican minister.

I thought of this hymn today because of the amount of change that is going on around us and the possibility of greater change in the not too distant future. As I write, Boris Johnson has just become Prime Minister and is making his tour of the UK including Northern Ireland. What change is going to be brought about because of Brexit we still can't say for sure, though Mr Johnson is declaring that, no matter what, we are leaving on 31st October 2019. Time will tell.

It's at a time such as this that we need to remember the teaching of God's Word contained in the hymn, 'Abide with me'. A hymn that looks beyond the temporal things like football and even Brexit and points us towards the one and only God who is God overall. A hymn that speaks of help, grace, guidance, triumph and hope.

'Change and decay in all around I see!' But let us not forget the line that follows, 'O thou who changest not, abide with me.' (Malachi 3:6)

Everything around us is changing, but God, who is great in mercy and rich in love, is constant in that love for us in Jesus Christ. And so may I encourage you to keep praying, whether you are in favour of Remain or Brexit, or just don't know. To keep praying to our Sovereign Lord that in all things his will be done on earth as it is in heaven.



Congregational Record

DEATHS



08 May 2019	Mrs Dorothy Doggart, District 20
17 May 2019	Mr Raymond Jackson, District 11
18 May 2019	Mr Roy Larkin, District 25
1 July 2019	Mrs Martha Thompson, District 26
9 July 2019	Mrs Margaret Thompson, District 5

"Blessed are they who die in the Lord"

BAPTISMS



2 June 2019 Elsie Marie Myrtle, daughter
of Keith and Clare Williams
"The promise is to you and your children"

NEW MEMBERS



4 June 2019 Mr & Mrs Paul Canmore, District 9
July 2019 Mr & Mrs George Horner, District 26

We warmly welcome these new members to our fellowship, assuring them of our interest and seeking from them their active support.

EAGLE WING

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CONGRATULATIONS

Bobby and June Kirk celebrate their 60th Wedding Anniversary on 12th September. Bobby and June got married in Donegal Pass Presbyterian Church, Rev J J Mulligan conducted the service.



To all,
Following my retirement from Children's Church; I wish to thank everyone, ministers, kirk session and members of our congregation past and present who allowed me the great privilege of teaching in Sunday School and Children's Church for many years.

Pamela Ferguson

Being Presbyterian Conference 2019



Being an Open Church
with
Revd Dr Sam Wells

Thursday, October 10th

Assembly Buildings, Belfast
10.00 am

First Lisburn
7.30 pm

For further details and to register visit
www.beingpresbyterian.com

COFFEE MORNING
Margaret Chestnutt is hosting a McMillan Coffee Morning in the Walter Nelson Hall, on Saturday 21st September from 10:00 am to 12:30 pm.
Everyone is Welcome.

Editorial

They say as one door closes another one opens, this is true for the future of the Eagle Wing Magazine. This is the first time I have taken the helm as editor of the Eagle Wing. I wish to thank Susan for all of her guidance and tips for my new role as editor, within Groomsport Presbyterian Church. Susan had been the editor of our loved church magazine for many years, when she decided it was time to pass the job on to someone new. With that, may I congratulate Susan and John on the recent birth of their new grandson.

When Paul asked me if I would be interested in taking over this role, I have to admit I did need time to think about it. After several days of consideration, I came to the conclusion that this opportunity had been put in front of me for a reason. I now realise what a wonderful experience this has been, as I have had new opportunities to talk to members of our congregation about the things that they have been doing.

Susan has done a wonderful job, I know I have a hard act to follow, so I just ask that everyone goes easy on me for this first issue. You will see a few changes over the next few months and I hope that you will enjoy the new look magazine.

I look forward to working more with Julie, who works diligently behind the scenes. Julie is the backbone of the magazine, without her I am not sure that things would come together so easily. Julie spends a lot of her time printing and putting together the Eagle Wing, that side of things I would struggle on, so thank you. Praise must go to the proofreaders, you know who you are; proofreading is hard. Any errors that remain in the magazine, have surely been put there deliberately to see if you are paying attention!

This issue sees a lot happening in the past few months within our congregation. The big event that everyone was following with great anticipation, was June Kirk's skydive. The jump out of the aeroplane went with no hitches, eventually. Lowry Manson keeps us all updated with the Property Committee activities, who can say they aren't busy? The church halls were literally rocking during the early part of August, as Pyramid Rock took it over for the week. Caroline Lavery has completed a course in children's ministry. The course sounded like hard work and I can see that it was very rewarding. We also learn of a new arrival in the Miller household. I have to say Katherine is a gorgeous addition to the family and I wish the Millers all well for the future.

There are plenty more things to read in the magazine, but I do not want to spoil it all for you, so for once I won't say anything more.

Amanda

"The word is near you," said the apostle Paul. "It is in your mouth and in your heart" (Romans 10:8, NIV). Let us proclaim and sing God's word, that we may carry it always in our hearts. Welcome.

Word From The Clerk Of Session

General Assembly 2019 - Some personal reflections by the Representative Elder.

The famous “Blue Book”, which contains the Annual Reports and Order of Business, arrives through the post a couple of weeks before Assembly Week. I have attended on a few occasions before, but the complexity of this book continues to bamboozle me. However, I was able, with the kind assistance of Paul to decide in advance as to which days I would attend, as it would be a mammoth task to attend everything for the whole week.

I did manage to attend sessions on four days, taking advantage mostly of shared lifts to Belfast with Rev Paul and my Senior SmartPass.

Tuesday morning is traditionally a time for the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, which I attended in the company of Paul. This was a very dignified service, but for me, the praise was anything but uplifting. The Church Hymnary has been well and truly thrown out the window, totally unknown “songs” (to me) being sung unmusically to the accompaniment of a guitar, where nowhere knew where to actually start singing, except the guitarist himself. A cold house for the traditionalist?

In the afternoon the Clerk of the Assembly, in winding up a debate pertaining to revisiting some controversial decisions from the 2018 Assembly, said that, if in the way we did our business last year we have caused hurt, then we should say “sorry”. This of course, was with reference to the decisions regarding a credible profession of faith and same-sex attraction. In my view much too little and too late. A cold house for those of same-sex attraction?

One item which had caused considerable interest was the dismissal of a professor from Union College following the decisions taken at the 2018 Assembly, to which the professor had voiced public dissent. No debate was permitted this year on the sacking as the matter is now sub judice; however, I am inclined to ask the question “is this is a cold house for dissent?”

At the same session, under the report by the Council for Training in the Ministry, some lively debate took place concerning the lack of women coming forward for training as ministers; this year there are 11 applicants for training, all of them men. Is this a cold house for women?

The South Belfast Presbytery put forward a motion to the Assembly in an endeavour to rescind the decision of the 2018 GA no longer to issue an invitation to or accept an invitation from the Church of Scotland. Alas, the proposal was soundly defeated. I am tempted to ask the obvious “Is this a cold house for the Church of Scotland”?

It is only fair to add that there is still much to commend in the carrying out of the annual business in the GA. A Representative Elder can only be impressed by a genuine endeavour of the members to serve God through a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The standard of debate was as usual very high, with quite a lot of laughter and witty remarks between the Clerk of the Assembly and the Moderator. The general “buzz” about the place and the opportunity to meet up with old friends whom you have not seen for some time are also strong features.

The PCI has been likened to a bird which needs two wings to fly and if one wing is not permitted to function, then surely the bird will fall to the ground. My queries above with regard to “a cold house” for one wing of the church would possibly suggest there is a real danger that the other wing of our Presbyterian Church in Ireland will dominate to such an extent that a serious “fall” will be caused.

We, at Groomsport PC, need to keep ourselves abreast of all that is taking place and continue in constant prayer for the wider Presbyterian Church in Ireland that unity should prevail.

Alastair S. McQuoid
Clerk of Session

Letter From Our New Intern

Dear Friends,

As I write this, it’s just a few short weeks until I fly from Washington State to Northern Ireland to begin as Assistant Minister for 2019–2020. Although I’ve been anticipating this move for some time now, I’m still busy with lots of preparations for coming to be with you all. It turns out there are lots of last-minute details to consider before a move across the pond. As I work through these details, I’m getting even more excited to settle into the area and to get to know you all.

I grew up in the Pacific Northwest of the USA (Oregon and Washington States), where I grew up on a small farm and was raised amidst horses, cows, and chickens. I attended college at Whitworth University in Spokane, WA, where I majored in political science and minored in theology. During college, I experienced how academic study of God and the Bible strengthened my own faith. I took a gap year after college, planning to attend law school the following year. However, working in ministry during this gap year caused me to realize my love of ministry. I decided to change plans, pursuing seminary instead of law school. I enrolled at Princeton Theological Seminary the following fall.

I graduated from Princeton in May 2019 with a Master of Divinity. Although the degree entails a broad range of study, I focused in particular on biblical studies classes, since reading and study of the Bible has been formational for my faith. I am a candidate for ordination in the Presbyterian Church (USA), and I have worked at several Presbyterian congregations both before and during seminary. My most recent experiences in ministry involve being a hospital chaplain this summer and working as a teaching assistant for New Testament Greek while in seminary. I deeply love parish ministry, however, and I am grateful to serve alongside you all for the coming year.

In my free time, I enjoy doing most anything outside, spending time at coffee shops and restaurants, reading, and spending time with family and friends. I also enjoy travelling, but I have never been to the UK, which makes me particularly thrilled about my time in Groomsport this year. I am very excited to settle into Groomsport, and I would love your recommendations (and company!) as I get to know the area.

Peace,

Heidi



Farewell Ryan Pearce

We said farewell to Ryan on Sunday 4th August. Rev Paul Dalzell read the following words about Ryan during a presentation to him.

Ryan brought to this internship enthusiasm, hard work and above all, a desire to serve his Lord and Saviour and share the blessing and hope we have in Jesus Christ with others.

I know that Ryan's ministry with us has been really appreciated from the youngest girls and boys, through to the young adults that he mentored and to the comfort and assurance that he shared with those who were elderly.

Thank you, Ryan, and we wish you God's blessing as you return to Princeton for the final year of your Master of Divinity and as you seek God's will for future ministry.



Presbyterian Women

As we start a new church year, we in the PW are looking forward to our varied programme. We meet at 8:00 pm on the second and fourth Mondays of the month in the Archie Agnew Hall and invite anyone who is interested in joining us. The programme until Christmas is below.



23rd September - Rosalind from Ramsay's Fine Foods with fresh local foods delivered to your door.

*

14th October - Richard Gill, "Friends against scams."

*

28th October - Hospitality Night: hosting local clubs 'An Evening of Song' with Andrew McBride.

*

11th November - Boning a turkey by George Burns and a little flower arrangement By Pat Miller.

*

25th November - Malawi Work Night.

*

9th December - Christmas Party.

Remember, you do not have to be a member if you would like 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 coffee morning on Saturday 23rd November from 10.30 am – 12 noon.

Many of you will have noticed in the Presbyterian Herald that this year sees the last boxes going to Malawi primarily for logistical reasons; therefore, we are packing our boxes in November. We are ever grateful for the gifts from you, the congregation, so you will hear more very shortly.

Cruise on Lough Erne

Hazel and Stanley Megahey

Alan and Jean McIlmoy kindly offered a cruise on their luxury boat 'Hard Earned', as part of the Church Mission Auction of Promises.

We were fortunate to be able to secure Alan and Jean's offer on auction night. After meeting Alan and Jean, who I did not know, we arranged a date in July.

Graham and Mabel Martin our friends who now reside in Cardiff but still have their cottage in Donegal have never cruised on Lough Erne. Hazel and I cruised on the Erne along with her dad Floyd in the early days of our business life in 1976. We needed to be able to get back to the shop quickly if my mother, who kept an eye on the shop, started calling. We hired a boat in Ballanaleck from Bob Ewart from Erne Marine. The boats we hired were basic, with no bow thruster but had an aft cabin perfect for Floyd's privacy and space. We cruised in those days from Belturbet to Belleek when there were few boats on the lough, being the height of the troubles.



What a joy to join Alan and Jean on their beautiful Dutch steel cruiser, 'Hard Earned', at the prearranged berth in Enniskillen. After coffee and a chat, we slipped the ropes and we are off. We passed Enniskillen Castle and Alan sets a course for the Lower Lough. The lake was flat calm. Not usual. Alan said that the previous day the winds were high hence large waves. We passed the Tower of Devenish, Lough Erne Hotel golf course and estate. Then, heading north, we arrived at a quiet bay where Alan dropped anchor in about 10 metres of water.

Jean had made lunch. This idyllic anchorage was just beautiful. After a perfect meal, we headed further north towards Castle Archdale and cruised around the islands. On our journey back to Enniskillen, Alan allowed me to take the wheel. I enjoyed the experience but was not confident to take 'Hard Earned' through the lock at the Portora Boat House; then it was over to the skipper. We berthed in Enniskillen beside the Forum and then we all went off for supper to a beautiful Italian restaurant which Alan and Jean know well. The finale to a perfect day on the water.

What a difference the Lough is now from our early days in the eighties: boats everywhere, hire boats everywhere, visitors from overseas, tourists fishing. Brilliant for the economy of Fermanagh. Castle Archdale now has pontoons and is a haven for children and water sports; a change from the start-up in the '70s. Navigation markers are in abundance and visible from a distance; in the early days, cormorants sat on the markers and made navigation difficult with their deposits.

For Graham and Mabel, this was a unique experience having never cruised the Lough. Thank you, Jean and Alan, for making our day so enjoyable but especially for our friends Mabel and Graham.

What a great way to raise funds. Thank you to the Mission Committee who organised the auction.



Making Disciples Of All Nations

Reflections on children's ministry and certificate course - Caroline Lavery

I have been asked to write an article on a recent Children's Ministry Certificate Course I completed through Union Theological College, Belfast. Thinking about what I would write about the course, and what I had gained, it begs the question- what indeed is the purpose of children's ministry? Is it to keep the children occupied during the morning worship? Or to tick a box of the Kirk Session's action plan? Perhaps it is to equip our children to be disciples in a hostile, post-Christian culture in which we now find ourselves.

Few of us can fail to recognise the rapid changes that our society has undergone. Many of our own congregation, over the course of their lifetime, will have witnessed numerous innovations in technology and advances in the field of science. Only a few weeks ago we were remembering 50 years since the phenomenal lunar landing and what a remarkable feat that was. VCR's have given way to DVDs and indeed online streaming, household phones to mobiles, and newspapers to the era of 24-hour news both on TV and mobile apps. Indeed in my own field of medicine so much changes so rapidly- much that I learnt less than five years ago as a medical student is already obsolete and superseded by new knowledge and understanding. Yet as touched upon by Mr Dalzell in one of his sermons during July, and indeed aptly summarised originally by Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) and subsequently translated by Ray Palmer, although the array of material belongings can dazzle and tempt, it is not long before "we turn unfilled to thee again". Our society we find, without much looking, despite its advocating the importance of the individual above all else, personal rights above collective and finding your true 'identity' as the new 'gods' that satisfy, is an empty and lost one, unfulfilled and unedified. The fruits of the world can certainly provide a sweet 'sugar hit' yet ultimately leave us empty. The fruits of the Spirit are the only ones that can provide true spiritual nourishment; living water that can quench the deep thirst within us for more profound meaning and direction to our lives; we remember clearly the words of the Shorter Catechism - that man's chief end is to "glorify God and enjoy Him forever". Of the many challenges we face, a few are highlighted in the following:

- a) A survey published in 2014 by Peter Brierley, and quoted by Scripture Union, shows that 95% of UK children have no church involvement- a statistic which perhaps should not be altogether surprising given rapid and sustained decreases in membership both of our own denomination and the wider Church demonstrated in Census data over the last number of decades.
- b) We find virulent hostility to faith and religion in general in the public sphere, and are told faith must be a personal matter; while this may be the case, it is certainly not a private one, nor indeed one purely for Sundays. Given the way our faith should shape our outlook and perspective on daily life, it must be one that permeates our Monday to Saturday as well as Sunday and we cannot simply do as society would have us do, to leave our faith 'at the office door'.

While the exceptionally alarming statistic may be more indicative of trends in Great Britain rather than Northern Ireland, this statistic, combined with this hostility should indeed prompt urgent and deep soul-searching as to the direction we should be heading as a church. Mindful of this, it is clear we have two objectives.



Firstly, it is essential that children are taught in our churches - if we don't, our society certainly will and can fill the void with many pernicious influences, ones already so pervasive. This deafening cacophony must be combated with a renewed vigour in children's ministry in our congregations. If providing our children and young people with firm foundations of rock to withstand the storms of life is not reason enough to take children's ministry seriously, surely the fact our Lord exhorts us to is; in Matthew 28, He commands us to "make disciples of all nations... teaching them to observe all that (He has) commanded" (ESV).

Secondly, we must ensure children are equipped with armour and indeed armour of suitable strength and durability to deflect the "flaming darts of the evil one" (Eph 6:16, ESV). These darts adopt different guises in different societies and different generations- those fifty years ago are undoubtedly different and arguably less sinister than those today. Often the solution proposed by many is to dilute the key principles and messages of the Gospel. I would advocate for the contrary; in my own field, patients will often cease their courses of antibiotics prematurely as he or she 'feels better'; this may have little or no short-term consequences, however, in the longer-term, more virulent, pathogenic and resistant organisms can develop to which subsequent antibiotic courses may prove ineffective. Only the full course of the correct strength of antibiotic yields effective, lasting bacterial eradication. Similarly, whilst it is evident that we must be open to different ways and methods of presenting the Gospel to different generations, the core message of that Gospel should and must remain unchanged; otherwise it too is rendered ineffective and meaningless. It was once said that one of the Devil's favourite techniques is to discourage believers.

It is by no means easy, as Daniel Bliss wrote, to "dare to be a Daniel", when we are in a small minority, and we see many instances, even in our own denomination, where "many mighty men are lost, daring not to stand" and choose to conform to societal whims rather than transform the Babylon in which we find ourselves. We read in Revelation 12 of the many forms the seven-headed dragon adopts and, in our own generation, this is manifested in the often insidious but no less cunning techniques of the Devil. But we are warned by Christ Himself that if we lose our distinctiveness, if we lose our 'saltiness', we are "no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet" (Matthew 5:13, ESV). We read in the Gospels of Christ's indisputable, radical, counter-cultural teaching and in particular in John 8:11 of His remarkable example of being able to speak the truth, yet as always with love and grace.

It is amazing for me to think it has been almost ten years, that I have had the honour and privilege to be involved in Children's Church in the congregation; for the first number of years as a 'helper' and latterly the majority of those years now as a 'leader'. So many of the leaders at that time were so encouraging to me as a 'helper', not only letting me shadow their teaching but in particular, the methods underpinning the lesson plan and activities being used.

However, I have always been mindful of the fact, not from a teaching background myself, that I had never formally completed any training in teaching. A few years ago, I had seen an article in the Presbyterian Herald on the two ministry courses, Children's and Youth, offered via the Union Theological College through PCI's Council for Congregational Life and Witness. However with work commitments and rotas, it was only this past year I was actually able to participate in the course.

After multiple emails to hospital staff to try to dovetail rotas and emails to PCI regarding the course, my place was confirmed... and all that remained was for our esteemed teaching elder, Rev. Paul Dalzell, to verify my character as being suitable for participation in the course, which he very kindly gave!!



The course itself took place across 10 weeks, September-November 2018, with a wide breadth of topics encompassed across these, including different learning styles, involving the wider family in children's ministry, children and Sunday worship, 'managing the chaos' and ideas on how to create, organise and manage a children's ministry programme within a congregation. Speakers from a variety of different backgrounds led lively, stimulating teaching sessions, probing and challenging each student to reflect on current practice- reasons underpinning this and encouraging a different perspective when preparing and leading a session. In order to complete the course, each student was required to submit weekly 'journal style' reflections on the coursebook- Sue Miller's "Making Your Children's Ministry The Best Hour Of Every Kid's Week"- a book with a decidedly American slant yet with useful broad concepts regarding organisation as well as to complete a 1,500 word essay on concepts gained throughout the 10 weeks.

It was mid-January before a letter arrived through the letterbox, PCI logo stamped on the front of the envelope, to confirm my successful passing and completion of the course, and an invitation to the 'graduation' ceremony in May. It wasn't long before the four months quickly passed... and before I knew it I was walking into the foyer of Knock Presbyterian Church in East Belfast. Standing in the foyer before walking into the church, the work and effort weren't so much at the forefront of my mind as the satisfaction at the huge amount I learnt and gained in the ten weeks. Ministers of the candidates were also invited to attend, but given the huge time commitments our minister has, and his diligence and dedication pastorally to members of our congregation, it was a great surprise but enormous pleasure to also share in the evening with Mr and Mrs Dalzell- such a kind and warm gesture that was very much appreciated.

So what did I learn? I have always felt that children learn best when learning through fun, and this was developed and reinforced during the course. I certainly know my teaching style and preparation have also matured. My enthusiasm and vigour for being involved in teaching children have been renewed and refreshed. As for my delivery and the standard of the lessons, whilst the children would be my judges, we remain subservient to God, who is the ultimate judge.

Some important principles remain. As leaders, whether in adult or children's ministry, as teaching or ruling elders, or indeed those of us who faithfully are witnesses in our quiet ways in our own daily lives and our own 'Babylons' (lots of little candles together make a lot of light..), we very much are nothing but instruments of God. As humbling as that may be for some, what an honour to be so used by our Lord. It is perhaps most beautifully espoused by Mary on hearing of the forthcoming birth of Jesus- "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38, ESV). May we be always willing to be bridled and controlled by the Spirit, to be shaped and moulded by the Master Potter and used for His purposes. Our own congregation definitely presents many challenges:

- a) Small numbers in our children's organisations can be disheartening- we ought to remember "where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them" (Matthew 18:20)- as small a number as eleven disciples, with the fire of the Spirit energising them, evangelised and helped provide the spark that has spread the Gospel to all nations, with billions of Christians worldwide. It can be easy to be more keen to teach only with larger numbers, and 'make do' with less teaching on Sundays with smaller groups. Teaching one or two children is just as vitally important as twenty.
- b) The rotas for various organisations, including children's ministry, are often filled with only a small but enthusiastic number of volunteers. This can sometimes be discouraging. Whilst certainly we all can examine and challenge ourselves to become involved in activities in which we have not previously been involved and discern God's calling. We need to recognise the different gifts with which God has blessed different members of the Church. Like the ten talents, with God's help, we need to nurture and develop the talents of those in our congregation and enable them to thrive, with our encouragement, physical support at various events, but most importantly our prayer.

I would like to thank my family and close friends for the encouragement not only during the ministry course but during my time of involvement in children's ministry. I appreciate the patience and teaching of the other children's leaders in our congregation and their help in maturing my own teaching and leadership. I would particularly wish to thank our minister, for his encouragement from last August when I first mentioned my interest in completing the course, to his enthusiasm in the weekly developments throughout the several months and particularly to his and Mrs Dalzell's attendance at the ceremony in May. I would ask for the congregation to keep all leaders of organisations but particularly those involved in children's and youth ministry in their prayers. That our zeal and enthusiasm may never abate, that our lessons may be challenging and varied, informative yet enjoyable and that new leaders may come forward and be equally as encouraged by the current leaders as I myself was just under a decade ago. May our Kirk Session continue to encourage and provide fresh vision and incentive to the overarching programme.

I finish leaving the words of a prayer of John Calvin, a prayer I pray not only daily before work but one which strengthens me before my Sunday's on the rota for Children's Church:

My good God, Father, and Saviour, grant me aid by your Holy Spirit to now work fruitfully in my vocation, which is from you, all in order to love you and the people around me rather than for my own gain and glory. Give me wisdom, judgment and prudence, and freedom from my besetting sins. Bring me under the rule of true humility. Let me accept with patience whatever amount of fruitfulness or difficulty in my work that you give me this day. And in all I do, help me to rest always in my Lord Jesus Christ and in His grace alone for my salvation and life. Hear me, merciful Father, by our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

Sunday School & Bible Class

Margaret McCreedy

Sunday School and Bible Class will be meeting each week from 8th September. As usual, we will be in the Walter Nelson Halls from 10:15 until 11.10 am. This allows for children to be collected in good time for the beginning of morning service at 11:30 am.

We will be delighted to welcome any children from approximately three years old to 11 into Sunday School. Older children who have entered secondary education will be in the Bible Class under the leadership of Audrey, Jordan and Sharon. The Sunday School leaders are Paula, Fiona and myself.

This year we are working from a new curriculum adapted from the Heartshapers programme. Last year we had a small number of children attending each week and would love to have many more join us. We try to have a wide variety of activities related to the topic for the day. The activities include crafts, games, singing and sometimes we bake or decorate buns or biscuits. Each week Rosemary comes to play the piano for us so that our singing is in tune.

We also learn more about the world as we hear from Bernie, the bear who reports back to us from the countries he visits under the auspices of Christian Aid.

Please encourage any children you know to join us and also we seek the prayers of all our congregation that leaders and children alike may learn more about how our God wants us to live for him.





1ST GROOMSPORT BB



Monday Evenings 7.00 – 8.00 pm

**Starting Monday 16th September 2019
in the Walter Nelson Hall**

**Lots of fun, activities and games for boys aged 4 to 11.
All new members are very welcome.**

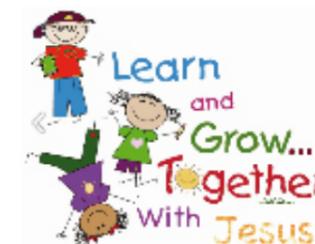
For further information, please contact Groomsport
Presbyterian Church office by telephone on 02891462552
or by email to office@groomsportpresbyterian.com

Further details can also be found on the internet at:
www.groomsportpresbyterian.com/boys-brigade/



Come and join us!

Sunday School for 3-11 year olds
Bible Class for 11 years +
10.15-11.15am
begins 8th September



**Boys Brigade
Anchor Boys and Juniors**
Mondays at 7pm for boys aged 4-11 year olds
begins 16th September



Rainbows - Thursdays at 6.30pm for girls aged 4-7 years
Brownies - Thursdays at 6.30pm for girls aged 7-11 years
Guides - Thursdays at 8pm for girls aged 11-14 years
begins 12th September



Sunday Worship at 11.30am - All welcome



Children's Church during the service for 3-11 year olds

Crèche Room (with video link) available for parents
and children up to 3 years throughout the service



For more information contact the church office on 02891462552 or visit
www.groomsportpresbyterian.com

Pyramid Rock

Audrey Thomas

Pyramid Rock was the name of this year's Holiday Bible club and we certainly had the halls rocking. From 30th July to 2nd August we took over the church halls for four days of fun and Fellowship. Each day around 45 children joined our small, but willing band of leaders, for a fun-filled packed programme. We enjoyed singing lots of action songs, singing loudly enough so the men on their boats could hear us. We learned Bible verses and had quizzes. With an Egyptian theme as our focus, we painted, did lots of crafts, played games and even baked some tasty goodies. An assault course around the church grounds was enjoyed by all. The older children performed a wonderful play about Joseph in Egypt. It was just like an episode of our very own Groomsport's Got Talent! One of the favourite parts of the day was our daily exercise session. After stretching, jumping, jogging and keeping fit in the car park, everyone needed their well-earned juice and treats to cool down.



The Biblical theme for the week was the amazing story of Joseph. Each day we had a special visitor who told us something about Joseph's life, which was certainly full of ups and downs. We met Simeon his older brother, Potiphar's servant and the butler who worked for the Pharaoh. We even had a visit from Joseph himself. Joseph always relied on God. Even in the hardest times, he believed that God was with him, looking after him and keeping him safe. With God's help, he was able to explain dreams and forgive the brothers who had sold him. Joseph knew God had a plan for his life and would never let him down. There are many lessons to learn from Joseph. God has a plan for each of us and is in control. He loves us and cares for us and provides strength in difficult times. Joseph relied on God and God did not let him down.

We finished the week with our annual family bbq. It was wonderful to see many of the children come along with parents and grandparents. While the sausages and burgers cooked, the families

went on a Scavenger Hunt around the village and played games in the car park. This was an enjoyable way to end a week of fun and fellowship.

Holiday Bible club has been part of our church summer programme for over 20 years now. We aim to teach the children more about God and present our church as a friendly, welcoming community of God. The Holiday Bible Club is an excellent opportunity for outreach. We had children attend from all over the Bangor area. We want to thank all the leaders for their different talents and skills. Thank you also to the congregation for their prayers, the parents for trusting us with their children and finally and most importantly, the children in our care, who make the whole week worthwhile.

The Pyramid Rock Team was Audrey, Sharon, Fiona, Lois, Catherine, Pat, June, Rosie, Natalie, Ellis, Elaine, Sylvia, Beth, Charlotte and Summer.



Turnstones Community Drama Group

Can you sing, dance, hold a hammer, put on makeup or help in any way?



It's that time of year again and having had a years break Turnstones hope to regroup again for another panto season. We hope that all past members and new members will come along to rekindle friendships and get involved in this popular community event.

An audition night will be held in the Edgar McCutcheon Room at the rear of Groomspport Presbyterian Church, on Wednesday 18th September.

7.00 pm - 7.45 pm, auditions for children p1-p7.

7.30 pm, auditions for both on stage and backstage.

Should you miss this date or have any queries, please contact Ann Williams 07710 744884 or Elaine Nixon - Shepherd 07802 497442.

The Tuesday Club

The Tuesday Club meets at 2:00 pm in the Walter Nelson Hall on the following dates.

October 8th - Safety In The Home

*

November 5th - Ramsay's Foods

*

December 3rd - Christmas Party

There will be a concert on Friday 25th October: Donaghadee Male Voice Choir, more details will be available nearer the time.



The Film Club

The Film Club runs once a month in the Walter Nelson Hall, everyone is welcome. The film club starts at 2:00 pm and there are refreshments.

22nd October - Ladies In Lavender
19th November - The Scarlet And The Black
10th December - Scrooge The Musical
21st January - Bertie And Elizabeth
17th March - The Quiet Man

Friendship Lunch Club

Valerie McCutcheon

In the early part of 2009, Roger, Doreen and I met at The Manse to discuss the possibility of having a monthly lunch consisting of soup and wheaten bread. The lunches would be for those living on their own and for new members of the church. It began on the 29th September 2009, with five helpers catering for around 26 members, with chicken and broccoli bake followed by apple tart, pavlova and a cup of tea. From here it grew and at times we had upwards of 55 to 60 members and 10 to 12 helpers. At Christmas, we had turkey dinner and crackers followed by entertainment from Alastair, Desi and Friends, while everyone enjoyed singing along.

We ended the first year with a mystery bus tour to Portaferry and afternoon tea at Cloughy Presbyterian Church. Over the years we went on several bus runs to Newcastle, Antrim and Portaferry while supporting other churches for afternoon teas and flower festivals.

The year we went to Antrim for our mystery tour Billy, one of our diners, had travelled all the way from Antrim to Groomspport for his lunch. He could not believe when we were passing his door, he said that he could have met us there if he had known. Sadly, this year we have lost Billy, who was always very appreciative of us and the things we provided. In fact, everyone appreciated the things we did and the food we provided.

I would like to thank everyone for attending the lunches so faithfully every month and for being so encouraging. We appreciate that through your generosity, we were able to donate to several charities: Store House, the Endourology Department at the Ulster Hospital, Brainwaves, Chest Heart & Stroke and Guide Dogs For The Blind. Finally a big thank you to my helpers, my family and my friends, especially those who did the fetching, carrying and came up with Christmas gift ideas. Also, thank you for their love and support; it is all very much appreciated and I could not have done it without you all.

Hopefully, the lunches will continue and I would like to wish Mary all the very best for the future. Thank you all, especially for the lovely gifts I received, they will be enjoyed and put to good use.

Valerie

Friendship Lunch Dates

The lunches will held in the Walter Nelson Hall at 1:00 pm on the following dates.

Wednesday 30th October

*

Wednesday 27th November

*

Wednesday 11th December

Experience Of A Skydive

June Kirk

It was something I will never forget; I decided to do it to celebrate my 80th birthday and also to raise money for the Urology Department in the Ulster Hospital.

I was warmly welcomed at the Wild Geese Flying Club on Saturday 6th July (this was my 3rd attempt, due to inclement weather), by a lovely lady called June. She told me to go to the café, have a coffee and relax, as I wouldn't be flying to about noon. RELAX? She must be joking!

My family were all there and it was also lovely to see John & Sheelagh Dalzell who had been staying in Ballycastle.

When I was called to the hanger, I hugged everyone and they wished me all the best. Simon, my instructor, was lovely, he helped me into my suit and harness. We walked out to the plane; I won't tell you how my stomach felt at that moment. I had to sit on the floor in front of Simon, in an extremely small plane, while he hooked me up to him. He kept showing me his watch, which told us how high we were to go before we could fall out.

When we reached 10,000 feet, Simon said: "right June, goggles down & shuffle out". I just thought "go for it June". I couldn't open my eyes as it was the most scariest moment of my life. When I eventually did, Joanne was filming it all. She wanted me to wave & smile at the camera. That's not the most natural thing when you are petrified!

Just below the clouds, Simon opened the canopy – the view was

magnificent. He pointed out Glenshane Pass, Antrim Coast and indicated the direction of Groomsport.

When we got to about 400ft it was time for "knees up June, toes up, toes up" in preparation for a very soft landing. Everyone was cheering as I walked over to where they were all standing.

It was an experience I will never forget. People ask me now about my next challenge and I say I am just going to enjoy life.

Would I do it again? I don't think so.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to my charity – to date my skydive has raised £4551 and counting!



Living With the Skydive

The Kirk Family

There's one thing doing a skydive... but another living with someone who's doing it. In our family, there have been few events that have come close to being all-consuming as much as this one.

Firstly, there was the idea, sitting around the table last Christmas it was June's grandchildren who suggested they 'throw her out of a plane' by way of celebration of her 80th birthday.

After a couple of days thinking about this, she announced to the world that she was 'doing it'.

Then the questions began: when she would do it, would that date suit everyone, what time would it be at? All other events going on within our family paled into insignificance; THE SKYDIVE was her only topic of conversation.

The first trip up to Wild Geese Club in Kilrea was entertaining for those members of the family accompanying her. When she arrived at the reception desk this conversation followed, "Hello, you must be Julie, I've spoken to you on the phone. I'm doing a skydive for my 80th birthday."

"No, I'm June, I'm..." "Och are you June too? My name's June." For goodness sake and so it continued.

Apparently, during the safety briefing, the 15 would-be, high-fliers were all encouraged to ask questions. Everyone was quiet, apart from June, who asked, "can I wear my jumper?" and "what colour will my parachute be, I need to tell my family, so they know it's me coming down." Pete was the assigned instructor. At this stage you can imagine his thoughts!

The weather, however, never cleared up that morning and all skydives were again postponed, Pete's prayers were answered.

Over the next few weeks, June spent time lying in bed practising pulling her knees up to her chest (well sort of) – as 'that's what you need to do when coming in to land'.

A pair of sparkly trainers were also purchased – so we could see her coming down.

Bright blue skies dawned on 6th July, so we were off to Kilrea. Pete had been replaced with Simon, who apparently was nicer anyway. She was certainly in good company that day, it was the anniversary of her Dad's birthday and also the 80th birthday of Northern Ireland's great sportswoman, Lady Mary Peters.

And so the rest is history. We may joke & laugh about the event, but she did it and we are all so immensely proud of her.

Well done Mum!

PS Simon got to keep the traybakes left over from the picnic, he's well in!



The TATE Family



Do you know how many of the TATE family belong to your church?

There is one named DICTATE, who wants to run everything. And then there is AGITATE, who stirs up plenty of trouble with help from her husband, IRRITATE and their angry son, MILITATE. Whenever new projects are suggested, HESITATE and his wife, VEGITATE, want to wait until next year, whereas PRECIPITATE is inclined to rush headlong into everything.

Then there are IMITATE - who wants your church to be like all the other churches; DEVASTATE- the voice of doom, and POTENTATE, who just wants to be a big shot.

But not all the TATE family members are bad... FACILITATE is really helpful in church matters; cousins COGITATE and MEDITATE always think things over carefully, and lend a helpful, steadying hand; eagle-eyed NECESSITATE can be relied upon to spot what needs doing, and meticulous ANNOTATE will dependably record all suggestions and decisions; while RESUSITATE is always a useful person to have around in a crisis. And a truly delightful member of the family is the empathetic FELICITATE.

Of course, there is also the black sheep of the family – AMPUTATE, who has completely cut himself off from the church; but perhaps brothers REINSTATE and REHABILITATE will be able to bring him back to the fold.

We probably all know some of the TATES –
in our own families, workplaces, or church congregations.
Which one(s) do you identify with?
Which would others identify you with?

Anon

Lunch With Friends

You all know that a wide variety of promises were made for the Auction Of Promises in June this year.

One of the promises was a lunch, hosted by June Kirk in her own home. The lunch promise was purchased by Rhoda Martin. Rhoda and friends, Sandra Todd, June Manson, Rosemary Gillespie, Valerie McCutchen all enjoyed a lovely afternoon with June.



To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing.

Badminton Club



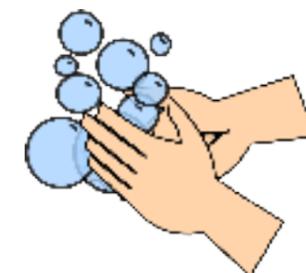
The Badminton Club meets in the Walter Nelson Hall on Wednesday mornings at 10.00 am until noon from 25th September.

Last year we were pleased to have an increase in the number of people coming along but would be delighted to have more, particularly gentlemen, joining us.

Beginners and those with experience are always welcome. We can supply racquets. The fellowship, exercise, chat and especially tea and biscuits are most important. Please pop in and give it a try.

Basic Hygiene Course

The Basic Hygiene Course on 23rd September is scheduled for 7:30 pm in The Maxwell Hall and an additional course at 10:30 am, 14th October in the Walter Nelson Hall. Those who host coffee mornings, including charity ones, Sunday School, PW, Tuesday Club, Bowling club and all other organisations who serve food of any description, need a basic hygiene certificate, which lasts for one year.



The Church As A Mosaic

A mosaic consists of thousands of little stones. Some are blue, some are green, some are yellow, some are gold. When we bring our faces close to the mosaic, we can admire the beauty of each stone. But as we step back from it, we can see that all these little stones reveal to us a beautiful picture, telling a story none of these stones can tell by itself.

That is what our life in [the church] is about. Each of us is like a little stone, but together we reveal the face of God to the world. Nobody can say: "I make God visible." But others who see us together can say: "They make God visible." [Christian] community is where humility and glory touch.

—Henri J.M. Nouwen



Auction of Promises



Michael Steele

On behalf of the Mission Committee, I would like to thank everyone who supported the 'Auction of Promises' that was held on Friday 7th June. It was a great night of fun and fellowship and a big thanks to our resident auctioneer, Mr Alastair McQuoid. We managed to raise over £3,000, which was way above our expectations. This money will go to the 'Shallow Wells Project' in northern Malawi and will result in five or six new wells being constructed. I was fortunate recently to meet up with Dr Lyn Dowds, who has been the medical officer at Livingstonia Mission for the past eight years. Lyn (who is from Craigavon) was telling me about the many water-borne diseases that she encountered at the hospital and how clean water will improve the health of the local people in the area.



The 'Shallow Wells Project' has been running for a number of years now and is well established. It is done in partnership with the local villagers who are responsible for digging the wells and providing the bricks. The wells cost around £500 depending on the depth and are usually last about ten years. The pumps are looked after by an experienced management team who are based at Livingstonia Mission. Each well will supply 50 people with clean water, which means that it costs £1 per person for ten years, that is no more than the cost of a bottle of water in our local shops.

We first learned about the 'Shallow Wells Project' from Rev Jim Campbell who, along with his wife Ruth, has spent many years working in Malawi. They have visited Livingstonia many times and have witnessed the construction and benefits of the wells first hand. Jim and Ruth will be joining our Sunday worship on 22nd September and will bring us more news during the service.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has been involved in our 'Auction of Promises'. You have made a real difference to the lives of many folk in this small African nation.

Through Isaiah (55:1), you call all who are thirsty to come to you, Lord. My soul is parched; refresh me with Jesus, the Living Water.

Tales Of A Car Booter

Rev Dr David & Maureen Irwin

Each Saturday and sometimes Fridays, from May to September, the Rev Dr David and Maureen Irwin have been raising money at Car Boot Sales for a hospital Mission Station and Orphans in Malawi. This is their 18th year and they would like to thank all those who have not only donated but also purchased items over all these years. David is known as 'the man with the hat' because of the colourful fez-like headpiece he wears, it is his selling hat. David and Maureen enjoy chatting to browsers and bantering with other car booting sellers; it is all good fun in spite of the really early morning rises as it is for a worthwhile cause.



Shoe Box Appeal

Maureen Irwin



Groomsport Presbyterian would like to take part in the 'Samaritan's Purse – Operation Christmas Child' shoebox appeal. This special appeal would involve people getting a shoebox and filling it with simple items for a needy child at Christmas. This is a practical expression of God's love. Items can include pencils, hats, socks, combs and brushes and perhaps a special toy. The Samaritan's purse will add a simple book of bible stories to each box.

If you have a spare empty box, please leave it on the table in the vestibule for someone to fill up, or you could cover a box with Christmas paper and fill it up yourself. Mark the box clearly if it is for a girl or a boy and what age group. These boxes may be left in the vestibule anytime from now on. The final date for collection will be Sunday 20th October. More information can be found on the website <https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/>.

Thank you so much in anticipation. The Mission Committee.

Spud Bears Update

A few months ago Maureen Irwin was collecting little teddy bears for Spud Bears Ministry. The teddy bears go to Hospitals, Clinics, Orphanages and Schools in the developing world to bring comfort and happiness to Children in the name of Jesus. Our church collected lots of bears. As you can see below, they have gone to good use.



There Is Always Hope

Rosalind MacNeice

Thank you all from the bottom of my heart for your help in enabling us to send a cheque for £1000 to the Hope Christian Trust in May of this year.

We first went to the Holy Land in 2008 and then in 2012 having been introduced to the Reverend John Angle by our son-in-law, who happens to be a vicar.

John first went to the Holy Land in 1967, at which time he was the vice principal of a comprehensive school. From that date, John visited every summer for the full school holidays until he retired and became a full-time rector of a church. Over the years he gradually became aware of the difficulties faced by the non-Jewish population emerging as it did from the impossible political situation between the Israelis and Palestinians. This has

resulted in pain and suffering on both sides of the divide, but particularly extreme poverty in the West Bank and especially in Gaza.

In 1981 John got involved with the Bethlehem Bible College and subsequently set up a trust to help support its work in the area. The money we have raised in Groomsport, since 2008, has gone towards supporting the Bethlehem Bible college under their 'shepherds purse', a general earning arm of the college. We have supported the children's school in Hebron, helped build a playground in the family centre in Zababdah and supported Syrian refugees in Jordan.

This year, in Gaza, we have been supporting both staff and pupils during times of financial crisis; John says he has never before seen poverty like it.

Now that John is officially retired he has been back and forth about four times already this year to the West Bank but especially to Gaza. John does what he can, as he says he feels helpless when visiting Gaza in the face of the big mess of the situation and the appalling nature of human suffering. I believe there is always something that can be done at an individual level to support, encourage and bring blessing in the face of suffering. To express God's love through giving, to give those in need the present of presence.

Since our first visit, we have had the privilege of welcoming Reverend John Angle and Dr Bishara Awad, who was then head of the Bethlehem Bible college, to our church to talk about their work.

Thank you again for helping and supporting the Hope Christian Trust (charity registration number 328456).



Eretz - checkpoint leaving Gaza



THE HOPE CHRISTIAN TRUST
SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES IN THE LANDS OF THE BIBLE

How Many Miles?

Rev Maria Shepherdson

How many miles to Bethlehem?

Well, it depends you see

On border guards

On settler roads

On checkpoints cleared

On barriers closed

On what your race

And why you travel

On withheld funds

Supplies of gravel

On who you worship, How and when

On where you go

And SHOULD you return again

On who shot whom

And who's permitted

To visit the Holy City

How many miles to Bethlehem?

Well it depends, you see,

On how much we acknowledge

Our Complicity.

Storehouse Update

Sheelagh Dalzell

We have managed to rent suitable premises at Balloo Avenue with a 5-year lease, but they come at a price and we could find no alternative.

Storehouse is vital to people in hard times. The rent of £500 per month is nominal for such accommodation. If 100 people set up a standing order for £5 per month, which is the same as a coffee and a scone, our rent will be paid. We are very grateful to all who support storehouse with food financially and with your prayers. We believe that God's work done in God's name will never lack God's supply. Standing order forms are in our church porch.

Thank you all from me and those who need our help.



Update From Henry Coulter

Maureen Stewart



Dear Groomsport Presbyterian,

It was amazing to get so many bicycles from Groomsport. They have already been given out. It is a joy to be able to give bicycles to many needy refugees and asylum seekers. Travelling around Belfast is expensive, so the provision of the bikes means they can get to colleges, offices, schools and go shopping with ease. Thank you.



The man pictured here had been waiting for months for a bicycle appropriate for his height. He was delighted to have got one and was moved to tears. Every day over 80 people come into International Meeting Point for a hot tasty lunch, clothes, food hampers, help with filling out forms, or just a place to relax. We hold English language classes twice a week to help people get to grips with English and a Northern Ireland accent. There are Bible studies every day in various languages and it is a joy to see people coming to faith and growing in their knowledge of God's Word.

Thank you again for the bicycles; your generosity helps us touch lives as we share the love of Christ in practical ways.

With appreciation,
Henry Coulter

This was the encouraging response we got to the bicycle delivery completed in June. Since then several people have suggested that there are still spare bicycles in Groomsport which can be passed on to people who can make good use of them. We hope to make another delivery, perhaps in September, if people remain willing to help in this way. We will confirm a date for this in the church bulletin soon. It is also possible we could respond later in the year to a new appeal from IMP for baby clothes, to be made available to families in need in North Belfast where a new IMP base has been opened at Carlisle Circus. Further details will be provided in due course, so it's thank you and please again from the mission committee.

To me it doesn't matter whether it's raining or the sun is shining or whatever: as long as I'm riding a bike, I know I'm the luckiest guy in the world. - Mark Cavendish

The Leprosy Mission, Heal Nepal Appeal

Stephanie McCreedy

On behalf of the Leprosy Mission, I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you for your generosity to the Heal Nepal appeal. Our Sunday School collection, Coffee Morning and World Leprosy Day service collections totalled £2700.00, matched by UK AID, has contributed to the £4,154,781. The campaign raised £2,169,311 in donations, the first £2million of which was matched pound for pound by the UK government, making this the most successful campaign in the charity's 145-year history.

Thanks to you, the team at Anandaban Hospital will now be able to reach even more people living in remote areas of Nepal to diagnose them with leprosy and cure them. Thanks to you, even more people will get the best medical care, including vital surgery that can help them regain mobility and independence. And thanks to you, even more people will be supported with counselling to help them overcome the pain of discrimination and rejection.

The money will be used to train and fund outreach workers to go into remote communities to find and cure Leprosy before the ancient disease causes people to develop life-long disabilities, including blindness. This will not only enable leprosy to be diagnosed and treated early, preventing disability, but for those already disabled, it will provide vital surgery and prosthetics needed to restore futures. An effective cure for Leprosy has been available since 1982 in the form of multidrug therapy. But because of the stigma and lack of health services, there are six million people globally needlessly living today with leprosy-caused stigma and disability. This is more than the population of Scotland.

Heal Nepal is The Leprosy Mission's most successful appeal of all time, meaning that many more people with leprosy in Nepal will be found, cured and healed, enabling them to live with dignity, good health and hope for the future. What an amazing difference this will make!

The following thank you was received from Joanne Briggs, National Director of The Leprosy Mission, Northern Ireland:

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. *Ephesians 3: 20-21 (NIV)*

To all at Groomsport Presbyterian Church

Your incredible gifts to Heal Nepal will bring Christ's love and healing to people with leprosy.

Because of your amazing generosity to Heal Nepal, teams of outreach workers will be trained to go into remote communities to find and cure people with leprosy. We pray people will be reached before they develop life-long disabilities. Thanks to your kindness, they will be given a place to heal at Anandaban Hospital.

Together we pray that Heal Nepal will bring an end to leprosy in Nepal.

Thank you so much for your kindness and compassion.

Yours in Christ

Joanne Briggs
National Director, The Leprosy Mission Northern Ireland



leprosymission.org.uk
The Leprosy Mission England, Wales, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man
Tel: 01733 370505 post@lmev.org.uk
A company limited by guarantee. Registered charity no: 1050527 Registered company no: 3140347



Property Update

Lowry Manson (Property Convener)

I thought that it might be helpful to inform our church members about the considerable amount of property related work, which has been continuing over the summer months. The following is a summary.

1 INCIDENT WITH INTRUDER ON SUNDAY 9th JUNE 2019.

The glass panels in the doors of the church office and finance room, which were smashed during the break-in, were replaced and the slips were repaired and reused.

2 THE REAR CORRIDORS BEHIND THE CHURCH.

The painting of the three rear corridors, the two stairwells, together with all 17 doors, architraves and skirtings, was completed on 23rd July.

3 THE IRWIN ROOM.

The refurbishment of the Irwin Room is now complete. The room was redecorated, following the removal of the old trophy cabinet and old glass-fronted bookcases. New roller blinds having been fitted. A noticeboard has been added and new artwork has been provided.

4 HEALTH & SAFETY DOCUMENT FROM ARDS & NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL.

I have recently completed a comprehensive 32-page document from the council, which relates to 'Health and Safety - Churches and Places of Worship'.

5 DEEP CLEANING OF THE WALTER NELSON HALL COMPLEX.

Our Caretaker, Ian McDonald and his wife Anne, have recently undertaken a deep clean of all our accommodation within the Walter Nelson Hall Complex and as part of this, all of the carpets have been shampooed.

6 NEW NOTICEBOARD FOR THE WALTER NELSON HALL COMPLEX.

It was agreed by the Main Committee some months ago, that it would be a good idea to have a separate noticeboard, fixed to an outside wall of the Walter Nelson Hall, to list all the various church activities held in this accommodation. This noticeboard is now in place.

7 NEW HIGH-LEVEL LIGHTING IN THE CHURCH.

Hopefully, by the time this issue of the Eagle Wing is in circulation, we will have new LED lighting in the church. This is replacement lighting for the old Halogen lights, which have been there for nearly 30 years, they are now outdated and parts and bulbs hard to come by. As previously, four of these ceiling-mounted lights will wash down the two side walls, while the other two lights will shine down on the flower arrangements.

8 PROTECTIVE GLASS COVERING TO THE COMMUNION TABLE.

I have been liaising with the Ladies from the Flower Club, who had enquired about covering the whole of the top surface of the Communion Table. This is to protect it from accidental spillages. Following some discussion, it was agreed that the ladies could proceed with this glass protection and they have agreed to purchase the glass out of their own funds.

9 THE REFURBISHMENT OF THE GENTS' TOILETS IN THE WALTER NELSON HALL.

I have measured up the existing gents toilets and have then produced drawings for the existing layout, together with two alternative layout proposals for the planned refurbishment.

10 PHOTOGRAPHS OF FORMER CLERKS OF SESSION.

All the photographs of our previous Ministers are on display in the Upper Corridor, beside the Church Office and we are in the process of doing the same for the former Clerks of Session. However all the existing photographs of the former Clerks, are of different sizes and some of the quality is rather poor. We are arranging for them to be reproduced to a standard size, with some enhancement where required and then they will be reframed.

11 THE FIELD BESIDE THE OLD MANSE.

As you are probably aware, the Church still owns the 3.5-acre field beside the old manse. Recently Dr Alan McIlmoyle, who is a member of our church and is an expert on agricultural matters, gave us some advice about the current state of this field and also provided some suggestions for our consideration. These suggestions are currently being reviewed.

12 OUR HOUSE AT 25 MAIN STREET, GROOMSPORT.

Ryan has kept our house at 25 Main Street in very reasonable condition, but certain selected areas need to be freshened up for the arrival of our new Intern, Heidi. Ian Patton has offered to repaint these areas, at no cost to the church. We appreciate this very kind gesture. Ian McDonald and his wife Anne are undertaking the cleaning of the house inside and Ian is also power hosing the outside areas, cutting hedges and generally tidying up all around the external areas.

13 THE FUTURE SECURITY OF THE WALTER NELSON HALL COMPLEX.

The Property Committee wish to make the Walter Nelson Hall Complex more secure, a Wireless Bell, together with one fixed and one portable chimer, has been purchased and installed. We are adding a new type of lock to the outside door, this will mean that this main entrance door can be kept securely locked from the inside. This type of lock, which is fully approved by the Education & Fire Authorities, can be opened very easily from the inside in the event of an emergency.

14 THE AQUA-DRAIN AT THE ENTRANCE GATES TO THE CHURCH CAR PARK.

Some time ago, an aqua-drain was provided by the Roads Authority to take the water running off our car park, and the entrance area, into the main storm drain. However, this drain has been heavily silted up and blocked for quite a while. Ian and I tried to unblock it without success. We talked to our MLA, Alan Chambers, about this problem and he has followed it up. In early August he confirmed to me that the Roads Service will shortly be cleaning out this drain.

15 WORKNIGHT TO TIDY UP THE CHURCH GROUNDS.

A team of volunteers, under Richard McCreedy's guidance, turned up on Monday evening the 12th August and, although the weather was rather inclement, a great amount of cutting and trimming of the shrubs, trees and hedges was accomplished.

16 REPAIR OF STAINED GLASS PANEL IN THE DOOR TO THE BALCONY.

Some months ago, three panes in the stained glass panel in the balcony door were accidentally broken. I subsequently arranged a meeting with a Bangor lady who repairs stained glass. Following her visit, she provided a quotation of £500 + VAT; therefore I investigated other alternatives for the repair. In the end, we decided to remove the slips on the door and then placed a thin sheet of Perspex against the damaged glass. We are hopeful that this alternative repair will suffice, at a fraction of the cost.

17 LEAK AT THE MANSE,

Unfortunately, following some recent very heavy rain, there has been a leak in the main bathroom of the Manse. In addition, when the gutters were being cleaned out a couple of weeks ago, it was noticed that some of the mortar pointing in the valleys was loose and had broken away from the roofing tiles. Accordingly, a roofing contractor has been asked to come to closely inspect the roof and make the necessary repairs and also to try to establish the source of the leak.

I think that the above seventeen items are more than sufficient at this stage and I trust that it demonstrates just how much continuous work has been undertaken on behalf of the congregation over the summer months.

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The Nix Family Update

Katie Nix

Dear Groomsport Family,

Much has changed since our last check-in. Being part of the United Methodist Church includes a vow of itinerancy, which means I go where my Bishop tells me to serve. So we have said goodbye to our church in rural Moberly and have recently begun serving in the big metropolis of St. Louis. While there were many tears goodbye, for Trinity has been a beautiful home for our family the past four years, we are THRILLED and eager to begin this next season in St. Louis. Eric and I are both 'born and raised' in St. Louis, our parents and immediate family live close by, so this is truly a coming home experience.



I am now the head pastor of Grace United Methodist Church. The sanctuary reminds me of an old European cathedral with vaulted ceilings and beautiful stain glass windows. The congregation is about the same size as my previous church, but also filled with many professors and lawyers (it helps that you can see one of the largest universities from our front door). I see so much potential at this church and they have embraced our family with open arms. With a move also comes new schools for Elizabeth and Steven who will both be starting next week. And Rebecca has begun her own adventure of potty training (prayers greatly appreciated!).



In other less exciting news; Rebecca celebrated her 2nd birthday, Elizabeth her 7th, and Eric his ... let's just say a little more than seven. Elizabeth has lost her front teeth. Steven has decided that sharks are the greatest animal ever; he now has shark pajamas, shark bedspread, shark pictures, you name it. And our beloved St. Louis Blues hockey team won the Stanley Cup!

Even though it has been many years, I believe almost 10, how did that happen? Know that you are all still in my heart. I even shared about my experience in Groomsport in my first sermon at the new church! We miss you all and love you dearly.

Katie

Faith Journey

A family was heading on holiday: two little ones were nestled in car seats; the van was packed. As Dad locked the house and Mum secured the garage, an adult neighbour, the kids knew, walked up and spoke through an open window. "Where are you going?" The kids shrugged. "Well, what road are you taking?" the friend asked with a knowing smile. Of course, they had no idea. "Do you know where you'll eat today, or where you'll spend the night?" Blank stares. Then the friend asked, "Who are you travelling with?" The children broke into grins and shouted, "Mummy and Daddy!"

On the journey of faith, we don't know precisely where we're headed or how all our needs will be met. But we know who we're travelling with: our loving God who is fully aware of the twists and turns ahead; the loving Parent who promises to care for us wherever we go.

Greetings from Missouri!

Chris Miller

The last few months in the Miller household have been joy-filled, but exhausting, as we are figuring out what life is like with both a three year old and a five month old! While both sleep well sometimes, they don't both usually sleep well at the same time.

David is enjoying the end of his summer break from preschool with lots of trips to the park, the indoor playground, and generally, anywhere he can run around. Katherine is a happy baby, delighted to smile at most anyone, and is just about able to sit up all by herself. In just a couple weeks, David will start his second year in preschool.

Things at Trinity are going well. Just this past week I was installed as the Moderator of John Calvin Presbytery, so for the next year I will get to do some extra visits with congregations in our area of the US and will run the quarterly meetings of Presbytery. Our congregation continues to grow, and we just finished a week of summer bible camp. Exciting times!

I've included a few photos of our family - enjoy!



Hello Groomsport!

Ryan Irmer

Hello Groomsport! Greetings from the Irmer family as summer flies by. Things in Lawrenceville, New Jersey continue to go quite well. Here's the latest:

- We were able to have a lovely holiday in Portugal, South of France, and the Basque Country of Spain. Seeing Roger and Doreen was one of the highlights for us. We are so grateful for our relationship that continues to thrive well after my time as a seminary intern. In addition, we are also grateful for their hospitality and pool on some hot summer days.



- Alison was selected to sing a solo in her school's chorus concert, which she sang beautifully. She also continues to enjoy learning songs on her ukulele, that she and I built together last Christmas. She is growing up quickly with her unique sense of style and personality continues to bloom.

- Amelia attended a cousin's wedding in Trinidad. Getting all of her family together along with relatives that still live there was a real treat. Being a teacher's aide is allowing her to enjoy long summer holidays.

- I continue to enjoy being a pastor at Slackwood Presbyterian Church. It is hard to believe that it's been four years since we said goodbye to you all and headed back across the pond. Our church continues to grow in many different ways: We have ten new members this year, we are in the final stages of hiring a Director of Family Ministries, and our congregation continues to get more and more diverse. For all these things and more, I am extremely grateful.

Whether you live in N. Ireland or the USA, there is no doubt we live in challenging times. May we continue to have Jesus Christ as our foundation, which unites and provides us with the courage, strength, and wisdom to do God's will in pursuing justice, mercy, and peace wherever we live.

All the best,
Ryan, Amelia & Alison Irmer

These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

Weekly Activities In The Walter Nelson Hall Complex

SUNDAY

Sunday School & Bible Class	10:15 am
Congregational Coffee Mornings (Last Sunday in the month excluding June - August & December)	10:15 - 11:15 am

MONDAY

PW (2nd & 4th Mondays)	8:00 pm
BB Anchor Boys & Junior Section (5-11 yrs)	7:00 - 8:00 pm

TUESDAY

Tuesday Club (1st Tuesday in every month)	2:00 pm
Tuesday Film Club (3rd Tuesday in the month Oct - March)	2:00 pm
Leisure Group	7:30 - 9:00 pm

WEDNESDAY

Badminton Club	10:00 am
Friendship Lunch (last Wednesday in the month, Oct – April, sign up sheet available in the church)	1:00 pm
Indoor Bowling Club	7:15 pm
Midweek Prayer and Bible Study	7:30 pm

THURSDAY

Brownies	6:30 - 7:45 pm
Rainbow Guides	6:30 - 7:30 pm
Guides	7:30 - 9:00 pm

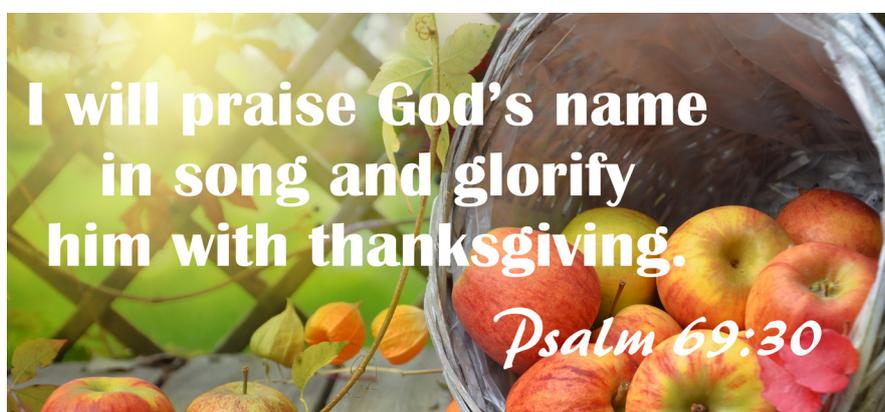
SATURDAY

Coffee Mornings (June-August incl)	10:30 am - noon
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Prayer does not change God, but it changes those who pray.

Forthcoming Services

7:00 pm, Sunday 22nd September	Installation and Ordination of new Elders
11:30 am, Sunday 29th September	Sunday School and Children's Church Leaders Dedication service
11:30 am, Sunday 6th October 6.00 pm	Communion Service Parish Church Harvest Thanksgiving
11:30 am, Sunday 13th October 7:00 pm	Harvest Service, guest speaker Rev Mark Catney, convenor of United Appeal Harvest Service and Supper
10:30 am, Sunday 10th November	Service of Remembrance
11:30 am, Sunday 24th November	Uniformed Organisations' Day
11:30 am, Sunday 15th December 7.00 pm	Gift Day Advent Communion
7:00 pm, Sunday 22nd December	Carol Service
10:30 am, Wednesday 25th December	Christmas Day Family Service



Dates For Your Diary

10:30am, Saturday 12th October	Leisure Group Coffee Morning
1:00pm, Wednesday 30th October	Friendship Lunch
10:30am, Saturday 23rd November	PW Coffee Morning
1:00pm, Wednesday 27th November	Friendship Lunch
1:00pm, Wednesday 11th December	Christmas Lunch