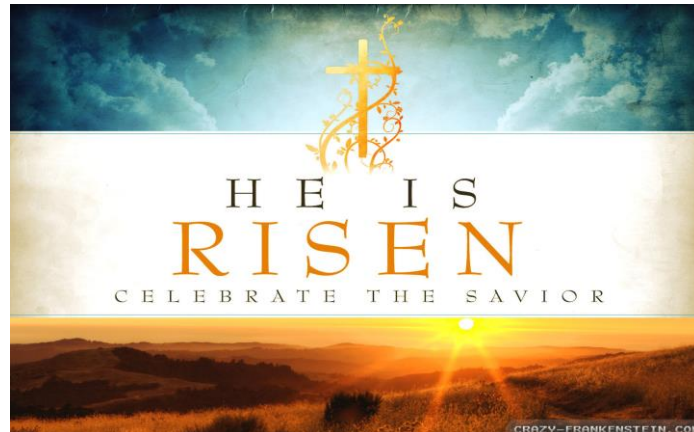


# *Eagle Wing Newsletter*



*Easter 2024*

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## Message from the Minister



As we emerge from the grip of the pandemic, it is remarkable how infrequently we now find ourselves discussing COVID-19. Once dominating headlines, statistics, and conversations, it has slipped into the background of our collective consciousness. Yet, its impact remains palpable, its reality undeniable. We have adapted, we have endured, and to a large degree we have overcome, but the scars it has left are a testament to its enduring presence in our lives.

In a similar vein, sin, much like the virus, is a reality that we often overlook or avoid discussing in contemporary discourse. We may shy away from acknowledging its existence, preferring instead to focus on more comfortable topics. However, just as COVID-19 lingers, so too does sin persist in our world, affecting our lives in profound ways.

Sin can be understood as a spiritual disease, its symptoms manifest in various forms: self-centredness, greed, hatred, and injustice, to name a few. Despite its pervasive influence, we tend to downplay its significance or relegate it to the realm of antiquated religious rhetoric.

Yet, it is precisely this disease of sin that underscores the profound significance of Easter. The Easter story reminds us that sin is not merely a theological abstraction but a tangible reality with profound consequences. It is the reason for Christ's sacrificial death on the cross. He bore the weight of our sin so that we would be redeemed, liberated from guilt and shame.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of our faith and the ultimate expression of hope. In his triumph over death, we find assurance that sin and its consequences have been decisively defeated. Easter serves as a powerful reminder that forgiveness is not merely a distant possibility but a present reality, made possible through Christ's life, death and resurrection.

In a world beset by uncertainty, disease and turmoil, Easter offers a message of hope. It invites us to confront the reality of sin, both individually and collectively, and to embrace the transformative power of grace. Through Christ's resurrection, we are offered the promise of new life, reconciled to God and to one another.

As we celebrate Easter this year, let us not forget the significance of this momentous occasion, acknowledging the reality of our sin and the profound implications of Christ's sacrifice. May we find comfort and assurance in the knowledge that, through his death and resurrection, we are offered the gift of eternal life and hope everlasting.

Wishing you the blessing of Easter.

Your minister



# CONGREGATIONAL RECORD

## DEATHS

25 <sup>th</sup> December 2023	Mrs Rita McAlpin	District 23
15 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	Mrs Valerie Peattie	District 24

### **Useful Contacts**

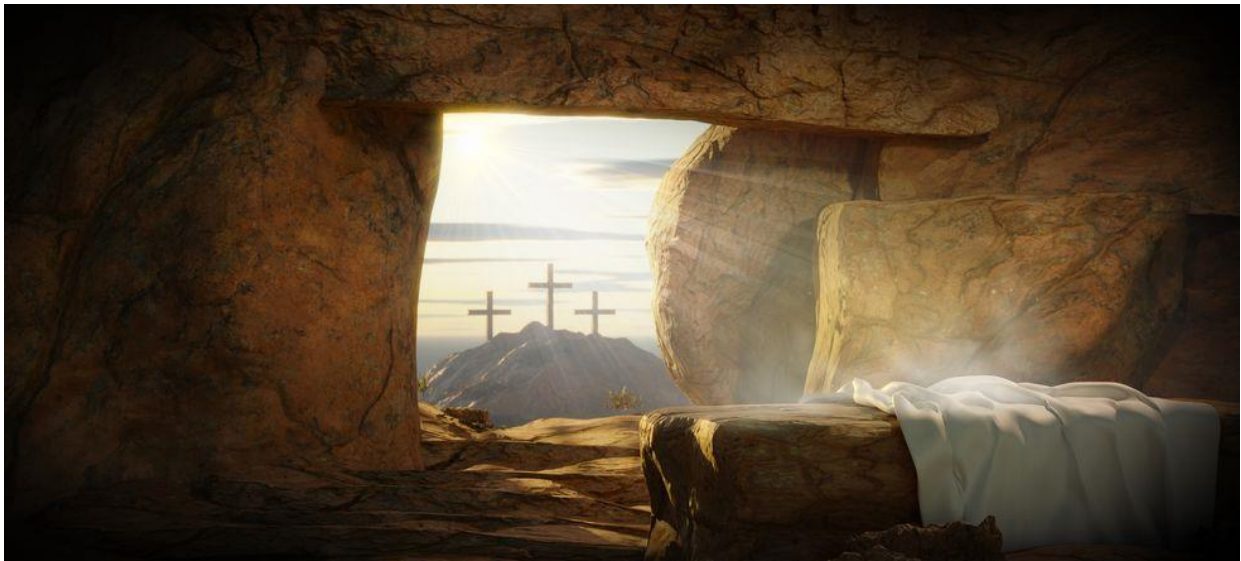
Minister: Rev Paul Dalzell 07909 896123  
Pastoral Assistant: Rev Denis Campbell 07716 332769  
Clerk of Session: Dr Michael Steele 028 9127 4559  
Facilities Coordinator: Mr Ian McDonald 07899 718089  
Office Secretary: Mrs Julie McClurg 028 9146 2552

Email: [office@groomspresbyterian.com](mailto:office@groomspresbyterian.com)  
Church Website: [www.groomspresbyterian.com](http://www.groomspresbyterian.com)

## **FORTHCOMING SERVICES**

Friday 29th March 8.00pm Good Friday Communion Service

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March 11.00am Easter Sunday Service



## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May Christian Aid Coffee Morning

12th – 18th May Christian Aid Week

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May Communion Service

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> June Children's Day

## Easter Prayer Room

### A special invite from Elliot and friends down the road!

Our prayer room is running from Monday 25th to Wednesday 27th March, open 7am to 7pm. It's in the Parish Church halls, Avril Morley Room - just go in the door and turn left and to the end of the corridor!

It's a place with reflective and creative prayer activities (see picture from last year), to spend time with the One who loves us more than anyone else ever could, and who is closer than our very breath - our Lord Jesus, present with us by His Spirit!

Open to all, from all backgrounds, to come in to for as long or as short as you'd like.

(Feel free to sign up for a specific hour slot on the rota in the porch of Groomsport Parish Church, or pop in anytime you'd like!)

We long for revival in our community and nation!



**Also coming soon .....**



**Coffee Morning and  
collection of duvets and toiletries**

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> April  
10.30 – 12.00**



**Men's Coffee Morning**

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May at 10.00am**

**Guest Speaker: Stephen Woods  
from Tools for Soladarity**

**Do come along and show your support,  
you will be made very welcome**

## AGM on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024

At our recent AGM, following a time of worship, the congregation received the reports from the Clerk of Session, Alastair McQuoid, Treasurer, Chris Thompson and Property Convener, Lowry Manson.

This was a particularly special evening as it saw the completion of Alastair's 5 year term of office as Clerk. Rev. Paul Dalzell paid tribute to Alastair's years of sterling service and presented a gift on behalf of the congregation.

The new Clerk of Session, Dr Michael Steele, was welcomed and gave a short speech.

Entertainment was provided by Susan Shepherd, award-winning and highly versatile Carrickfergus soprano. A graduate of Queen's University Belfast, Susan holds a First Class Honours and a Masters in Music. Susan sang various classical pieces and songs from the shows and her singing was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

The evening finished with a light supper, prepared by Valerie McCutcheon.

Here is a selection of photographs from the evening:



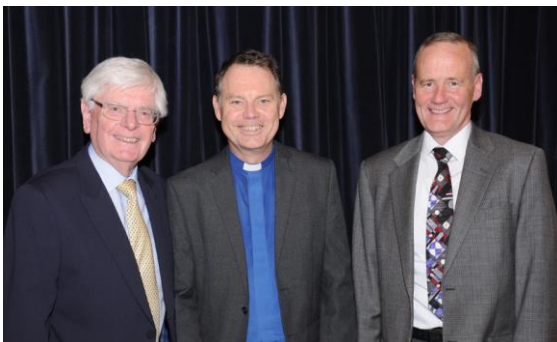
Alastair McQuoid - Outgoing Clerk



Catherine Dalzell (right) presented flowers to the soloist, Susan Shepherd (left)



The outgoing Clerk, Alastair McQuoid, wishes the incoming Clerk, Michael Steele God's blessing

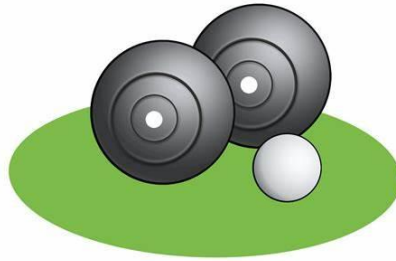


Outgoing Clerk and incoming Clerk with Rev Paul Dalzell



Julie Steele (left) presented flowers to Freda McQuoid





## **THE BOWLING CLUB**

Bowling Club meet on Wednesday evenings at 7.15pm in the Walter Nelson Hall where we finish with a cup of tea/coffee and chat after a few games.

We opened our season back in September when both new and existing members were welcomed for a time of fun and fellowship.

We have played friendly matches with local clubs, and everyone appeared to enjoy the friendship and good-hearted competition. The other clubs were willing to host these matches for which we are most grateful.

We held in house matches towards the end of the season and trophies are awarded to the worthy winners at our annual dinner to be held in Carnalea Golf Club in March.

Jean Wilson - Secretary



## **A BRIEF UPDATE ON THE REFURBISHMENT CONTRACT**

The building work to the Coffee Bar, the Toilets, Lobby and the Entrance Foyer has continued well, despite the very poor weather over the winter months, with the heavy rain and strong winds occurring on a frequent basis.

All of the internal walls and ceilings have been plastered and painting will be starting soon. The various new doors have been hung and they also will be painted shortly.

Various meetings have taken place with regard to the Servery in the Coffee Bar to decide on the exact locations of all the items of equipment, together with the finishes to the Servery.

The colour schemes have been chosen, as have the floor finishes in the different rooms within the refurbished and extended areas.

At present new furniture is being researched, mostly by Elaine and Ann and it hopefully will be ordered soon so that when the Building Contract is complete by the end of April 2024, we can start getting the new accommodation furnished.

The existing slated roof of the Main Hall is very unsightly, and it will be cleaned in the next few weeks to remove all the old lichen. Although we repaired this roof last year, unfortunately due to the very strong winds of late, some slates have slipped or have been broken and these will be replaced/repositioned soon.

I really think that you will be greatly impressed with the newly enlarged Coffee Bar with its significant views over the harbour and beyond. The new Servery will be very attractive and the lighting throughout the Coffee Bar will really enhance this area.

The Entrance Foyer will also hopefully impress you, with its curved full height glazing providing great views from the harbour, right around to Main Street.

The due date for the completion of the Contract is Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2024, but following that date it will be several weeks before the new accommodation will be ready for use to allow for the fitting out.

Lowry Manson- Property Convenor



View out of the Coffee Bar



Inside the newly extended Coffee Bar



View from inside the Entrance Foyer.

## The Lighthouse School in Gaza



*'Wake and Shake'*

*The beginning of the school day three weeks before the start of the war in Gaza.*

We have all watched with horror the situation in Gaza, the West Bank, East Jerusalem and in Israel, international law has been broken and a humanitarian disaster is imminent in Gaza.

Since the last bulletin I have to report that Christmas 2023 was cancelled. The services were celebrated but hope and joy were hard to find ... instead the part of the Christmas story where Herod killed the children has sadly been happening here in Gaza.

Bethlehem was empty of the usual tourists and pilgrims and this of course meant no work, no jobs, no income for vast numbers of Palestinians ... Christmas was cancelled.

On an update on 4th March John Angle reports that in the 4 months since the war began almost all of the Church institutions in Gaza have suffered at least moderate damage or been destroyed. Tragically, so many Palestinian children have lost their lives ..... either killed in military incidents or have died because they could not get medical care.

The Lighthouse School itself is still standing, although they have lost a classroom and upper room. The walls are pit marked, the solar panels, windows gone and the playground is damaged by burning cars, but, it is all repairable.

Around it the Al Ahli Hospital has been bombed and abandoned, the nearby R.C., Orthodox and Baptist churches have been damaged. With this brings looting which again is part of war!

Food in the north, around Gaza city is in very short supply (about 2/3 weeks left) and again this brings a black market and exorbitant prices.

John Angle, who describes himself as a 'realistic in faith' Christian believes the school will reopen even though some of the children and teachers have been killed.

He believes the Christian community will remain, although many are inevitably talking of leaving, some to Canada or Australia: a) if they can get out and b) if they have the money to get out - at present it costs several thousand dollars to get a visa to leave.

John, who has just returned from visiting the West Bank has never seen the people so depressed. There are just so many difficulties and so much hate and most have friends and family in Gaza. He has never felt the situation so bad or so tense in the West Bank. However, the Lighthouse School is desperately needed. The other schools have either been destroyed or are being occupied by refugees from the war.

As well as education it also provides a sense of security, a place of safety where Muslims and Christians work together, pray and worship together - a very rare thing in itself.

John Angle quotes Brother Andrew of Open Doors when he says from Rev.3 'strengthen what remains and is about to die'.

Hope Christian Trust will be using its finances to repair the school, to ensure the payment of the teachers' salaries (which currently have been paid up to the end of 2023) and to ensure that people are fed and where possible housed. The aim of Hope Christian Trust is to see peace and good relationships in the land. To see the lessening and moderation of extremists on both sides and to see the Christian community being resilient and flourishing in the land where Jesus walked.

Rosalind MacNeice.



It has been about 15 years since we first created our church website and since then there have been regular refreshes but now as we plan for the reopening of our new and refurbished halls the Kirk Session made the decision to update and renew our website at the same time.

A new IT company has been appointed to manage the new

site and currently there is a lot of work going on in the background designing and populating the new site.

**Watch out for our new look on the World Wide Web!**

Fiona McCreedy



Follow us on social media  
for weekly news and events.



Scan the QR code to find Groomspport Presbyterian Church  
on Facebook.



## 60 years an Elder

Congratulations to Billy McCreedy who has served as elder in our congregation for 60 years.

He was ordained to the office of elder on 15th March 1964, having previously served for number of years on the Congregational Committee.

As an elder he represented the congregation for over 20 years as the Transferor Representative on the Groomspoint Primary School Board of Governors, for many years he served on the

Management Committee of Sunnyside House, and for a number of years was the Representative Elder to Presbytery.

The Kirk Session was honoured to have Billy serve as Clerk of Session from September 1996 until September 2013.

As well as congratulating Billy, we give thanks to God for the blessing he has been to the congregation in many ways and for his continued service.

*(Rev Paul Dalzell)*





This year marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Leprosy Mission. It was started by an Irishman, Wellesley Bailey who travelled out to India to work in the American Presbyterian Mission. There he saw for the first time the devastating effects of leprosy. He married his childhood sweetheart Alice in Bombay cathedral in 1870 and this began a lifelong partnership in raising awareness and fighting this terrible disease. The ‘Mission to Lepers’ was born in 1874 and, in response to the talks given by the Baileys, people began giving money and praying for their work. By the late 1870s the Mission was raising £900 a year and caring for 100 leprosy-affected people in North India.



The Mission’s first hospital, Purulia Leprosy Hospital in West Bengal, opened in 1888. Money raised by the Mission helped to build a home for leprosy-affected people in Neyyoor in South India.

In 1906 Wellesley toured the Far East extending the Mission’s work through China, then on to New Zealand, Australia, the Philippines, Japan, Korea, back to China and then on to Malaysia, Singapore and India. This was no mean feat in the early 1900’s and took a lot of faith and courage. During this tour Wellesley gave more than 150 talks, met with many government officials and visited leprosy homes. By the time Wellesley retired in 1917, the Mission was running 87 programmes in 12 different countries.

Today TLM is a global organisation. It employs around 2,000 staff around the world and implements or supports projects in more than 20 countries. Thankfully we now have antibiotics to cure leprosy but it is still a disease that goes hand in hand with poverty. A holistic approach is therefore needed to eradicate leprosy. TLM funds community workers to identify those suffering from leprosy and educate people how it can be prevented and treated successfully.



It also funds treatments to counteract the damaging consequences of the disease such as reconstructive surgery, physiotherapy and provision of shoes to prevent further damage to numb feet.

At our leprosy mission service this year we were delighted to welcome Rebecca Parnell who is the church partnership officer for TLM NI. Rebecca gave an informative address about the work being undertaken by the leprosy mission throughout the world. She told us the inspiring story of Kashi who had been treated for and cured of leprosy as a child in Anandaban Hospital in Nepal. Later he trained as a nurse and is now working in the hospital caring for those currently receiving treatment there. TLM is hoping that with continued support from churches in Northern Ireland and elsewhere that it would be possible to eliminate leprosy from the world by 2035.

Over the years Groomsport Presbyterian Church has loyally supported the leprosy mission. It was a privilege to have three former leprosy mission convenors at the service on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> March, Nessa McCutcheon, Dorothy Johnston and Stephanie McCreedy. We owe them a great debt of gratitude for their tireless work in supporting TLM over many years. Rebecca joined us in a photograph to celebrate this amazing achievement.



If you would like to contribute to this year's appeal you can send a cheque to our church office or give directly to our church treasurer,

Mr Chris Thompson.

Don't forget to mark any cheques with  
'The Leprosy Mission'. Thank you.

(Dr Michael Steele, Chair of GPC Mission Committee)

## Hello from Heidi ...

Dear friends at Groomsport,

I miss you all and think of you often! It was such a joy to visit Groomsport briefly in May 2023, though I was sad that it was such a quick visit.



I am currently in the fourth year of my doctoral studies in New Testament at Duke University. I am in the middle of writing my dissertation, which focuses on age (young, old, and in-between) in Luke's Gospel and Acts. I hope to finish and defend my dissertation in Spring 2025. This year, I have also been teaching Greek to students studying for ministry. I have so enjoyed walking with my students as they have studied this language in order to read the New Testament in its original language.

In addition to keeping up with my studies, I have been involved in a local congregation here, and I also frequently preach at various other congregations. And in fact, because of the different ways I have been involved in ministry, I have just been fully approved for ordination! (The photo here shows me being examined for ordination at my Presbytery's meeting in February.) Details about the ordination service are forthcoming, but the service will likely be held in April. Being ordained will not particularly change my responsibilities for now, but it will allow me to preside over Communion when I preach at different congregations.

I remain truly grateful for my time in Groomsport and my time with each of you. You are in my prayers frequently, and my time being shaped by all of you continues to impact my life and ministry.

Love,

Heidi Biermann

## Update from Ryan



Greetings to you my brothers and sisters at Groomsport Presbyterian!

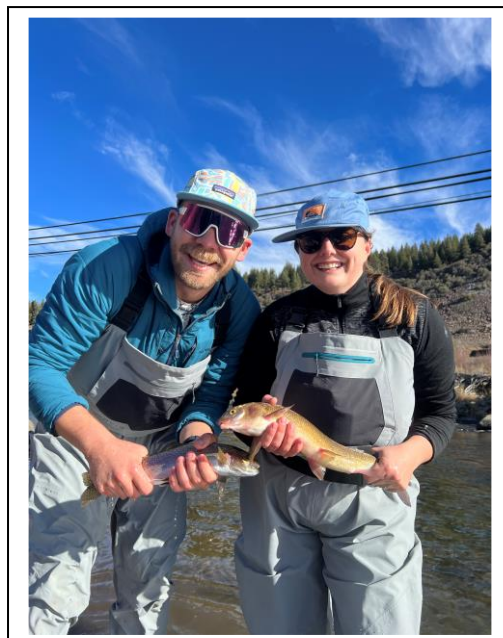
I am sending my love from sunny Danville California where I live and pastor. I miss you all and I continue to pray for you in the moments when Groomsport comes across my mind.

I am working as an ordained pastor within the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, which is a sister denomination of the PCI. God is so faithful in how he has prepared me to work in his church. Work as a Pastoral Care pastor is something that Groomsport prepared me to do.

Spending time with you learning how to talk about life and death and the things in-between has enabled me to minister to the people of my church. Learning the art of preaching from Paul and from your helpful feedback (and endurance of my sermons) was a paradigm shift. And the time of quiet conversation and contemplation at this pilgrim journey God has us on continues to bring a richness to my faith as I pray about what God is doing in our midst.

I am so grateful for my time with each one of you, and I hope that I am able to see you soon!!

Here is a recent photo of my wife, Maggie, and me on a recent trip fly fishing in the mountains of California!





You can support this work by donating the usual groceries.  
**Storehouse North Down** appreciates your ongoing support  
with the cupboard essentials.



*Thank you!!*

*Rev Paul Dalzell and members of  
Groomsport Presbyterian Church ..*

*We would like to express our sincere  
thanks for all the beautiful flowers, cards, gifts and  
phone calls of support the Simpson family received  
following Don's passing in November 23.  
The contact was very much appreciated at a very  
difficult time, and we will never forget your kindness  
and generosity.*

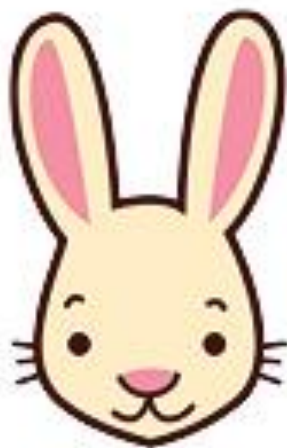
*Kind Regards to all  
Agnes and family circle*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Easter Day

## Word Hunt

**DIRECTIONS:**  
Find and circle the  
vocabulary words  
in the grid. Look  
for them in all  
directions including  
backwards and  
diagonally.



BASKET

BUNNY

CANDY

CARROT

CHICKS

CHOCOLATE

DAFFODIL

DECORATE

EASTER

EGGS

FLOWER

HUNT

JELLYBEANS

PARADE

SPRING

SUNDAY





(Photograph taken by Jonathan Manson)

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