

# *Eagle Wing Newsletter*



*Christmas 2023*

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## Message from the Minister



Most of us are familiar with the Christmas carol, “Good King Wenceslas”. It’s a song that tells a story about a Bohemian king (modern day Czech Republic), Wenceslaus I, who ruled in the 10th century.

Wenceslaus, also known as Vaclav the Good, was born around 907 and was the Duke of Bohemia from 921 until his assassination in 935. Though he died young, his influence was felt by many. He built numerous churches in Bohemia and was deeply respected as a pious, moral, educated, and intelligent man who promoted the Christian faith and took care of the poor, the sick, the widowed, and the orphaned by doing charitable deeds. He is considered a martyr and a saint in the Czech Republic and is the patron saint of the country.

The carol was translated from a Czech poem by John Mason Neale and published in 1853. The lyrics were then set to a thirteenth century tune.

The lyrics of "Good King Wenceslas" describe the king's compassionate act on St. Stephen's Day (26<sup>th</sup> December). According to the legend, Wenceslaus braved harsh winter weather to provide gifts for a poor peasant. The carol portrays the king and his page walking through the snow to deliver food, fuel, and wine to the peasant's dwelling.

The last four lines bring this challenge and assurance

“Therefore, Christian men, be sure,  
Wealth or rank possessing,  
Ye who now will bless the poor,  
Shall yourselves find blessing.”

Thank you to all who give so generously, not just at Christmas, but throughout the year. Your generosity is evident in so many ways, be that special appeals, such as the Turkey/Syria earthquake appeal earlier in 2023, or the ongoing appeals for Storehouse, the International Meeting Point and many, many more.

Unlike Wenceslaus, your generosity may not have a poem or carol written about it but let us always remember what Jesus, the one whose birth we celebrate, taught. In the gospel of Matthew, in chapter 25, Jesus teaches that whenever we give food to the hungry, water to the thirsty, shelter to those without homes, clothes to those who have nothing, care to those who are ill or wrongfully imprisoned, when we do this we are doing it for the Lord Jesus.

Wishing you a very happy Christmas and peace filled New Year.

Your minister

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Paul Taylor M.".

# CONGREGATIONAL RECORD

## DEATHS

13 <sup>th</sup> July 202	Mrs Susan Nixon	District 6
22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2023	Mrs Lillian Strutt	District 19
2 <sup>nd</sup> August 2023	Mr John Dalzell	District 8
27 <sup>th</sup> August 2023	Mrs Jean Martin	District 9
10 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	Mrs Susan Greer	District 8
11 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	Mrs Rosemary Kerr	District 9
15 <sup>th</sup> October 2023	Mrs June Goldie	District 23
18 <sup>th</sup> November 2023	Mrs Harriet Bell	District 2
20 <sup>th</sup> November 2023	Mr Don Simpson	District 18
24 <sup>th</sup> November 2023	Mrs Rea Rea	District 17

## NEW MEMBERS

Mr Eric and Mrs Carole McClure, District 4

### Useful Contacts

Minister: Rev Paul Dalzell 07909 896123  
Pastoral Assistant: Rev Denis Campbell 07716 332769  
Clerk of Session: Mr Alastair McQuoid 028 9188 3695  
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)



**CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT**  
**SUNDAY 17th DECEMBER 2023**  
**7.00 pm**

Do plan to attend this special service of lessons and carols, regarded over the years as a meaningful way to welcome the Christmas season. The choir has been rehearsing appropriate music this year, with a mixture of contemporary and popular carols.

There will be the usual opportunity for the good congregational singing for which Groomsport Presbyterian is renowned.

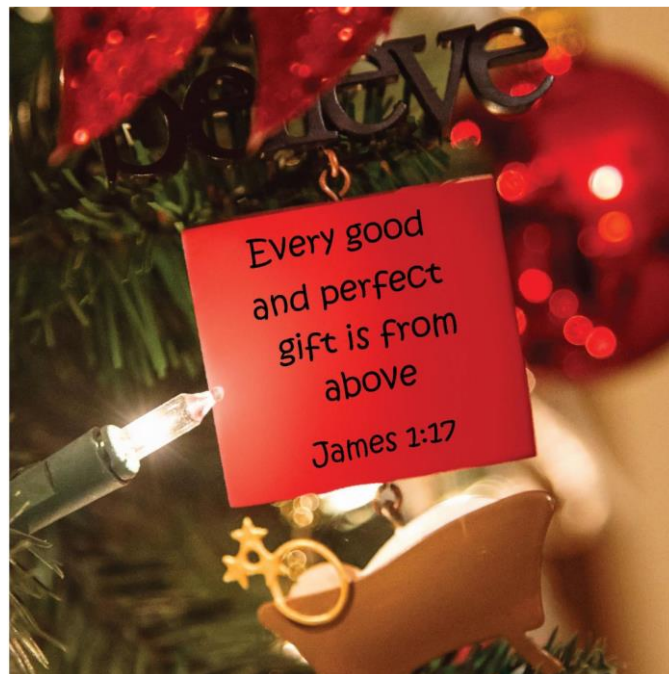
A full church will be a true encouragement for those who are preparing to make this a service of real significance.

# FORTHCOMING SERVICES

Carols by Candlelight  
Sunday 17th December  
at 7.00pm

Monday 25th December 10.30am Christmas Day Family Service

Sunday 7th January 11.00am New Year Communion Service



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February Congregational Committee Meeting

Saturday 2nd March PW Coffee Morning

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March AGM



# Presbyterian Women /

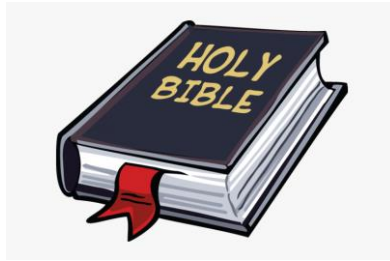
Despite the inconvenience of building works, PW is really thriving. Ladies of all ages are welcome to come along and join us on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays of each month at 7.30pm in The Archie Agnew Hall. You will receive a very warm welcome, friendship and fellowship.

As I write this, we are looking forward to our Christmas Party where Alastair's Lilters are coming to entertain us.

Our programme for the New Year is as follows:

8 <sup>th</sup> January	Our own David Irwin Travelling the world
22 <sup>nd</sup> January	Karen Patterson Ballycrochan Artisan
12 <sup>th</sup> February	Henry Coulter International Meeting Point Belfast
26 <sup>th</sup> February	Bible Study and Scarecrow!!!
11 <sup>th</sup> March	Sandra Weir Quilts with a message
25 <sup>th</sup> March	Final night and AGM

**Our Spring Coffee Morning will be Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> March**



Some may be interested to know that this December marks the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Ordination of the Rev Dr. David Irwin to the Christian ministry.

He was ordained in Woodvale Presbyterian Church in Belfast as an Assistant Minister in 1963.

David exercised a very happy ministry here in Groomsport from 1966 – 1991, before being called to McCracken Memorial in Belfast.

He served there until his retirement in 2003.



## **Christmas Child Shoe Box Appeal**

A big thank you to all those who supported the Samaritan's Purse Shoe Box Appeal for needy children worldwide.

Groomsport has donated 65 boxes.

Each box will bring the message of God's love to a child and let them know that others are thinking of them. Thank you so much.



Maureen Irwin

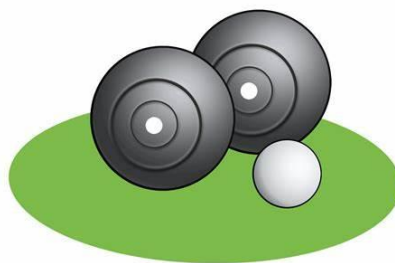


### BADMINTON CLUB

The Badminton Club meets on Wednesday mornings from 10.00am to 12 noon in the Walter Nelson Hall.

New members will be made most welcome to enjoy, chat, tea, coffee and, of course, exercise. Previous experience is not necessary, and we have spare rackets available if you would just like to give it a try.

Margaret McCreedy



### THE BOWLING CLUB

The bowling club continues to meet on Wednesday evenings at 7.15pm when we have a few games and finish with a cup of tea/coffee.

We welcomed four new members this season and we hope they enjoy the fun and fellowship with all of us.

A few matches are booked with other clubs and due to ongoing work in the Walter Nelson Hall these clubs are gladly willing to host these matches for which we are most grateful.

Jean Wilson



### THE LEISURE GROUP

The Leisure Group resumed meeting in October. Our group has grown in numbers and has a broad range of ladies from across the community.

One of our members volunteered to sing and, accompanied by her also talented husband, entertained us on a recent evening. We really had a wonderful musical evening enjoyed by our group and their friends. As a result of this event the sum of £455 was raised for various charities.

We also are hosting a Coffee Morning on Saturday 2nd December in the Walter Nelson Hall. Money raised from this morning will again be for charity.

We meet in a Tuesday evening at 7.15pm. Anyone interested in joining the group would be made very welcome.

Sandra Todd



You can support this work by donating the usual groceries.  
**Storehouse North Down** will be in need **after** Christmas  
when stocks are often low.

We would appreciate the following items:- cooking oil, tinned sweetcorn, tinned custard, tea bags, long life milk and ladies shampoo and/or deodorant.

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

### **INTRODUCTION**

In my last article for the Autumn Edition of the Eagle Wing, I mentioned that because it was written in mid-August 2023, that you would notice quite a difference in the work related to the Refurbishment Contract by the time you were reading it, and this proved to be the case.

A considerable amount of work has been undertaken over recent months and despite the extremely poor weather during October and November, at the time of writing this article, the Contract is both on Programme and on Budget.

However, the extensive glazing for the windows and doors, will not be available to install until mid-December and this might well result in an overall delay.

### **THE HEATING**

During September the new gas boiler was installed and following that all the associated heating pipes were then taken from the boiler house, through various stores and fixed to the walls of the Main Hall and the Irwin Room and Archie Agnew Hall and also connected into the newly refurbished areas. There are now numerous heating pipes, because the new system provides independent heating to every hall, or room, within our accommodation and this is a vast improvement to our previous arrangement, where if you required heat in a particular hall, other unoccupied halls had also to be heated. The heating was up and running from the beginning of October and we would thank the various organisations who agreed to delaying their usual September start to allow this work to be completed.

The electrical work has also progressed very well and the first-fix has been completed and soon the second phase of this work will start.

### **THE MAIN CONTRACTOR, THE SUBCONTRACTORS & THE DESIGN TEAM**

Our Main Contractor DA Wishart has been great to work with and nothing seems to be a bother to them and they have a very good foreman on site called Davy Graham, who is on top of everything and is a very skilled workman.

The various Subcontractors have all worked well together, which is not always easy on a confined site.

Judith Hamilton, our Architect, has really been superb and knows about everything that is going on and she chairs the monthly site meetings and prepares comprehensive minutes.

The remainder of the Design Team, consisting the Mechanical & Electrical Consultants, the Structural Engineers and the Quantity Surveyor have all carried out their various tasks to a high standard.

### **OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS**

A meeting has been planned for the end of November to discuss and agree the finer details of the Coffee Bar and especially the curved Servery Area, which will include a fridge, a dish washer, several shelves and drawer units, a sink, a hand rinse and two water boilers. In addition, the fittings and fixtures, together with the finishes and overall colour scheme will be decided and Elaine Nixon-Shepherd and Ann Williams will join me at this meeting with Judith.

We have discovered several problems with the original building construction completed in 1978, especially in the old Coffee Bar, with badly rusted steelwork and also that the base plates to the two steel posts, which supported the overhead beam, above the old window, were sitting a couple of feet above floor level and spanned across the cavity in the lower wall, resulting in inadequate and improper base support. We are so fortunate that this significant, previously hidden, defect was discovered and also that we weren't planning to use any of these old structures in the Refurbishment. As I mentioned in my Autumn article, if these serious structural defects hadn't been detected, we would have incurred considerable expenditure in sorting them out.

In addition, we also have discovered, when the underground drainage was being investigated, that some runs of pipework were not laid in the proper direction, and I am very surprised that this hasn't caused blockage problems to date. New pipework has been installed to correct this existing problem.

### **THANKS FOR YOUR PATIENCE & UNDERSTANDING**

Finally, just a word of thanks for your patience and understanding of the situation during the course of the contract and also for complying with the various necessary changes, which will need to be in place until the end of April 2024.

Lowry Manson- Property Convenor



The Coffee Bar



The Coffee Bar



The Entrance Foyer



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.

What has happened to these children and their families?

I received these photos at the beginning of November from John Angle. I would ask you to pray for these children, their families, and their teachers as we come to the season of Advent and Christmas.



Checking for clean nails on a Monday morning





Wake and shake

Rosalind MacNeice



Kidszone is going from strength to strength. We have approximately 20 children on our register with numbers varying each week. We have a variety of activities for the children to do each week learning about a story from the Bible. We have been talking about Parables recently.

We are looking forward to our Gift Day Service on 10th December when the children will lead the service. Our gifts will be donated to Belfast Central Mission.

We hope that a special visitor might make an appearance on 17th December!!



Kidszone runs all year so there's no break at Christmas!

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas.

The Kidszone Team.

World Development Appeal - 2023

**STARTING**  
*from* **SCRATCH** 

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**HOPE FOR THE DISPLACED**



Money raised from the World Development Appeal is used to help poor communities around the world escape poverty. This is done through sustained development using innovative improvements in agricultural techniques, education, using local technology, setting up local cooperatives and empowering communities to stand up against powerful vested interests. Sustained development helps communities face crises such as flooding or drought so that they are able to better cope when these misfortunes arrive.

The 2023 World Development Appeal focuses on people who have been forced to leave their homes and land and start their lives from scratch.

Conflict, climate change, land grabbing – these are just a few of the reasons for displacement. The Appeal highlights those who have been forced to leave the homes they've lived in and the land they've worked for, people who have had to ask, "How do we start again?" The Appeal will support two projects, one in Bangladesh run by Tearfund and the other in Sierra Leone run by Christian Aid. To learn more about these projects please visit the PCI website: [www.presbyterianireland.org](http://www.presbyterianireland.org)

Please pray for the work of Tearfund and Christian Aid as they work to help the most marginalised people in our world. Pray for the people who have had to start from scratch after being displaced from their homes and are living in the shadow of injustice. Please give generously to this year's World Development Appeal using the envelopes in the pews. Thank You.



(Photograph taken by Jonathan Manson)

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