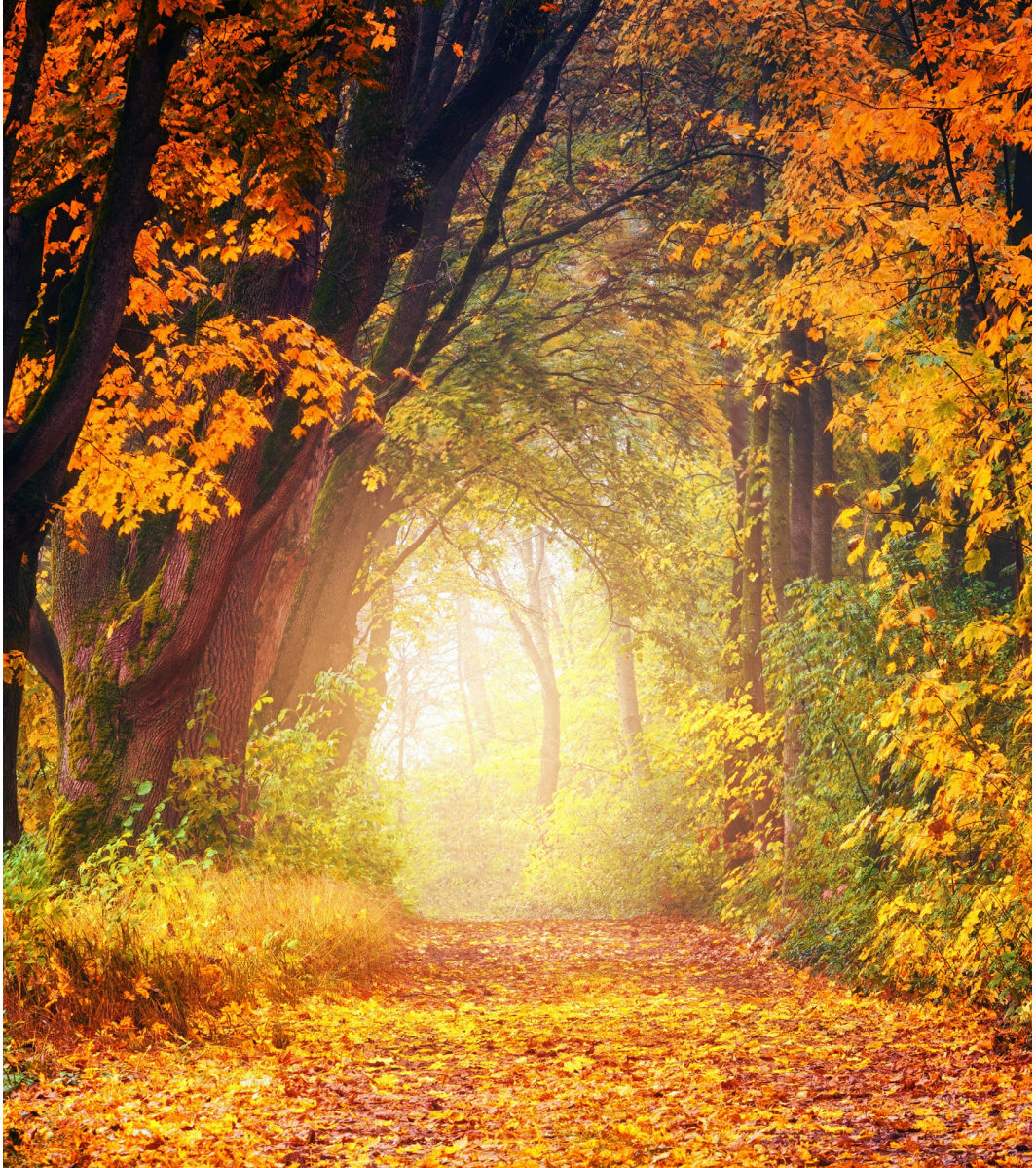




Eagle Wing

Autumn 2023



You designed and made the earth

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

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Message From the Minister



Arvo Pärt may not be widely recognized among the general public, but his contributions to classical and sacred music are noteworthy. Born on 11th September 1935, the Estonian composer has earned numerous international accolades and honorary doctorate degrees. Following a series of challenges in his personal life over a seven to eight-year period, including a difficult marriage and an extended illness, the extremely talented, Mr Pärt, embraced the Christian faith and became a member of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

In a review of his work, The Guardian quoted Mr Pärt as saying that he wants his music to express “love for every note” he writes or plays.

Whatever our life’s calling, whatever we fill each day with, God wants us to express love for every ‘note’ he gives us to write or play. Many things in life are important, including faith and hope, but the greatest and most important thing is love. As Paul reminds us in Corinthians, if we don’t have love then everything is pointless and useless (1 Corinthians 13).

That was exactly why God came into the world in Jesus Christ, to show us the centrality of love. Of course before Jesus was born many knew of God’s love for them. In no less than 35 of the 150 Psalms, the writers remind us that God’s love endures forever. But it was in the coming of Jesus that God showed us just how much he loved us: This is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins (1 John 4:10). It is in and through the Lord Jesus that we know and experience God’s love and because of this we want to say thank you.

October will give us two very special opportunities to say thank you to God for his love to us.

The first is on Sunday 1st October when we will share in the communion meal at morning worship. This simple meal is a means by which we remember God's love for us in the Lord Jesus dying and rising again, and by eating the bread and drinking the wine we have this special time to say thank you. Bread reminds us of Christ's body broken on the cross and wine speaks of his blood shed. Please may I underline that this simple meal, what we call communion, is not for those who are very good, or for those who are thought to be righteous, quite the opposite, communion is for sinners. It is for all who, like the tax collector, come praying, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner" (Luke 18:13). So if that is your attitude of heart, can I invite you to come and to share in the communion service and say thank you to God for his love which endures forever in Jesus Christ.



The second opportunity to say thank you to God for his love to us will be on the Sunday 8th October in the harvest services at 11am and 7pm. This is a very timely reminder that the food we have, the good things that we enjoy eating, are all because of God's love for us, providing for our daily physical needs. As in previous years, the choir will have prepared special anthems

which will enhance and enrich our worship as together we give thanks to our God.

It might be a considerable time since you took communion or perhaps have come to church, but whether a long time or short can I assure you of a most loving welcome to our church family.

Wishing you God's blessing and the knowledge of his love which endures forever.

Yours in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Paul Taylor M." The signature is written in a cursive style.

Editorial

As waves kiss our shores and harvest time beckons, we're reminded of the eternal dance of change and constancy. Having witnessed many such cycles, our seasoned spirit finds itself at a crossroads of traditions and new revelations.

This issue has an article comparing Artificial Intelligence (AI) to the teachings of Jesus. While AI may sound foreign, some think of it as the compass of yesteryears.

Harvest represents not just the fruits of our labour but also the interplay of the old and new. Let's cherish the knowledge of our past and be open to today's innovations, celebrating the spirit of continual learning. While honouring traditions and sowing the seeds of understanding for the future, let's welcome both the wisdom and the innovations that lie ahead.

In this season of harvest, may we reap the rewards of both reflection and anticipation. Pancake or iceberg, may we come together and celebrate all in this wonderful world.

Warm wishes for a fruitful harvest season.

Amanda

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Congregational Record

DEATHS

Mrs Susan Nixon (district 6): 13th July 2023
Mrs Lillian Strutt (district 19): 22nd July 2023
Mr John Dalzell (district 8): 2nd August 2023
Mrs Jean Martin (district 9): 27th August 2023
Mrs Susan Greer (district 8): 10th September 2023
Mrs Rosemary Kerr (district 9): 11th September 2023

NEW MEMBERS

Marcus & Cara Christians (district 7)
Eric & Carole McClure (district 4)



Dates For Your Diary

1st OCTOBER

Communion Service: 11:00 am.
Evening Harvest Worship in the Parish Church with
Rev Elliot Swattridge: 6:00 pm.

8th OCTOBER

Harvest Service with special anthems: 11:00 am.
Evening Service, sermon Rev Elliot Swattridge: 7:00 pm.

19th NOVEMBER

Praise Service with Donaghadee Community Choir: 7:00 pm

Am I a Pancake or an Iceberg?

First of all, I want to thank you all so much for the incredibly warm welcome given by you all on my first Sunday in Groomsport, 13th August, when I came along to Groomsport Presbyterian in the morning as I really wanted to meet everyone - and also in every time I have bumped into many of you over the last few weeks - you have all been so friendly!

Let me introduce myself quickly! I am Elliot, the new minister of Groomsport Parish Church, and am very enthusiastic about the whole Church of all denominations working together as one - as this oneness is a precursor to genuine revival in our land, as it honours our Lord Jesus, who prayed for this in John 17. So I am looking forward to connecting a great deal with you all! You might see my wife Nomi and me - who were married in a Presbyterian church in Greystones, as it happens - walking our friendly golden labrador Wesley (named after hymn writer, poet and revival preacher Charles Wesley of course!), who loves the beach and meeting every dog - and human - who will give him a chance!

The title above is inspired by Rev. Paul's wonderful sermon on the 13th on the providence of God shown through Paul's being shipwrecked on Malta in Acts 27 - a shipwreck which looked like a disaster initially, but resulted in many islanders coming to know Jesus - the Church in Malta endures to this day. He used the beautiful image of an iceberg, 90% of which is underwater, being more affected by the deep ocean currents than the surface ice (called "pancake ice" because it is broken up into round pieces resembling pancakes), which is blown to and fro by the varying surface winds. This is a picture of how God desires our hearts to be connected to His big picture, 'deep ocean currents' of plans for our lives - some of which are only seen in hindsight - rather than the day-to-day surface winds of circumstances, which tear our hearts apart and consume our minds with worries. I was very inspired by this and challenged as I am a lot more pancake ice-like than I would like to admit - my heart is certainly a daily rollercoaster, so I long to trust in the deep, constant ocean currents of the beautiful will of God, who is always saturated with love and so fully trustworthy. These 'deep ocean currents' are from the One who is making everything new! (Rev. 21:5)

I have had enough time messing around with the surface pancake ice and long to flow instead with God's heart - the One who can bring an entire nation to Himself, even when we can often barely sort our own internal church politics out. So I love the topic of revival, such as the 1904-5 Welsh revival and 1859 Ulster revival - where in both cases God brought hundreds of thousands to Himself in a huge outpouring of His Spirit. I long for the whole Church of all denominations, to pray for God to do this again - for our land is in spiritual drought and in desperate need of a great move of the Spirit of God to bring hundreds of thousands of precious souls to Himself. But like that pancake ice I am so distracted by the here and now that my prayers fizzle out constantly... O Lord, teach us to pray - and lead us to cry out to You and not give up until we see great revival of the life of Jesus in our whole land!

"When God intends great mercy for His people, He sets them praying." - Matthew Henry

Elliot



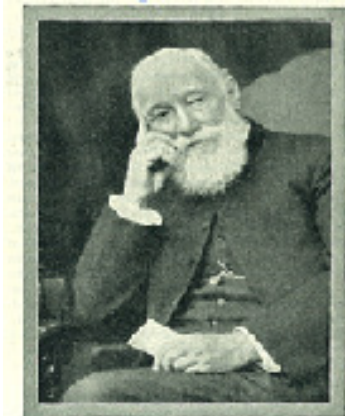
Anyone who cherishes the teachings of Jesus
and the unwavering loyalty of a dog,
carries the heart of true greatness.

Dr Robert Laws

MEDICAL MISSIONARY AND FOUNDER OF THE LIVINGSTONIA MISSION IN MALAWI



Livingstonia Mission is perched on top of an escarpment looking out over Lake Malawi, 3,000 feet above the southern end of the Great Rift Valley of East Africa. It was founded by pioneering medical missionary, Dr Robert Laws back in 1894. His original stone house and hospital are still there today and are testament to the vision that he had all those years ago. The escarpment site was actually the third location of the Livingstonia mission which had to move from Cape MacClear and Bandawe, both situated on the shores of Lake Malawi. Malaria was rife in these lower lying areas where mosquitos flourished and spread this deadly disease.



[From "Reminiscences of Livingstonia" by members of Mission, Church of Scotland]

Dr Laws came from humble beginnings being the son of a carpenter in Aberdeen. He was born in 1851 and at the age of 15 he committed his life to becoming a medical missionary. He knew the importance of education and entered the University of Aberdeen to study theology and medicine. He completed his studies at Glasgow and Edinburgh. In 1874, the Church of Scotland released Dr Laws to go to Lake Nyasa for two years only. He stayed for 53 years

and achieved some of the most impressive medical mission work in Africa. He was following in the footsteps of Dr David Livingstone who had died a year earlier on his final journey into East Africa. Both men were passionate opponents of the slave trade and were determined to bring Christianity to part of the world stricken by conflict, poverty and disease.



The initial 'Livingstonia Mission' expedition was led by Captain E. D. Young. He was accompanied by Dr Laws and six other Scottish pioneers. They travelled up the Shire River navigating several waterfalls. They had to transport a boat in sections and this was re-assembled as they moved their way towards the lake. In

1875 they arrived at Cape MacClear to establish their first mission. In addition to the ravages of malaria, there were many other challenges; the construction of wooden buildings which often leaked during the rainy season, fending off wild animals such as crocodiles and hippos and protecting their gardens from being trampled by marauding elephants.

In 1877 Robert Laws was joined by his childhood sweetheart, Margaret Gray from Aberdeen. They were married in a little thatched church in Blantyre in August 1878. Margaret was the first European lady to live at the mission and she quickly supported her husband in his medical work and founded a school at the mission. Both faced hardship and disease but this was an enduring partnership that lasted 42 years.

These early missionaries long suspected the association of fever, swamps and malaria (bad air) and knew to take quinine as a treatment. Even before the connection between mosquitos and malaria was proven, using mosquito nets and wearing high boots and thick socks was advised in the evening. Despite this the illness and death toll from malaria drove these pioneers to find a safer location for their mission. The cooler air high above the lake level proved to be much safer and this was where Dr Laws chose as the final location for the Livingstonia mission. The local people helped

to level roads, build houses and started bringing their children to the new school. Many other schools were established in the surrounding areas with more than 5000 pupils receiving an education.

Dr Laws developed the medical services in northern Nyasaland with well-equipped hospitals and surrounding clinics. In 1897

The David Gordon Memorial Hospital



Dr Laws treated over 9,000 patients most of whom required surgical operations. Many had been attacked by wild animals, especially lions which could jump through the grass roofs of the village huts at night. Between 1903 and 1905, thirteen Livingstonia hospitals were built and many more dispensaries treating over 83,000 patients. It was not until 1911 that the David

Gordon Memorial Hospital was constructed using a generous legacy from a Scottish family wishing to support the mission.

At the turn of the century, Dr Laws brought new technology to Livingstonia. He attended a course on engineering and electricity at Heriot Watt College and returned to construct a piped water supply from the Manchewe River and a hydro-electric dynamo at the Manchewe Falls. The first electric light in Nyasaland was switched on at Livingstonia in 1905.

He also constructed the famous Longmuir (Garodi) Road down the escarpment with hand tools and some dynamite. It is over three miles long and has 22 hairpin bends some of which require a three point turn. Descending this road is not for the faint hearted (and I can vouch for that).



He built his own stone house at the mission and arranged for the African Transcontinental Telegraph Line to be connected to Livingstonia.

The outbreak of the Great War in 1914 affected the mission with many staff seconded to the war. Dr Laws and his wife were alone in charge of the mission in 1917 with Margaret administering chloroform as 40 years before. The mission survived and Dr Laws worked hard to maintain services as in austere post war years. Mrs Laws had an illness and was rushed to Edinburgh where she died in 1921. In a rare interview Dr Laws gave a tribute to his wife: 'Mrs Laws has been my constant help during all these years. I owe her more than I can tell to her. She has been an unspeakable comfort. We have come through perilous times together. Many a night she and I never knew what the morning would bring. It is not one's preaching and work that tells on people, but the example of one's life'

Dr Laws worked at Livingstonia until 1928 with energy and leadership. He died in 1934 in London and was buried in St. Machar, Aberdeen after a crowded funeral. Tributes were paid to Dr Laws including: 'He appeared to Africans as a daring spirit. He had a message and accomplished it. He is wonderful in his humility and compassion'.

The Livingstonia Mission continues to provide education and medical services to people in Northern Malawi. Run by the CCAP (Central Church of African Presbyterians), Synod of Livingstonia, it's one of Malawi's largest churches. It has 214 congregations and 1,600 prayer houses in Northern Malawi. With 200,000 members, the church reaches 25% of the adult population there. In its ministry, it provides spiritual care and is also involved in education, health care, HIV&AIDS, water, food security and civic education. The mission receives support from PCI, Church of Scotland and the Livingstonia Hospital Partnership, a local charity with dedicated supporters.

Dr Michael Steele

References: 'The Story of Medicine and Disease in Malawi' by Michael and Elsbeth King. CCAP, Synod of Livingstonia, CCAP Synod of Livingstonia (ccapsolinia.org). Livingstonia Hospital Partnership, <http://www.livingstonia.org.uk/>. Malawi, The Warm Heart of Africa, <https://www.malawitourism.com>

Knysna Presbyterian Church

A FRIENDSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP IN CHRIST ACROSS CONTINENTS

Hazel and I have been regular visitors to Knysna for many years now, probably more than we care to remember! It is a popular holiday destination on the southern coast of South Africa situated along the Garden Route. It is a scenic area with many holiday and retirement homes, but like many parts of South Africa there are surrounding urban townships which provide many challenges for planning and development.

It was back in 2012 that we first discovered Knysna Presbyterian Church. It was almost by accident that we spotted a small, obscure sign on Clyde Street pointing towards the Church. Hazel and I were very welcome when we attended Sunday worship, so we have been going there regularly during our visits to Knysna. This was the beginning of the link between KPC and our home church of Groomsport Presbyterian.



KPC has always had a strong ethos of mission to the local community. They have also built up a large membership of Malawians who come to work in the locality, sending money back to support their families in Malawi. Many are attracted to KPC due to their strong Presbyterian heritage and links to the Church of Scotland and Presbyterian Church in Ireland.



The congregation in GPC has always been generous and willing to support many outreach projects of KPC over the years. One of the early initiatives was when Rev. Roger Purce and Gillian McCutcheon organised a concert which raised over Rand 40K to support the production of e'Pap (a high-protein porridge with many essential micronutrients). This porridge is a great source of nutrition for many thousands of



children in the Knysna locality, giving them an important start to their early years. This project is still up and running. There is a great need for early pre-school infant nurseries and donations from members of our congregation got one such enterprise, Maranatha Pre School, up and running. This included a special play area for the children, contributing greatly to their early development. This project is still ongoing and we can visit it on our trips out to Knysna.

Knysna Presbyterian Church was in a state of flux in 2017 when Rev.

Wayne van Heerdeem left to take up a new charge in Johannesburg. The Knysna Church called Rev. Tim Hawkrigde in 2018 and a new era of life was breathed into Clyde Street. The infrastructure was in a bad state of repair. Both the roof and floor had rotten timbers and parts of the building were in danger of collapse. Groomsport PC, also now with a new minister, Rev. Paul Dalzell, once again responded generously to help with the cost of building materials and construction.

In 2020, just before Covid struck, we were able to strengthen bonds of friendship when Michael and Julie Steele travelled out to Knysna for three weeks. They were able to meet Tim Hawkrigde and attend worship at KPC. Michael struck up a particular bond with the Malawian members of the congregation when he was able to address them in their local language of Chichewa. A video message of greetings from Rev. Dalzell on behalf of GPC was also played to the congregation during Sunday worship (just managing to avoid a power outage or 'load sharing' episode).

Julie and Michael were able to see some of the outreach work being undertaken by KPC in the Knysna area and Western Cape. There has been an after-school feeding project, run by Maria, for children in the town of Rheendall. This has been running for many years and allows children to do their homework after school in a safe space. There is also an 'early reading' book project for the

pre-schools which is organised by Lois Kleyn, a KPC member. These boxes of books are shared around many schools and include texts in local languages and English. This is a very effective way to stimulate early language and reading skills at minimal cost. GPC members have provided funds to renew many of the books which were out of date or worn out.

In 2020 the Covid epidemic brought particular challenges to the Knysna Church. Malawians without residency lost their jobs and were not supported by the Municipality. Thankfully the Church stepped in and provided food vouchers to struggling families. This scheme has continued. The KPC outreach has also provided support for a home with children with learning disabilities and epilepsy. A commercial washing machine was replaced to provide an urgent need for over 50 children.

One positive outcome of the Covid epidemic has been the outreach Audio Ministry with weekly broadcast services by Rev. Tim from KPC. These services have continued even though Covid is in abeyance and reach a wide audience far away from Knysna. There is a link on the GPC website homepage to KPC and the services can be found under 'updates'. In the last year, support has come from the increase in membership, the outreach Audio Ministry and the support of our Mission Fund here in Groomsport.

Hopefully, this article regarding Knysna Presbyterian Church has provided some assurance that the support from Groomsport Presbyterian is making a real difference to many people far beyond our shores. It has been a privilege to share in the fellowship of both GPC and KPC and see our bonds of friendship develop over the years.

Stanley & Hazel Megahey.



SHOE BOX APPEAL

This is the time to prepare your shoe boxes for the 'Samaritan's Purse' Christmas Child Shoe Box Appeal. Our boxes will be collected from Groomsport Presbyterian Church at the end of October.

Think on These Things

PRAYING FOR ME AND OTHERS

In this job you have to be prepared to reveal things about yourself; so now I am going to tell you things I have never told another living soul about – my prayers.

I only pray for myself On two occasions. One, when I am ill and then I whine at God to make me better and pester Him with ‘Why me? Why now?’, and ‘How soon will I be well?’ The other is when I am to meet someone I don’t like. I ask God to make me act in a friendly and reasonable way, and it works. If I forget, I am my usual snide, abrupt, not-suffering-fools self. Afterwards, I know I have done wrong and beat myself up.

The late Noel Mackey told me he prayed for about forty people each day. ‘How do you remember them?’ I asked. ‘Keep a list,’ he said. Now so do I, but I have two lists. The first is for people Who are ill, distressed and in need of comfort –some forty in total. I ask God to be with them and give them comfort and help. The second list is of people I love and admire. It includes my family, friends, acquaintances and others—some 56 in all. I am so lucky to have so many people to love. I ask God to keep them from harm, deliver them from evil, and give them some joy. I say each name to Him and do so every day.

W.S Bowd said. ‘Prayer is weakness leaning on Omnipotence’. Maybe I do that, since my weakness is in being unable to protect my loves from harm or evil, nor to provide them with joy –so I ask God. There is a problem, however. Within the 56 there are now two who have hurt me. The ugliness of what they have done has caused me great grief. Their names are given to God each day, even through gritted teeth. Why are they not struck off? Well, What about Matthew 18, w. 21-22, and seventy times seven? I certainly don’t wish them harm or evil; but do I wish them joy? Kierkegaard writes, ‘The function of prayer is not to influence God, but rather to change the nature of the one who prays Oh boy! I wonder is he right?’

Part 1 of 2 sent in by Campbell Young. Part 2 in next issue of the Eagle Wing.

Refurbishment Project Progress

INTRODUCTION

- * Work started officially on the refurbishment project on 24th July 2023, having been delayed for several weeks due to the initial high tender costs.
- * However, we managed to reduce these costs following hard work by the Design Team and especially our Architects and Quantity Surveyors. Permission was granted to proceed with the project, at a Congregational Meeting held on Wednesday, 28th June 2023.
- * The following Monday 3rd July, a Pre-Contract Meeting was convened in the halls and then during the next few weeks from 5th July preliminary advance set-up site work was undertaken by the Main Contractor D.A. Wishart.
- * Also, during this time, the contract documents were finalised for signing in due course and all the various Insurances were sorted out.
- * The Contract was subsequently signed on Thursday 3rd August 2023, when Chris and I signed the various documents on behalf of the Church.



PROGRESS TO DATE

- * I have included some photographs throughout this report to let you see what has been happening on site.
- * At the time of writing this Report in mid-August, you would hardly recognise the area being refurbished, as the old Coffee Bar has been totally demolished, with the roof removed, along with the external wall and the large window. The wall between the Coffee Bar and the Gents' Toilet has also been taken away, as planned, to increase the overall floor area of the new Coffee Hub area.

The Former Coffee Bar



The Former Coffee Bar



- * The foundations are complete for the Entrance Foyer and the curved blockwork is up to floor level. The foundations and the blockwork for the steps for the Escape Doors out of the Archie Agnew Hall and the Coffee Bar are well advanced.

The Former Gents' Toilets



- * The existing toilets are being stripped out at present and plumbing and electrical works are advancing throughout the refurbished area and also in the other accommodation.
- * The old boiler and oil tank have been removed and the installation of the new gas-fired boiler will start soon.
- * However, by the time you are reading this article, the building work will hopefully have advanced significantly and the structural steelwork for the Coffee Bar and the Entrance Foyer should be in place.

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

- * We will have absolutely wonderful views from the increased size of the windows in the new Coffee Hub, although the nearby trees, beside the Cottages, are growing considerably and consequently restrict our views towards the harbour.
- * In this context, I recently contacted our local UUP Councillor, David Chambers, to inform him that branches from the two nearest trees are starting to overhang our car park with the danger of falling branches onto cars. In addition, I mentioned that some branches could fall and damage the thatched roof of the cottages and I therefore requested that the Council should undertake heavy pruning of these trees.
- * However, the Council sent out a Tree Specialist to inspect the trees and concluded that they are in a healthy state and classed them as low risk and therefore our request “to trim down and remove branches overhanging private property will not be processed”.
- * Nevertheless, you can be assured that I will be keeping a very close eye on the situation, and I would also thank Councillor Chambers for his assistance in this matter.
- * During the demolition/deconstruction works we discovered some hidden structural defects relating to the works undertaken in 1978. However, I will not list these at this stage, but sufficient to say that these shortcomings could have caused us significant future problems with associated considerable expenditure. Thankfully these particular structural items were never intended to be used in the refurbishment project and they have now been removed.

PLANS FOR OUR ORGANISATIONS IN THE AUTUMN

- * Ian and I have been in contact with the various organisations who use the halls in the Walter Nelson Hall Complex and at this stage, most intend to recommence activities in early October 2023.
- * The main hall, kitchen and Archie Agnew Hall will all be available

although the new gas heating boiler will not be in full operation until the end of September.

- * As you will be aware, the entry and exit to these 'other' halls is via the double doors on the tennis court side and while these doors still act as the fire escapes from the halls, they have been altered so that they also can be opened and closed using a key.
- * The new temporary toilets are located close to these entrance/exit doors and Ian has added a light above the doors to illuminate this area during the dark autumn and winter months.
- * The other fire escape doors in the Irwin Room are still in operation, but these are to be used only in the case of an emergency and not to gain access to the site.
- * The Leaders of all the organisations will be asked to attend an Induction Meeting in September so that they can be advised and instructed on all the new 'regulations' relating to changes when using the halls during the contract works.
- * Ian and I will be liaising closely with the Contractor regarding all the various activities being held within the 'other' halls and we will be providing Wisharts with dates and times of the various organisations. However, it should be recognised that there may be occasions when the halls can not be used for a short period, for example, when the Contractor is linking services from the Boiler House to the refurbishment area.



OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

- * Site Meetings are held on a monthly basis and comprehensive minutes are produced by Judith, our Architect.
- * I thought that it would be a good idea to have a poster on our Noticeboard to inform folk what was happening in our halls, and this is the photograph of this poster.



* Below the picture of the completed work, the poster reads:

* “We at Groomsport Presbyterian Church are expanding and upgrading our existing Coffee Bar and are adding a lovely new fully glazed Entrance Foyer.

* This work is expected to be completed around the end of April 2024, however, the other accommodation in the halls will open during this work and usual activities will take place”.

* Only three nominated people from the Church are authorised to visit the site and these are Chris Thompson, our Treasurer, Ian McDonald our Facilities Co-Ordinator and myself as Property Convenor and Client Representative.

* Finally, thank you all for your patience and understanding during the next eight or nine months, when the refurbishment contract is underway and the arrangements will be different from what we have all been used to for many years.

Lowry Manson

Special Thanks

My family would like to thank so many folks from my church family for their condolences on the passing of my sister, Lillian.

The gifts of food, flowers, cards, letters, phone calls and people calling at our home were overwhelming and respectively received by each family member. Many thanks also to those who attended the funeral. We have been helped in our grief by the power of lots of prayers.

Once again, Groomsport Presbyterian Church shines on us as we are known for such a kind and friendly congregation.

On behalf of our extended family, thank you.
The Todd Family.



Church Activities

Due to renovations being carried out at Walter Nelson Hall, it has been decided to postpone the commencement of the Bowling Club until 4th October 2023.

We hope then, to meet up again after the summer break. New members are always made very welcome and we have bowls for use. Come along and give it a go.

We meet Wednesday evenings at 7.15 pm & finish with a cup of tea/coffee.

Jean Wilson (Secretary)

CHURCH CHOIR

The choir will be into the regular Thursday evening practices by the time you are reading this. Together with preparing anthems for Sunday worship, we will be concentrating on learning anthems for Harvest Thanksgiving. SPOILER ALERT John has chosen two excellent new pieces (by John Rutter and Howard Goodall) for the Harvest Services - so please mark the date 8th October to come along and hear these lovely praise items.

I do make a plea to those of you who enjoy singing to think seriously about joining the choir - it is really a welcoming and happy environment in which to enjoy music making. Please speak to John McIwaine or me if you wish to discuss this invitation.



Alastair (Chairman)

TUESDAY CLUB

Thank you to everyone who came along to our open meeting in September, By all accounts it was an enjoyable experience; James Gillespie was very interesting.

Just to let you all know, we intend to have another one or two open meetings, possibly in December and definitely one in March. There will be ample notification about these nearer the time.

The Tuesday club is specifically designed for people who live alone for whatever reason. If you would like to give us a try, come along to the Canon Tyney Hall on the first Tuesday of any month, the Club runs all year round.

You might enjoy it!



BADMINTON CLUB

Due to the ongoing refurbishment project Badminton Club is now planning to commence on Wednesday 11th October.

We look forward to seeing all our former members and will be delighted to welcome any newcomers.

We enjoy the exercise, tea, coffee, biscuits and, of course lots of chat and laughter. Everyone is welcome, and we have spare racquets for any wishing to try Badminton, whether they have previous experience or not

Come along and join us on Wednesday 11th October from 10.00 am until noon in the Walter Nelson Hall.

LADIES LEISURE GROUP



The Leisure Group hopes to start another year of this group. The date is yet to be confirmed as work is being done to our halls.

When the hall is available, we will contact all of our members. Some ladies have been walking on a Tuesday evening during the summer months. The weather has been kind to the walkers and most evenings. We have enjoyed the wonderful views of the amazing part of Northern Ireland we call home. We look forward to seeing all members again and new members would be made very welcome.

Groomsport Presbyterian Women



Petals & Pictures

Pat & Paul



7.30pm Monday 9th October 2023

As we start a new church year, we in Presbyterian Women are looking forward to our varied programme starting, with our own Paul and Pat Miller.

We meet on the second and fourth Mondays of the month at 7.30pm from October to March and invite anyone who is interested to join us.

Christians Against Poverty

People you encounter may be facing huge challenges: they may be weighed down by debt, stuck in long-term unemployment, struggling with a life-controlling habit, or navigating life on an exceptionally low income. These problems can cause and keep people locked into a life of poverty and despair.

christians
against
poverty

CAP

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) have been helping people out of debt since 1996. CAP will help anyone regardless of their religious beliefs, age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, race, gender identity, sex, or sexual orientation.

To find out more about CAP and its services call free on 0800 328 0006 or www.capdebthelp.org

Poet's Corner

Echoes of Autumn

(anon)

Golden fields sway, under a sky so grey,
Wheat and barley, in the cool breeze play.
Apples ripe, in orchards old and vast,
Memories of summer, now in the past.

Farmers gather, with gratitude in their heart,
For the season's yield, nature's work of art.
Thatched barns filled, with the autumn prize,
As the sun sets early, on countryside ties.

Harvest at home, a tradition so deep,
Where dreams are sown, and promises we keep.



Discover Groomsport

Discover Groomsport is a local charitable community group with five Groomsport Presbyterian Church members as its trustees: David and Maureen Irwin, Audrey Thomas, Elaine Shepherd-Nixon and Roy McWhinney.

Since its formation last year, they have organised the Christmas Lights Switch On, The King's Coronation Big Picnic and Litter Pick Up, held Walking History Tours of Groomsport during the summer months, produced a free history tour guide which you can find on the fence outside Cockle Cottages and hosted an Ulster Scots Course.

In particular, the King's Coronation Big Picnic was attended by 1,000 people and blessed by a day of beautiful weather. Some relaxed and soaked up the sunshine, entertained by music from the Bangor Ukes others were more active and participated in arts and crafts activities, crab fishing and children's fun games. Our very own King and Queen, Reverend Dr David and Maureen Irwin, led the coronation fancy dress parade, finishing with the cutting and sharing of the Coronation Cake.



Future events include a Hallowe'en fun afternoon in conjunction with Ards and North Down Borough Council and, once again, Groomsport's Christmas Tree Lights Switch On in December.

Discover Groomsport is an excellent outreach example of local engagement, and we wish them every success in the future.



Artificial Intelligence

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND US: A MODERN ANALOGY WITH JESUS AND HIS CONGREGATION

In the evolving landscape of technology, artificial intelligence (AI) stands as a beacon of progress and innovation. Its ever-increasing presence in our daily lives is undeniable, sparking debates, opinions, and wonder. But, as members of a faith-driven community, how do we perceive and relate AI to our own beliefs? An interesting analogy can be drawn between AI and its users, and Jesus with His congregation.

THE CREATOR AND THE CREATED

Just as God sent Jesus, His Son, to guide, teach, and help humanity, humans have created AI to assist, inform, and facilitate many aspects of modern life. In both scenarios, there is a clear creator and the created. Jesus, though divine, took a human form to walk among us. Similarly, AI, though a creation of code and algorithms, often takes on human-like functionalities to integrate into our world.

GUIDANCE AND LEARNING

Jesus taught His congregation about love, kindness, and the virtues of a righteous life. He provided guidelines to lead a life in harmony with God's will. Similarly, AI provides users with guidelines, solutions, and recommendations based on its programming. However, the difference lies in the origin of guidance. While Jesus' teachings stem from divine wisdom and love, AI's guidance is derived from human input and vast amounts of data.

DEPENDENCE AND INDEPENDENCE

Over time, many have come to rely on AI for various tasks, much like how believers turn to Jesus for spiritual guidance and support. However, it's essential to remember the difference in our dependence. Our relationship with Jesus is rooted in faith, love, and the quest for salvation. In contrast, our reliance on AI is practical and functional.

THE QUESTION OF ETHICS

A significant concern with AI is ethics. How do we ensure that AI always acts for the greater good? This mirrors the moral struggles within a congregation. Jesus provided a moral compass to His followers, emphasizing the importance of choices that reflect love, compassion, and righteousness. Similarly, AI developers and users must ensure that ethical considerations are at the forefront of AI's functionality.

THE EVER-REVOLVING RELATIONSHIP

As Jesus' teachings are eternal and continue to guide countless generations, AI is continuously evolving. With each iteration, AI learns and grows, aiming to serve its users better. However, while Jesus' teachings are steadfast and unchanging, rooted in eternal truth, AI's evolution is based on ever-changing human knowledge and experience.

IN CONCLUSION

Drawing parallels between AI and its users and Jesus and His congregation provides a contemporary lens through which we can understand our evolving relationship with technology. It serves as a reminder that while AI can be an incredibly valuable tool in our lives, our spiritual and moral guidance should always be rooted in the eternal teachings of Jesus.

As we navigate this age of technology, let's cherish the timeless bond we share with Jesus and use AI as a tool, always remembering the distinction between our spiritual guide and our digital assistant.

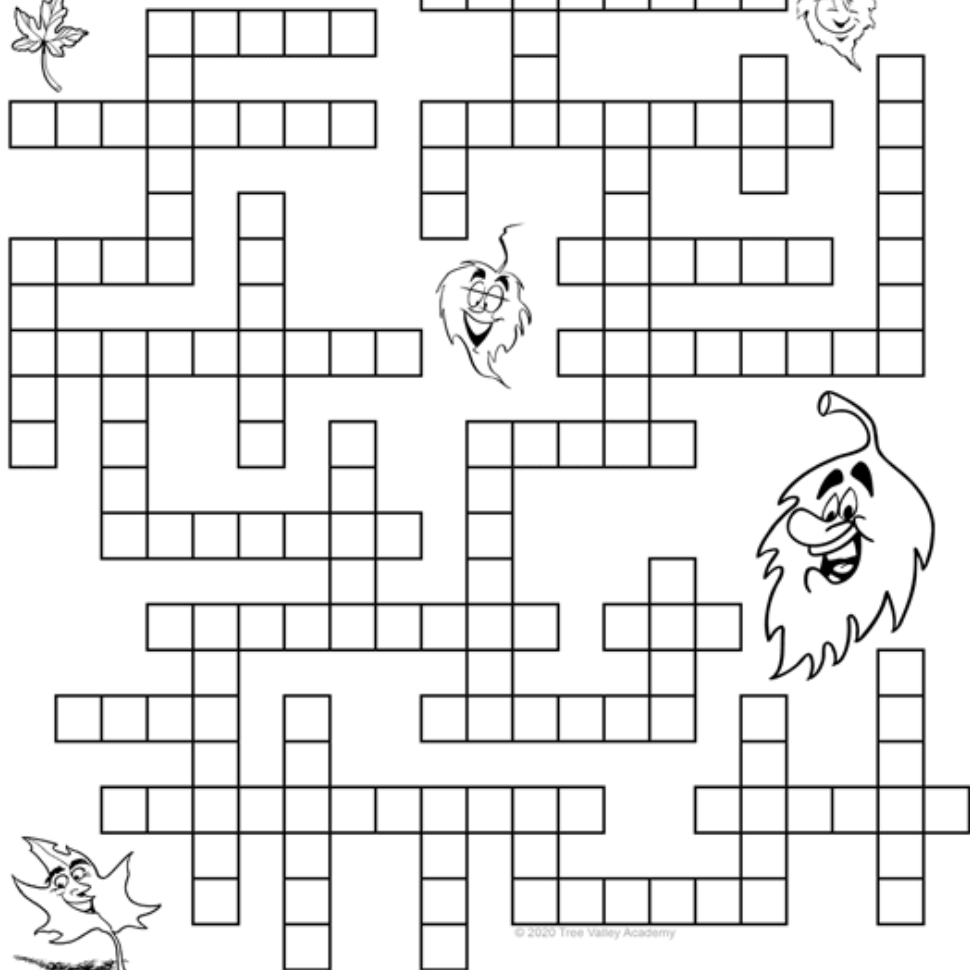
Author: AI



**AI is but a tool,
and its brilliance is only
as bright as the
mind that uses it.**

Puzzled?

AUTUMN



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3 letters

hay
owl
pie
red

4 letters

cool
corn
maze
pear
rake

5 letters

cider
crisp
quilt
socks
spice
trees

6 letters

apples
autumn
colors
leaves
orange
school
season
yellow

7 letters

falling
harvest
pumpkin
sweater

11 letters

wheelbarrow

8 letters

chipmunk
mushroom
orchards
rustling

9 letters

chestnuts
deciduous
pinecones

Welcome autumn





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Photo sent in by Lowry, taken by his son.