

1st Ballyeaston Presbyterian Church



The Link Magazine

www.firstballyeaston.org

Vol. 19 No. 2

December 2009



May the Joy of Christmas remain with you throughout the year ahead.

10 Lower Ballyboley Road
Ballyeaston

December 2009

Dear Friends,

Recently I was driving home in gale force winds and as I drove over the brow of a hill, I almost crashed into a large branch that had fallen onto the road from a tree above. The branch was blocking my way, so I had no other option but to pull it away from the middle of the road and into the ditch.

While lifting the branch, the trees on the roadside were swaying violently in the wind and I became quite anxious. I realised that at any moment one of the trees could snap and fall down on top of me. Thankfully that didn't happen, and at the end of my journey I thanked God that I had arrived home safely.

The experience brought home to me in a very real way the fact that our lives and our safety constantly lie within the will of God. Every moment of our lives we are in God's hands, and my experience on the road that night reminded me to thank Him for all of His gracious provision. I often think that the passing of immediate danger has the effect of reminding us about what is really important in life, and encourages us to straighten up our priorities.

Unfortunately Christmas is that time of year whenever our priorities can be very out of line, and the celebration of Jesus' birth can become nothing more than a self-indulgent round of human consumption. It is so easy for the whole significance of Jesus' incarnation to be submerged if not completely buried by all the busyness, spending and sentimentality.

So as the season of Christmas approaches, why not think about how you might straighten up Christmas. For example, you might try to be more considerate to those outside your own circle of family and friends, give more to charity or take the time to attend a carol service.

It's possible though, that you might need to make that most important change of all by straightening up your heart. If we are not seeking to follow Jesus Christ, then Christmas will hold little more significance than the presents, tinsel and food. Is it any wonder that it can all end up being such a hollow and

superficial affair and people saying, “Sure its only for the kids”.

I pray that we will take the time to truly consider what is most important this Christmas, and that the peace of Christ will be more than just an idea in a card or a carol, but something that is a living reality in your life.

Wishing you a significant and peaceful Christmas,
Your friend and minister

Edwin McDowell

ELECTION OF NEW ELDERS IN 2010

At their meeting in September past, the Kirk Session agreed that we should elect some new Elders to help share the spiritual oversight of our congregation. It is our intention to elect eight new Elders next year and in order to help us think about who we should elect, there will be a series of sermons on the Eldership in January and then the election will take place in February.

From the beginning, I would urge you to pray for this extremely important election and to give very careful consideration as to those communicant members within our congregation who could fulfil the qualifications and responsibilities of an Elder within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. It is imperative that any Elder in our church should be someone who has entered into a saving relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, and is endeavouring to follow Jesus Christ in their lives at home, at work, in the church and in the community.

As we consider the election of Elders in First Ballyeaston, I would strongly encourage you to read the leaflet entitled Choosing New Elders that has been included with this edition of the magazine. In this leaflet the Board of Christian Training seek to give clear Biblical guidance as to those who should be elected as Ruling Elders within our denomination.

In the second paragraph, the Board of Christian Training give good advice when they write, “We should not make the mistake of thinking that a person needs to be perfect before they can become an Elder. But neither should we

make the mistake of thinking that Eldership is for any well-meaning person who is willing to serve". They then go on to focus on the Apostle Paul's advice about overseers and deacons in 1 Timothy 3.

Let us pray that suitable candidates will be called to take up this office in our congregation and as a result, that our congregational life and witness will be strengthened and in the end that God will be glorified.

Edwin McDowell

STUDENT PLACEMENT

The congregation will be pleased to know that Mr Alan Moore, an applicant for the Ministry of our Church, will be undertaking a placement in First Ballyeaston during January, February and March. Alan has applied to become a student for the ministry, and his placement in First Ballyeaston will form part of the process used to assess his suitability to train as a minister. Alan's home congregation is Woodlands in Carrickfergus, and we look forward to meeting him in January. Let us pray that God will continue to guide Alan and equip him during his selection year.

PLANNING TO GET MARRIED?

Anyone planning to be married in 2010 or later should speak to Rev McDowell as soon as possible to confirm date etc.

**NEW
COMMUNICANTS**
Anyone considering becoming a communicant or full member of the church should speak to Rev McDowell before Christmas. Enquiry Classes are planned to commence 3pm Sunday 31 January at the Manse.

GOSPEL CONCERT
in
1st Ballyeaston Lecture Hall
with
Rev William McCrea
Karla Gregg
The Thompson Brothers
(original Low Country Boys singers)
Harpists
on
Saturday 13th March 2010
commencing at 7.30pm
Tickets £8.00 (including Supper)
(available at Bert McCormick's)
Proceeds to RVHSC Diabetics Unit /
Church Vestibule Fund

CHURCH RECORD

BAPTISM *'Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.'* Mark 10 :14

ANGUS IAN, son of Stephen & Elaine McCullough,
37 Ballygelly Road, Broughshane.



MARRIAGE *'Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it.'*
Psalm 127 : 1

14th November, Miss Lauren Margaret Agnew, 51 Trenchill Road
Ballyeaston & Mr Jamie Semple, 186 Lower
Ballyboley Road, Ballyclare.



DEATHS *'Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; ..."'* John 11 :25

8th September, Mr William (Billy) McClintock, Abbeyfield
House, Doagh Road, Ballyclare and formerly of
Drumadarragh, Doagh.



29th September, Mr George Fenton, Masserene Manor Private Nursing
Home and late of 6 Ballyalbanagh Road, Ballyeaston.

NEW FAMILIES

Mr Alastair Robinson & Miss Ruth McCrea, 16 Huntingdale
Crescent, Ballyclare.

Miss Lauren Moore, 29 Craighill Park, Ballyclare.



NEW COMMUNICANT *"This do in remembrance of Me"* Luke 22 :19

November 2009 - by Transfer Certificate

Mr Raymond Buchanan from the congregation of Carnmoney.



WIDER WORLD

The logo for Presbyterian Women, featuring a stylized cross and the text 'Presbyterian Women' in a vertical orientation.

Wider World is the magazine of the **Presbyterian Women** organisation and is produced quarterly in March, June, September and December at a cost of £4 for the year, paid in advance, ie. paid in December. If you would be interested in receiving copies, please place your order with Miss Wilma Todd before the end of December.

THE GIRLS' BRIGADE

The GB is well under way for another year. Our session started in September with most of our girls returning and a few new members along the way. The Sections have all been working hard at their badgework and scripture classes, with even our Toddlers having their weekly Bible story. The Company Section has also had a few exciting make-up nights and I believe the Brigaders will have had a very special visit from six fire fighters along with the fire engine! The Brigaders are hoping to raise funds for them in return for the massive help they were at our last annual display.



Remembrance Sunday took place on Sunday 8th November with some of the Officers and Girls on parade for the laying of the poppy wreath in the Church vestibule. GB feels we are very privileged to be allowed to take part in this ceremony each year.

The Annual Enrolment Service takes place on Sunday 29th November with our Chaplain, Rev. Eddie McDowell leading the service. The younger girls, Toddlers and Explorers, have been practicing their singing most earnestly for this occasion and we thank them for this. Approximately 130 girls are being enrolled and we would like to take this opportunity to thank the parents for their continued support in sending their girls to GB each week.

Christmas holidays will be as follows:-

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Toddlers, Explorers and Juniors | Friday 25th December 2009 and Friday 1st January 2010 Return on Friday 8th January 2010 |
| Seniors and Brigaders | Monday 21st and 28th December 2009 Return on Monday 4th January 2010 |

Please keep in mind the date for our Display which is Friday 26th March 2010 in Ballyclare Secondary School. There will be details about tickets and further information nearer the time.

We would like to wish all our members and their families, friends and the entire church family a really Happy Christmas and God's richest blessing in the New Year.

Ashley McFarlane

PW GROUP NEWS

We would like to thank all who contributed to the mission boxes this year, the figure at present is £1009.00.

If your box still hasn't been opened this

year, there is still time. Just pass it to Mrs Lily McNair. If you don't already have one and would like to help fund the missionaries at home and overseas, please speak to Lily, who is our Treasurer, or any PW Group member.



Thanks also to those who support our Christmas Fun Day and Sale, without your presence all our efforts would be worth nothing.

On the 12th January Mrs Pamela Forrest, who works in Cameron's Ballymena, will be coming along to speak to us on 'fashion' and tell us how God has worked in her life. We would love to see more ladies coming along, please don't be shy, you will be among friends.

At our February meeting (Tues 9th) we will be having visitors from neighbouring churches and the evening will be taken by Hilary McDowell. Hilary is involved in a ministry of outreach and reconciliation through drama, art, music and humour. She is also an author and a former deaconess.

On Friday March 5th the Women's World Day of Prayer will be held in our Church. The service has been prepared by the Christian women of Cameroon.

The Praise Evening on Sunday 7th March at 7.30 pm will be led by Larne Choral Society. The charities we will be supporting this year are the Alzheimers Society and Guide Dogs for the Blind.

On the 9th March Nessie Lennon will join with us and her topic will be 'New Talents with Bible Plants and Flowers'.

16th April sees the end of another session in the life of the PW Group when we will be having our 40th Anniversary Dinner in the Church Hall.

Have a happy and peaceful Christmas and remember each other in your prayers.

Margaret Waugh

FLOWER ROTA

January 2010 Mrs A Grimason
Feb. 7 & 14 Mrs G Henderson
Feb. 21 & 28 Mrs M McNeilly



March 7 & 14 Mrs J Woodside
March 21 & 28 Mrs J Stewart

PRAYER TIME

In recent times there has been a very definite 'call to prayer' to our congregation from the pulpit. Rev McDowell has highlighted the need for prayer for a range of issues and events within our Church and appealed for members to consider attendance at the Mid-Week and Sunday morning times of prayer.



At the start of this article I want to add to our Minister's call to prayer and encourage you to come along and experience the warm fellowship and be spiritually uplifted as you join with others to pray (silently or audibly). I'm reminded of the saying "much prayer - much blessing, little prayer - little blessing, no prayer - no blessing". Surely we want the blessing of increased prayer for our church fellowship, the local community and those in need at home and abroad.

It couldn't have escaped your notice that there is an Alpha Course going on at the moment (early November). Nicky Gumble, who is described as the pioneer of the Alpha Course deals with prayer in a very comprehensive way in his book "Alpha - Questions of Life" (a copy is currently held in the Church Library). In it he describes prayer as a vital activity - a way in which we develop a relationship with our Father in Heaven through asking, thanking, praising, confessing and listening.

Prayer not only changes us, it changes situations. In Matthew 7 v 7-8 Jesus says:

"Ask and it will be given you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; everyone who seeks finds and to everyone who knocks the door will be opened".

How should we pray? The answer is that there is no set way to pray. Prayer is an integral part of our relationship with God and therefore we are free to talk to Him as we wish. God does not want us to repeat meaningless words. He wants to hear what is in our hearts. You may find that using the Word of God is helpful and can be a very effective way of bringing us to new and deeper levels of understanding and experience of the Lord. I came across the following explanation of a method of using the Scriptures in prayer.

Exploring a way of Praying the Scriptures

"I can't wait to go on holiday." "I'm looking forward to having lunch with

you.” “I’m going shopping with my friends on Saturday.” What do all of these statements have in common? They all speak with anticipation about something good that is going to happen. So what does anticipation have to do with reading the Bible and prayer? Everything! There is a powerful link between the grace available in Scripture and our own faith. Put simply, the more we expect God to work in us when we read and pray the Bible, the more open we will be to hearing his voice and experiencing his presence. If we truly seek out the Lord in Scripture we will have an intimate experience of him. Scripture can draw us near to Jesus and have a profound impact on the way we think, the words we speak, and the way we view the world.

The Promise of Scripture

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him”. (Colossians 3:16-17)

Reading the Word

It's a good idea to get yourself in the right frame of mind. Find a quiet place where you can read and pray. Take your mind off your responsibilities for these few minutes. Try to avoid any place where you might get interrupted. Then take a few minutes to place yourself in the presence of the Lord. Ask Jesus to open the “eyes of your heart” as you fix your attention on him. Next, choose a passage from the Bible that you want to pray about. Some people choose a specific book, such as Isaiah or the Letter to the Hebrews. Others prefer to work through the gospels, while still others prefer the Epistles of Paul, John, or Peter. Where you go is entirely up to you - though it is helpful for beginners to go where you are most familiar, such as the gospels or the Psalms.

When you have chosen a passage, read it a few times. If there are aspects of the passage that are puzzling to you, consulting a reliable commentary will give you a better understanding of what the passage is saying.

How you read this passage can have a big impact on what you get out of it as well. It is best, as you read, to listen also. Listen for the still, small voice of God that longs to speak to you as personally as he did to Elijah long ago. It's this listening for the still, small voice of the Lord that helps move you from reading to meditation. It's one thing to understand the passage, whether through

close reading or through the use of commentaries. It's another thing to ask the Holy Spirit to "open up" for you the words you have read and studied. If one particular verse from the passage attracts you, spend time thinking about it and allow the words of Scripture to become a source of wisdom, hope, and purpose.

Praying with the Word

Reading and studying gives way to prayer - to a heartfelt conversation with our Heavenly Father. In this kind of prayer, we should offer the Lord our praise, thanks for his mercy, and many blessings. By moving from meditation and reflection on God's word to prayer, we come to learn that the Bible is not meant to be only an historical document or a set of stories, it is the word of life given by God to help all of us grow in our relationship with Jesus. As we read and pray we should be open to whatever God wants to say to us, surrendered to whatever he wants to do in our lives.

Praying the Scriptures may take a bit of practice, but it is a glorious way to deepen your relationship with your Heavenly Father.

Robert Woodside

DOES GOD ANSWER PRAYER?

Yes , but not always in the way we might expect!

God's Strange Answer

"He was a Christian, and he prayed. He asked for strength to do greater things, but he was given infirmity that he might do better things.

"He asked for riches that he might be happy; he was given poverty that he might be wise.

"He asked for power that he might have the praise of men; he was given weakness that he might feel the need of God.

"He had received nothing that he asked for; all that he hoped for. His prayer seems unanswered, but he is most blessed."

(Copyright 1999 by Grady Scott - may be reproduced for non-commercial purposes at no cost to others.)

Thanks to Thomas McKnight who provided this thought provoking piece.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!

A series of events is planned for early February that will provide something for almost everyone in the congregation.

On Thursday 4th February 2010, Mairisine Stanfield, will be the Guest Speaker at an evening for ladies to be held in the Lecture Hall. Mairisine is a gifted speaker who has frequently addressed ladies groups and her theme will be 'A life worth living'. A warm invitation is extended to all the ladies of the congregation and their friends.

Then the following weekend we are very privileged to have the current Moderator of the General Assembly, Stafford Carson, as our special speaker at a Men's Breakfast on Saturday 13th February and also at our Morning Service the following day - Sunday 14th, which just happens to be St Valentine's Day.

And for the younger members of the congregation, Jonny Farrell of Youth for Christ will lead an evening on Friday 12th February and will also take the Sunday Evening Service that same weekend.

Then in May (21st to 23rd) we have a Church weekend planned for the Glenada Conference Centre in Newcastle - an opportunity for members of the church (young and not so young) to take time out, relax, enjoy good company and fellowship. Our guest speaker for the weekend will be the former Moderator, Russell Birney.

Please pray for these special events - that God will use them to strengthen our faith and encourage us as a congregation of His people.

| When ? | What ? |
|--|--|
| Thursday 4th February | Ladies Evening - Guest Speaker Mairisine Stanfield |
| Fri 12th - Sun 14th February (St Valentine's Weekend) | Special Weekend with Stafford Carson and Jonny Farrell |
| Fri 21st - Sun 23rd May | Church Weekend at Glenada House, Newcastle with Russell Birney |

Eucl Agnew

PROJECT ROMANIA UPDATE

During the Summer an appeal was made on behalf of Project Romania for food to be sent to families to help them throughout the Winter. There was a great response from the congregation not only for food but also donations towards additional food. The food has now been sent to Romania in two lorries that departed from Northern Ireland at the start of November.

Inside the lorries were the woodstoves that had been manufactured by a small team of dedicated individuals over the Summer months. These stoves, that started as a challenge to build twenty basic stoves, that grew and became forty, then they became forty with legs, then forty with legs that we wanted to paint with heat resistant paint. Then just when I thought we were finished one of the team decided that we should make flues for the stoves. Each time we finished a stage of the project having used up all our resources someone on the team would challenge us to try to do just a little more. But none of these challenges are anything compared to the challenges that the families that will receive the stoves face each and every day.

As we added each additional stage to the build, we were constantly amazed at how the Lord provide all that we needed. At the beginning we needed money to buy steel box section and someone to obtain it for us. Then we needed the components for the doors cut by laser. Once again the Lord not only lead me to a company that would cut the components but they donated all the steel that we need for them. As we completed the build of the basic stoves we knew they didn't look so hot as rusty boxes and one of the team was keen that we should paint them. Once again the Lord provided, a donation from a bowling club that a member of the team belongs to, allowed us to purchase the heat resistant paint. Having no money left and running out of time before the lorry would arrive to take the stoves to Romania, there was one last challenge. Where could we get steel pipe for flues? A local engineering company in the village has been of great assistance to me with knowledge on steel and more importantly, who to speak to to get what we needed. Having been guided to a supplier and been offered a discounted price for the charity, one hurdle remained, we had no money left.

Once again we prayed to our Lord that if we were to do this finishing touch we would need help and once again donations arrived that allowed us to buy steel and manufacture the flues.

Folks, the only amazing thing about this story is that we were constantly amazed that the Lord provided all that we needed. Why should we ever have a doubt as to what the Lord will provide when we know that he will always provide what we need, but not necessarily what we want.

Matthew 21:22

“If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”

1 John 5:14

“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.”

God Bless those who made this happen, God Bless those who needed it to happen.

Thomas McKnight

PRESBYTERIAN ORPHAN AND CHILDREN’S SOCIETY

I just want to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have contributed to the Presbyterian Orphan and Children’s Society collection. Total contributions at mid November were £997 excluding Gift Aid (total for 2008 was £1195.56 incl Gift Aid). While we asked that contributions be in by the end of November, there is still time for anyone who has forgotten. Again many thanks for your continued support and generosity.



Jean Woodside

SUNDAY SCHOOL

The new session of Sunday School started on 13th September 2009. There are three new starts in the Primary section and the intake in the Senior section is the group of five moving from Primary. With the other classes in the Senior section moving on, the Senior Bible Class now has nineteen young people.

~ Please encourage those who already attend.

~ Invite those who do not come or have stopped attending.

| | VENUE | TIME |
|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| PRIMARY SECTION | Galbraith Hall | 10.30am - 11.20am |

| | | |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| SENIOR SECTION | MacConnell Hall | 10.30am - 11.15am |
| JUNIOR BIBLE CLASS | Lecture Hall | 10.45am - 11.15am |
| SENIOR BIBLE CLASS | Kitchen (L.Hall) | 10.45am - 11.15am |

The Primary section has the continuity of having Agnes to choose choruses and play piano at opening. Michelle and Lynsey have been leading the opening prayers and praise.

The Senior section has been using the opening praise to explore words used in choruses:

e.g. HALLELUJAH = PRAISE THE LORD

Other words that we have and will be exploring are:

CHRISTIAN LIGHT GRACE

The teachers of the three groups have in turn chosen a chorus to illustrate the message they have been teaching. The new-to-us choruses have been added to our long list of available praise.

Prayers for Sunday School and Bible Classes

| | |
|--------------|---|
| For Children | That they will start on their journey towards being Christ-Like. |
| For Teachers | That their objective in showing the Way will enrich them as well as their pupils. |
| For Church | That the potential treasures we have in our children and the commitment of teachers will be close to the heart of the congregation. |

Margy Davison
(Sunday School Co-ordinator)

SUNDAY SCOOOL CHRISTMAS PARTIES SATURDAY 19TH DECEMBER 2009

PRIMARY - Lecture Hall from 3.00pm to 5.00pm
SENIOR - Lecture Hall from 7.30pm to 10.00pm

Santa Claus will be in attendance
(Reindeer permitting)

ALPHA - An opportunity to explore the meaning of life!

The Alpha Course began in First Ballyeaston on Thursday 24th September 2009 and the weekly sessions continue until the end of November. There has been a good turnout every week to date, with all ages participating. As I write this, we are now into the second half of the course and some cannot believe that they are at this stage already.

The evening begins with a short DVD by Nicky Gumbel, on the specified topic for that evening. Some of the topics we have covered so far are:

Christianity: Boring, Untrue and Irrelevant?

Who is Jesus?

Why and how should I pray?

How does God guide us?

Nicky presents each topic in a clear, 'down to earth' manner and adds humour in his presentations by using real life stories/examples. Following the DVD clip, we break for a light supper (which has been very well prepared!) before we head off into small groups to discuss the relevant topic for that evening.

I have had the pleasure of leading one of the small groups and have thoroughly enjoyed this. It has been encouraging to share experiences of people who are mature Christians and those who are new in their faith. Course members appear to enjoy the weekly fellowship as it gives them a chance to discuss the Christian faith in a relaxed, comfortable setting. We have also had a few laughs along the way!

It is expected that the second part of the course will be as positive as the first!

Topics include : What does the Holy Spirit do?

Why and how should I tell others?

How can I make the most of the rest of my life?

I am certain that good fellowship, fun and faith will continue in the weeks ahead!

Lynsey Foster

ALPHA FOLLOW UP

Consideration is being given to holding the Alpha follow up course, 'A Life Worth Living', as part of the Wednesday evening meetings through early 2010. More details will be given when a final decision is made.

THE ALPHA COURSE - A personal view

I am so glad I decided to attend the Alpha Course which commenced on 24th September 2009 in the Church Hall and will run over ten weeks. At first I was a little apprehensive as I didn't know what it would entail. Would I have to speak in front of others? Would I know the Bible enough to take part? A strong influence in my mind urged me to go and continued in the weeks leading up to the start of the course. Then on the Sunday before the course started I heard more about it in Church. Everyone was encouraged to come along and try it, no commitment was required. My mind was set.

The first session was about 'Who Is Jesus?' There was a warm welcome for everyone as they arrived from the Elders and Rev McDowell. We watched the powerpoint presentation on Nicky Gumbel speaking to a large group of people. He spoke about the proof in sections of the Bible that Jesus existed, his human qualities that he had while on earth and the reason he came to take away our sins. He used amusing examples in his talk, keeping it interesting and our minds focused. Then after the presentation we had a delicious buffet supper made and supplied by the ladies with a hot cup of tea or coffee. We sat at a number of tables and these formed our groups which we returned to every subsequent week. Some of the Church Elders were the discussion leaders of each group. It was in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere that we thought about and discussed the message of the presentation. We could enter into the discussion or just listen. There was no pressure to speak, but somehow like every conversation, we all found it easy to say what we thought.

We were all given the Alpha Course manual which helped us remember the presentation and the verses in the Bible to support the message. Each night there was a book stall and everyone could view and buy the relevant latest books if they wished.

Over the weeks I learned more about my direction in life and how to develop a closeness with God by daily contact through prayer and Bible reading. We all took time out of our busy lives to enjoy fellowship with each other and with the realisation that we can overcome all the obstacles of life with Jesus at our side.

Pauline Watt

Caution: Be careful of your thoughts; they could break into words at anytime!

THE BOWLING CLUB

The indoor bowling season is now well under way. The club has made a good start to the season and has won three out of the four games played in the East Antrim League. These wins have included games against Carrick Bowling Club and Ulster Transport, clubs which are always very hard to play against especially on their own bowling mats. If the club continues to play as it has up to now, the club could be aiming for a top position in the League.

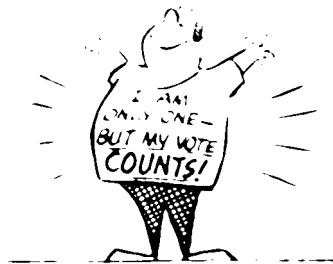
The club this season has a couple of new members and these, plus the improvement in the younger players, has strengthened the team and will hopefully lead to success in some competitions.

As well as the East Antrim League the club has entered three cup competitions, The Wilson Feeds Charity Cup, The John Logan Cup and this year for the first time The Robert Wilson Cup which this year is supporting The Blind / Deaf Children Charity, a very worthy cause. Hopefully the club's good start to the season will continue and will be successful in all competitions.



Christopher Craig

**HAPPY
CHRISTMAS
TO YOU ALL!**



One Person Does Count

When you are tempted to believe that your absence from church doesn't matter, consider these facts about the power of a single vote:

- In 1654, one vote gave Oliver Cromwell control of England.
- In 1845, one vote brought Texas into the Union.
- In 1868, one vote saved President Andrew Johnson from impeachment.
- In 1876, one vote gave Rutherford B. Hayes the Presidency of the United States.
- In 1960, Richard Nixon lost the Presidential election and John F. Kennedy won it by less than one vote per precinct in the United States.

Your presence at church does matter. We'll see you there on the next Lord's Day.

JUST A FEW ODDS AND ENDS

FAITH AND HOPE

The future is yours, it belongs to you,
And with faith in God
and in yourself, too,
No hill's too high,
no mountain's too tall,
For with faith in the Lord
you can conquer them all -
And all that you wish for
that is honest and true
The Lord will certainly give to you,
Not always the way you most desire
But always He gives
what you most require -
So accept what He sends,
be it bitter or sweet,
For God knows best
what makes life complete,
And great is your gladness
and rich your reward
When you learn to accept
the will of the Lord.

Helen Steiner Rice

Hidden Bible Gems and Metals

(Done the first one for you.)

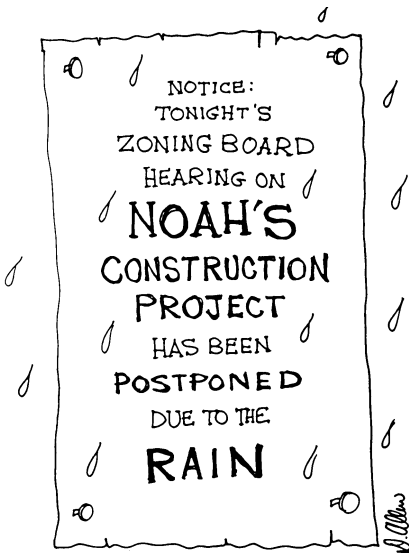
1. Good men can be seen
growing **old** with grace.
2. There was never an Emir on
the throne of Israel.
3. Hilkiah was a temple admin-
-istrator for King Josiah
4. A sore tonsil very quickly
inflames.
5. We should do our best in all
our work.
6. Caleb, Ron, Zebedee and
Adam never met.
7. Early Methodists found
Mow Cop perfect for Prayer
Meetings.
8. When people in Babylon
made a stop a zither was heard.
9. Rub yellow and blue
together for green.

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

Towards the end of the Sunday Service, the Minister asked, "How many of you have forgiven your enemies?" 80% held up their hands. The Minister then repeated the question. Everyone responded this time except one small elderly lady. "Mrs. Neely, are you not willing to forgive your enemies?" "I don't have any," she replied, smiling sweetly. "Mrs. Neely that's very unusual. How old are you?" "Ninety eight" she replied. "Oh Mrs. Neely, would you please come down to the front of the church and tell us all how a person can live ninety eight years and not have an enemy in the world?" This little frail woman, tottered down the aisle, faced the congregation and said, "I outlived them all!"

OH MR NOAH!

Why is it still raining cats and dogs? I thought you had only two of each animal in the Ark!



See Genesis 7: 10



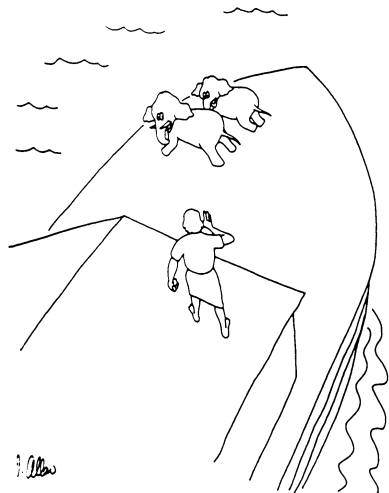
“Not cantaloupe! I said to bring me a pair of antelope!”

See Genesis 7: 9



‘I’m getting a little tired of
“Row, Row, Row Your Boat”.’

See Genesis 7: 17



“Stop running around the ark. You’re
making everybody seasick.”

See Genesis 6: 19-20

Photos of events over recent months



September Men's Breakfast - Colin Davidson, Rev Noel Agnew, Brian Gardiner and Eddie McDowell (John Waugh - both photos)



Smiles all round following presentations on 27th September - William Stewart, Ian & Roberta Patterson, Robert Woodside and Eddie McDowell



Project Romania

Stoves destined for
Romania -
before and after
painting

(Thomas McKnight)



VISITATION GROUP

Some time back a Vision Group was set up within our congregation and since then they have encouraged a number of successful events eg Men's Breakfasts, Holiday Bible Club, Alpha Course, etc.

Out of their more recent discussions came the idea of a Visitation Group being set up within the congregation. This group will be made up of volunteer visitors each of whom would visit a number (approximately six) of the elderly, sick, housebound or bereaved members of the congregation.

It is intended that the visits would be on a monthly basis and would complement those made by Rev McDowell and the District Elders. The main purposes of the visits would be to keep a close contact with these members, to convey to them the greetings of the Church, to inform them of events within the Church and to lend a listening ear to any potential needs.

The formation of this group is already underway and, with God's help, it will be in operation in the not too distant future.

We look forward to getting this up and running and trust that God will equip and guide us as we seek to carry out this particular ministry.

Marlene Davis

HALF WAY TO A NEW VISUAL SYSTEM!

The Church Session and Committee have given approval in principle for the installation of a new Visual System in our church.

Such systems are increasingly being used by churches. In recent years we have used many new worship hymns in Church and if we want to expand our current selection of praise we will have to either purchase new hymnbooks or print a new praise supplement. The use of a visual system will give much greater flexibility in the choice of praise by allowing the words of hymns to be displayed - and Bible readings also. It can also be used to display slides and video clips; we have used a temporary system on various occasions this year - including the PW 40th Anniversary Service when photographs of their activities over the years were displayed.

Earlier this year a small team visited other churches, contacted various visual

system providers, and sought to identify the type of system that would be suitable for our church and the likely costs. The most appropriate solution seemed to be 3 large plasma screens. Two of these would be at the front of the church above the doors either side of the pulpit that lead to the Galbraith Hall (where the balcony meets the front of the church). These 2 screens would be visible from most of the body of the church. The other screen would be on the front of the balcony and would be used mainly for the Choir and the Minister.

We would also like to install 2 fixed cameras that could be used, among other things, to make those speaking from the lectern and those involved in baptisms/weddings more visible to the congregation. The computer and associated operating equipment would be located in the booth used for the sound system at the corner of the gallery.

Large plasma screens are expensive and the total cost of the system has been estimated at approximately £16,000. The Kirk Session wanted to take a lead in the funding of this project and has already contributed over £5600. On top of this the Committee has decided that a bequest of £2000 from the late Bobby McCaw should be used for this purpose. With some other funding we already have about £8,000 earmarked for this project - about half of the likely cost - which is an excellent start!

Earlier this year the Committee discussed holding a special one-off appeal to the congregation for the remainder of the funds. However, in light of our financial situation, and uncertainty about the money the congregation had invested with the Presbyterian Mutual Society, it was decided that it was not the right time to do that. Just now we need an increase in contributions to put our general finances on a sound footing and in particular to reduce our Vestibule Fund debt. That must be our short term focus.

So the installation of the visual system has been put back, but it is hoped to complete this project in the near future - when our finances permit.

In the meantime if you would like to help progress the visual system we would be delighted to receive contributions for it - but only if these are over and above what you intend to contribute to other aspects of the Church's funds. (Please do not reduce your other contributions to give to this project.) If you wish to contribute to the Visual System please put your contribution in

an envelope with your name on it and clearly marked “Visual System” and put it in the normal Sunday collection plate or pass it to Joe Bingham, our Treasurer.

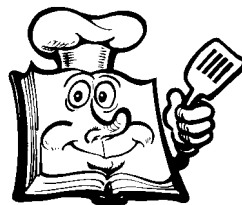
Euel Agnew

COOKERY CORNER

Mince Pies - the taste of Christmas in a delicious pastry parcel.

Ingredients

| | | |
|--|-------------------------|---------------|
| 225g (8oz) plain flour | 125g (4oz) butter | |
| 50g (2oz) ground almonds | Grated rind of 1 orange | |
| 60g caster sugar | 1 egg yolk | 2-3 tbsp milk |
| 1x 410g jar Robertson’s Rum, Raisin & Cherry Mincemeat | | |



Method

Pre-heat oven to 180°C / fan 160°C / Gas Mark 4. Rub butter into flour until it resembles breadcrumbs, stir in almonds, orange rind and sugar. Add egg yolk and enough milk to mix into a soft dough. Roll out pastry to about 0.3cm thick, cut out 24 rounds with a 7.5cm cutter and a 5.5cm fluted cutter. Line a greased bun tin with the larger pastry rounds, place a spoonful of mincemeat in each case, dampen edges, top with remaining lids and seal. Bake for approx 15 minutes until golden brown. Sprinkle with caster sugar. *Tip:* Sieve cinnamon over the mince pies for a lovely festive flavour.

Christmas Biscuit Cake - a decadent alternative to traditional Christmas cake.

Ingredients

| | | |
|---|--------------------|-------------|
| 150g milk chocolate, | 2tbsp golden syrup | 100g butter |
| 200 g Digestive or Crinkle Crunch biscuits, roughly crushed | | |
| 75g glace cherries, halved | 100g raisins | |
| 50g pistachio nuts, roughly chopped | | |
| 50g white chocolate, roughly chopped | Icing sugar | |

Method

Line an 18cm loose-based round cake tin with cling film, leaving enough to fold over the top when the tin is full. Place 150g of milk chocolate, 2 table-
spoons of golden syrup and 100g butter into a bowl, melt over a pan of
boiling water or place in the microwave. Add 200g of roughly crushed

Digestive or Crinkle Crunch biscuits, 75g of halved glace cherries, 100g raisins, 50g of roughly chopped pistachio nuts and 50g of roughly chopped white chocolate and stir well.

Tip the mixture into the tin and press down with the back of a metal spoon. Fold over the cling film and leave overnight in the fridge to set. To serve, remove from the tin and slice thinly, before dusting with icing sugar.

Banoffee Layer - quick, easy and great fun for the children to make!

Ingredients

Sliced bananas, toffee sauce, ginger biscuits or cookies, whipped cream and grated chocolate.

Method

Crush the ginger biscuits or cookies and place into the base of a sundae glass, layering sliced bananas, toffee sauce, whipped cream and finally grated chocolate on top. Serve immediately *and enjoy!*

CRÈCHE ROTA

| Date | Leaders | Helpers |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 3rd January | Martha McClenaghan Claire McDowell | Laura Patterson |
| 10th January | Amanda Shaw Sharon McConnell | Emma Patterson |
| 17th January | Irene Downey Jean Currie | Zara +Ryan McIlwaine |
| 24th January | Jacqui Coulter Helen McAuley | Danielle McClenaghan |
| 31st January | Pauline Watt Claire McConnell | Lauren McClintock |
| 7th February | Pamela Wilson Arlene Boyd | Sarah Faulkner |
| 14th February | Jean Currie Claire McDowell | Megan McAuley |
| 21th February | Martha McClenaghan Heather Patterson | Graeme McAuley |
| 28th February | Amanda Shaw Pauline Watt | Finlay McConnell |
| 7th March | Pamela Wilson Claire McConnell | Lauren McClintock |
| 14th March | Irene Downey Jacqui Coulter | Melanie McAuley |
| 21st March | Helen McAuley Sharon McConnell | Claudia Kirk |
| 28th March | Arlene Boyd Heather Patterson | Sian Agnew |

The crèche for pre-school children is held in the Patterson Room, on the upper floor of the church vestibule, throughout the service each Sunday. The provision of a crèche is made possible by the contribution of all the volunteers on the rota and their help is much appreciated. If anyone on the rota finds that a date does not suit, please either try to swap or contact me on 93352440

Jean Currie

‘SPUD’ YOUTH ASSEMBLY

The SPUD Youth Assembly is back now for its second year having made a significant impact in the debates at last year’s General Assembly.



What is SPUD? It is a forum whereby a group of young people in the 15 to 25 age group, chosen within our churches to represent the youth in their congregations, come together to discuss/debate issues and Resolutions coming up at the next General Assembly. Specific areas are chosen where a ‘youth’ input is considered valuable, for example there would not be much point in seeking a youth input on some topics, e.g. on Ministerial Pensions or review of Salaries, where ministers themselves can’t always agree. However it is important for the voice of our young people to be heard on issues which affect the future development / direction of our Church Presbyterian.

‘SPUD’ is derived from the process or format which this ‘Youth Assembly’ takes - **Speaking, Participating, Understanding and Deciding**..

Two representatives have been selected from this congregation to attend SPUD for 2009/10. They are Sarah Gardiner and Simon Baxter and I hope that they will be able to report back to us as a congregation on their experiences and on some of the issues discussed. The first SPUD Assembly meeting is set for Saturday 21st November followed by a SPUD ‘mash up’ on 19 - 21st February 2010 culminating in the General Assembly in the first week of June 2010. We trust that Sarah and Simon find their participation a rewarding experience and that they will in due course share with us some of the thoughts and experiences on the whole process and on the topics discussed.

Editor

‘CHILD PROTECTION’ TRAINING

Training for those working with children and vulnerable adults will take place on Thursday 14th January 2010 in 1st Ballyeaston Lecture Hall at 7.30pm. The training will include information about the new vetting and barring scheme and the new Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). It is important that everyone working with children and young people in our congregation attends this training event, and does not regard it as optional. This applies to Sunday School teachers, crèche and children's church leaders and helpers, Youth Fellowship leaders and Girls’ Brigade officers and helpers.

SOME 'HOLY' HUMOUR TO LIGHTEN YOUR DAY!

A father was approached by his small son who told him proudly, 'I know what the Bible means!' His father smiled and replied, 'What do you mean, you 'know' what the Bible means?' The son replied, 'I do know!' 'Okay', said his father. 'What does the Bible mean?' That's easy, Daddy' the young boy replied excitedly, 'it stands for **Basic Information Before Leaving Earth.**'

There was a very gracious lady who was mailing an old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country. 'Is there anything breakable in here?' asked the postal clerk. 'Only the Ten Commandments', answered the lady.

'Somebody has said there are only two kinds of people in the world. There are those who wake up in the morning and say, 'Good morning, Lord,' and there are those who wake up in the morning and say, 'Good Lord, it's morning.'

A minister parked his car in a no-parking zone in a large city because he was short of time and couldn't find a space with a meter. Then he put a note under the windshield wiper that read: 'I have circled the block 10 times. If I don't park here, I'll miss my appointment. Forgive us our trespasses.' When he returned, he found a parking ticket from a Traffic Warden along with this note 'I've circled this block for 10 years. If I don't give you a ticket I'll lose my job. Lead us not into temptation.'

There is the story of a pastor who got up one Sunday and announced to his congregation: 'I have good news and bad news. The good news is, we have enough money to pay for our new building program. The bad news is, it's still out there in your pockets.'

While driving in Pennsylvania, a family caught up on an Amish carriage. The owner of the carriage obviously had a sense of humour, because attached to the back of the carriage was a hand printed sign... 'Energy efficient vehicle: Runs on oats and grass. Caution: Do not step in exhaust.'

A minister waited in line to have his car filled with petrol just before a long holiday weekend. The attendant worked quickly, but there were many cars ahead of him. Finally, the attendant motioned him toward a vacant pump. 'Reverend,' said the young man, 'I'm so sorry about the delay. It seems as if everyone waits until the last minute to get ready for a long trip.' The minister

chuckled, 'I know what you mean. It's the same in my business.'

People want the front of the bus, the back of the church and the centre of attention.

The minister was preoccupied with thoughts of how he was going to ask the congregation to come up with more money than they were expecting for repairs to the church building. Therefore, he was annoyed to find that the regular organist was sick and a substitute had been brought in at the last minute. The substitute wanted to know what to play. 'Here's a copy of the service,' he said impatiently. 'But, you'll have to think of something to play after I make the announcement about the finances.' During the service, the minister paused and said, 'Brothers and Sisters, we are in great difficulty; the roof repairs cost twice as much as we expected and we need £40,000 more. Any of you who can pledge £500 or more, please stand up.' At that moment, the substitute organist played the National Anthem. And that is how the substitute became the regular organist!

On a more serious note - 'Give me a sense of humour, Lord,
Give me the grace to see a joke,
To get some humour out of life,
And pass it on to other folk!'

Keep smiling and remember -

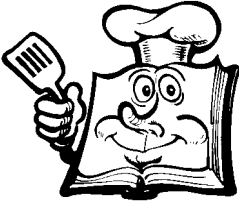
Your 'thoughts' become words. Your 'words' become actions. Your 'actions' become habits. Your 'habits' become character. Your 'character' becomes YOUR destiny. *(Thanks to Susan for this whole piece.)*


Herald £10 **Reach Out** £7

Anyone wishing to place an order for the above magazines of our Church, should give their name to Mrs Orvil Cree before the end of December. Due to increased printing etc. costs the Herald price has been raised to £10 per annum from 2010 (just £1 per Issue).

Both these magazines continue to be a source of blessing and encouragement to those who read them, giving lots of information on the home and overseas work of our Presbyterian Church.

COOKERY CORNER WITH A DIFFERENCE!!



Love Cake

Ingredients: 2 shady trees 1 small seat
2 smiling faces 1 tiny waist (well squeezed)
4 lips pressed

Method: Mix all together with a litre of love, stir in a
1/4 litre of moonlight and take as long as you like.

Matrimony Cake

Take a cup of kindness and another of love,
In a pan of happiness mix the above.
Add a pinch of tenderness and tablespoon of trust,
Stir in a little sunshine, roll out a smiling crust.
Flour with contentment, keep all free from strife,
Fill with understanding and bake well all your life.

Preserving Husbands

Husbands, like peaches, will not keep well unless preserved.
First select him carefully, not too green or over ripe.
Husbands grown in the tropics of pleasure look very fine, but usually insipid. The home grown ones are best.
Select your husband, if possible, from a family tree growing on the sunny side of life. You will be sure that he is sound at heart.
Having selected your husband, make a cheery fire of love.
Your preserving pan (the home) must be clean and spotless.
Give him plenty of sweetness. Vinegar is never used.
Don't keep stirring him up. Should you keep poking him to see if he is done, it will spoil his looks.
Follow this recipe and he will be well preserved.

Cured Tiffs

Use all available reason. Add a mixture of forgiveness with a tincture of love. Leave to cool and serve with a friendly spirit.

Editor: thanks to Jane Stewart for these recipes, courtesy of some of her mother's old cookery books. Just thought I'd better explain the source in case you thought I'd taken leave of my senses - what's left of them!

A BIBLE READING PLAN FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

This reading plan is prepared by the International Bible Reading Association (IBRA), publishers of 'Light for our Path' and 'Words for Today' study notes.

READINGS IN LUKE

(1) The coming of the Messiah

Text for week: Luke 2:11

January 1 Luke 1:1-25

2-3 Luke 1:26-45

4 Luke 1:46-56

5 Luke 1:57-80

6 Luke 2:1-14

7 Luke 2:15-24

8 Luke 2:25-40

9-10 Luke 2:41-52

THE ECONOMY OF GOD

(1) The economy of grace

Text for week: Ephesians 2:5b,7-10

11 Ephesians 2:1-10

12 Philippians 4:4-9

13 Philippians 2:5-11

14 2 Corinthians 8:7-15

15 1 John 3:16-24

16-17 1 Peter 3:13 - 4:6

THE ECONOMY OF GOD

(2) The economy of fools

Text for week: 1 Corinthians 7:31

18 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

19 Philippians 3:4-14

20 James 5:13-20

21 Romans 8:22-27

22 Luke 16:19-31

23-24 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

READINGS IN LUKE

(2) Beginnings

Text for week: Luke 3:4

25 Luke 3:1-14

26 Luke 3:15 - 22

January 27 Luke 3:23-38

28 Luke 4:1-15

29 Luke 4:16-30

30-31 Luke 4:31-44

CLOTHING

(1) Clothing our nakedness

Text for week: Matthew 25:36

February 1 1 Samuel 2:18-21

2 Exodus 22:21-27

3 Isaiah 3:18 - 4:1

4 Matthew 25:31-40

5 John 19:23-24

6-7 Matthew 5:38-42

CLOTHING

(2) Robed in honour and glory

Text for week: Zechariah 3:3-5

8 Zechariah 3:1-5

9 Daniel 5:1-7

10 2 Kings 2:9-14

11 Matthew 22:1-14

12 John 19:1-7

13-14 Revelation 3:1-6

READINGS IN GENESIS (1-38)

(1) In the beginning

Text for the week: Genesis 1:31

15 Genesis 1:1-19

16 Genesis 1:20 - 2:3

17 Genesis 2:4-25

18 Genesis 3:1-24

19 Genesis 4:1-16

20-21 Genesis 6:5-22

(2) The great flood

Text for week: Genesis 8:22

22 Genesis 7:1-16

February 23 Genesis 7:17-24, 8:1-5
24 Genesis 8:6-22
25 Genesis 9:1-17
26 Genesis 11:1-9
27-28 Genesis 12:1-20

(3) God's covenant with Abraham

Text for week: Genesis 18:15

March 1 Genesis 13:1-18
2 Genesis 14:13-24
3 Genesis 15:1-16
4 Genesis 16:1-16
5 Genesis 17:1-22
6-7 Genesis 18:1-15

(4) Abraham, Lot and Isaac

Text for week: Genesis 22:16-18

8 Genesis 18:16-33
9 Genesis 19:1-14
10 Genesis 19:15-29
11 Genesis 21:1-20
12 Genesis 22:1-19
13-14 Genesis 25:19-34

(5) Jacob

Text for week: Genesis 32:26

March 15 Genesis 27:1-17
16 Genesis 27:18-38
17 Genesis 29:16-30
18 Genesis 32:22-32
19 Genesis 33:1-11
20-21 Genesis 35:1-14

READINGS IN LUKE

(3) The road to Jerusalem

Text for week: Luke 22:26-27

22 Luke 19:29-40
23 Luke 19:41-48; 22:1-6
24 Luke 22:7-23
25 Luke 22:24-38
26 Luke 22:39-53
27-28 Luke 22:54-71

(4) The way of the Cross

Text for week: Luke 23:47

29 Luke 23:1-12
30 Luke 23:13-25
31 Luke 23:26-31
April 1 Luke 23:32-43
2 Luke 23:44-49
3-4 Luke 23:50-56

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Christmas will soon be upon us once again bringing its message of the Saviour's birth - a message which forms but a small part of the story revealed in the New Testament. I would like to thank all who have contributed to this Issue and wish you all a very happy Christmas and God's richest blessing for the year ahead.



Sam Waugh

If you have any comments or material for inclusion, contact Sam Waugh (Editor) by
Email: thelink@firstballyeaston.org
Post: 4 Collin View, Ballyclare BT39 9AR
Telephone: (028) 9332 3708




CHILDREN'S CHURCH ROTA

Thanks to all existing volunteers. As you can see from the list below, a few more volunteers would be really helpful. If you feel you can help for 2 weeks in the year please speak to me or Robert Woodside.



Heather Patterson

| DECEMBER | Up to P3 | P4 - P7 | Suggested Topics |
|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 28th | Claire McDowell | Liz Agnew | Wise Men |
| JANUARY | | | |
| 3rd | Thomas McKnight | Lynsey Foster | Boy in Temple |
| 10th | Thomas McKnight | Lynsey Foster | Jesus' Baptism |
| 17th | Carol Conn | Heather Patterson | Jesus calls disciples |
| 24th | Carol Conn | Heather Patterson | Jesus heals paralysed man |
| 31st | Helen McAuley | Helen Cummings | Jesus calms storm |
| FEBRUARY | | | |
| 7th | Helen McAuley | Helen Cummings | Jairus' daughter |
| 14th | Helen McKnight | Liz Agnew | Feeds five thousand |
| 21st | Helen McKnight | Liz Agnew | Good Samaritan |
| 28th | Adele Davidson | Bruce Drummond | Mary and Martha |
| MARCH | | | |
| 7th | Adele Davidson | Bruce Drummond | Blind man |
| 14th | Lynsey Foster | Martha McClenaghan | Mothers Day |
| 21st | Lynsey Foster | Martha McClenaghan | Parable of great feast |
| 28th | Sharon McConnell | Claire McDowell | Palm Sunday |
| APRIL | | | |
| 4th | Sharon McConnell | Claire McDowell | Last supper & betrayal |



Points for Prayer Handbook
Get your 2010 copy now and keep up to date on the work of our Presbyterian Church at home and abroad and its prayer needs.
Make sure of your copy by placing your order with Mrs Margy Davison today!

Price - still only £1.50

WORLD DEVELOPMENT APPEAL

“Suppose someone is without food and clothing. If you say, 'God bless, keep warm and well fed' but do nothing about it, what good is that?

James 2: 15 - 16



This year's World Development Appeal is entitled **‘Credit where Credit's due’**.

This is the first of a two year appeal. It aims to provide funds to the poorest people in the world to help them build a sustainable future. Our donations to the World Development Appeal are passed on to our partners, Christian Aid and Tearfund. They will make 'start up grants' or micro credit schemes available to those who would normally not have access to banking services.

Ever heard of Muhammad Yunus or The Grameen Bank?

In Bangladesh in 1976, Muhammad approached conventional banks asking them to lend to villagers deep in debt to loan sharks. He was told it couldn't be done because the poor are not creditworthy. Muhammad set about designing a credit delivery system to provide banking services targeted at the rural poor.

The Grameen Bank Project (Grameen means "rural" or "village" in the Bangla language) came into operation with the following objectives:

- o extend banking facilities to poor men and women;
- o eliminate the exploitation of the poor by money lenders;
- o create opportunities for self-employment for the vast multitude of unemployed people in rural Bangladesh;
- o bring the disadvantaged, mostly the women from the poorest households, within the fold of an organisational format that they can understand and manage by themselves;
- o and reverse the age-old vicious circle of "low income, low saving & low investment" into a virtuous circle of "low income, injection of credit, investment, more income, more savings, more investment, more income".

Muhammad has helped millions of Bangladeshis out of rural poverty by lending them small amounts of money to set up their own businesses. Money is lent mainly to women in groups of five (as he has identified them as using

money more effectively than men, for the wellbeing of their children). If one defaults, they all suffer, so they support each other to pay it back. The borrowers own the bank, receiving dividends in lieu of profits. Today, Grameen Bank has 8 million borrowers, 97% of whom are women. Since 1982, Grameen Bank has issued more than £3.65bn, lending around £75m a month, with the average loan just £150, and repayments of near 100%. Its model has now been rolled out worldwide, from China and Zimbabwe to New York, and plans are underway to open the first British Grameen in Glasgow.

This year's World Development Appeal has taken the basis for its projects from the Grameen Bank ethos, together with their partners, in seeking to help people build sustainable futures. Its projects are based in Ethiopia, Cambodia, India & Mali. The enclosed leaflet details the stories from these areas of how this will make a lasting difference.

Remember God has called us to help those less fortunate, not just by charity but by empowering them to help themselves in order for their joy and satisfaction to last.

Anyone who wishes any further information in relation to the World Development Appeal can contact myself or surf the web at www.pcimissionoverseas.org

Claire McDowell

World Development Partners -



Christian Aid believes in a world free of poverty and injustice, now, not just in the future. It has three essential aims: to deliver real, practical benefits on the ground; to speak out where there is injustice; and to campaign for change.

W: <http://www.christianaid.ie>



Tearfund maintains that to act with justice and love mercy is central to the purpose of the Church. Its vision is to harness the power that lies within the local church, as a caring, inclusive, servant-hearted and witnessing community, to make everyday miracles happen every day.

W: <http://www.tearfund.org>

KIRK SESSION REPORT

Since my appointment as Clerk of Session on the 1st September 2009, I have been coming to terms with the many challenges and responsibilities of this new role. I am greatly indebted to Ian Patterson for his help and support to enable me to commence my duties and as he continues to offer advice and guidance on the work and witness of our congregation.

Since the beginning of September all the organisations have commenced their winter programmes. The Badminton Club has not commenced this year as numbers attending have dropped significantly and the existing members have decided not to continue.

During the month of September we had a number of special events and services. Our United Evening Services with 2nd Ballyeaston congregation commenced on the 13th September with a Communion Service. The morning service on 20th September was conducted by the Presbyterian Women as they celebrated their 40th anniversary in First Ballyeaston. We congratulate them on this and wish them God's richest blessing for the future. After the morning service on Sunday 27th September the following presentations took place in the church:-

1. Mr Ian Patterson - Ian has been Clerk of Session from 1982 to 2009. A suitably inscribed mantle clock was presented to him by Mr Sam Waugh.
2. Mrs Roberta Patterson - Roberta, Ian's wife, has fully supported Ian in his role as Clerk of Session. A Silver Necklace was presented to her by Mr. Sam Waugh.
3. Mr Robert Woodside - Robert has been Superintendent of the Sunday School from 1990 to 2009. A suitably inscribed Study Bible was presented to him by Mrs Joan Chesney.

Harvest thanksgiving services were held on 11th October. Rev McDowell conducted the morning service and the evening service was conducted by Rev. Dr. MacConnell. We were delighted to have Harold and Adelaide back sharing with us in First Ballyeaston.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was celebrated at the morning and evening services on 1st November. With the support of our Girls' Brigade Company the Act of Remembrance took place at morning worship on Sunday 8th November. The Girls' Brigade Enrolment Service will take place on Sunday 29th November.

As we look forward to the Christmas season some special services have been arranged:-

6th December - Gift Sunday - no evening service

13th December - Evening Carol Service with light refreshments after.

20th December - Family Service

25th December - Christmas Morning Service at 10.30am.

Following the success of the Men's Breakfast in May of this year another one was held in Ballyclare Golf Club on Saturday 19th September. Around forty men attended this event and the guest speaker, Rev. Noel Agnew, shared his experience and the challenges he faces in his role as chaplain to the Christian Bikers.

The Alpha course commenced on 24th September in the Church Halls. Kirk Session were very encouraged when over 50 people enrolled for the course and the numbers attending each week remained fairly constant.

The past few months have been extremely busy and the year ahead promises to be just as busy as we seek to serve and worship God in First Ballyeaston. A number of special events have been planned for St Valentine's weekend and also for 21st - 23rd May. Arrangements are also in place for a Ladies event in February. Please pray for these special events, that God will use them to strengthen our faith and encourage us as a congregation of His people.

It is planned to carry out Child Protection training in January. The Board of Social Witness of our Church requires this training to be carried out every three years.

Finally on behalf of Kirk Session I wish you all a happy, peaceful and blessed Christmas and every blessing for the New Year.

If necessary, I can be contacted by phone at 9334 1533, email:w.stewart.108@btinternet.com

William Stewart (Clerk of Session)

CONGREGATIONAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Alpha Housing

There has been little progress recently regarding the proposal for a social housing scheme in Ballyeaston Village. Alpha Housing had contacted the

relevant authorities to determine the need for a social housing scheme on land owned by the Church and this work is still on-going. This scheme would only come to fruition if approved by Session, Committee and congregation of 1st Ballyeaston Church.

Church and Halls

There has been quite a lot of work completed over the last few months with the most obvious improvement being the cleaning of the entrance area at the Lecture Hall and around the church. This cleaning has greatly improved the appearance of these areas and we are very grateful to everyone who put in a lot of hard work to undertake this work.

Work has been carried out on the heating system in the Church and we would like to express our thanks to those who keep this system working effectively.

Manse

Manse grounds – the corn/grass has now been cut and the area in front of the manse is looking well.

Painting – The manse has now been painted and looks extremely well. This work had been postponed from last year due to the inclement weather.

Footpath through the Village

Following an approach from the Roads Service, the Committee has agreed to provide a strip of ground along the side of the car park on the Ballyboley Road to allow the carriageway to be realigned. This will result in a new wall being built. Work on the footpath project has at last got underway, having started on 9th November.

Malcolm Downey

TREASURER'S REPORT

| | 2009 | 2008 | |
|----------------|---------|---------|--------|
| FWO | £52,574 | £51,986 | + 1.1% |
| United Appeal | £6,379 | £5,115 | +24.7% |
| Vestibule Fund | £16,634 | £15,613 | + 5.0% |
| Harvest | £20,717 | £20,226 | + 2.4% |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Gift Aid to - FWO and United Appeal | £14,918 |
| Vestibule Fund | <u>£9,089</u> |
| | £24,007 |



Above is a summary of contributions made up to the 15th November 2009. 2008 figures are given as a comparison.

Income

Although there has been a small increase to the FWO it is not enough to balance against the Expenditure. Excluding the balance at the start of the year, the total income up to 15th November is £79,085.

The target for the United Appeal, set by Presbytery this year is £10,293. Adding the Gift Aid of £1,581 to the Income to date gives a total of £7,961, well short of the target set.

General Revenue A/C Expenditure

Total expenditure to date has been £84,768, this is £5,683 more than what has come in. In simple terms we are heading for the RED in this account.

Property Account

A number of projects have been carried out which has increased the deficit in this account e.g. installation of Fire Alarm system in the Halls and exterior painting of the Manse. £8,200 has been raised towards the Audio Visual Project, which is at present on hold.

Vestibule Fund

We now have paid the balance owed to the builder which leaves us with the Architects and Quantity Surveyors to pay. In November we paid out another £15,000 plus interest to the Presbyterian Mutual Society leaving us with £180,000 of the original loan to pay back.

Balance

On the 15th of November the balance in each of the Accounts, which includes starting balances, were:

General Revenue (this covers the churches general running costs) = £6,302

Property Account = - £12,035

Vestibule Fund = £40,882

We still need your support for all aspects of the church's work, we continually need your financial support.



End of Year Arrangements

In early December you will receive a statement of your contributions and your 2010 envelopes. Please contact John Waugh or myself if there are any

discrepancies so we can investigate further. Please note that any contributions made after 31st December 2009 will be allocated to 2010 accounts.

All organisations should have their accounts with John Waugh for Auditing no later than 10th January 2010. All contributions to the Church should be made before the end of 2009.

Joe Bingham

For Your Diary *Continued*

FEBRUARY

- Wednesday, 3rd 8.00p.m. Bible Study & Prayer Time, MacConnell Hall
Thursday, 4th 8.00p.m. Ladies Evening with Rev Mairisine Stanfield, L. Hall
Sunday, 7th 11.30a.m. Morning Worship (Evening Service next week)
Wednesday, 10th 8.00p.m. Bible Study & Prayer Time, MacConnell Hall
Friday, 12th Youth Evening, Jonny Farrell
Saturday, 13th 8.30a.m. Men's Breakfast with Rt Rev Dr Stafford Carson
Sunday, 14th 11.30a.m. Morning Worship with Rt Rev Dr Stafford Carson
7.00p.m. Evening Service with Jonny Farrell
Wednesday, 17th 8.00p.m. Bible Study & Prayer Time, MacConnell Hall
Sunday, 21st 11.30a.m. Morning Worship
Wednesday, 24th 8.00p.m. Bible Study & Prayer Time, MacConnell Hall
Sunday, 28th 11.30a.m. Morning Worship

MARCH

- Wednesday, 3rd 8.00p.m. Bible Study & Prayer Time, MacConnell Hall
Friday, 5th 7.45p.m. Women's World Day of Prayer Service, 1st B'easton
Sunday, 7th 11.30a.m. Morning Worship
7.30p.m. Annual P.W. Evening of Praise - Larne Choral Society
Wednesday, 10th 8.00p.m. Bible Study & Prayer Time, MacConnell Hall
Sunday, 14th 11.30a.m. Morning Worship
Tuesday, 16th 8.00pm Annual Cong. Meeting & Meeting of Church Comm.
Wednesday 17th 8.00pm Bible Study & Prayer Time, MacConnell Hall
Sunday, 21st 11.30a.m. Morning Worship
7.00p.m. Evening Service in 2nd Ballyeaston
Wednesday, 24th 8.00p.m. Bible Study & Prayer Time, MacConnell Hall
Friday, 26th Annual GB Display, Ballyclare Secondary School
Sunday, 28th 11.30a.m. Morning Worship (**Start of British Summer Time -
clocks forward one hour**)
Wednesday, 31st 8.00p.m. Presby. Divine Healing Service (venue to be confirmed)

For Your Diary



DECEMBER 2009

- Saturday, 5th 2.00p.m. PW Group Christmas Fun Day & Sale in Church Halls
Sunday, 6th 11.30a.m. Gift Day Service (Evening Service next week)
Wednesday, 9th 8.00p.m. Time of Prayer & Bible Study, MacConnell Hall
Sunday, 13th 11.30a.m. Morning Worship
7.00p.m. **Service of Lessons & Carols in Church followed by tea, mince pies, etc. in Galbraith Hall**
Tuesday, 15th 8.00p.m. Kirk Session Meeting (if required)
Wednesday, 16th 8.00p.m. Time of Prayer & Bible Study (last for this year)
Saturday, 19th 3-5pm Primary; 7.30-10.00pm Senior - Sunday School Parties
Sunday, 20th 11.30a.m. **Family Service** including Nativity Play by young people from Children's Church (**No Sunday School**)
7.00p.m. Carols by Candlelight Service - 2nd Ballyeaston
Thursday, 24th 11.30p.m. Christmas Eve Service - 2nd Ballyeaston
Friday, 25th **10.30a.m. Christmas Day Service for all the family**
Sunday, 27th 11.30a.m. Morning Worship (**No Sunday School**)
(The church's Accounts for 2009 will close at 31st December. All contributions to be credited in 2009 Annual Report should be with the Treasurer before that date.)

JANUARY 2010

- Sunday, 3rd 10.30a.m. Sunday School resumes
11.30a.m. Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
7.00p.m. Evening Service
(Organisations are reminded to submit their books and accounts for audit to the Assistant Treasurer, John Waugh, by next Sunday at latest.)
Wednesday, 6th 8.00p.m. Bible Study & Prayer Time, MacConnell Hall
Sunday, 10th 11.30a.m. Morning Worship
Wednesday, 13th 8.00p.m. Bible Study & Prayer Time, MacConnell Hall
Thursday, 14th 7.30p.m. Training re Children & Vulnerable Adults, 1st B'easton
Sunday, 17th 11.30a.m. Morning Worship
7.00p.m. Communion Service, 2nd Ballyeaston
Tuesday, 19th 8.00p.m. Meeting of Church Committee, MacConnell Hall
Wednesday, 20th 8.00p.m. Bible Study & Prayer Time, MacConnell Hall
Saturday, 23rd Morning Training event for Pastoral Visitation Team & Elders
Sunday, 24th 11.30a.m. Morning Worship
Tuesday, 26th 8.00p.m. Kirk Session Meeting
Wednesday, 27th 8.00p.m. Presby. Divine Healing Service (venue to be confirmed)
Sunday, 31st 11.30a.m. Morning Worship
3.00p.m. Enquiry (Communion Prep) Classes commence at Manse