

1st Ballyeaston Presbyterian Church



# The Link Magazine

[www.firstballyeaston.org](http://www.firstballyeaston.org)

Vol. 19 No. 3

March 2010

Love ever gives —  
Forgives — outlives

And ever stands  
With open hands.  
And while it lives —

It gives

For this is love's prerogative  
To give — and give  
— and give.



John Oxenham



And God so loved us  
that He gave ... and gives

The Manse  
Ballyeaston  
March 2010

Dear Friends,

You may remember a film from the 1990s called *Groundhog Day*, when a news reporter is condemned to relive exactly the same day over and over again. Every morning when he wakes up, it is the same date and when he goes outside he meets the same people, has the same conversations and experiences the exact same events.

I imagine there are probably days that you wish you could live over again because of the time you have wasted, the things you have said or the tasks you have left undone. Perhaps you wish you could press some delete key and start all over again. Sometimes people can feel that they have made such a mess of their lives that they have no hope or opportunity of starting over again.

The good news of Jesus Christ is that we can have that new beginning. For when we allow him, Jesus really can wipe the slate clean and remake us. God graphically demonstrates this truth to us in Jeremiah chapter 18. God shows Jeremiah a potter working at clay on a wheel but whenever the clay collapses in his hands, he just starts over again. God says to Jeremiah, "Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand." The Divine potter can take our broken and misshapen lives and remould them into something of value and beauty.

The reason God is able to remake our lives is because he allowed his own Son to be broken for our sake. He was pierced for our transgressions and crushed for our iniquities and the punishment that should have been ours was laid on him. Yet his mangled body was raised from the dead, and from Jesus' new beginning our new beginning can also flow.

In fact we all need a new beginning. Every one of us, without exception, needs to experience the forgiveness of God and the strength of his spirit. If you haven't yet received the salvation of Jesus Christ, then today could be the time. Ralph Waldo Emerson, an American philosopher and poet, once wrote, "A day is like a miniature eternity." In the next 24 hours you can make decisions that will shape the rest of your life and your eternal destiny.

In Groundhog Day, only after the news reporter learned to become less self-centred and more considerate of others needs was he then released from the nightmare of living the same day again and again. Without Jesus Christ we are condemned to live each day with the same sinful attitudes, so that each new day becomes much like the one before. Only Jesus Christ can release us from the tyranny of our own sin, and give us the new beginning that truly makes life worth living. I wonder will you be praising God for His new life in your heart this Easter?

Wishing you the peace of Christ this Easter.  
Your friend and minister.

*Edwin McDowell*

### **ELECTION OF NEW ELDERS**

The Kirk Session are very pleased that three people namely Mrs Anne Gardiner, Mr Tom McKnight and Mr John Waugh were nominated by the congregation in February to become ruling elders in our congregation. We are grateful that all three have accepted their nomination, and have now become elders elect. They will have training in the Westminster Confession of Faith and in what it means to be an elder. This training will be undertaken by Presbytery and our own Kirk Session during March and April. After the three candidates have finished their training, they will meet with Presbytery so that any further questions or issues can be addressed. Although not yet decided, we can anticipate that there will be a service of ordination in 1st Ballyeaston towards the end of May or early June. In the meantime, we wish Anne, Tom and John every success with their training and we pray for God's richest blessing upon them as they prepare to become ruling elders in our congregation.

*Edwin McDowell*

### **AN ANAGRAM FOR YOU**

What do you get as an anagram of **PRESBYTERIAN**? Answer is in 3 words - see later in the magazine.

**CHURCH WEEKEND**  
**Friday 21 to Sunday 23 May 2010**

**Glenada Holiday & Conference  
Centre, Newcastle**

**Speaker:**  
**Rev Russell Birney**  
**Former Moderator of the General  
Assembly**

*Will you come ?*

*Please do!*

## BALLYEASTON PLACEMENT

Ballyeaston, where's that? I have to confess these were my words when I was given my placement by Union College. But after taking a trip in my car over the hill from Carrickfergus where I live, I soon found myself in the quiet surroundings of Ballyeaston. As you can imagine I was a bit anxious about how it would all go, how would the people here accept me, how would I be able to help them and not be just another student, what was the minister like, these were just some of the questions floating around in my already occupied mind.

Some of the other things which occupied my thoughts at the time were family issues. I have been married to Sally for twenty years; we have two girls, Emma (18) and Danielle (15). Sally's mums died very suddenly and unexpectedly in November last year and things have been difficult for us all since then. Sally works as a family support worker in Newington Presbyterian church, I at present am studying full time at Cornhill, Belfast, a bible teaching course, so assignments and talks which have to be prepared were also in my mind. When I look back, only five years ago, our lives were so different, God didn't feature, well at least that's what we thought, but in reflection it's clear to see how God has worked and is working in our lives, even in and through all of the difficult times. God truly is faithful at all times and I thank him daily for all he has given me and the grace and strength he grants me through every situation. I believe God will never lead you to a place his grace can't keep you, so it is on him I had to lean for my placement at Ballyeaston despite all that was going on in my life.

So I set the ball rolling, my first contact with Eddie was by phone to make arrangements for a chat prior to me starting and to establish exactly what would be required of me during my time at 1st Ballyeaston. I thought I was going for a brief chat but ended up being a couple of hours there and I can still recall walking away from the manse so thankful and encouraged by Eddie's words and openness to help me. This meeting was in December and we agreed a start date of 10th January 2010.

Christmas came and went, and on the 10th of January my placement started. The weather played its part as the snow and ice prevented the service from being held in the main church building, Eddie introduced me to the congregation by way of a short interview. Can I take this opportunity to thank

you all for making me so welcome from day one - you have invited me into your homes, shared your food with me and gave me your time. Your friendly and welcoming manner has been and is a real blessing and I will never forget it. It is an example that, God willing, I would encourage any fellowship to emulate in any congregation I would be part of.

Since that first Sunday I have taken part in the services in various ways, and am extremely grateful for the opportunities I've been given, also I have tried to attend and be part of God's work in 1st Ballyeaston through the many events and ministries which have taken place. What a great encouragement it is to see your zeal for God and his kingdom, every event or meeting I have been to or participated in has been well attended and organised, with people looking to grow in Christ, with a leadership looking to lead by example, serving faithfully those whom they lead. In Eddie I have been taught much and have had the joy of shadowing and experiencing the demanding ministry work at first hand. His love and commitment to his flock and God's people, as well as his faithfulness to God's word are so evident and good to learn from, and I'm glad to say in Eddie not only did God send me to someone to learn from but also to someone who I can call a friend.

I don't have long left of my placement at Ballyeaston, but I do believe this will not be the end of my association here as I hope to be a regular visitor. I still have a long way to go before going into the ministry but I believe in my heart that is where God is calling me to. I am thankful for your continued support and prayers, and I will hold you all with great affection in my heart and prayers. If any one now were to ask me, where is Ballyeaston, I can say, that is a wee place in County Antrim where God truly is at work.

*Alan Moore*

### **WHAT DATE EASTER?**

Most of us have probably wondered at some time as to why the date of Easter and the associated holidays fluctuate so much. The reason is that they follow the Jewish Lunar Calendar and not the Solar Gregorian Calendar. Generally speaking the first Sunday after a full moon that falls on or just after the Spring Equinox (March 21st) is fixed as Easter. Easter may therefore fall on any date between 22nd March and the end of April.

For 2010 - Easter 4th April                      Ash Wednesday 17th February.

For 2011 - Easter 24th April                     Ash Wednesday 9th March.

For 2012 - Easter 8th April                     Ash Wednesday 22nd February.

## CHURCH RECORD

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

3rd December 2009, Mr James McConnell, 11 Rashee Crescent, Ballyclare.

22nd February 2010, Dr Elizabeth (Isa) Woodburn, 81 Braepark Road, Ballyclare.



**NEW FAMILIES** *'Let us go into the house of the Lord.'* Psalm 122 :1

Mr Jackie & Mrs Melissa Mawhinney, 57 Huntingdale Green;

Mrs Madge Williamson, 194 Rashee Road;

Mr Ian Hamilton & Miss Susan Magee, 18 Henryville Manor;

(all of Ballyclare.)



## THE GIRLS' BRIGADE

Once again we are approaching the end of another session of Girls' Brigade. Since our last bulletin in the "Link" magazine, the girls have been working hard to finish off their badge work and have now started working on perfecting items for the forthcoming Display.



May I take this opportunity of thanking everyone who has helped out during Girls' Brigade this year. Your assistance has been greatly appreciated and I sincerely hope that the lives of the young people in our Company have been enriched by your contribution. I would like to appeal for more help when we re-commence in September. Our aim in 1st Ballyeaston Girls' Brigade is to bring girls, through fun, fellowship and spiritual education, to accept Christ as their Saviour. If you feel that you could devote a few hours each week to help in our Company we would love to hear from you.

Our Display will be held in Ballyclare Secondary School on Friday, 26th March, 2010 at 7.00 p.m. Tickets will be sold in the usual way i.e. two tickets for each family (priced at, Adults £3.00 - Children £1.50) and then any remaining tickets will be offered on a first come, first served basis. Tickets will go on sale Friday, 5th March and Monday, 8th March. Any remaining

tickets can be purchased on Friday, 12th March.

The Rehearsal Night for the Display will be held on Monday, 22nd March in Ballyclare Secondary School and the times for each Section are as follows:

Toddlers	6.30 p.m. - 7.00 p.m.
Explorers	7.00 p.m. - 7.45 p.m.
Juniors	7.45 p.m. - 8.30 p.m.
Seniors	8.30 p.m. - 9.00 p.m.
Brigaders	9.00 p.m. - 9.30 p.m.

Please note the following dates for your Diary:-

The Annual District Scripture Table Quiz will be held on Saturday, 20th March, 2010 at 7.30 p.m. in 1st Ballyeaston.

The Annual District Church Parade will be held in Joymount Presbyterian Church on Sunday, 28th March 2010. Girls in the Company Section (Juniors, Seniors, Brigaders, Sub Officers and Officers) are asked to meet at 3.15 p.m. in Carrickfergus and full details will be given to all girls and officers prior to that date.

This is an important event in our calendar and a full turnout is expected.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the Display and also to enjoying our well-earned summer break and we hope to see all girls and leaders back in September for the new session.

We would ask for your prayerful support for our Company that it may continue to prosper and to bring young girls into the service of our Lord and Master.

*Ann Agnew (Captain)*

### **THANKS**

Following the Haiti earthquake in mid January, the Moderator of the General Assembly, Dr Stafford Carson, issued a special appeal across the church for money to help the victims. We responded by raising £2,366 (including Gift Aid on contributions). All the money raised by the appeal will be shared equally between Christian Aid and Tear Fund to help finance their relief work in Haiti. Thank you all for your most generous support.

## PW GROUP NEWS



Our numbers at the January meeting were low because of the snow and our speaker, Mrs Pamela Forrest, was unable to come along. Those who were able to be there enjoyed the evening when we put ourselves in the shoes of one of our missionaries. Claire welcomed everyone, Martha opened the meeting with a Bible reading. After prayer we sang a hymn, then broke up into small groups of 3 or 4 and tried to answer such question as - If you were a missionary in say Africa, would you choose to live in a mud hut or a house? Lots of varied answer and reason were reported by each group, no one being right or wrong.

At our February meeting we had fellowship with our friends and neighbours from 2nd Ballyeaston, Ballyclare, Ballynure, Glenwherry, Ballylinney, 2nd Donegore and Raloo Presbyterians, Ballyclare and Ballynure Methodists and Ballyclare Old Presbyterian Church ladies. Claire conducted the opening devotions and welcomed everyone, especially Hilary McDowell who was our speaker for the evening. Hilary told us briefly about her past work and then went on to talk about her work now with young people and her concerns about the high number of suicides. On screen we saw pictures of some of her journeys and the situations she found herself in. Everyone was amazed at the achievements of this disabled lady.

By the time you read this article the Evening of Praise and also our March meeting with Mrs Nessie Lennon, who will talk on Plants & Flowers, will have passed. To round off this session our AGM will be held on 20th April and on the 23rd April we will celebrate our 40th Anniversary with a dinner at Ross Park Hotel.

*Margaret Waugh*

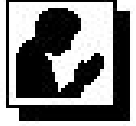
### FLOWER ROTA 2010

April 4th	Mrs V Baxter	June 6th	Mrs J McKeown
April 11th	Mrs M Waugh	June 13th	Mrs H McAuley
April 18th	Mrs H Patterson	June 20th	Mrs E McNair
April 25th	Mrs C McDowell	June 27th	Mrs B Irvine
May 2nd	Mrs R Patterson	July 4th	Mrs O Cree
May 9th	Mrs N Millar	July 11th	Mrs S Drummond
May 16th	Miss W Todd	July 18th	Mrs D Agnew
May 23rd	Mrs M Houston	July 25th	Mrs G Baxter
May 30th	Mrs M Boyd	Septem. 5th	Mrs M Davis



## PRAYER TIME

In the Bible, God commands us to praise Him and come before Him in prayer and it should be our desire to turn to the Lord in a way that is acceptable to Him, with a pure heart. We must never forget that He is sovereign and that we, who are his enemies by nature, should count it a privilege beyond compare, to be invited into the presence of such a great and gracious God. Our prayers are but a humble acknowledgment of our helplessness and dependence on Him and a recognition that He is the author and source of every good gift.



Of course the greatest gift He offers is salvation from our sin through the atoning blood of Christ shed for us on the cross at Calvary and the Bible alone teaches all that is necessary for our salvation and is the only standard by which all Christian behaviour and practice must be measured.

The prayer of faith is based on the firm promise and affirmation of the inerrant word of God and on its teaching and authority being absolute, supreme and final.

I would imagine that a high percentage of us would openly admit that the place where we are most conscious of weakness and failure in our daily walk of faith is in our prayer-life and yet to be careless about praying is to be guilty of sinning against the Lord.

Prayer should be a regular activity and a joyful habit in the life of every child of God, for there can be no deep realisation of His presence, nor any real fruit from our Christian living and service, if there is insufficient emphasis placed on private and corporate prayer. Only when we spend time in prayer before the Lord and in meditation of His word, will the fragrance of true worship mark our lives and result in service that is blessed.

J C Ryle, the first Anglican Bishop of Liverpool, a great preacher and writer of the 19th Century, warned that prayer is the most neglected of all Christian duties and the lack of it, a major cause of back-sliding for the believer.

So often we feel we can get by, relying on self-effort, and as long as we think we can sort out our own lives we will not pray, but prayer demands that we see ourselves not just as small and weak but as sinful and wicked, not able to change our own natures, far less the world around us. In prayer we seek

God's holy, pure and righteous face and we see what we are in that light. We praise His wonderful name, we express our abhorrence of, and ask forgiveness for, those things that mar our lives and relationships and we call down His blessing on all His children.

As we approach this Easter time we are very conscious of the death and resurrection of God's Son, Jesus Christ, some 2,000 years ago, an event that split time in two and altered the destiny of the earth's people. It has become the focal point of the Christian message to the world and nothing should keep us from the privilege of working hand in hand with Christ for the conversion of souls.

God calls few to be spiritual giants but depends on the faithful, daily praying of all His people, to help build His Church and extend His Kingdom. Prayers prayed in the will of God are never lost and one day they will be gloriously answered. He will reward fully, all those whose prayers helped win the spiritual battle and opened the door for His great work in the world.

In closing this article, can I just advise that the “Life Worth Living” Course, which began back on 11th February 2010 on a Thursday evening, will run until 1st April and will then break for Easter, with the final meeting on 29th April. Our midweek times of Bible Study and Prayer will then resume in May. There is also a short time of prayer in the Upper Room at the back of the church on a Sunday morning, starting at 10.45am, and we are always delighted to see new faces at these meetings which are open to everyone.

Would love to see you there.

God Bless.

*Cecil Davis*

**PRESBYTERIAN ORPHAN AND  
CHILDREN'S SOCIETY**

I would like to endorse what Paul Gray says in his letter on the next page and say a very big THANK YOU to every member of the Congregation who gave so generously to the Presbyterian Orphan and Children's Society collection this past year. Your contributions really have made a huge difference to the lives of some of our Presbyterian children and young people.



*Jean Woodside*

Mrs Jean Woodside  
17 Victoria Road  
Ballyclare  
BT39 9JE



7 January 2010

Dear Mrs Woodside

Thank you so much for the marvellous collection of £1077.00 from First Ballyeaston Presbyterian Church. The gratitude of the Society is conveyed to you for your practical interest and enthusiasm, and to everyone involved in raising this outstanding collection for their inspiring support and wonderful generosity.

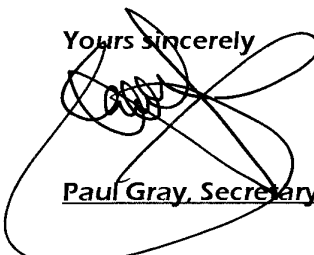
First Ballyeaston Congregation has given so very generously and meaningfully to help those families under the care of the Society, all of whom are in real financial need. One mother being helped by the Society put it this way “we as a family greatly appreciate the cheque we have received and are comforted by knowing people care for us”.

In 2010 the Society will strive to continue proving beneficial to children and young people throughout our Presbyterian Church in Ireland by providing regular quarterly grants and special exceptional grants to families.

Sincere thanks once again to you for your continued efforts on behalf of the Society — we greatly appreciate all that you do for us, and to our friends in the Congregation for providing the Society with such tremendous support.

Kindest regards and every good wish for 2010.

Yours sincerely

  
Paul Gray, Secretary

*A wonderful collection ! Thank you for your hard work on our behalf and thanks to everyone for their generosity & support.*

5th Floor, Glengall Exchange, 3 Glengall Street, Belfast BT12 5AB  
Telephone (028) 90323737

## FROM ONE WEEKEND TO ANOTHER

A big thanks to all who supported our special weekend of events in February linked round the theme of Love and St. Valentine's Day and thanks also to those who prayed for the events as part of the "Forty Days" initiative - thanks for this important ministry as we seek God's will and grace in our congregation.

o We were delighted to have the Rt Rev Dr Stafford Carson speak at our morning service on Sunday 14th February and also at a breakfast on Saturday 13th February attended by over 40 men from our congregation and others. The breakfast at Snob Logs Coffee Shop at Logwood Nursery was superb, and the Moderator spoke simply about his own father and the legacy he had received from him - a love of sport; a love of nature; and a love of the Lord - and we were challenged about the legacy we men will provide for our families and loved ones ??

o Johnny Farrell of Ballyclare Youth for Christ led both a youth night on Friday 12th February and our evening service on Sunday 14th. The music on the Sunday evening was new and different and it was great to see so many people - young and not so young - at the service. Johnny has an easy speaking style and talked about the meaning of love and gave various examples from his own experience.

o Before all that, Rev Mairisine Stanfield was the Guest Speaker at a ladies evening on Thursday 4th February. About 80 ladies enjoyed an excellent meal - and Mairisine's talk on the theme "A Life Worth Living". She talked about the heart - how it can be broken and healed by Jesus and made stronger through adversity. There was a special prayer ministry after the meeting, which was much appreciated by many of those who attended.

The events were a challenge to one and all to consider how we live out our faith day in and day out - and on Valentine's Day we were asked whether we show the love of Christ to those around us.

And now we look forward to other weekends - the Easter weekend - and then to our Church weekend at the Glenada Holiday and Conference Centre in Newcastle on Friday 21st to Sunday 23rd May - and after that to the Holiday Bible Club at the start of July.

We are now planning the programme for the Church weekend, and Rev Russell Birney, the former minister of High Kirk in Ballymena and a former Moderator of the General Assembly will be our Guest Speaker. Life can be hectic and the aim is that this should be a relaxing and refreshing weekend for all those who come. The weekend is open to all members of the congregation and further details will be available shortly.

*Euel Agnew*

## **YOUTH FELLOWSHIP WEEKEND 2009**

We left the Church Halls at 7:30 unaware of what lay ahead but certain the Youth Fellowship weekend for 2009 would be an unforgettable and eventful time. After arriving and unpacking there was sing star (I'm surprised the windows are still intact) and hot chocolate. The most memorable part of Friday night was definitely the incident involving a cooker, a packet of skips and a long story. We played games and talked until 4.30 on Saturday morning.

Surprisingly we were all up bright eyed and bushy tailed by 8.00. After breakfast and Ethan's thought for the day, we left for the Giant's Causeway despite the weather! When we returned to the hostel in Ballintoy it was a race to the radiators to warm up before lunch. We had planned to go coasteering in the afternoon but this was cancelled due to the weather. This was a disappointment to everyone. Instead we agreed to go kayaking in Portrush harbour. Prizes for the most capsizing definitely goes to Graham McAuley but the prize for the wettest definitely goes to Anne despite the fact she watched from the sidelines.

On Saturday evening we were joined by Louise O'Toole, Sarah Craig and Francis Downey who were unable to make the beginning of the weekend. After we had all successfully dried off we learned a few new games from Simon including spoons and president before gathering around the TV for the X Factor (on which the girls insisted). We were then split into teams for a quiz organised by Brian. The questions were extremely difficult, I mean who knows what the capital of Botswana is? Again fun and games continued well into the night. I'm sure if you saw us walking around in the dark making animal noises you would have thought we were crazy.

We had to be up early on Sunday to pack, it is surprising how much mess can be made in two days. On Sunday morning after we had successfully packed

we headed to Coleraine and the University of Ulster where the MAD (Make a Difference) weekend was taking place. The morning service was very good with the highpoint being the African Children's Choir and their story. We were also teamed with another church who are our prayer partners. Youth Fellowship will be praying for this church and keeping in contact with them by email to see if our prayers have made a difference in their church family. Before heading home we stopped at Burger King for our last meal. Despite the overall lack of sleep there was still fun to be had and ice cream to be eaten. We all left and headed back home and although there were no power ballads being belted out as there had been on the journey on Friday evening the journey home was just as fun. When we arrived back in Ballyeaston it was hard to believe the weekend was over. I guess it is true what they say, time flies when you're having fun.

*Megan McAuley, Melanie McAuley & Louise O'Toole*

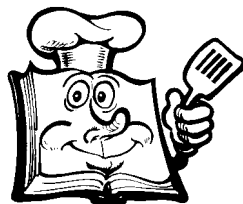
*[Received just after the December 2009 magazine was published. Editor]*

## COOKERY CORNER

### Chocolate Banoffee Pie

#### Ingredients

Base - 2 tbsp coca powder      1 tsp mixed spice  
100g (4 oz) butter, melted  
250 g (9 oz) digestive biscuits, crushed finely



Topping - 100 g (4 oz) butter      50 g (2 oz) caster sugar  
50g (2 oz) dark brown soft sugar  
1 x 397 g can Carnation Condensed Milk  
1 tbsp treacle      4 bananas  
75g (3 oz) dark chocolate, melted  
1 x 284 ml carton double cream, whipped

#### Method

Mix coca powder with spice, melted butter and biscuit crumbs. Press mix into base and part of the way up the sides of a 20cm (8in) cake tin. Chill.

To make topping, place butter and sugars in a pan and heat gently, stirring, until butter has melted and sugar dissolved. Add condensed milk and gently bring to the boil, stirring. As soon as mix comes to the boil, (*contd. page 16*)

# CHRISTIAN AID WEEK - A WAY TO CHANGE THE WORLD



Ever wondered why we do Christian Aid Week?

Here are seven good reasons why we're involved...

**1** We are joining with more than **20,000 churches** in an unparalleled act of Christian witness to our communities – showing them we care about justice and poor people.

**2** Christian Aid has a vision – an **end to poverty**. By being part of this week we're not only funding life-changing projects, we're helping tackle the root causes of poverty – helping to change the world for good.

**3** The church has **an amazing heritage** of working for justice. Christian Aid Week has run every year since soon after the Second World War – demonstrating the church's faithfulness to helping the poor.

**4** In these **difficult financial times**, the world's poorest people need our time, prayers and financial support more than ever. Christian Aid Week helps us give people the opportunity to be generous.

**5** Around **300,000 volunteers** give their time to deliver envelopes door to door and put on events. We are part of this movement for change.

**6** We get **money for nothing!** Every taxpayer who signs a Gift Aid declaration on an envelope is giving Christian Aid 28 per cent extra – making even more development work possible in the world's poorest countries.

**7** Christian Aid has successfully campaigned on 'dropping the debt', carbon-declaration reform and trade justice. Christian Aid Week helps world-wide **structural change** to take place.



## CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 9 - 15 May 2010

We believe that poverty is a scandal and that we can really do something about it. To find out more about how you can get involved just ask your congregational Christian Aid representative who is Sam Waugh, or go to [www.caweek.org](http://www.caweek.org)

**POVERTY - LET'S END IT**

remove from heat, add treacle and melted chocolate and mix well.

Spread chocolate mix over biscuit base and chill for an hour. Slice bananas and fold into whipped cream and spoon over chocolate topping. Decorate with remaining bananas and dust with cocoa powder, if liked.

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## FOR LOVE .... OR FEAR

Like me you will have heard the question asked ‘Why does God allow it? Often it is in relation to some natural tragedy - earthquake, flood, fire, famine, or whatever. The question may also be asked in connection with issues more directly related to human nature - murder, immorality, etc.

Did not God create us and the world in which we live? Yes, I hear you say and perfectly according to the book of Genesis, but then we sinned and continued to sin in disobedience to God’s word as revealed by the Prophets throughout Old Testament times. God continually sought to win over the hearts of those erring ‘Children of Israel’. He punished them to wander in the wilderness after their miraculous escape from the Egyptians but also gave them the Ten Commandments, the most wonderful set of rules for living ever written. He gave them victories over their enemies so that they might inherit the ‘promised land’ but to little avail. He promised them a Saviour but they looked for a saviour to deliver them from the power of the occupying Roman forces in their land. In the Old Testament we experience a fear of God for ‘He is a Holy God’ even a ‘Just God’ but His justice was to be feared. In the coming of Jesus we see a more loving and caring face of God, a face that was always there right from the beginning but could not be readily seen because that was God’s will. His promise to send a Saviour was born out of His love for His creation and a need to reconcile this erring mankind to Himself

But let us get back to our original question, ‘Why ..’, and questions beginning ‘why’ are not always easy to answer. Let us not forget the other question concerning creation and remember that ‘God saw that it was good’. I suggest to you that such tragedies are not the punishments of a vengeful God but a test of our love for God and our fellow man. If we love and respect our fellow human beings could we be a party to murder, etc.. The natural disasters are not a punishment sent by God but arise from within the world He created, sometimes aided and abetted by the greed of man. Such happenings should be seen as a test of our love for our fellow man, an

opportunity for us to show compassion for those in need and an opportunity to use the inventiveness which God gave as part of our being, to find ways to protect the vulnerable through, for example, helping to develop better structures in vulnerable areas to withstand earthquake, wind and fire.

For God so loves us that not only did He send His Son to bring us Salvation that ‘we might not perish but have eternal life’ but that we might also love one another that they might not perish - for ‘inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brothers, you have done it unto me’. God has given us a world rich in natural resources and is continually revealing to us ways of better using those resources and He has given a world capable of producing all the food needed to feed us if we would stop being selfish and wasteful and share out those resources with love in honour of God’s name, the one who first gave! Remember also that prophesy of the desert blooming, could be a reality as it already is in many parts of the world, simply through irrigation, using water already deep down in the earth.

*“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” John 13 : 34-35*

*Sam Waugh*

*[A reflection on the recent earthquakes in Haiti and Chile, terrorist events here in Northern Ireland and not forgetting the Easter message and the upcoming Christian Aid Week in May.]*

### **SENIOR MEMBERS’ AFTERNOON - 19th JUNE**

Final arrangements for our Senior Members’ afternoon are almost complete. Arrangements are much the same as last year in that it will be held as usual on the **third Saturday of June, the 19th**, in the **MacConnell Hall** and **commence at 3.30pm**. We have decided to invite back ‘**George and friends**’ **together with Jim Reid** to provide a musical programme similar to last year. Our Church Catering Group will provide a tea in the Lecture Hall at around 5.00pm and can we stress that if you do not feel up to sitting through the afternoon musical programme, you will still be very welcome to come for your tea and a bit of craic at 5.00pm. The only thing that we ask is that you confirm with your District Elder that you are coming for tea so that the ladies know how many to cater for. Invitations will be issued through your District Elder some 3-4 weeks before the event and will have all the details on it.

## Photos of recent events



Stafford Carson with the Snob Logs crew - Jim, Amanda and Mandy at the Mens Breakfast.



Mens Breakfast - William Stewart, Stafford Carson and Uel McCrea taking a break before heading home.

*(John Waugh - All photos)*



William & Jane Stewart, Stafford & Patricia Carson, Claire & Eddie McDowell with Zoe & Callum and Alan & Sally Moore after the

Valentine's Day  
Morning Service.



With all my heart -  
a floral display for  
Valentine's Day by  
Agnes Grimason.

## **PRESBYTERY REPORTS**

This was my first year as Representative Elder. On each occasion before getting down to business the Moderator of Presbytery, Rev Richard Kerr, conducted opening worship. This was usually followed a period of time set for prayer on issues concerning the Presbytery.

### *3rd March 2009*

New Representative Elders were welcomed. The Rev Robin Brown was appointed as Convenor of the Consultation Commission. A number of reports on Vacancies: First Antrim, Crumlin and Dundrod were submitted. The Finance Report was presented and passed. A draft copy of the Presbytery Mission Plan was presented and discussed. A report from the working group was to be completed and forwarded to the Board of Mission.

### *5th May 2009*

The final version of the Presbytery Mission Plan was agreed and the working group's next focus was to move on to individual Congregational Mission Plans. I never realised that there were so many committees, panels and agents within Presbytery but tonight the new structure was agreed with the Rev McDowell being appointed to the Social Issues Committee and the Mission Committee. Reports were received from the Chaplains of Muckamore, Holywell and Antrim (Rev E McDowell) hospitals. Rev P Dickinson expressed concern about the proposed reduction in the number of residents in Muckamore.

### *8th September 2009*

The business of this meeting began with a number of recommendations being proposed by the Finance Committee on the auditing of church accounts, in that auditing must be undertaken by an independent auditor and signed accordingly. This was agreed by Presbytery. Reports were given on the Presbytery Weekend by its Convenor, Rev Paul Dalzell. An application for the appointment of a Deaconess in First Antrim was approved. Issues relating to Assembly decisions - Union Commission, Resolution 2, "Ministry, Finance & Mission" was referred to the Ministry Committee for discussion and General Board, Resolution 23, "The reality of sectarianism and its widespread effects ..." referred to Social Issues Committee.

### *3rd November 2009*

The main issues of this meeting :- The call to the Rev David Steele to the

congregation of Dundrod and Miss R Spiers as Deaconess in First Antrim. A report from the Ministry Committee on “Ministry, Finance & Mission” was received and agreed. Rev George Moore of the Students Committee read out a report on two applicants for the Ministry. We also heard from Miss Joan McCourt, 1st year Deaconess and Mr Stuart Morrow, 2nd year ministry student, on their progress. First Ballyeaston was one of a number of congregations requesting permission to proceed in the electing of new elders.

*1st December 2009*

This session was a bit quicker than most. Presbytery had agreed a nomination for Moderator. The Rev D Johnston, Bangor was proposed and agreed. This name was submitted to the Clerk of the General Assembly.

*2nd February 2010*

This meeting began with a list of five ministers to choose from for the post of Moderator of the General Assembly. It was decided through secret ballot and after the third run the Rev Ivan Patterson was the nomination of Presbytery. It was also agreed that the Rev Chris Glover be Moderator of Presbytery for the forthcoming year starting March 2010. A report was submitted from the Finance Committee, who had met with congregational treasurers to discuss a consultation paper on Pensions and Assessments sent out by the General Board Panel. Following discussion it was Presbytery's mind that no changes should be made to the present pensions scheme for several years. Dates for the training of new Elders were announced. The Convenor of the Social Issues Board, Rev James Tosh, reported back on Sectarianism. The report was received and it was agreed that Sectarianism be discussed at congregational level, with the use of resources from the Peace and Peace Making Panel, and reported back to Presbytery in September.

I have enjoyed my year as Representative Elder to Presbytery and I would like to thank the Rev McDowell for transport to the meetings on various occasions.

*Joe Bingham*



**If you have any comments or material for inclusion, contact Sam Waugh (Editor) by**

**Email: [thelink@firstballyeaston.org](mailto:thelink@firstballyeaston.org)**

**Post: 4 Collin View, Ballyclare BT39 9AR**

**Telephone: (028) 9332 3708**

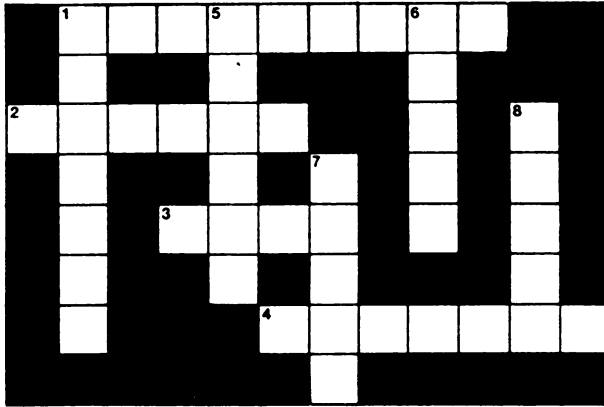
**Remember you can read 'The Link' on [www.firstballyeaston.org](http://www.firstballyeaston.org)**



# KID'S PAGE (and even for the not so young)

Who remembers the story of Joseph? Well here is a test on it for you.

## CROSSWORD



Across:

Down:

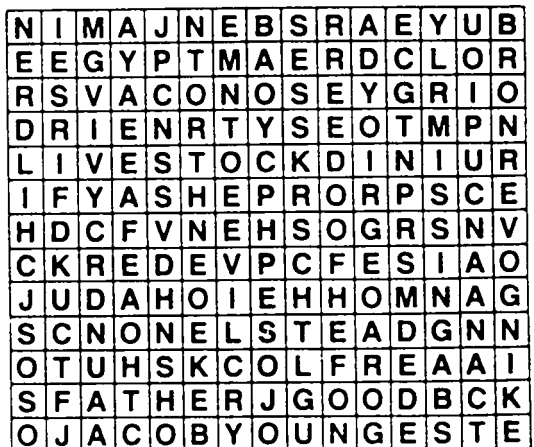
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How old was Joseph when his father gave him a multi-coloured coat?</li> <li>2. Which brother did not want to kill Joseph?</li> <li>3. His brothers threw Joseph into a dry ----.</li> <li>4. When he heard of Joseph's "death", Jacob did this for many days.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Joseph's first dream was about these.</li> <li>5. How many stars bowed down to Joseph in his second dream?</li> <li>6. Where were the Ishmaelites going?</li> <li>7. Joseph's brother dipped his tunic into a goat's -----.</li> <li>8. Joseph was sold as one of these.</li> </ol> |
|--|---|

*(Answers in Genesis 37: 2-36)*

## WORDSEARCH

Find these words in the grid .

- |             |          |           |
|-------------|----------|-----------|
| BAG         | EGYPT    | KING      |
| BENJAMIN    | EVIL     | LIVESTOCK |
| BROTHERS    | FAMINE   | MISSING   |
| BUY         | FATHER   | MONEY     |
| CANAAN      | FLOCKS   | NILE      |
| CHILDREN    | FOOD     | SACK      |
| CITY        | GOD      | SEVEN     |
| CORN        | GOOD     | SHEPHERDS |
| CROPS       | GOSHEN   | SON       |
| CUP         | GOVERNOR | SPIES     |
| DESCENDANTS | JACOB    | YEARS     |
| DRANK       | JOSEPH   | YOUNGEST  |
| DREAM       | JUDAH    |           |



## FIRST BALLYEASTON MEN'S BREAKFAST ON THE WEB

### What the Moderator had to say in his Blog

“Snob-logs February 18th, 2010

It's called Snob-logs and it's to be found on the main Belfast-Larne road close to Bruslee. The Garden Centre is Logwood Mill, and Snob-logs is the coffee shop and restaurant which is part of the garden centre, run by Jim and Amanda, and their business partner, who is also called Amanda.

I was there last Saturday morning for a men's breakfast with members of First Ballyeaston congregation as well as a few visitors from other congregations in the East Antrim area. It was a great meal. I reckon that, for lots of reasons, one should only eat a full Ulster fry now and again. But it has to be one of the most tasty meals ever invented.

Even though I often travel that road from Belfast to Larne, I have never stopped at Logwood Mill. My experience last weekend has encouraged me to think again about calling in to see Jim and Amanda when I'm in that part of the world.

The gathering at Snob-logs gave me the opportunity to reflect on my days growing up in East Antrim, and especially to recall the influence which my father had on my life. My father, by his life, communicated what he really loved and what was most important to him, and significantly influenced my life. As fathers and grandfathers, we do the same to our sons.

Albert Schweitzer, the famous medical missionary, said, “Example is not the main thing in life — it is the only thing.” He might have overstated it a bit, but it is undoubtedly true that most of us have been influenced most by the actions of others than by their words. So, on reflection, calling in at Snob-logs regularly for an Ulster fry may not be my best option. I wonder if they serve green tea and a wee salad?”

*Taken from <http://www.staffordcarson.com/2010/02/snob-logs/> You can also read the comments which this evoked on PMS (Presbyterian Mutual Society)*

*Editor*

### What others have said ...

‘Some Christians are ready to give God credit, but are very slow to give Him cash!’ ‘The missing ingredient in some sermons is a little shortening.’

*[As seen in another Church Magazine]*



<b>Date</b>	<b>Leaders</b>		<b>Helpers</b>
21st March	Helen McAuley	Sharon McConnell	Claudia Kirk
28th March	Arlene Boyd	Heather Patterson	Sian Agnew
4th April	Pauline Watt	Pamela Wilson	Ryan and Zara McIlwaine
11th April	Claire McConnell	Irene Downey	Lauren McClintock
18th April	Jacqui Coulter	Helen McAuley	Sian Agnew
25th April	Sharon McConnell	Claire McDowell	Graeme McAuley
2nd May	Amanda Shaw	Jean Currie	Melanie McAuley
9th May	Martha McClenaghan	Arlene Boyd	Finlay McConnell
16th May	Pamela Wilson	Claire McConnell	Lauren McClintock
23th May	Irene Downey	Jacqui Coulter	Megan McAuley
30th May	Helen McAuley	Sharon McConnell	Emma Patterson
6th June	Claire McDowell	Amanda Shaw	Sarah Faulkner
13th June	Arlene Boyd	Pauline Watt	Laura Patterson
20th June	Jean Currie	Martha McClenaghan	Claudia Kirk
27th June	Heather Patterson	Pamela Wilson	Danielle McClenaghan

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 this is much appreciated by parents. If anyone would like the opportunity to come and help some Sunday to see if you would enjoy being part of the team, please speak to me. If anyone on the rota finds that a date does not suit, please either try to swap or contact me on 93352440. Thank you,

*Jean Currie*

### **BALLYNURE SEEK TO REVIVE VILLAGE FAIR**

Ballynure Community Group and the local churches have plans to revive the Village Fair on Saturday 19th June 2010. They have a band booked to be there all afternoon from about 1pm and hope to have the local primary school choir and other musicians featuring too. Local organisations are also involved so there will be a lot of side shows, craft and local produce and plants for sale. They also plan to have inflatables ... a slide, an assault course and a

small one for the kids. There will be a 'Hog Roast' as well as other barbecues and tea and coffee.

The feature event will be the Duck Derby at 3pm sponsored by Ballygally Castle. This will be in the little bit of the Six Mile Water that goes from the Carrick Road, under the A8 and winds its way down to the old mill. Top prize is an overnight stay in the Castle and there are other good prizes too like the Sunday Carvery and Afternoon Tea.

This will be followed by an Auction of Talents about 4 pm. In the evening the Residents' Association will have their annual Tug o' War at the Church of Ireland.

All three churches in Ballynure are involved in this event as are all the local businesses ... it should be a good day! It is hoped to also organise 'Praise in the Park' on Sunday afternoon.

*(from information provided by Richard Wallace)*

### **WANTED**

#### **Volunteers for difficult service in local church.**

Motivation to serve should be obedience to God, grateful gladness, forgiveness, humility and love. Temptations to quit will sometimes be strong. Volunteers must be faithful in spite of long hours, little or no visible results and possibly no recognition except from God in eternity.

*[As seen in another Church Magazine. Perhaps this might be a Job Description for our new Elders Elect but could equally apply to all aspects of church work and witness. The fiery darts of carping criticism or worse still apathy, are just as much a part of the Devil's weaponry as jealousy, greed or any of the so called 'deadly sins']*

#### **As only children can see and tell it ...**

The nursery class was learning about whales. The teacher explained that it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human being because even though it was a very large mammal its throat was very small. A little girl pointed out that in Bible Class they'd learned that Jonah was swallowed by a whale. Irritated, the teacher insisted that a whale cannot swallow a human. The child was unconvinced and said "when I get to heaven, I'll ask Jonah" The teacher said "Ah, but what if Jonah went to Hell?" "The little girl replied instantly "Then you ask him."

## A BIBLE READING PLAN FOR THE MONTHS 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

#### (3) The road to Jerusalem

*Text for week: Luke 22:26-27*

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

#### (4) The way of the Cross

*Text for the week: Luke 23:47*

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

#### (5) The risen Lord

*Text for the week: Luke 24:5*

- 5 April Luke 24:1-12  
6 April Luke 24:13-27  
7 April Luke 24:28-35  
8 April Luke 24:36-43  
9 April Luke 24:44-53  
10-11 April Acts 1:1-14

### RESTING PLACES AND SACRED SPACES

#### (1) The divine imperative to rest

*Text for the week: John 15:9*

- 12 April Exodus 31:12-17  
13 April Hebrews 4:4-11  
14 April Leviticus 25:1-7  
15 April Isaiah 30:15-18  
16 April Matthew 11:28-30

17-18 April John 15:4-10

#### (2) Resting places in the Old Testament

*Text for the week: Psalm 131:3*

- 19 April Genesis 2:1-3  
20 April Genesis 28:10-22  
21 April Exodus 15:27 – 16:26  
22 April Jonah 1:15 – 2:10  
23 April Song of Songs 2:1-7  
24-25 April Psalms 127:1-2, 131

#### (3) Resting places in the New Testament

*Text for the week: Mark 6:31*

- 26 April Mark 4:26-29  
27 April Mark 1:9-13  
28 April Mark 4:35-41  
29 April Mark 6:30-44  
30 April John 14:1-6  
1-2 May John 19:38-42

### THE JESUS WAY

#### (1) Seeing, touching and tasting

*Text for the week: John 1:43*

- 3 May John 1:43-51  
4 May John 20:19-31  
5 May John 9:1-17  
6 May John 2:1-11  
7 May John 2:13-22  
8-9 May John 6:1-21

#### (2) Showing, walking and praying

*Text for the week: Mark 8:34*

- 10 May Matthew 23:1-12  
11 May Mark 1:1-8  
12 May Matthew 6:25-33  
13 May John 17:6-19

14 May Mark 8:27-38

15-16 May John 15:9-17

### **(3) Living and loving**

*Text for the week: Matthew 5:1-10*

17 May Matthew 5:12

18 May Luke 14: 25-33

19 May Mark 9:38-50

20 May Mark 1:29-39

21 May John 3:4-21

Sat-Sun 22-23 May Acts 2:37-47

## **ROMANS 1-8**

### **(1) Paul to the Romans -**

#### **The gospel for sinners**

*Text for the week: Romans 1:9-10*

24 May Romans 1:1-7

25 May Romans 1:8-17

26 May Romans 1:18-27

27 May Romans 1:28-32

28 May Romans 2:1-11

29-30 May Romans 2:12-16

### **(2) All have sinned, and are now justified**

*Text for the week: Romans 3:22*

31 May Romans 2:17-24

1 June Romans 2:25-3:8

2 June Romans 3:9-20

3 June Romans 3:21-31

4 June Romans 4:1-12

5-6 June Romans 4:13-25

### **(3) Sin and salvation**

*Text for the week: Romans 5:1*

7 June Romans 5:1-11

8 June Romans 5:12-23

9 June Romans 6:1-14

10 June Romans 6:15-23

11 June Romans 7:1-12

12-13 June Romans 7:13-20

### **(4) Life in the Spirit**

*Text for the week: Romans 8:1-2*

14 June Romans 7:21-25

15 June Romans 8:1-11

16 June Romans 8:12-17

17 June Romans 8:18-25

18 June Romans 8:26-30

19-20 June Romans 8:31-39

## **PETER THE APOSTLE**

### **(1) Peter and Jesus**

*Text for week: Matthew 16:15-17*

21 June Luke 4:38-39, 5:1-11

22 June Matthew 14:22-33

23 June Matthew 16:13-23

24 June Mark 9:2-10

25 June Mark 14:26-31, 66-72

26-27 June John 20:1-10

### **(2) Peter, a leader**

*Text for the week: John 21:17*

28 June John 21:1-17

29 June Acts 2:14, 22-39

30 June Acts 3:1-16

1 July Acts 11:1-18

2 July Galatians 2:6-14

3-4 July 2 Peter 1:16-18

## **MOODS AND EMOTIONS**

### **(1) From sorrow to joy**

*Text for the week: Psalm 30:5*

5 July Psalm 10:12-18

6 July 1 Samuel 2:1-10

7 July Psalm 126

8 July Isaiah 25:1-9

9 July Jeremiah 31:10-14

10-11 July Psalm 30

### **(2) From despondency to hope**

*Text for week: Habakkuk 3: 17-18*

12 July Psalm 88

13 July Job 3:11-26  
14 July 1 Kings 19:1-8  
15 July 1 Kings 19:9-18  
16 July Habakkuk 3:17-19  
17-18 July Lamentations 3:19-23

**(3) From anger to creative action**

*Text for the week: Romans 12:17*

19 July Psalm 4  
20 July Galatians 5:16-26  
21 July James 1:12-21  
22 July Proverbs 22:17-25  
23 July Ephesians 4:25-32  
24-25 July Romans 12:14-21

**(4) From jealousy to contentment**

*Text for the week: Philippians 4:19*

26 July Numbers 11:23-30  
27 July 1 Samuel 18:5-16  
28 July 1 Samuel 24:1-17  
29 July Philippians 4:2-9  
30 July Philippians 4:14-20  
31 Jul -1 Aug 1 Timothy 6:1-12

**READINGS IN LUKE**

**(6) Forerunner and followers**

*Text for the week: Luke 5:31-32*

2 August Luke 5:1-11, 27-32  
3 August Luke 6:12-26  
4 August Luke 7:18-35  
5 August Luke 8:22-25; 9:1-11  
6 August Luke 9:18-36  
7-8 August Luke 10:1-20

**(7) Making people whole**

*Text for the week: Luke 9:42-43*

9 August Luke 7:1-17

10 August Luke 7:36-50  
11 August Luke 8:26-39  
12 August Luke 8:40-56  
13 August Luke 9:37-50  
14-15 August Luke 17:11-19

**SILENCE**

**(1) Old Testament silences**

*Text for the week: Psalm 46:11*

16 August 1 Kings 19:9-18  
17 August 2 Kings 2:1-11  
18 August Job 2:7-13  
19 August Psalm 46:1-11  
20 August Psalm 50:16-23  
21-22 August Habakkuk 2:18-20

**(2) New Testament silences**

*Text for the week: Revelation 8:1*

23 August Luke 20:20-26  
24 August Luke 22:54-62  
25 August Luke 23:6-12  
26 August Acts 8:26-40  
27 August Acts 21:10-14  
28-29 August Revelation 7:9-17,8:1

**RIVERS OF THE BIBLE**

*Text for the week: John 7:38*

30 August Exodus 1:22-2:10  
31 August Joshua 3:1-17  
1 September 2 Kings 5:1-14  
2 September Psalm 137:1-4 &  
Ezekiel 1:1-4.



**HAPPY EASTER!**

Answer to anagram of Presbyterian  
'BEST IN PRAYER'

## 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*

<b>MARCH</b>	<b>Up to P3</b>	<b>P4 - P7</b>	<b>Suggested Topics</b>
21st	Lynsey Foster	Martha McClenaghan	Parable of great feast
28th	Sharon McConnell	Claire McDowell	Palm Sunday
<b>APRIL</b>			
4th	Sharon McConnell	Claire McDowell	Last supper & betrayal
11th	Sharon Bell	Claire McConnell	Story of Good Friday
18th	Sharon Bell	Claire McConnell	Easter story
25th	Sandra Agnew	Irene Downey	Jesus appears to his friends
<b>MAY</b>			
2nd	Sandra Agnew	Irene Downey	Parable of two builders
9th	Jean Currie	Thomas McKnight	Parable of the lost sheep
16th	Jean Currie	Thomas McKnight	Jesus blesses little children
23rd	Lynsey Foster	Carol Conn	Zacchaeus
30th	Lynsey Foster	Carol Conn	Parable of lost coin
<b>JUNE</b>			
6th	Heather Patterson	Helen McAuley	Parable of lost son
13th	<b>YOUNG PEOPLE'S DAY</b>		
20th	Heather Patterson	Helen McAuley	Fathers day
27th	Helen Cummings	Helen McKnight	Jesus heals ten men

### FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

It seems like only yesterday that I was writing this piece for the Christmas issue with its message of the Saviour's birth but here we are at Easter with its message of new birth both in relation to the world of nature and our Christian faith. Easter is a time for celebration both of the crucifixion with all its pain and suffering but without it there could have been no resurrection of Easter morn and no Salvation through God's love and grace. I would again like to thank all who have contributed to this Issue and wish you all a very happy Easter and hopefully a very pleasant summer.



*Sam Waugh*

## OUR GIVING TO GOD'S WORK - A PRESBYTERY PERSPECTIVE

Below is an extract from the report of the Presbytery Finance Committee to the Templepatrick Presbytery at its meeting on 2nd March 2010.

### Givings to Specified Sources (WFO, loose collections & Stipend givings)

Congregation	<u>No. of Families</u>		Specified Sources	Average givings per Contrib. Family	
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Contrib.</u>		<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
First Antrim	450	396	£187,541	£473.59	£418.19
High Street	434	290	£91,870	£316.79	£352.17
Greystone Rd	373	271	£78,303	£288.94	£275.14
<b>1st Ballyeaston</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>£83,751</b>	<b>£279.17</b>	<b>£273.52</b>
2nd Ballyeaston	319	258	£73,853	£286.25	£360.90
Crumlin	132	98	£38,866	£396.59	£365.85
1st Donegore	227	167	£64,672	£387.26	£375.92
2nd Donegore	212	176	£65,264	£370.82	£365.39
Dundrod	237	203	£65,171	£321.04	£336.50
Hydepark	180	174	£54,692	£314.32	£331.25
Lylehill	93	89	£30,645	£344.33	£323.79
Kilbride	508	386	£107,289	£277.95	£268.48
Killead	177	161	£49,933	£310.14	£314.14
Loanends	161	147	£49,909	£339.52	£343.65
Muckamore	250	198	£117,770	£594.80	£569.81
1st Randalstown	150	93	£34,144	£367.14	£414.50
Duneane	94	77	£33,154	£430.57	£357.32
2nd Randalstown	213	155	£70,517	£454.95	£472.44
O C Randalstown	400	332	£104,976	£316.19	£337.34
Templepatrick	323	273	£117,585	£430.71	£427.78
<b>2009 TOTAL</b>	<b>5,293</b>	<b>4,244</b>	<b>£1,519,905</b>		
<b>2008 TOTAL</b>	<b>5,527</b>	<b>4,232</b>	<b>£1,519,039</b>		
<b>2007 TOTAL</b>	<b>5,533</b>	<b>4,252</b>	<b>£1,499,302</b>		

**The average givings per family for 2009 across the Presbytery was £365.05 as compared with £358.94 in 2008 and £352.61 for 2007.**

What does all this mean? On a Presbytery wide basis the number of families, both total and contributing, has been falling for some years but the number of contributing families has risen just slightly in 2009, a welcome change. However the general trend is a decreasing membership in line with most 'traditional' Denominations. While overall total contributions continue

to follow an upward trend, the increase in 2009 is negligible or non-existent bearing in mind the small increase in overall contributors.

But where does First Ballyeaston stand in all of this? With 360 families we are the sixth largest congregation in the Presbytery but the more relevant figure is our 300 contributing families which places us as fourth largest. However our average contributions per family of £279.17 (averaging at £5.36 per week per family as against the Presbytery wide average of £7.02 per week per family) places us nineteenth out of the twenty congregations in the Presbytery.

While our contributions to Specified Sources rose by some £3,300 in 2009 as against 2008, we have no room to be complacent about our givings when we view the wider picture. When I first started printing these statistics in 2003, we had 320 contributing families giving an average £233.58 per family in 2002 (averaging £4.49 per week per family). Over the seven year period this represents an increase, based on averages, of £45.59 per family (less than £1 per week increase). I leave you to judge if you consider this as adequate.

One piece of what might seem good news for 2010 is that our United Appeal Target as set by Presbytery has dropped to £9,653 from £10,293 in 2009. However in reality the drop is accounted for by a change in the way the Students Bursary Fund is now funded having been removed from the United Appeal and charged from 2010 as a direct Assessment on the congregation at the rate of 5.25p per £/p of stipend paid to the minister. It might interest you to know that Church House Assessments for 2010 now amount to a total of 73.5p per £/p of stipend but that is another subject for another day.

*Sam Waugh*

## **KIRK SESSION REPORT**

As we commence a new year in First Ballyeaston, Kirk Session have been very busy with the various events that have been planned to take place throughout the year.

Child Protection training took place in the Church Halls on 14th January. The Board of Social Witness carry out this training which is necessary for those with responsibility for the organisations where children and young people are involved. The course was well attended by our members and some from neighbouring congregations.

The visitation teams set up by Kirk Session and convened by Mrs Marlene Davis have commenced visiting members of the congregation. They focus their visiting on those who are unwell or housebound and this adds to any visiting that is carried out by the minister and Kirk Session. If you know of anyone in the congregation who would appreciate a visit from the team on a regular basis please contact either Marlene or myself and this can be arranged.

Kirk Session has also set up a Worship Team, convened by Robert Hill. Along with the organist and minister, the team has representatives from the choir and music group and their remit is to enhance the musical input to our Sunday services. If you have any suggestions or comments in relation to the music used in our services please pass these to Robert or me.

The election to appoint new elders took place during February and by the time you read this the outcome will have been made known.

Following on from the Alpha course held in the autumn a follow up course entitled “A Life Worth Living” commenced in February. This is a 9 week course based on the book of Philippians and is aimed specifically at those who are starting out on the Christian life. Kirk Session are encouraged by the numbers attending this course and it is our prayer that together we will learn how to live the Christian life positively, practically and joyfully.

As we come once again to the Easter Season let us stand once again at the open tomb and reflect on what happened there. John Chapter 20 gives an eye witness account of the first Easter morning. These verses are full of the most interesting details and are certainly the account of eye witnesses. Peter and John were the first to see the evidence of the most sensational thing that has ever happened on this planet. As John Stott puts it, “We live and die; Christ died and lives.” Because He lives we also shall live. Easter has been described as the New Year's Day of the soul.



**‘THE EASTER MESSAGE’**

I wish you a pleasant Easter and I trust and pray that throughout this Easter season you will experience afresh the risen Christ as revealed to us in the scriptures.

*William Stewart*  
*(Clerk of Session)*

*(email : w.stewart.108@btinternet.com*

*Telephone: (028) 9334 1533)*

# CONGREGATIONAL COMMITTEE REPORT

## **Alpha Housing**

At present the Northern Ireland Housing Executive are carrying out a survey of Ballyeaston and the surrounding area to determine if there is a need for a social housing scheme in the area.

## **Footpath through the Village**

Work at the footpath along the side of the lower car park is continuing and hopefully this work will be completed early in 2010. There has been considerable disruption to the car park beside the Lecture Hall and the surface of the car park and the surrounding area should be made good once the work has been completed.

## **Manse**

Hedging plants have been purchased and it is hoped that the new hedge will be planted in the area to the side of the Manse in the near future.

There have been a few problems with the heating system at the Manse. The present boiler and pump are quite old and it has been decided that it would be better to replace the boiler with a new more efficient system rather than carry out repairs to the present system.

## **Vestibule/Church**

There has been a leak in the system designed to take water away from the roof of the vestibule. The system runs through the vestibule and there is a point where leaks may occur. At present the Property Committee are looking into the problem and will get a contractor to repair or replace the problem area in the drainage system to try to prevent a re-occurrence.

An area of dry rot has been detected in one of the upper window frames in the Church. A specialist company will examine the area once the visit by the Moderator has taken place and will decide what remedial action will be required.

*Malcolm Downey*

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Below is a summary of giving's up to the 21st February 2010 with 2009's figures for comparison. The General Revenue Account began with a balance of £9,935, this is £2,050 less than when I reported last year.



	2010	2009	Difference
WFO	£8,571	£9,543	-£972
Loose Collection	£118	£141	-£23
United Appeal	£814	£1,057	-£243
Vestibule Fund	£1,907	£1,874	£33
	£11,410	£12,615	

As you can see income to the WFO and United Appeal is down by over £1,200 than on this time last year.

Please consider how much you actually contribute towards the church, its work both locally and internationally. We need every contributing member of the congregation to increase what they contribute into each Fund. If you contribute on a regular basis a small increase every week would not be noticed. A Standing Order form is available if you wish to set this up with your Bank, but please remember to update this each year.

The Vestibule Fund started with a Balance of £21,806. Money still owed of the loan from the Presbyterian Mutual Society is £180,000. By the end of April we need to have enough in this Account to pay back at least £19,000, i.e. £15,000 capital plus interest.

*Joe Bingham*

### THE E-MAILER'S PRAYER?

Dear Lord,

Every single evening, as I'm lying here in bed  
 This tiny little prayer, keeps running through my head.  
 God bless all my family, wherever they may be,  
 Keep them warm and safe from harm for they're so close to me.



And God, there is one more thing I wish that You could do,  
 Hope you don't mind me asking, please bless my computer too.  
 I know that it's unusual to bless a motherboard  
 But listen just a second while I explain it to you Lord.



You see, that little metal box holds more than odds and ends  
 Inside those small compartments rest so many of my friends  
 I know so much about them by the kindness that they give  
 And this little scrap of metal takes me in to where they live.

By faith is how I know them, much the same as You.  
 We share in what life brings us, and from that our friendship grew.  
 Please take an extra minute from Your duties up above  
 To bless those in my address book that's filled with so much love.

Wherever else this prayer may reach, to each and every friend,  
 Bless each email in-box, and each person who hits 'send'.  
 When You up-date your Heavenly list on your own GREAT C.D. ROM,  
 Bless everyone who says this prayer - sent up to GOD.COM

Amen

*For Your Diary*  *Continued*

**MAY**

Sunday 23rd 11.30am Morning Worship  
 Wednesday 26th 8.00pm Presby. Divine Healing Service, Loanends  
 Sunday 30th 11.30am Morning Worship

**JUNE**

Sunday 6th 11.30am Morning Worship and Sunday School prizes.  
 7.00pm Evening Service  
 Monday 7th Start of General Assembly Week, Church House, Belfast  
 Sunday 13th 11.30am Young People's Day Service  
 Saturday 19th 3.30pm Senior Members' Afternoon, Church Halls  
 Sunday 20th 11.30am Morning Worship  
 Sunday 27th 11.30am Morning Worship  
 3.30pm Orange Service, B'easton & B'robert Lodges

**JULY**

**The United Services with 2nd Ballyeaston will be held at 11.00am in First Ballyeaston during July and in Second Ballyeaston during August.**

Thur-Sat. 1st -3rd Holiday Bible Club  
 Sunday 4th 11.00am United Morning Worship  
 Sunday 11th 11.00am United Morning Worship  
 Sunday 18th 11.00am United Morning Worship  
 Sunday 25th 11.00am United Morning Worship

**AUGUST**

Mon. 16th - Fri. 20th 9.30am-12.30pm. Galactic Blast Holiday Club in  
 2nd Ballyeaston Registration: May / June

# For Your Diary



## MARCH 2010

Saturday	20th	7.00pm	B.B. Annual Parents & Friends Eve, Brann Hall
Sunday	21st	11.30am	Morning Worship
		7.00pm	Presby. Celebration of Mission in Praise & Worship, High St. Church, Antrim - Speaker, Mr Billy Patterson
Thursday	25th	8.00pm	'A Life Worth Living' Course, MacConnell Hall
Friday	26th	7.00pm	GB Display, Ballyclare Secondary School
Sunday	28th	11.30am	Morning Worship (Palm Sunday)
			(British Summer Time begins - clocks forward one hour)
			GB Annual District Parade/Service, Joymount Church ( <i>see p.7</i> )
		7.00pm	Series of Lenten Services conclude 2nd B'easton
Wednesday	31st	8.00pm	Pres. Divine Healing Service OC Randalstown

## APRIL

Thursday	1st	8.00pm	'A Life Worth Living' Course, MacConnell Hall
		8.00pm	Maundy Thur. Communion, 2nd Ballyeaston
Friday	2nd	8.00pm	Good Friday Service - in the Church
Sunday	4th	11.30am	Morning Worship for Easter
Sunday	11th	11.30am	Morning Worship
Sunday	18th	11.30am	Morning Worship
		7.00pm	Service for Farming Community, 2 <sup>nd</sup> B'easton
Tuesday	20th	8.00pm	PW Group Meet./Election of Office Bearers
Thursday	22nd	7.45pm	Pres. Choirs Festival, High St. Church, Antrim
Friday	23rd		PW 40th Anniversary Dinner
Sunday	25th	11.30am	Pre-Communion Service
Thursday	29th	8.00pm	'A Life Worth Living' Course, MacConnell Hall

## MAY

Sunday	2nd	11.30am	Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
		7.00pm	Service of Thanksgiving & Lord's Supper
Thursday	6th	7.30pm	PW Annual Meeting, Church House, Belfast
Sunday	9th	11.30am	Morning Worship & Bread and Cheese Lunch - speaker Mr Billy Patterson. Start of Christian Aid Week
Sunday	16th	11.30am	Morning Worship
		7.00pm	Evening Service in 2nd Ballyeaston
Tuesday	18th	8.00pm	Church Committee Meet, MacConnell Hall
Fri. 21st - Sun. 23rd			Church Weekend, Glenada House, Newcastle