

YOUR AUTUMN EDITION OF

ISSUE No.18, AUGUST 2019

WEST CHURCH, BANGOR PUBLICATION



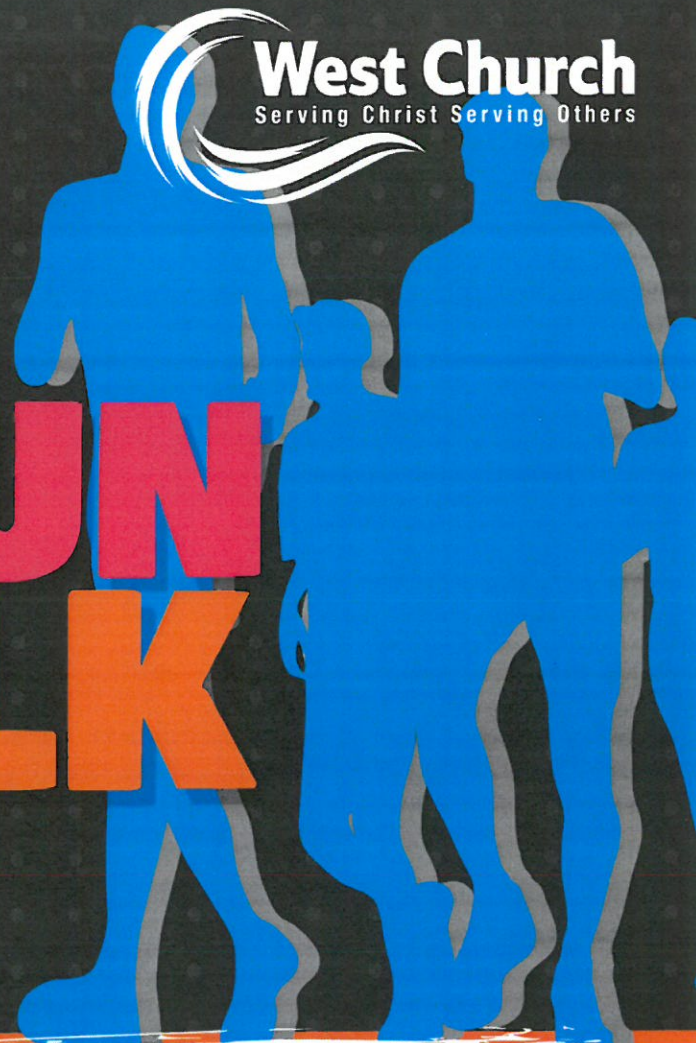
WEST LIFE

ONLY INSIDE YOUR WEST LIFE / WELCOME BACK, FAREWELLS & CELEBRATIONS / MISSION UPDATES / THE NEW SESSION / YOUTH & CHILDREN / GET INVOLVED

2019

FUN RUN & WALK

Along the Coastal Path towards Bangor, returning to West to enjoy a BBQ together.



West Church
Serving Christ Serving Others

'UNITING WEST' WITH.....

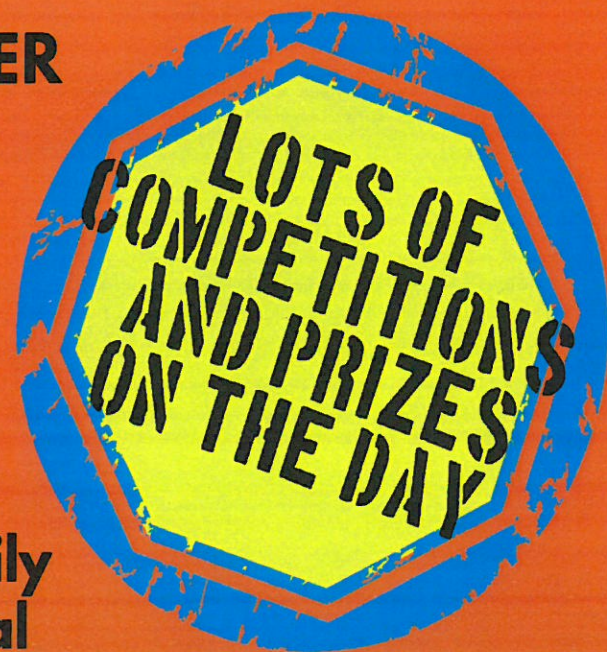
START DATE:
SATURDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER

START TIME:
2:30PM at West

REGISTRATION IN ADVANCE
via Church Office/email/sign up

SUGGESTED MINIMUM DONATION:
£5 per person or £10 per family
supporting PCI's United Appeal

Please wear blue t-shirts or fancy dress



WELCOME TO YOUR AUTUMN WEST LIFE

Welcome to West Life. Let me charge right in and ask you an awkward question: How is your *rest life*?

Pardon my boldness, but you see it is that time of year when my mind starts to get distracted by thoughts of summer holidays. Don't get me wrong—I love what God has called me to do, but I also love my holidays! And after a busy year I feel like I am leaning forward towards the finish line in anticipation of some much needed rest and relaxation!

Let's face it, rest is so important in life. God did not create us to be slaves to our callings or vocations or studies or household tasks. We were created to have healthy boundaries that allow space for rest. We need the refreshment of sleep everyday and we need a break from the 24/7 demands of works. That's why the establishment of the Sabbath principle in the Bible would have been such a counter-cultural blessing in an ancient agricultural economy.

In today's fast paced world it is still a great idea. A day off to relax and be refreshed. Sure you couldn't be bad to that!

But the Bible doesn't stop there: there is the establishment of annual festivals to celebrate and enjoy quality time together with good food. A theology of rest! In fact Jesus took a lead in modelling a life fuelled out of rest. I love how the Voice translation describes Jesus' conversation with his disciples in Mark 6:31 "Let us go out into the wilderness for a while and rest ourselves." That sounds like a holiday in my book!

SO I hope that as you read this issue you may have already experienced some much needed and redemptive rest. May you be energised and spiritually refreshed as you sit back and read this latest issue of West Life. May your rest life be blessed and may we step into the autumn with a fresh determination to have a healthy balance between work and rest.

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Harry McBride

Children's Worker:
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Lin Montgomery

Sunday Service Times:

10.00 am Traditional Service
10.00 am Young West
11.30 am Contemporary /
Family Service (Crèche provided)
Children leave for JClub at 11.45 am
11.45 am #Café church
18.30 Evening Service
8.00 pm Deeper

Pastoral Mobile: 07543 198391

A YEAR IN THE SPOTLIGHT

by Mark Smith, PCI's press officer who caught up with Rt. Rev. Dr. Charles McMullen

"It's a funny old feeling" was the text I got from the Moderator the night presbyteries met to elect his successor in February. "How do you mean?" I texted back. Given the year that the Church has had, his response may surprise many: "Sad, I suppose that my tenure is now moving to an end. An indication of how much I have enjoyed this year."

While Dr McMullen admits that it has been more challenging and intense than he had imagined, it has been a year when he has been inspired and excited by what he has seen of the work of the Church across Ireland and overseas. "It may seem a bit twee, but it feels like in many ways that every day has been Christmas Day.

"Each day has been special, encouraging and different. I have met all kinds of people and experienced such hospitality, realising that there is a tremendous heart in our Church and that is one word that I would want to emphasise as I step down, this whole idea of 'heart', and the overall 'heart' of our denomination is good.

"There is a great love, a great commitment, a great dedication and desire to serve the Lord across our congregations, a vibrant beating heart that reflects the rhythms of grace. This year has given me a renewed passion for the local church and how it is not on its own, but part of a bigger family. It has also shown me and reinforced the overall importance of relationships," he says.

'Building relationships, Christ's love compels us' - Dr McMullen's theme for his year in office - has been a constant presence. It has also been a theme that may have



One of Charles' final centenarians in his year as Moderator, Mrs Betty Patton, one of our own church members

seemed a little unfortunate to some, foundering at the General Assembly's decision to end its symbolic relationship with the Church of Scotland and other controversial issues. While hindsight is a wonderful thing, he completely disagrees.

Looking back, he says that his theme came to him on the night of his election. "Two words struck me : 'building relationships'. I believe I was given those words, it was as if God said to me, 'This is right, but it will not be altogether easy... this is very much for the long haul.'

Building relationships
Christ's love compels us

Throughout the General Assembly and the ensuing year, bearing in mind I believe that God gave me this theme and said

that it would be for the long haul, it became all the more vital and all the more imperative," he says.

In the immediate aftermath of the Assembly, with the headlines and general reaction, Dr McMullen says

that as he began his engagements and preaching in different congregations, he encountered both "support and heartache" over what had happened.

"Initially when I was elected I might have talked myself into this role by saying it would be a career break from my congregation for a year, I soon discovered that it wasn't. As Moderator you try always to listen and weigh things up, and one of the phrases I found myself using in those early days was 'on the one hand/ and on the other'.

"As a Church it is vitally important that we state what we believe in accordance with the Scriptures, but we must also stress the importance of having a pastoral heart and throughout the year perhaps God has given me the grace to respond to the challenges as I have tried to set the tone, always being gentle and consensual," he explains.

He admits, however, that it has been challenging and that he has been personally stretched in different ways, having had to grapple with many complex issues and deal with the media profile that he was

suddenly given.

While some of the work has attracted positive headlines, such as the Church leaders' initiative to bring Northern Ireland's politicians together, and attending the state reception in Dublin for Pope Francis, much of it hasn't attracted the spotlight - yet it has, in his own words, been "life changing". His overseas tours of Jordan last August and his visit to Greece are particular examples.

"We went to Jordan to encourage colleagues connected with PCI and it was there that we came face-to-face with Christianity and the rawness of faith in a kind of way that was simply amazing. In refugee camps we met brothers and sisters in Christ, who had experienced persecution in other parts of the Middle East, people who had put their needs on the line to serve Jesus. For me, it put a lot into perspective," he says.

In March he travelled to Greece to meet with representatives of the Greek Evangelical Church. During the visit he also saw first-hand the work of the Church in reaching out to Syrian refugees, which he says he found inspirational and deeply moving.

"On one occasion we visited a church planted right in the heart of a Roma community camped on the edge of the perimeter fence of the local airport, on what really was a rubbish heap - and yet lives were being changed for Jesus Christ," Dr McMullen explains.

But it wasn't just in Jordan and Greece that he discovered people making a real difference in demonstrating Christ's love to others, Throughout his four week-long presbyterial tours, his visits most Sundays to local congregations, touring the

denomination's homes and support units and seeing Presbyterians showing leadership in business, have all given him an incredible bird's eye-view of life in PCI, which has also left him "in awe" of his ministerial colleagues.

"As time has gone on I have had a renewed passion for the church of Jesus Christ, We live in a society that is fractured and broken, but the local Christian community of God's people is very much the hope of the world, something that I have witnessed across our Presbyterian denomination and farther afield.

"I have been inspired by the example of our people, from the exuberance of a thousand teenagers committed to Christ at last year's 'MAD' event in Coleraine, to being so blessed by the long years of Christian witness of the centenarians I have met, and so many faithful people in between," he says.

So, after such a year, is the Right Reverend Dr Charles McMullen looking forward to hanging up his robes and becoming 'the Very Reverend', the subtle change in title that denotes a former Moderator?

He answers thoughtfully, "I've seen this year as a marathon sprint and I will keep praying that the Lord will get me safely over the line at the beginning of June. There will be a certain amount of relief, but it will be tinged with genuine sadness that it has come to an end. But I have run the race, supported so steadfastly by Barbara, by the prayer of many and the awesome power of the Holy Spirit. As a parish minister first and foremost, I will look forward to returning to West, but with memories of an unbelievable year."

We kindly received permission from the PCI Press Office to publish this article.



Pictured left, Charles with his son David & Dave Gray, Chaplain to Queens University, planting a tree at Derryvolgie to mark the end of the student year.

REACHING OUT BEYOND OUR OWN WALLS

by Maureen Bennett,
Deputy Clerk of Session

Kirk Session meets on the second Monday of every month and follows certain well-honed procedures, some of which are laid down in PCI's famous Code. This year Andy Galbraith has been at the helm. As acting Moderator he opens the meeting with a short devotional and then constitutes the meeting as a court of the church before launching into the evening's business. At some point in the evening the elders also spend time in prayer seeking the Lord's guidance and committing our business to Him.

The recurring items include any current membership matters raised by the Taking Care Designated Person, or the acceptance of new communicant members; they also include reports from the five action teams and from the Congregational Committee. Over the last few months, Session has also progressed the arrangements for the After School's Club (a collaborative arrangement involving the YMCA, Rathmore Primary school and West Church as reported in the previous edition of West Life); ensured that the reports for the Charity Commission have been accurately prepared; overseen the appointments of the new Student Deaconess and the new Youth Worker, and approved the arrangements to be put in place when

Stephen Cully, our Church Coordinator retires at the end of October. Session has also agreed the recommendation from Committee to proceed with the repair of the church roof.

Session's main role is to give spiritual direction to the work of the church and that means both ensuring the spiritual and pastoral needs of the congregation are met and that we reach out beyond our own walls to share the love of Jesus in the wider community. It is for that reason we are keen to be associated with the YMCA initiative and to seize the opportunity that this provides. Easter Mission, our Mums and Toddler group, as well as our Tearfund and Walk for Water all help the community to get a glimpse of the values we espouse. Our Faith in Focus seminars and various discipleship initiatives are designed to equip our members to 'keep the faith' and share their faith in today's secular society.

One of the most exciting developments has been the invitation from Kilcooley Presbyterian Church to run an Alpha Course for them on Sunday mornings. Session had no hesitation in accepting. George and Norah Dines who had completed a daytime mid-week Alpha Course at West earlier in the year, agreed to take on the leadership as did some of the team who worked with them. The Sunday morning service incorporated the Alpha teaching and

Then a group of around 22 stayed on for the discussion groups and some refreshments. Most of that group has remained committed to the course and attended the 'away day' when the teaching focused on the person and the receiving of the Holy Spirit. The West team has been thrilled at how they have been received by the members of Kilcooley and at the levels of engagement within the discussion groups. The away day proved to be life changing for a number of the participants.

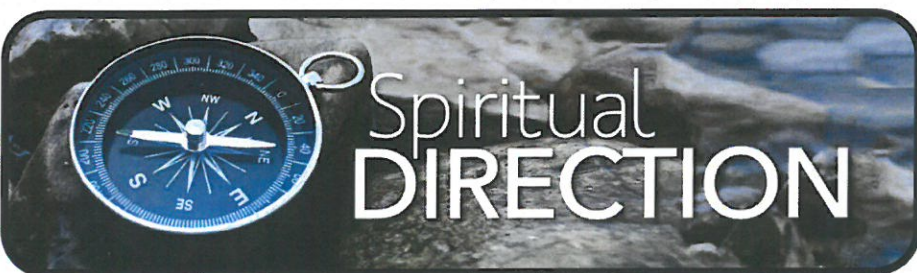
Currently we have 32 elders in West and an average attendance at each session meeting of 22. There are five action teams each with two co-conveners, with some reports included later in West Life.

Discipleship: Very Rev Dr. Roy Patton and Dr. Maureen Bennett
Mission and Outreach: Mrs Rosemary Shaw (headed up by Rev. Andrew Gill until moving on to his new congregation)

Pastoral Care: Mr Andrew Heron and Mrs Jane Richardson
Youth and Children: Mr Andrew McClelland and Mrs Catherine Bell
Worship and Prayer: Rev. Andy Galbraith and Mrs Heather Thompson.

Elders are elected for life but in recent years they have been able to step back into an elder emeritus role. West has around 12 elders emeriti who are convened three or four times a year by John McCroskery, himself an elder emeritus. We are grateful to John for all he has done in this role and pray God's blessing on Mrs Gwen Dodds as she succeeds John in September.

We have tentative plans to elect a number of new elders on Charles' return; the process and the timing will be announced in due course.



What is a Church Member?

A resource produced by the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

A Church member is...

Someone who believes

Believers trust Jesus Christ with their lives. This involves believing truths about him and having a personal relationship with him. The Bible, which Christians believe is God's Word, clearly tells us that the following essentials must be understood, believed and committed to if a person is to be a Christian:

- (i) There is only one true God who has revealed himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- (ii) All created things came into existence and keep existing by the will of God.
- (iii) The relationship between human beings and God was broken by sin and needs to be restored.
- (iv) To sin is to think we know better than God and to love as if we don't need God, with our own ideas of what is right and wrong.
- (v) Sin alienated us from God and deserves punishment, but in love for us God sent his Son, Jesus Christ, who died in our place and took the punishment we deserved (2 Cor 5:21).
- (vi) Being fully human like us, yet fully God, Jesus achieved forgiveness for us and restored us to a right relationship with God (Col 1:21-22).
- (vii) Jesus Christ was raised from the dead and now shares God's reign as Lord of all (Phil 2:9-11).
- (viii) The gift of the Holy Spirit assures us of our restored relationship with God as Father, enables us to grow in character, faith and understanding and makes each of us an indispensable part of his body, the Church, with specific gifts to contribute.
- (ix) It is Christians' certain hope that Christ will come again, final judgment will be done, sin, suffering and death will end and his people will share the Father's love in eternal joy.



Someone who belongs

Because Christians belong to Christ, we also belong to one another as part of the family of God. While it is possible for a believer in a country where Christians are severely persecuted to be very isolated, it was always Christ's intention that believers would meet regularly.

As Christians we all belong to the 'universal church', a worldwide movement spanning the continents and the centuries, but we are also called to be involved in a local church as a concrete and living experience of this reality.

Depending on circumstances the definition of 'local' will vary (in some parts of the world people have to walk many miles to church). The important thing is to be rooted in and committed to a congregation of fellow believers in Christ.

Two key parts of belonging are baptism (if you are a believer and have never been baptised please speak to the Minister) and the Lord's Supper. For more on what the Lord's Supper is all about please ask the Minister—you could also read the booklet, 'Introducing the Lord's Supper', produced by the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

Someone who worships
Because Christians believe, it

naturally follows that they worship God for who he is and what he has done for them. To worship is not just singing songs of praise (although it very much includes this) but also to honour God with all of our lives (Romans 12:1).

As a church we have a special time in the week on Sunday when we gather to praise God, pray and hear from his Word, the Bible. This time must take priority over other demands because it is church family time that is to be protected.

Someone who prays

For a Christian, who lives in a restored relationship to God, praying should be something we do every day and throughout the day. The Bible tells us that prayer is about offering praise to God, telling him we are genuinely sorry when we sin (1 John 1:9), saying thank you for what he has done and asking him to help us and others in many different ways (Phil. 4:6). It can be easy to do this on our own (as long as we remember!) but making the most of opportunities to pray with others who follow Jesus allows us to praise and thank God together and to encourage each other.

Cont'd over

Someone who learns

We have been given the Word of God to feed and sustain us as Christians (Matthew 4:4). Just as a relationship is broken, if there is no communication our lives are broken if we do not hear from God through his Word.

Like prayer, receiving from God's word is something that is done both on our own and together. The obvious example is the Sunday sermon but there will be other opportunities like Bible studies or informal ways like talking with others about what the message of the Sunday sermon means in your life (Col 3:16).

Christians also receive from God by spending time daily reading and reflecting on the Bible and filling their minds with the truths it contains.

Someone who serves

Every follower of Jesus is called to serve him through the Holy Spirit, both in the church (1 Cor. 12:4-11) and in the world (John 17:18). All believers have gifts for serving others (1 Peter 4:10) and are called to make a difference (Matthew 5:13-16). Knowing Jesus gives us a heart to serve in church, home, work, leisure and public life. In order to use our gifts in God's service (Eph. 2:9-10) we may first need to discover what they are. Ask others you trust to give you honest feedback about where you are gifted, and how these gifts can best be used in the service of Christ and other people.

Someone who gives

God had given us the precious gift of his only Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:16). Everything we have comes from him and belongs to him. This makes a church member someone who gives generously.

Giving financially is crucial to resourcing God's work in both the local and wider church and such giving is also a sign that we love him more than money (Matthew 6:24). But giving involves much more than money. It also includes our time and effort, even when this costs us. It is giving ourselves.

Someone who tells others about Jesus

Being a church member means being involved in the mission of reaching out to others with the love of Jesus. Your local church will have specific ways to do this.

The thought of telling others about Jesus can be scary, but they deserve to know about the precious gift we have received (Acts 4:20): a restored relationship with God who loves us. Our lives should show that Jesus is real, but we also need to explain that we live as followers of Jesus and are members of his church.

Someone who is committed

It can often be hard to be a Christian in today's world. Jesus said that to follow him is costly and

demanding (Luke 14:27-33).

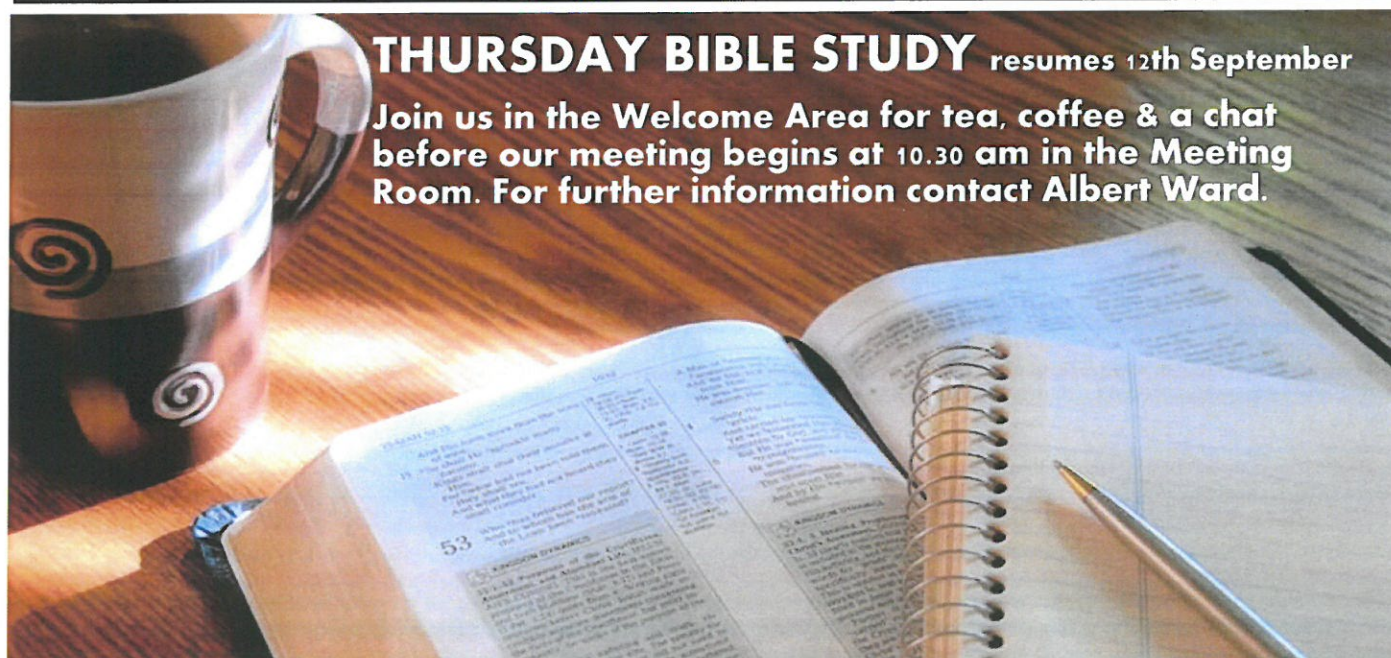
The pressures of life can make commitment to Christ's church difficult too, but the Bible encourages us to keep meeting together (Hebrews 10:24-25). In this way we can love and support each other to bring honour and glory to Christ in every aspect of our lives.

What next

You may be considering membership of our congregation or perhaps you are a member already and want to understand better what that means. We hope this article will have answered some questions for you but please do not hesitate to speak with Charles, Andy or any of the pastoral team and they will be able to answer any questions you may have.

Remember also, you may have been coming to West for many years and assume you are a member of our congregation. If you have not provided the Office with your details we may not have you noted down as a member.

You will also have read in the Kirk Session article on the previous page that there are tentative plans to elect new elders on Charles return. To be eligible for election or to vote, you must be a communicant member of our congregation and also contribute to the church through Free Will Offering. Again, if you need to check this information out, contact the church office.



THURSDAY BIBLE STUDY resumes 12th September

Join us in the Welcome Area for tea, coffee & a chat before our meeting begins at 10.30 am in the Meeting Room. For further information contact Albert Ward.

YOU'RE INVITED

EVENING CELEBRATION

SUNDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER AT 6.30 PM

TO WELCOME CHARLES & BARBARA BACK HOME TO WEST

Come celebrate with us!

KIRK SESSION ACTION TEAM UPDATES

Our five Action Teams, within Kirk Session, continue to meet every other month with updates from a few of the teams:

Pastoral Care

Andy Heron writes:

In the last West Life magazine, we included an article from a Christian charity called Care Home Friends which mentioned that by 2030, 45% of church attenders will be over 65 years old. This comes at a time of major societal change in the UK, where the percentage of older people is set to rise immensely in the next few decades. Here's one amazing forecast - it's predicted that 20% of people currently in the UK will live to see their centenary! These changes will mean that more and more seniors will require care in residential and nursing homes. We hear regular media reports about how the system is already creaking under the pressure.

In spite of periodic revelations about abuse in residential and nursing homes, most of them have a good record in the levels of care provided. Nevertheless, even though the residents' general well-being is catered for, many of them find it quite lonely living in a home. Work duties make it impossible for staff members to spend a lot of time just chatting with residents, as there is such a lot to be done. It's great when families are able to visit their loved ones regularly, but not all residents are blessed with attentive

families. This is where the Church can have a wonderful ministry of encouragement, which not only helps alleviate loneliness even if only a little, but also provides opportunities to present the love of Christ to people who do not yet know our Lord.

One of our church members, Richard Gawn, who is attached to our senior care visitors' team, has a special type of ministry in two nursing homes in the vicinity of West Church. He visits both homes every week, one on Mondays, the other on Saturdays. There he has befriended a variety of dear folk who greatly appreciate the time he spends with them, such as a lady who can no longer see, an ex-policeman who used to attend the Friday Men's Fellowship at West, various people who have dementia, etc.

In yet another local care home, a group of us from West Church has been conducting Sunday morning services attended by 15-20 of the residents. Many of these men and women were keen church-goers, when they were able, but can no longer get out to services of public worship. It has been such a thrill to bring 'church' into the residential home, and I am sure I speak for all the West folks who participate in this ministry when I say that being part of such a team brings as much blessing to us as it does to the



the residents we lead in worship.

Here are two things that would be really fantastic:

(i) Wouldn't it be wonderful if more people from West were led by God to be either part of a team going into homes to help with worship services or to befriend residents on an individual basis as Richard does?

(ii) Wouldn't it be wonderful if many younger people were encouraged to connect with older folks in these homes, sharing their vitality, energy and youthful enthusiasm in exchange for the wisdom and experience of life that many of the elderly would just love to share with them?

Discipleship

Maureen Bennett writes:

The Discipleship Action team has been reflecting on the past year and also looking forward. In June, the home / small group leaders came together. We discussed the merits of each of the resources that had been used in the course of the year and added a few more to the list. The majority of the 25 or so groups are healthy; the recently formed groups are also thriving and we plan to begin another new group in church in September.

The facilitators of the Triad or Quad groups also came together in June. Without exception they talked of the value of the relationships formed and the safe place that the groups provided to share life, talk in depth, and pray together. The groups also reported that their learning and understanding had been both extended and challenged. The resource material veers towards the academic but it provides a good structure and a teaching element that stimulates discussion. Groups need to create space to listen to God and to consider the personal application of what is learnt. The material can and should be used flexibly. All of the groups have taken longer than anticipated to complete the course but they all want to continue to meet until they finish. It was agreed that four (or even five) was a better size than three so going forward we may refer to Quads and Quins!

The information to the right sets out the various discipleship pathways that are available at West along with (where appropriate) dates for 2019-20. Our first Faith in Focus seminar is provisionally arranged for Tuesday 14th October. Details will follow nearer the time.

Should you wish to register for any of these events please contact the church office or Maureen Bennett (07808 169302).

West Church
Serving Christ Serving Others

Jesus calls us to be disciples, to support one another and to make disciples.

West offers the following groups that can help

Discipleship Pathways

Courses

Small Groups

Home Groups/ Small Groups usually have about 12 members and meet fortnightly to pray together, study together and enjoy fellowship. New Home Groups tend to start in Church in a) September b) January each year

ALPHA: a series of 11 sessions exploring the Christian faith. Each talk explores a different question and is designed to include general discussion. Next course starts: September 2019

TRIADS/QUADS: An opportunity to grow deeper in Christian faith and discipleship through a year long course (26 sessions) in a single gender group of 3 or 4 others. The text book followed is 'Discipleship Essentials' by Greg Ogden. Starts anytime

FREEDOM IN CHRIST: A course of 10 sessions for Christians at all stages of their journey to take hold of the truth of what it is to be a Christian and to resolve personal and spiritual issues that may be holding them back. Next course starts: Thursday 16th January 2020

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT: These series of seminars are an instrument for helping people to have a deeper experience of the work of the Holy Spirit. Next course starts: Tuesday 7th January 2020

PRAYER MINISTRY: This is an occasional course often run on a Saturday and designed to help participants to become channels of healing as they learn to minister with the love of the Father, and in the name of Jesus, listening to the Spirit and applying the insights that He gives. Next course Saturday 8th & 22nd February 2020

LISTENING TO GOD: A 4-week seminar to understand what is on God's heart for us as we pray and open up new avenues in talking with God. Next series starts: 8th October 2019 at 10.30 am

Occasional Seminars

Faith in Focus seminars were first provided in the Spring of 2019 and designed to provide Bible-based teaching on current ethical and social issues such as abortion, euthanasia, and end-of-life suffering. We plan to run a number of these during 2019-2020. Dates will be announced in advance.

If you are interested in any of these courses or groups or seminars, please contact the Church office on 028 9145 9688 or Maureen Bennett on 07808 169302

Some comments on Triads and Quads...

I think the benefit to me as a facilitator was getting to know two amazing and wonderful young women and enjoying friendship and fellowship with them.

I have really enjoyed the group as we discuss different issues which emerge from our reading and can share and pray for each other on a deep level. The strength of the relationship between us is tangible and very precious! I'm looking forward to meeting up again in the Autumn.

I would say that Quads is a safe place to share life's experiences and ask questions around God's truth in a loving environment. This is a faith affirming experience.

Whilst undoubtedly I have learnt a lot, not only of Biblical principles/ doctrines etc. the course has encouraged me most in my Christian walk and faith. Experiencing the love and joy that my fellow participants have in Christ has been a breath of fresh air!



Worship

Rev. Andy Galbraith writes:

Over the course of recent months the Worship Action team has been exploring how we could develop the way we do healing services at West. Whilst prayer ministry is already available at many of our weekly services, these occasional healing services have always provided an opportunity to have the space and time to focus an entire service in the pursuit of God in prayer. It was recognised by the team that down through the years these healing services have become a much loved aspect of our own spiritual identity as a congregation.

Usually, anyone from the congregation who is in need of prayer has been invited to come forward to be prayed with by the prayer ministry team at the close of a healing service.

But for some in our congregation this is a daunting prospect that restricts them from coming forward for prayer. It is seen by some to be too 'up-front' and maybe even a little intimidating. What could be done to make prayer ministry less intimidating and more comfortable for those who don't relish the thought of marching to the front of the church at the close of a healing service?

After much careful thought the Worship Action team came up with a new approach. Maybe it didn't quite turn our healing services upside-down, but it sure turned them side by side!

On the evening of 10th March, we embarked on the first of our new format healing services in the sanctuary at West. As the congregation arrived they were encouraged to sit in the two middle aisles. Prior to the service the two side aisles were roped off, and at three locations on each side the rows of chairs were rearranged to create 'prayer booths'.

The service began as usual with a worship set followed by a sermon on the theme of healing but at the start of the closing worship the prayer ministry team took up their positions in the prayer booths. During the closing praise, members of the congregation then had the opportunity to move over to the sides of the church for prayer whilst the rest of

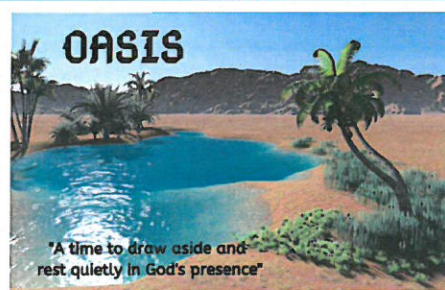


the congregation continued in worship.

The team were encouraged by the feedback of those who came forward for prayer during our first attempt at this new format, and another healing service was held on Sunday 9th June. We long to see more and more people being open to God moving in a new way amidst the difficulties we face. Could I encourage you to come along to our next healing service and see it for yourself?

Finally, when the summer comes to an end we will be looking forward to Charles' return. Could I invite you to put a note in your diary for Sunday 1st September? On that Sunday, Charles will get back in the saddle leading and preaching in our morning services at West, and we will be holding a celebration service to welcome Charles and Barbara back home to West at the 6.30 pm service. We will be hearing a report of his moderatorial year, and thanking God for his faithfulness in all that they have experienced. And if that's not enough motivation to attend, the service will be followed by supper!

I look forward to seeing you there!



WHAT is OASIS? It's the opportunity to spend quality time in silence with God.

WHERE is Oasis held? In West Church Sanctuary.

WHEN is it held? On the third Tuesday of the month from 7:00pm to 8:00 pm. You are welcome to come when you want and leave when you want.

WHO can attend? Anyone!

WHY have Oasis evenings? To give people the opportunity to draw aside from the busy lives we all seem to live. To sit quietly in the Sanctuary and talk and listen to our Heavenly Father.

To date there have been three Oasis Evenings and another is planned for Tuesday the 20th August. God never makes any mistakes and so those who have come along have been very much blessed by the experience. Most of us can talk easily to God in prayer and we probably have a long prayer request list when we do!

GLORIFYING AND ENJOYING GOD

by Rev. Andy Galbraith

Worship is vital. You and I were made to worship. The Westminster Shorter Catechism affirms that "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever". So when we choose to worship God we are aligning ourselves with God's purpose for our lives.

We are really blessed at West to have such a wide group of people involved in worship from Sunday to Sunday: from the choir to singing groups, from the orchestra to the praise bands; from the team that looks after all of our audio visual systems in the sanctuary to those who are recording the services for those who cannot attend; from those involved in the 10.00 am service, those who are involved in the 11.30 am service, to Café Church, Young West and our evening service. There are many dedicated servant-hearted people involved in worship at West!

We don't, however, have many opportunities to gather together everyone involved in worship under one roof at the same time for fellowship, worship and encouragement.

As we prepare to kick off a new term of activities in West this autumn, the Worship Action team would love to invite everyone involved in worship to come along to a



special event on **Tuesday 10th September at 7.30 pm in West**. We want to take the opportunity pro-actively to gather together with everyone involved for a time of fellowship, encouragement and worship. We want to celebrate and affirm all the sterling work of so many volunteers and pray for God to equip us afresh as we step into a new season.

If you have any involvement in the leading of worship at West, then I hope to see you there!



GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2019 ~ 'ENJOYING GOD'

by Jane Richardson, Representative Elder

The theme chosen this year by the new Moderator the Right Rev. Dr. William Henry from Maze Presbyterian Church, is "ENJOYING GOD". Apparently he is the youngest moderator ever to be elected and from my vantage point anyway seemed to be the smallest! In fact when Charles and he were standing face to face at his induction the image of LITTLE and LARGE came to mind!!

As usual, at the first night of the Assembly, the robed dignitaries walked in procession to a packed but silent house. It reminded me of a slow dead march-silent and rather glum! Thankfully that was not a fore-taste of what was to come.

Charles led the Assembly as the outgoing Moderator and he did it with his usual aplomb. He spoke on three separate occasions with warmth and wisdom, and possibly with some relief at being able to hand on the baton!

relax in His presence. He spoke well and seemed relaxed in his new role.

It was refreshing to see the new Moderator dispense with the bowing to each side of the House at the beginning of each session and instead, simply acknowledge the gathering with a slight inclination of his head. On Tuesday morning he welcomed the overseas visitors, and the delegates from the other denominations. Daphne and Roy Patton have the responsibility of looking after our visitors.

The Moderator then led the Communion service for a full Assembly and it was very encouraging to see so many attending. Giving out the bread and wine was done to military precision: absolutely nothing was left to chance! Seriously though, it was extremely well organised by the Rev John Flaherty! If he hadn't been a minister he would have made a good teacher!

(Watch out elders- we might consider a new regime for the next communion in West!!)

It was also refreshing to see the new Moderator suited but unrobed during the business sessions and worship services, both of which he led well. His talk at the Communion Service concentrated on the theme of Remembrance. He asked the following

questions and answered them.

Why do we remember?

To be thankful and enjoy our relationship with God.

Where do we remember?

In our heart and soul.

What do we remember?

God's love for us in sending Jesus and his ultimate sacrifice for us.

A few speakers then highlighted the fact that after the last Assembly



the reports in the press had caused hurt and disappointed many. There was much pain and stress for those who have attraction to the same sex but we must remember that people matter to God and must to us as well if we are his followers. Equally we must be true to what we believe Scripture teaches. One of the speakers pointed out that there has always been some dissent in the history of the church : the important thing is how we deal with differing views. Division can bring the church into disrepute. Our public discourse must reflect Jesus and His values both in the tone of our speech and the language we use.

Later in the week there was more discussion about how our deliberations are relayed to the public and again it was emphasized that the public listens to what the media says and so it is very important that business is done with grace and care.

Peacemakers, trying to see how we can learn from a project that has so much to give."

Too much truth without love and too much love without truth gets us nowhere.

Congregations need to be outward looking and not just concentrate on those already in the church. It was felt that many people had a genuine fear of witnessing to others in an increasingly hostile society. Members of congregations can however, be helped to share their faith through following a new church resource called "Inside Out", which is a series of 8 Bible Studies to be used either in large or small groups. "Go Deep, Go Wide" is another resource available for the church members to use. There is also a series of DVDs called "Eric says" which is an excellent resource for children.

There is much work being done throughout Ireland too. Currently there are over 530 congregations within PCI. All of these churches were started (or "planted") at some time in the past and PCI continues to plant new churches. For example, in Maynooth in County Kildare, a new church was planted in September 2002 when a small group of people started meeting together to pray and study the Bible together. It grew steadily, and was constituted as a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in 2007; today over 50 families or around 125 people of all ages attend regularly. Similarly in Donabate in County Dublin, members of Malahide Presbyterian felt God was asking them to start a new church in the town where five or six of their existing families lived. Weekly services in a Community Centre started in November 2010. Today about 150 people are part of the new congregation. In Belfast city centre in recent times,

two new expressions of Church have been started – in each case using buildings which housed churches in the past, but have since closed or were earmarked for closure. Rather than abandon the old buildings, they are being re-purposed as new places of worship. One such is May Street where Carnmoney Central, an off-shoot of Carnmoney Presbyterian now meets each Sunday afternoon.

Members of Assembly were asked to affirm the work of the Strategy for Mission Coordination Committee, and in particular its promotion of New Life, New People, New Places in support of Presbyterian church planting.

Some concern was expressed about the Christian ethos or indeed the lack of it in many of the state schools which were handed over to the state by the churches following the Education Act of 1948. There are still governors appointed by the church to the vast majority of state school governing bodies and those governors are encouraged to use their influence so that Christian standards are maintained. We are asked to pray for our school governors and teachers in their very important roles which influence our children and young people.

One of the areas where we should be considering is our mission to, and pastoral care for tertiary level students whether at University

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View of General Assembly week from the gallery



Rt. Rev. Dr. William Henry and Very Rev. Dr. Charles McMullen on the opening night of General Assembly

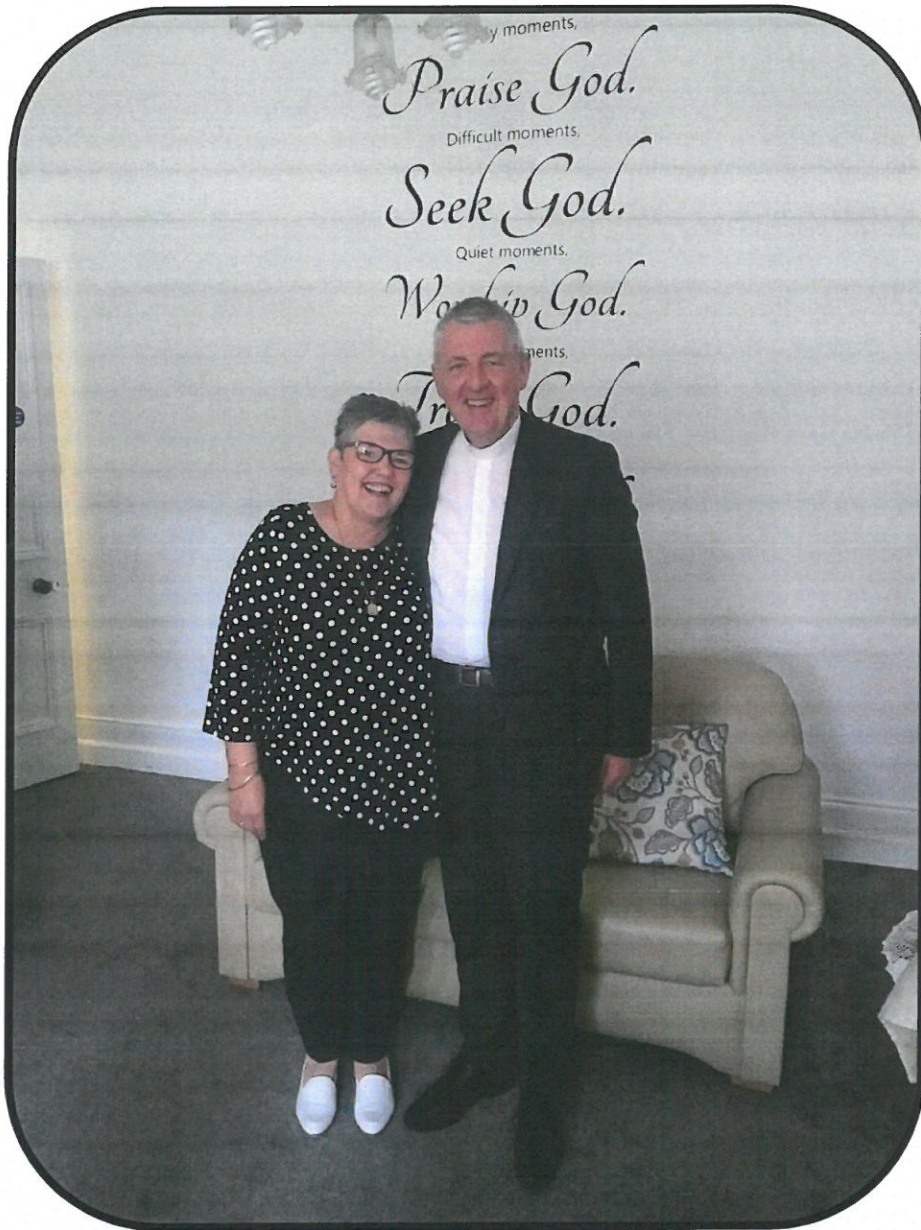
The new Moderator then took over and embellished his theme "ENJOYING GOD". He likened our relationship with God to having a good room in our house which is nice to look at but, because it looks perfect, we are sometimes afraid to relax and enjoy it. He said that sometimes we treat our relationship with God in a similar way. We appreciate Him from a distance but we don't really enjoy His company and

or college. Maureen Bennett pointed out that there are 360,000 students at this level across the island of Ireland but only two full-time chaplains, both of whom are in greater Belfast. There are no chaplains in Dublin; across the rest of Ireland the equivalent of about 5 days per week is afforded to student work. She urged presbyteries to see this as an area of special mission led by ministers but supported by other members - deaconesses, people from across the professions, interns and indeed anyone with a heart for students. Many of these students will be the future leaders and decision makers in our country and our church leadership will also be dependent on them. We need to share with them and the staff the good news of Jesus and help them towards maturity of faith.

The Council for Social Witness (CSW) provides effective social care service for and to the wider community by the provision of residential, nursing, respite and day care, supported housing and community-based programmes. The report of the CSW to the General Assembly presents a kaleidoscope of care and witness that has been undertaken. It also highlights a number of concerns. The Council's Disability Services Committee, for example, states that it continues to be concerned about the impact of welfare reform on individuals and families living with disability on a day-to-day basis. The lack of a working Stormont Assembly only serves to make life more difficult for such families, compounding the pressures upon them as additional support measures are not being explored, proposed or implemented.

A number of new initiatives have taken place, including the opening of a second International Meeting Point (IMP). Funded by United Appeal for Mission and the South Belfast Presbytery, the first International Meeting Point was set up in 2010. It provides a food and clothing bank, a bicycle workshop, a daily lunch club, English language classes to migrants and asylum seekers in the city, and a place of safety and belonging. Today, the centre welcomes people from over 30 different countries and is dedicated to meeting their practical and spiritual needs.

The opening of a second International Meeting Point in North Belfast



Charles receiving a warm welcome from Norma, manager of Adelaide House in Belfast, one of the PCI's Residential Homes

has been considered by the Strategy for Mission Coordination Committee and the North Belfast Presbytery. The General Assembly heard that in a few weeks a second IMP will open at Carlisle Circus in the north of the city. The project will include a charity shop for young mothers and carers, and the commencement of English language classes. The pilot will run for a year as a project of the Presbytery with input and support from the Council for Mission in Ireland.

Congregations were encouraged to support the United Appeal as the money is used for very valuable work both here and overseas. Presbyterian Women (PW) were commended for the amazing financial support they have given to the

Global Mission account this year as always. Congregations were also encouraged to invite speakers to highlight the work done by PCI personnel both at home and overseas.

There was some discussion about PCI's place in a multi-cultural society. It was pointed out that in the sovereignty of God many peoples of the world have come to live in Ireland. The Christian church needs a renewed confidence to share the message of the gospel with these newcomers. We need to share God's heart with the world and declare God's love for everyone. It was also pointed out that while there was still need for people to go overseas, there is an even greater need to support those nationals in Christian training in their own countries. At

present 24 nationals are being supported for ministry in their own countries and there are 27 workers in 10 countries supported by PCI.

The work of SAT 7 was highlighted. This broadcasting station enables the Christian message to be beamed into people's homes in countries where the outward proclamation of the gospel would not be possible. We were encouraged to support it.

There was an excellent session entitled "Life Matters" which dealt with mental health issues, the care of people with Dementia and Palliative Care for the dying. The presentation showed the care provided in Adelaide House - (in one of the videos I think I recognised Betty Crawford who was a long time member of West) and it was followed by a very informative talk on Care for the Dying by Prof. Max Watson.

There was some debate about the ending of the relationship between Union Theological College (UTC) and Queen's University (QUB). The situation was described as highly regrettable but the Council and the College are committed to ending the relationship well. While the adjustments to be made are significant, the Council is in no doubt that an exciting future for the College lies ahead. In particular, there are new opportunities for flexibility in training ministry and other theological students which it is hoped will lead to a better student experience and better outcomes.

The Assembly heard that the College hopes to develop online and blended courses and that next academic year the UTC will introduce 10 new courses, with 7 being fully online. The courses, in a variety of subjects, will be at Master's degree level, as well as graduate and postgraduate certificate and diploma level. A PhD will also be offered. The report states that the 'potential to develop this work is significant and it could prove to be a great resource for the global church as well as having the potential to provide income for the college'. It was reiterated that it would be good to see more women being trained for ministry.

The talks at the worship ses-

These talks were refreshingly presented and challenging. The last one was based on John 15 about Jesus being the vine and us being the branches. He emphasised that in our relationship with Jesus (a) we are not to be brick layers building a kingdom for ourselves; (b) we are not to be plate spinners trying to do a multitude of tasks without reference to what God wants us to do; (c) we are not to be branch comparers, wishing we had the gifts others have, but should use the gifts God has given us to the best of our ability; and (d) we are not to be fence builders but should be looking outwards to share the good news...but we are to seek to abide in him and let his life flow through us.

There was so much more I could report but you would probably be asleep at the end!! I found the deliberations interesting, the talks inspiring and the work that the church is involved in encouraging. I would encourage you to try to attend some of the sessions next year or at least stream the proceedings on your computer. It gives a good insight into the whole wide aspect of the work of our church.

I thought the new Moderator did a good job in keeping proceedings flowing. He did it with grace and good humour and seemed very relaxed. He also dispensed with some

of the more formal aspects of the proceedings including the moderatorial robes during the sessions and even a tie on the last day; for that he received some good hearted banter!! It is good to see us becoming a little more modern. There was very little of a contentious nature this year with much more measured debate.

The Moderator made this statement at the end of the Assembly, "My abiding memory of this year's Assembly, however, will be the optimism and hope that springs from a belief in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I was impressed by the tone of many of the discussions relating to last year's decisions - the recognition that tone is important and that words in a report can be painful. So an understanding, particularly in light of the report on credible profession of faith, of the need to have more holistic reports that bear pastoral considerations was important".

Now that the Assembly is over for another year, we hope Barbara and Charles can have a well-earned rest and we look forward to seeing them back with us in August. And so to round it off in the same manner as I started - this is the LONG and SHORT of my recollection of some of the debates and discussions.

Jane Richardson

Worship evening at General Assembly 2019,



STEPHEN : STEERING US WITH GOD'S GRACE

by Dr. Maureen Bennett, Deputy Clerk of Session

There is one person who is featured in this edition of West Life who could in the words of another famous person in command say, "This is the final cruise of the Starship Enterprise under my command. This ship ... will shortly become the care of another crew".

That person is Stephen Cully who has been at the helm of the West Church Office for eleven years and who is shortly to hand over to another crew. I am sure you will want to join with Lindsay and me, the staff team, Session and Committee, in saying a huge thank-you to Stephen for all that he has done to help steer our ship and keep us riding the high seas.

I still remember the gist of an incident that Stephen recounted at his interview; the details are unimportant now, because it was what it revealed about the heart of the man that was so important - someone with a compassionate heart and also the ability to think clearly to find a balanced way through a particular difficulty. It is those qualities of compassion and clear, ordered thinking, coupled with a deep love of God and His church that have characterised the contribution of Stephen to West Church. The job for him has been a calling; he has given unstintingly of his time and his considerable talent, and has established working procedures and structures, invested in appropriate technologies, and brought practical common sense to the administration and organisation of West so that, in his words, 'Ministers and pastoral staff can be freed to do what they have been called to do'.

As we have grown numerically as a church and as life has become more complicated and regulated Stephen has steered us through with grace and know-how. He has also been the practical, guiding hand on so many of our events - think only of

Fresher's Fayre, Christmasfest and the recent Any Questions - and has been the wise clerk of works ensuring that our buildings and property are kept in good repair - again think only of the acquisition and renovation of the bungalow, the fire on the roof, the leaks in the roof and quite simply, dealing with the huge foot-fall on our premises each week. Stephen has also worked closely with Victor and Jeremy in balancing our books and using our God-given monies wisely. For all of this we are hugely grateful. We are glad that he will be staying on for a little while longer to help with the financial management, but we do wish for him and Beth God's richest blessing in retirement chapter two. We also are thankful to God for the new crew, with Cheryl at the helm and Wendy as her second-in-command and pray for them God's wisdom, strength and grace.

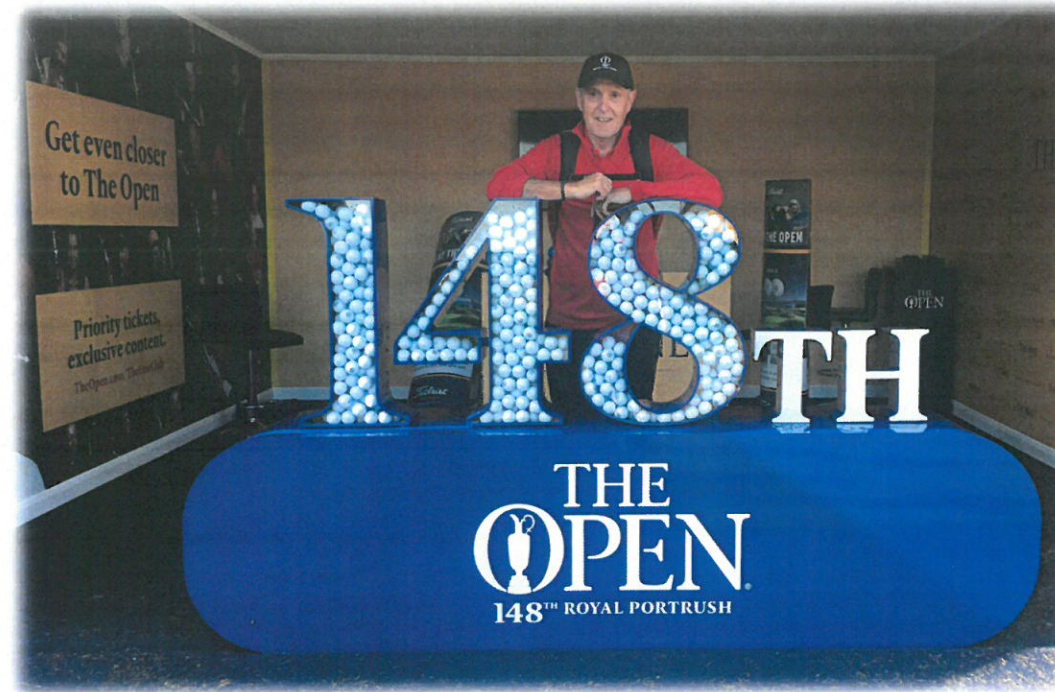
Stephen Cully is due to retire at the end of September from his post as Church co-ordinator. He looks back over the past 11 years with Maureen Bennett...

You took up the post of church co-ordinator following retirement - you must have been a very young retiree given that you have been with us 11 years. What did you do before coming to West and why did you apply for the job?

Before I took up the post of co-ordinator I worked for the Northern Bank (which then became the National Australia Bank) for 31 years and rose to a senior management position in IT. A programme of restructuring meant I had the choice of re-locating to Glasgow or taking early retirement. I choose early retirement but although I did a bit of IT work after I retired, I was, to be honest, a bit lost and not really keen to commit to a new IT career with all the travelling it would involve. One Saturday, I asked God to give me some guidance and amazingly when I sat down in church the next day, the first thing I saw on the announcements screen was an advertisement for the job of Church Co-ordinator. I applied, was successful and have been here for the past 11 years.

Before we go any further, tell us a bit about yourself, including one thing that is probably unknown to Westies.

I have been married to Beth for over 30 years and we live in Newtownards. I am originally from Portavogie so it is great to have someone else



Stephen enjoying time at Royal Portrush Golf Club at the recent Open Championship

on the staff team now, like Louise, who also 'speaks proper'. I am very keen on sport. I attended Regent House (not quite at the same time as my interviewer) and played rugby there, and then at Ards and at Donaghadee until I became too old. I play golf regularly (and badly) and am a very keen skier as everyone in the office knows. Westies probably don't know that I sat beside Andy Heron for O Level German and despite what he says I wasn't his teacher!

We had not had a Church co-ordinator before. You have blazed a trail for us and have also helped other churches develop similar posts. The job has changed considerably over your tenure - tell us a bit about what you did and what you do and the changes you have seen.

When I joined the staff team at West, I don't think anybody really knew what I was to do or envisaged

the job developing as it has done. There was a job specification which was simply a list of tasks, most of which were completed in that first year - they involved setting up administrative processes and sorting out job contracts. My job in those early days was to make the Office more effective and to make sure that we took over the work that stopped the Ministers doing what they should be doing. In small churches, Ministers have to manage a lot of administration but in a congregation as big as West, the Ministers could easily become swamped by the bureaucracy alone. In the Office I began with some basic processes that were IT related and came naturally to me with my IT background. For example:

- (i) there were 3 separate information databases which we transferred to one system which had been designed specifically for churches;
- (ii) the church magazine was updated, initially completing the printing in-house and introducing colour to replace a black and white production;
- (iii) employment contracts were put in place for all non-ministerial staff where there had previously been none;
- (iv) the Health & Safety Policies and processes were updated and brought into line with the legal requirements; and
- (v) the church accounts were computerised giving much more up to date information.

The job has changed a lot over the years, much of it driven by external influences. A significant number of legislative changes have been imposed ranging from General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Charity Commission, catering regulations and the auto-enrolment pension contributions for employees. As you can imagine, this takes up a lot of office time but

it is important as it helps to keep the elders out of prison!

We were one of the first churches (maybe the first) to introduce this co-ordinator role and it has now been introduced by a number of churches, mainly larger ones. I have spent time answering questions and meeting committees of other churches as they have considered the role. All of this has been interesting and I have learned as much at such times as I have been able to teach.

Give us a glimpse into that room with the porthole window - a) what happens on an average week?

From the outside of the porthole, the office may seem calm and quiet but sometimes it is very hectic. On occasions, I have seen all three of us, (Cheryl, Wendy and myself) at the counter at one time, answering questions and with a queue waiting. However, there is a pattern to the week's activity. The start of the week is for me, very finance-orientated. Victor Stephens provides me with information about the Sunday Freewill Offerings, which is then transferred on to the system and the money lodged. The end of the week is focused on preparation for Sunday, chasing up information from the ministers and worship leaders to put together the audio-visuals and also have the order of service drafted and printed. There is a lot that happens behind the scenes that many in the congregation take for granted without actually realising what is involved. In the middle of the week, we are often working directly with the pastoral staff, or on projects assigned to us - anything from pensions, ongoing issues with the buildings (and especially the roof leaks which have been a bug-bearer for the past 11 years but thanks to Thanney, seem to have been conquered).

Cont'd

b) what are some of the most memorable moments?

Probably the most memorable moments are from events we have run here - we have had some really good ones over the years. We started with for example, a Fresher's Fayre in September which we ran for a number of years - these events were great in being able to showcase to the local community what West has to offer and what is its purpose. Christmasfest has now taken off and was a brilliant occasion last year. Easter Mission is just a 'wow' event each year. We have also had some amazing visitors - the Vicar of Baghdad, Andrew White, visited a couple of years ago; last year we hosted 'Any Questions' and worked with the BBC to do that. Managing these events has been challenging but as a former Project Manager, it is the type of thing I like doing. I have had some super assistance over the years from Elaine, June, Cheryl and Wendy all of whom were or are excellent at their job and work incredibly hard behind the scenes in ways that few people know about.

c) what are some of the most difficult moments?

The most difficult thing is probably getting people to work at the pace we need to work at in the Office to meet deadlines. It is frustrating to send out emails and then discover that they are not read. As for Ministers - well they come from a different culture and of course, have different priorities from those in the Office! They are incident and people driven - we in the office may want them to give us a Bible reading for Sunday when they are focused on supporting someone through a personal tragedy, so we have to be understanding and patient.

d) looking back, tell us about some highlights

Probably the relationships. This place does not seem like work. It is busy but it is different from any other place I have worked - coming into work is like coming to meet my friends. There is a lot of support. Team meetings are like my Home Group - we look after one another and pray for one another; the

relationships are really the highlight for me. This church is blessed with so many volunteers and so many fabulous people.

e) what are some of the funny moments in the office?

We have had lots of laughs over the years and one source of regular fun is the ongoing series of jokes Andy Heron entertains us with on a daily basis, some awful, some absolutely brilliant, although my credibility will be ruined, now that I have admitted this and it's in print! Another great memory will be Charles' with his Young Mr Grace moments, when he tells us "you're all doing very well". This always gives us a laugh.

What have you planned for 1st October and the freedom that awaits you?

Beth is threatening to go back to work full-time. She thinks I will drive her nuts because I can't sit at peace. I will probably spend a lot more time up at the north coast. We have a place up at Portballintrae where we haven't spent as much time recently as we would have liked. Unlike the last time I retired, many of my friends are now retired so I have more golf buddies and will play a bit more golf.



You are not going away completely - you are going to stick around until the end of March working roughly a day a week doing what?

I will be in here one day a week and am looking forward to that because I will get to see everybody. My main emphasis will be on finance - keeping the computerised finance systems up to date, which is what we use for our management and forecasting. I will continue to work closely with Jeremy Eves who is the church finance convenor. I will also probably provide some IT support for the staff because I still know slightly more than most people even though my skills are becoming dated. I also seem to be a helpdesk for others in the congregation.

Cheryl Miller will take over the rest of your duties. Cheryl is your very competent second in command, ably supported by Wendy Dobbin. Cheryl won't be an exact replica of you so how will her job change, along with Wendy's? You have been preparing them for your exit, what is some of the advice you have been passing on?

Cheryl is very, very competent and over the last year we have been in transition; Cheryl has basically been running the operational issues in the church; she takes care of, for example, the bookings, the queries, and the liaison with the catering team. As everyone knows Cheryl is very well organised; she uses her time well. She will be doing everything that I currently do except the financial management and the management of the budgets. I will come in to help with these one day each week. She will also continue with the excellent job she does on the Church magazine.

Stephen pictured with his wife, Beth

Wendy is also a very capable lady with so much talent. My retirement will give her a chance to grow further and take on extra responsibilities. I think my retirement will also be good for the church. There comes a time when it is right to move on and make space for others to come with their ideas. The Office is blessed to have these two capable people ready and willing to move forward. Cheryl, like I did, will have to work very closely with the Congregational Committee and its Sub-Committees. This will be particularly important for her in the areas of property management, and health and safety. We have some very capable and willing servants in this area and it is a chance for these people to take a bit more responsibility and give Cheryl the instructions and guidance that she will need. Committees may seem like hard work at times but they are a great way of developing future leaders for the church and giving members a lot more ownership for what happens.

Again my going is an opportunity for others to step into some of these roles.

Do you think the job has changed you in any way?

Yes - it has changed me a lot, good and bad! My wife would probably say that I haven't got any more patient. I think I have learned a lot: I have learned a lot about myself and I have learned a lot about people and the goodness in a lot of people. It is hard to know, if you are standing on the outside of the church, to appreciate just how much people do, how good and kind people are and how many people there are in West Church with big hearts. I have been spoiled since day one when I joined; I have appreciated people more, and the work that ministers do. Unless you work here you can not fully understand the pressures that ministers are under from the joy of marrying a couple on one day and on the same day having to visit a family that has just lost a loved one - the range of emotions and how they handle them is amazing.

Working with Charles has been special: what I have learned from him, how he has helped me through some down times and knowing that I can go and talk with him are experiences that I will never forget.

What farewell words would you give to us a congregation - and translate that into Ulster Scots for Louise Davidson.

Thank you! It has been really, really good to work with you. Thank you for your support and advice and for putting up with my idiosyncrasies over the years.

Thank you and I will see you around!

Thank you

Coming soon



In line with the Tearfund Campaign on reducing plastic (article can be read on page 30 of West Life) we are currently in the process of looking into reusable tea/coffee cups for use in West instead of using our disposable & polystyrene cups which cannot be recycled.

We would encourage as many of our members as possible to buy one of these (cost should be no more than £5.00) and bring it with them each Sunday or during the week (or bring one of your own).

These can be ordered through the Church office or will be available on Sundays to purchase. Keep an eye on the announcement sheet as to when these will be available.

HAPPY 90TH BIRTHDAY RHODA

by Lindsay Conway, Clerk of Session

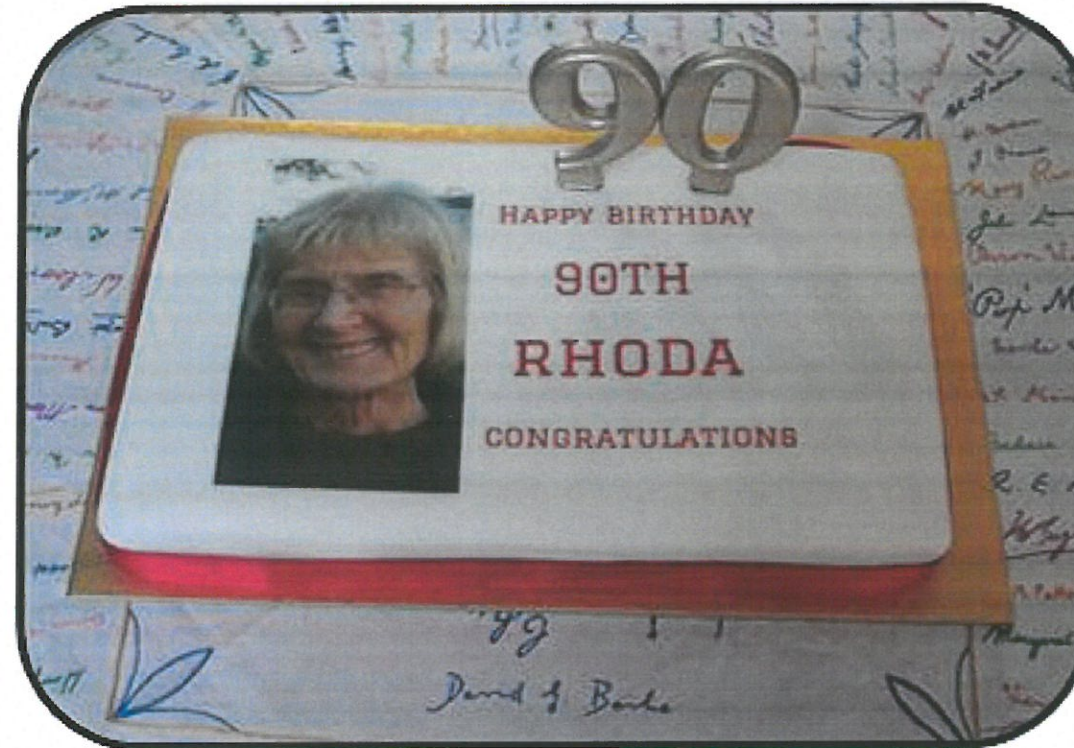
As we all gathered to celebrate the 90th birthday of Mrs. Rhoda Bailie on Wednesday 26th June, it was very obvious that Rhoda was coming home.

Celebrations had started on Friday 21st June, the day of her actual birthday, and continued with a family party at the Crawfordsburn Inn on Saturday. On Sunday Rhoda, David and family attended the ten o'clock service and as well as singing Happy Birthday, Rhoda picked a yoyo from the birthday bucket and was given a planter from the congregation.

The afternoon Tea party was an opportunity for Rhoda to meet some old West Church friends. On arrival, Rhoda was greeted by a standing ovation from her assembled guests. After a delicious afternoon tea, both Rhoda and David circulated round the tables and caught up with people they hadn't seen for a while. Many hugs & good wishes were exchanged. Speeches were short, I spoke on behalf of the congregation, Andrew on behalf of the family, both David and Rhoda spoke and Della Bell recited a sonnet written by Elizabeth. A great day was had by all.

Our thanks go to Norma Conway for coordinating the whole event and the SC'S for providing & serving the afternoon tea. Comments have compared the afternoon tea with the Merchant Hotel, the Crawfordsburn Inn and one thank you card gave it a five star rating.

It was our privilege to celebrate with Rhoda her 90th birthday and to give a little back to all the love and encouragement she and David have given to us for nearly six decades. It was so good to see Elizabeth, Andrew and Mary and their families over this special time.



Pictured above, Rhoda's birthday cake, top right Rhoda & David with the SC's who organised the Afternoon Tea, middle left, the Bailie family with Andy G, middle right, Billy & Jane Richardson, Victor & Helen Stephens and Anne & Jim Andrews enjoying the celebrations. Pictured below left, Alan & Barbara Stewart, Ronnie Baird and Anne & Hugh Anderson, below middle, Isabel & George Coburn, Doreen Clifford, Muriel Stephenson and Winne & Rev. George Moffatt below right, Rhoda having a catch up with Winne Potts.



MAKING CONNECTIONS

by Louise Davidson

As many of you are aware, my role as a trainee deaconess within West is to develop women's ministry and be part of the pastoral team. For me, this involves building relationships and getting to know you all and how together we can seek and serve God in a real and tangible way. I will also be involved with Presbyterian Women and leading a Girls' Brigade Bible study.

Since arriving at West, I have felt very much at home. On Sundays I have felt welcomed, uplifted, and rejuvenated through the Word & Spirit-filled services. For four weeks every Tuesday night in June we had Faith & Fellowship, which included a walk which lasted 30-40 minutes, followed by a good warm cup of coffee, chat and fellowship, finishing each evening with a devotion. It was a great encouragement that many of you came out and joined me – it has really helped me settle in.

As I am writing 55 women have signed up to go to Tom's Dining Rooms on 23rd July – by the time you have read this, I hope we will have enjoyed good food and fellowship. One thing that did challenge me and something that had not been on my radar, although I knew West to be a large church, is that some women had never met or did not know each other and so to be used by God already to help women build friendships has been a blessing and an encouragement. It is my prayer that I will be able to build connections between the women in West that will help them to grow deeper in their relationship with God, recognising and using the gifts God has given them, as well as forming relationships with people whom they have only ever met in passing.



So, what is my vision for women's ministry @ West Church?

FELLOWSHIP, FUN with the FOCUS on CHRIST

It seemed important to me to identify a name for our women's ministry and was encouraged to do so. The name will be 'Connections Women's ministry @ West' based on John 15:4 "Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me." We need to stay connected to Jesus, the true vine, because that is what will bring us joy, peace and hope. In doing so it will enable, equip and support women while nurturing their hearts to know God's Word and follow Christ faithfully, demonstrating authenticity and love, growing in our service of the one who made us and is remaking us by the power of the Holy Spirit. Naming the ministry 'Connections...' is also about connecting women with other women for friendship and fellowship. I cannot stress enough, though, that women's ministry is not a separate ministry from the rest of the congregation. Its intention is for the good of the whole church, so that we can encourage each other to use the gifts God has given us, serving Him and those within and outside of the walls of our church, having the hunger and the desire to see our community and beyond impacted by the gospel of Jesus-Christ.

Here is a list of different programmes and events that have been planned for this incoming Church calendar year:



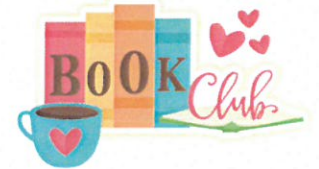
Bible Study:

Once a month I will be leading a Bible Study for women of all ages (18+) - girls to grans - where we will be looking at women of the Bible. It will take place on the **third Thursday** of each month, 7.30 - 9.00 pm, commencing on 19th September in the Meeting Room.

Chapters Book Club:

If you are looking for a warm, friendly place to discuss great Christian books with other women, to broaden our understanding of our faith and how to put it into practice, as well as to hear what God is doing in other places, come along and join **Chapters Book Club**. This will run every 6 weeks commencing on Tuesday 10th September, 7.30 - 9.00 pm in the Prayer Room.

Chapters



Saturday 21st September
Women's Breakfast
9.30 - 11.30 am
with guest speaker
Rev. Dr. Liz Hughes.
Cost £5.00
2020 dates
11th January & 16th May

There will be many additional events happening including social evenings with a range of activities - 10-pin bowling, meal out, night at the movies, pudding & praise evening, testimony evening, for example we will also have 'On the Sofa with...' which will involve women from the congregation telling us about how God has worked in their lives. There will also be an evening of hearing from people of what "This Time Tomorrow" looks like for them. So, keep an eye on the announcements!!

On the sofa with...

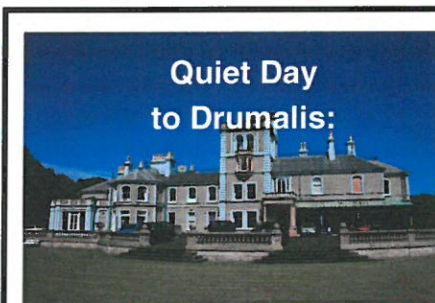


I am looking forward to getting to know you all a lot more. I am excited to see where God will lead us individually and as a group of women @ West which will deepen our connections, us with God, each other, those within our community and beyond, as we radiate Christ's love.

So please do sign up, or chat to Louise for more information regarding any of the programmes or events.

Your friend in Christ,

Louise xx

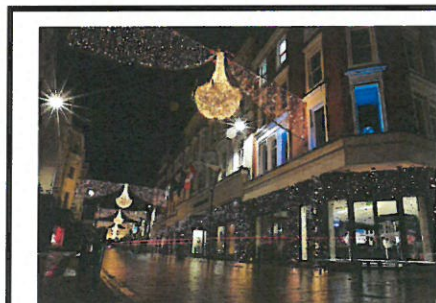


Quiet Day to Drumalis:

This will take place on **Saturday 23rd November** and will be a day of spiritual refreshment; a day which will enable people to leave the 'baggage' behind and hopefully move into a new place within, intentionally drawing aside to spend time with the Lord to reflect and pray. Claire Watton will be leading. Contact Louise for further information

Women's Weekend:

This will take place at Murlough House, 7th - 9th February. Only 25 spaces available. Cost to be advised.



Christmas Shopping in Dublin
Saturday 7th December

leaving West 8.00 am
returning from Dublin at 5.00 pm

Travelling by McAvoy's Coach
Cost £13.00

Book early to secure your seat
either through Louise
or the Office

Presbyterian Women

Living for Jesus



All ladies in the congregation are welcome to come along to Presbyterian Women (PW) on the 2nd & 4th Thursday of each month (excluding January), beginning at 7.30 pm on 12th September.

The theme for 2019-20 is Restore and the image featured is of the Japanese art of Kintsugi. This is the art of taking broken pottery and repairing it by binding the cracks with a lacquer mixed with powdered gold, silver or platinum. It creates a beautiful and valuable piece of art, the brokenness becoming the design as the pottery is even more refined because of its scars.

For further information, contact Maureen Blackmore through the Church Office.

GRIEF SHARE®

HELP AND ENCOURAGEMENT AFTER THE DEATH OF A FAMILY MEMBER

Griefshare is a weekly video seminar and support group to help you rebuild your life after bereavement.

This course begins on Friday 5th October in the Meeting Room at 7.30 pm
For further details please contact Lorna Milway/Anne Burrows by phoning the church office on 028 9145 9688

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MEN'S MINISTRY AT WEST

On Wednesday 15th May, the Friday Morning Men's Fellowship set off from West Church for our summer outing. We had a party of 42, which included some wives; our first port of call for morning coffee was The Londonderry Arms in Carnlough.

We then set off (incidentally on a lovely day) to the Tullyglass Hotel in Ballymena where we had a 5 course dinner. The hotel provided us with a 1st class meal in a beautiful garden setting. After dinner we had a short time in the hotel garden stretching our legs and thence on to our next port of call, Antrim Castle Gardens. On arrival we were met by our Ranger Guide who took us on a guided tour around the estate and gave us a complete history of the whole estate. It was a very worthwhile visit and after a short time sitting in the café area we were then shepherded on to our bus for the journey home.

The day was enjoyed by all and our grateful thanks go to John Elliott and Edward Carleton who organised the whole event.

All men in the congregation along with family & friends are more than welcome to Men's Fellowship. We meet each Friday morning with coffee, scones & lots of conversation in the Welcome Area from 10.15 am with our meeting beginning at 11.00 am with praise and guest speakers. Our new session begins on Friday 13th September. For further information, please contact Derick Riddell through the Church Office.

Derick Riddell



All men in our congregation are welcome to the Men's Breakfast on the last Saturday of each month meeting in the Minor Hall at 8.00 am for food, chat and talk from guest speaker. For further information speak with Paul Shields

'THIS IS A STORY YOU NEED TO READ. I HAVE BEEN STIRRED AND BLESSED BY IT.'
FROM THE FOREWORD BY PATRICK JOHNSTONE

Friday Men's Fellowship invites you to a morning with Maud Kells in West Church on Friday 11th October
Join us for coffee & scones in the Welcome Area from 10.30 am followed by talk at 11.00 am
EVERYONE WELCOME

AN OPEN DOOR
A TRUE STORY OF COURAGE IN CONGO
MAUD KELLS
WITH JEAN GIBSON

TEARFUND'S RUBBISH CAMPAIGN

supported by Bishop Harold & Charles McMullen

New research published by Tearfund has found that someone dies every 30 seconds due to plastic pollution.

Bishop Harold, a Tearfund UK ambassador and board member, is highlighting the effects of plastic on the world's poor by joining the 'Rubbish Campaign' and going plastic-free.

The bishop was at Tearfund's Theological Committee meeting when he had a eureka moment: "Someone said they had been trying to reduce their use of plastic. I wondered if it was possible to get back to Belfast from London without using any. I found it impossible to find anything not wrapped in plastic! Suddenly I saw it in the same way as I saw smoking when I was a teenager. People smoked on buses, planes, cafes... I thought it was completely normal, until it was banned and saw it with different eyes. Poor waste management is every bit as dangerous as smoking to the life of the planet, and to the lives of people. It's dangerous to us."

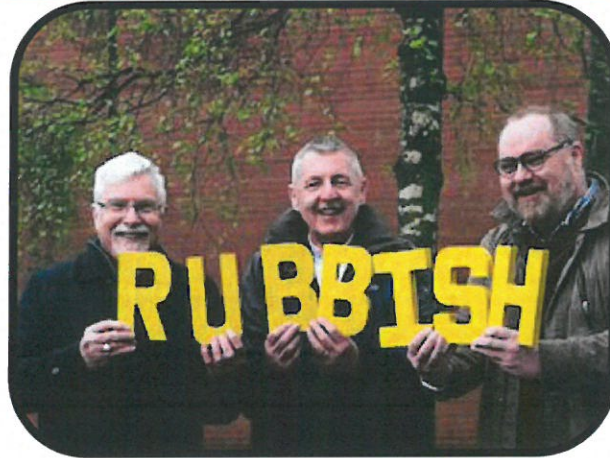
Bishop Harold's comments come after a new report by Tearfund has revealed for the first time that one person is dying every 30 seconds in developing countries from diseases and illnesses caused by plastic pollution and uncollected rubbish dumped or burnt near homes. It found that each year between 400,000 and a million people (at the upper end one person every 30 seconds) are dying in developing countries from illnesses and diseases like diarrhoea, malaria and cancers caused by living near uncollected waste and plastic pollution.

The new figures were released earlier in June in a report called *No Time to Waste: Tackling the Plastic Pollution Crisis Before It's Too Late* by international relief and development agency Tearfund, in collaboration with conservation charity Fauna

& Flora International (FFI), the Institute of Development Studies and waster management charity WasteAid. The report calls on multinational companies to change fundamentally their business models by committing to reporting the numbers of single-use plastic items they distribute in developing countries by 2020, and halving this by 2025.

Ruth Koch, NI Director at Tearfund said: "We are calling for urgent action from four multinationals – Coca-Cola, Nestlé, PepsiCo and Unilever. They sell billions of products in single-use plastic packaging in countries where waste isn't collected, in the full knowledge that people will have no choice but to burn it, discard it in waterways or live among it. The CEOs running these multinationals can no longer ignore the human cost of single-use plastic – fundamental changes to business models are urgently required. There is no time to waste."

Bishop Harold adds that, "The Christian faith is about looking out for our neighbour. It is about sacrifice and what appears to be a tougher way, but a better way. It is a challenge to individualism, a return to the way of thinking that used to inhabit this society in Ireland. I grew up in a working-class area of Belfast and everybody was there for each other: if someone didn't have enough money, somebody would help them out. When my mother was old, neighbours would bring round soup for her every lunchtime. It was part of what it was to live in community. When we live as part of a global community, we are able to consider how our actions affect others." He continues,



Bishop Harold with Charles supporting Tearfund's Rubbish Campaign, a campaign that West also supported with the recent matched giving incentive by the UK Government.

"Companies should promote a circular economy. Things should be re-used, and people's skills should be developed: that is good business."

Aid and development charity Tearfund, is also asking supporters to take on personal challenges by giving up an item of single-use plastic for 40 days: the time it takes to form a habit. "The campaign is an opportunity to make a change. Do something specific", Bishop Harold advises. He also encourages people to be vocal: "We started saying, 'I intended to buy more but I couldn't find anything that wasn't wrapped in plastic' while we were shopping. We got some funny looks!"

"All of these steps, individually and collectively, mean that we are following our Biblical mandate to care for the world and its inhabitants. As St James writes in his epistle: faith without works is dead. If we are proclaiming words, and they aren't lived out in the way in which we do community, love the poor and care for the planet, then they are only words. Let's hold the lot together."

The 'Rubbish Campaign' is now live at www.tearfund.org/rubbish.

LET ALL THAT YOU DO BE DONE IN LOVE

by Norma Conway

Supporting the Homeless

To bring you up to date with what has been happening since our coffee morning in March, our first 50 bags have been delivered to Centenary House in Belfast, for the Salvation Army to give to those who are in need. The 15 items in the waterproof drawstring bag comprise every day necessities, including thermal socks, toiletries, hand sanitizer, water & tissues. In the next delivery of bags, which will be in November a hat, scarf and gloves will be included. A member of the congregation sponsored the purchase of 100 bags, for which we are very grateful.

Homelessness is on the increase and this is evident in the bigger towns and cities of Northern Ireland. In Belfast there are a number of rough sleepers in doorways. Some of those who are homeless have other issues, like mental health or addictions. It is not up to us to judge, all of them are someone's mother, father, son, daughter, brother or sister. Many will have held down jobs, had their own homes, and have families.

We need your help...

Ian started his career as a soldier. He was out in the field, tired, cold and wet. The army insisted that he put on a pair of clean dry socks each day. He didn't realise the importance at first, but the simple pleasure of a warm pair of socks made all the difference. After leaving the army Ian began to help the homeless in Birmingham. Ian's motto is lots of people doing a little is better than a few doing a lot'.

For the month of September we are asking members of the congregation to purchase a pair of thermal socks, either one size or size 9-11. ASDA have packs of 3 costing £6.00, so you could join

together with a friend or if it is easier, put £2.00 in an envelope with SOCKS written on it and leave it at the office, or place in the offering plate. Other stores also stock thermal socks for the autumn/winter season. The socks will then be passed to the Salvation Army.



3Cs resumes on Tuesday 3rd September at 7.00 pm and Wednesday 4th September at 2.00 pm, meeting in the Committee Room. New members are always welcome.

"Let all that you do be done in love." 1 Corinthians 16:14

Pictured left, Sonia, Norma & Joyce attending the Official Opening of the Sensory Garden at Aaron House (3Cs had donated money towards the garden).



PROGRESS IN BIHAR & MUMBAI

an update from Jane Richardson following a short visit by Prince David to Northern Ireland

Prince David our Tearfund rep in India was over in Northern Ireland for a short visit at the end of June and he updated us on the progress of the work in Bihar and in Mumbai.

He also sends his thanks to all who prayed for him and his family after the death of his wife Anita. He is now back at work again and was able to attend the wedding recently of his daughter in America. Probably a bittersweet time for them all.

Emmanuel Hospital Association, Bihar, North India

Many families in the region of Bihar are desperately poor. Families struggle to scrape together two meals a day. When children reach 14 years old, compulsory education often finishes and they have to look for work.

Agents often come to the villages and offer the families about 6,000 rupees (about £60) a month for allowing their children to go with the agent and do some casual labouring. Frequently it is far from home, sometimes almost 2,000km away in Punjab. This offer seems to promise the families a chance of a better life: one with enough income to make sure they could eat three meals a day. But the families are deceived and

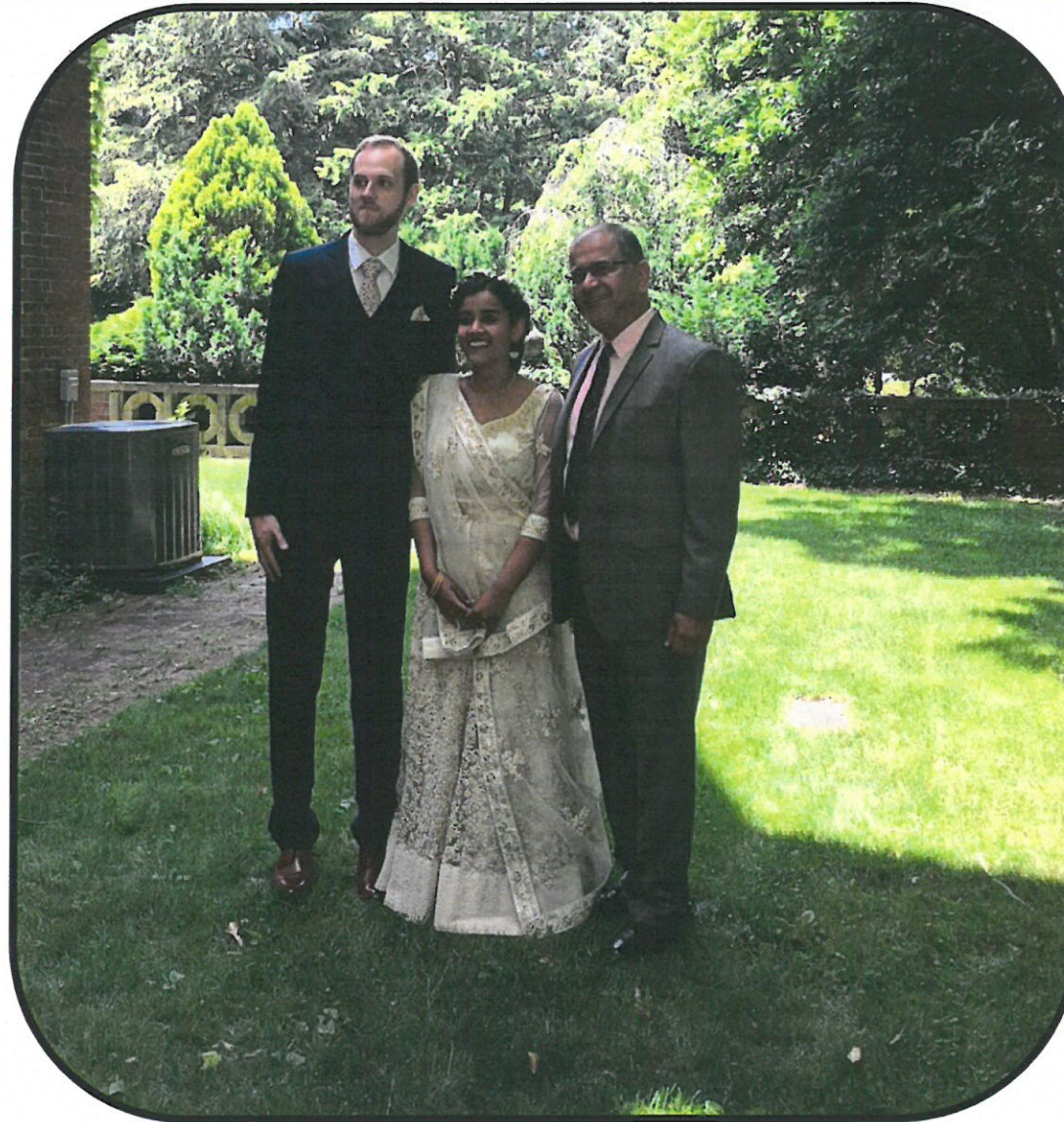
the job offers often turn out to be traps and, locked in a factory, children are forced, for example, to sew zips for 21 hours a day, six days a week. Most often they are not paid a penny or a rupee! They often have to sleep on the floor of the factory, along with other workers.

It is almost impossible for the children to escape as they are so far from home and have no money. Even if they do manage to escape, they are still in danger as the traffickers know exactly where to find them. Many become ill and some have died as the result of the awful conditions they live in.

Tearfund's partner Emmanuel Hospital Association (EHA) works with many of these children and their families and helps to rescue them from this enslavement and to build a sustainable livelihood that means they no longer rely on the life promised by the traffickers.

Life for the families can be completely different because of the intervention of Tearfund's partners and Prince was able to report that there are many villages in that area that have not had any children trafficked in the last few years.

Thanks to EHA's help and advice, life is much better and the children are safe and now families have enough to eat. And what's more, the children are at home with their family.



Prince David at the recent wedding of his daughter in America

Project Impact

The work that EHA does targets communities as a whole, strengthening local government, churches and civil society organisations to address together issues such as trafficking and child protection.

In a project in the Tea Gardens of Assam covering 5 tea estates and 4 villages, EHA are aiming to help the whole population of over 32,000 people.

Vulnerable households and young people who are most at risk of trafficking, will be the first to be invited to become part of skills development programmes and other initiatives.

What your money does

- £300 can establish a seed bank to help 15 families get the food they need without their children having to work
- £550 can help set up a vegetable nursery in a community, helping 60 children to get the food they need and stopping them having to work
- £600 can help a community form a milk cooperative to set a fair price for their milk, helping families to earn enough to feed themselves
- £27 can pay for a business starter kit which would provide a family with the skills and materials they need to start a small business like a poultry farm. This allows them to earn enough to feed themselves and keep their children safe.
- £35 can provide one anti trafficking training session in a school helping to keep a class of 30 children safe from the risk of trafficking.

EHA are dedicated to serving the poorest and most vulnerable in Northern India.

When Prince was over in June he confirmed that in Mumbai where there had been many brothels, there were now streets that had been almost completely cleared of these places due to the work of Tearfund's partners Sahaara. Many of the women who worked in these brothels have been rescued and given training so that they can go back to their families and have the skills to earn some money to support them.

Thank you all for the tremendous support you have given to these two projects and I hope this gives you some insight into what your giving can achieve.

Although we are no longer formally contracted to support this work, some of the money we raise in church for Tearfund will still be used to continue to support the partners Sahaara and EHA as well as other projects which arise from time to time.

Jane Richardson

Facing Trafficking Head-On, EHA's training programme

Awareness training in schools and communities is helping people understand the risks of trafficking and see through deception tactics so often used by traffickers.

Vigilance committees facilitated by church volunteers are enabling communities to work together to share information and challenge traffickers who come to their village.

Legal support is helping families to make their voices heard in the legal system so that traffickers can be prosecuted and justice is brought for those who have suffered.



EMMANUEL
HOSPITAL
ASSOCIATION



STRENGTHENING THE FAITH OF HIS PEOPLE AT A TIME OF CHANGE

from the Clerk of Session of Kilcooley Presbyterian

A team from West, through the introduction of the Very Rev. Dr. Roy Patton, was recently invited to link up with Kilcooley Presbyterian Church and lead an Alpha course each Sunday as part of their morning worship. The team was led by George Dines, assisted by his wife Norah, Karen Crockford, Henry Ellis and Brian Moorhead. The following report from their Clerk of Session shows how positively the Alpha course was received and it similarly expresses their gratitude to God for all that He accomplished.

As we in Kilcooley look back over the last nine weeks we can see the evidence of the truth expressed in this verse. Our experience from the beginning of the Alpha course right through to the end has been such a positive one. There are many words we could use to describe our Alpha experience but I think the words that many of our congregation would use are encouraging, reassuring, challenging and blessed. God's timing of the Alpha course in our church was perfect. The church is going through changes as our minister Gary and his wife Audrey have recently been called to serve the Lord in Limavady. However, God has used this time to minister to us through George and his team. We are a small congregation in Kilcooley but we were so delighted to see how many had signed up to take part in the Alpha course.

The format each Sunday worked very well especially at this specific time. Each Sunday George would talk through the various questions and what was amazing was that the whole congregation was able to hear his teaching on each subject. We

then split into two groups for discussion, starting our time together with a wee cup of tea – of course! Both groups got on very well and over the weeks new friendships were formed and old friendships were deepened.

Everyone had the opportunity to ask questions and the honesty and openness within the groups was evident. There were times when we cried together but also many times when we laughed. I know from chatting to people that they really

enjoyed the discussion groups and they experienced growth in their faith.

For a lot of people the day we spent learning about the Holy Spirit was a very special day. It gave us the opportunity to come aside and have fellowship with God and with one another. God's presence with us throughout the day was tangible and we witnessed the Holy Spirit moving in people's lives in such a gentle and beautiful way. We were also so blessed with the hospitality

catering team in West Church who served us the most delicious food. We appreciated their kindness so much and they really did spoil us! Many people discovered that day that the Holy Spirit desires to fill us, guide us, heal us and give us good gifts to help us serve in the church. It was a very special time when we had the chance to pray with one another and invite the Holy Spirit to come and minister to each person.

Our final Alpha Sunday was all about healing. George explained so

clearly, as he did every week, what the Bible has to say about healing. After the service the congregation had the opportunity to go forward for prayer and many did which was the perfect way to end.

It is very hard to put into words how blessed we have been through George and the team from West Church. From the moment they arrived in Kilcooley, they became part of our church family. Every one of them was so encouraging and reassuring and we have all grown to love them so much. We are so grateful to George for his hard work preparing the talks each week and to Nora, Henry, Karen and Brian for giving of their time each week to lead the discussion groups. We are also very grateful to all in West Church who had a part to play in making it possible for the Alpha course to take place. God has reminded us that we in Kilcooley are not on our own, that we are all one church, serving the one God. We know that God has a plan for His church and for the people in Kilcooley estate. Thank you for the part you are playing in that plan. We have been so blessed and Alpha has made a difference not only in the individual lives of the people who attended the course but also in the life and future of Kilcooley Church. The Alpha course has come to an end but we pray that this is not the end but just the beginning of what God has in store for us all.

“For I know the **PLANS**
I have for you”
declares the **LORD**
“plans to **PROSPER** you
and not to harm you,
plans to give you
HOPE and a
FUTURE.”
Jeremiah 29:11

Have you seen my car keys?

Did you watch any of The Open from Portrush?

Did you get your hair cut?

Now that I have your attention, let me tell you that our Autumn Alpha Course will be kicking off at

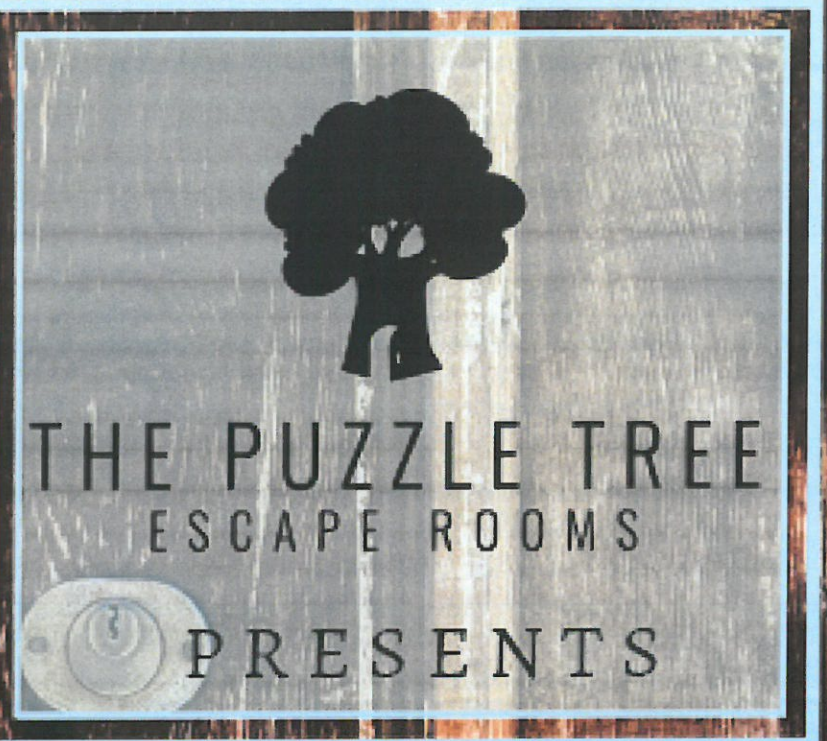
7.30 pm on Tuesday 24th September in the downstairs room at the Bryansburn Inn in Bangor West.

Let's face it we all wrestle with questions in life. Sometimes those questions might be more profound than the location of our keys or the state of our hairstyle. Our experiences in life can often leave us struggling to understand how God works. We all have questions about life that are worth exploring. That's where the Alpha course comes in. It's a great opportunity to explore the big questions about life. So even if you have been a Christian for many a year, you will find the Alpha course a spiritually refreshing experience that will deepen your faith and broaden your understanding of God.

Maybe you know somebody who 'doesn't do church' or is puzzled by faith. Bringing your friend or someone from your family on Alpha is a great way to introduce them to the Christian faith in a way that is fun and engaging and in no way intimidating. They may come to faith in Jesus, but even if they don't you will have shared a rich experience together and forged new friendships with an interesting group of people.

So have a think about who you could bring along to Alpha, or what deep questions you might like to explore yourself. We'd love to see you there.





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TRAVEL BACK IN TIME WITH
YOUR TEAM TO SAVE NARNIA
FROM THE CLUTCHES OF THE
WHITE WITCH!



THE ULTIMATE ESCAPE ROOM EXPERIENCE
FOR FAMILIES, FRIENDS AND GROUPS.
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LISTEN & PRAY

by Heather Thompson

Listening to God Seminar

Tuesday mornings
from 8th October
for four weeks

10.30am to 12.00 noon
in Prayer Room

*Call to me and I will answer
"you, and will tell you great
and hidden things that you
have not known."*

Jeremiah 33:3 ESV

In this short seminar our focus is on learning to recognise God's voice and the many ways in which He chooses to speak to us, and on encouraging one another to develop our relationships with God through talking to and listening to Him. Many have enjoyed these courses and grown in confidence that God does speak to them and wants to share things with them. Anyone is welcome, whether you are already flowing with the Spirit in this way and/or would like the encouragement of joining with a group of like-minded others who wish to grow in this together.

I will be sharing from scripture and from my own walk with God in learning to hear and follow His leading, and will be sharing some insights which help us in this journey of listening to God. No-one will be put under any sort of pressure. It is intended to be an exciting exploratory time in which each enters more deeply into the wonder of communicating with God through his or her spirit.

Heather



Call to me

AND I WILL

ANSWER YOU

JEREMIAH 33:3

Prayer Opportunities in West

Sunday	9.30 am	Prayer Room	Prayer for Young West
	6.00 pm	Committee Room	Prayer for Evening Service
3rd Monday	7.30 pm	Prayer Room	Samuel Hub—a time of worship and seeking God for what's on His heart
3rd Tuesday	7.00 pm	Sanctuary	'OASIS' a time to draw aside and rest quietly in God's presence
Wednesday	8.15 pm	Prayer Room	Prayer Fellowship
Thursday	8.00 am	Prayer Room	United Prayer
	2.00 pm		
	8.00 pm		
1st Friday	2.00 pm	Prayer Room	Persecuted Church
4th Friday	1.30 pm	Prayer Room	Listening Space—a time enjoying God's presence and or personal praying and listening

THE NEW SESSION

Sundays at West

Group	Age	Start date	Time	Contact	Number
Crèche	Children up to 3 years	1st September	11.20 am	Vic Croft	07868 162521
Little Acorns		1st September	11.30 am	Vic Croft	07868 162521
JClub Juniors	3-4 years	1st September	11.30 am	Vic Croft	07868 162521
JClub	P1-P7	1st September	11.30 am	Vic Croft	07868 162521
Young West	Year 8 +	1st September	10.00 am	Andrew McClelland	07753 347748
Missionary Prayer Group	Everyone	1st Sunday of month	11.15 am	Church Office	028 9145 9688
Deeper	Year 11+	8th September	8.00 pm	Carly Shields	07727 762047

Youth & Children

Group	Age	Start date	Time	Contact	Number
Bangor West Nursery Playgroup		26th August	9.00 am	Alison & Wendy	028 9147 0664
Guiding	(Reg)	Monday 16th Sept	7.00	Stephanie 02891 451494 or Sonia 02891 465090	
Rainbows 4-7 years from 6.30 pm, Brownies 7-10 years from 6.30 pm, Guides 10-15 years from 7.30 pm					
Boy's Small Groups		Tuesday 17th Sept	7.00 pm	Andrew McClelland	07753 347748
Mums & Toddlers	Pre-nursery	Tuesday 10th Sept	10.00 am	Vic Croft	07868 162521
Girls' Brigade		Wednesday 28th August		Cheryl Miller (Captain)	07851 699000
Explorers age 3-P4 from 6.00 pm Co. Section P5+ contact Cheryl for section times					
Boys' Brigade		Thursday 29th August		Roy Nesbitt (Captain)	028 9145 0419
Anchor Boys P1-P4 from 6.30 pm, Junior Section P5-P7 from 6.30 pm, Co. Section Yr 8+ from 7.45 pm					
Girls' Small Groups		Thursday 19th Sept	7.00 pm	Andrew McClelland	07753 347748
Coffee Bar	Year 8+	Friday 6th Sept	3.30 pm	Andrew McClelland	07753 347748
Scouts	(Reg)	Friday 6th Sept		Andy Ruston	07738 853880
Squirrels 4-6 years from 6.15 pm Beavers 6-8 years from 6.15 pm					
Cubs 8-10½ years from 6.45 pm Scouts 10½ - 14 years from 7.30 pm					
Special Friends	5-11 years	Saturday (1st & 3rd)	10.00 am	John McGilton	028 9145 1144
wYLDlife	Year 8-10	Saturday 14th Sept	7.00 pm	Andy Shields	07738 260680
Younglife	Year 11-13	Saturday 14th Sept	7.00 pm	Bronte Cromie	07590 928563

Groups

Group	Who for	Start date	Time	Contact	Number
Badminton	Adults	Tuesday 3rd Sept	7.30 pm	John Hutcheson	07711 611846
Carers' Group	All carers	1st Tuesday in month	7.30 pm	Margaret Webb	02891 461883
3Cs	Ladies	Tuesday 3rd Sept	7.00 pm	Norma Conway	02891 469913
Tuesday Together Senior Adults		2nd & 4th Tuesday	3.00 pm	Liz Clayton	07821 323301
Sycamore Club	Adults with learning disability	Tuesday 10th Sept	6.30 pm	Derek/Tanya Polley	028 91468394
Banner Group	Open to all	Wednesday 4th Sept	10.30 am	Roberta Hagan	07934 751214
3Cs	Ladies	Wednesday 4th Sept	2.00 pm	Ethel Anderson	02891 462666
Wednesday Night Fellowship & Prayer	Open to all	Wednesday 11th Sept	7.00 pm	William Hall	02891 461071
Thursday Bible Study	Open to all	Thursday 12th Sept	10.30 am	Albert Ward	07800 911420
Art Club	Open to all	Thursday 26th Sept	2.00 pm	Barbara Stewart	02891 451279
PW	All ladies	2nd & 4th Thursday	7.30 pm	Maureen Blackmore	02891 456897
Ladies Bible Study	All ladies	3rd Thursday	7.30 pm	Louise Davidson	07714 700286
Friday Men's Fellowship	All men	Friday 13th Sept	10.30 am	Derick Riddell	02891 229384
Men's Breakfast	All men	Last Saturday	8.00 am	Paul Shields	07739 490680
Walking Group	Open to all	Last Saturday	varies	Derek Polley	02891 468394
Home Groups	Open to all	as arranged		Maureen Bennett	07808 169302

Prayer & Praise

Group	Who for	Start date	Time	Contact	Number
Prayer for Israel	Open to all	1st Monday of month	7.30 pm	Ivor McClinton	07966 489892
Prayer Ministry	Team members	as noted	7.30 pm	Heather Thompson	02891 459688
Samuel Prayer Hub	Open to all	3rd Monday of month	7.30 pm	Heather Thompson	02891 459688
Listening to God	Open to all	Tuesdays in October	10.30 am	Heather Thompson	02891 459688
Choir	Open to all	Wednesday 11th Sept	8.15 pm	Gillian Caughey	07711 144527
UCB Team Meeting	Team	Last Wednesday	8.00 pm	Dorothy Campbell	07845 231815
United Prayer Meeting	Open to all	every Thursday	8.00 am & 2.00 pm	Church Office Catherine Bell	02891 459688 07730 783028
Prayer for Persecuted Church		1st Friday of month	2.00 pm	John Braithwaite	02891 452702
Listening Space	Open to all	4th Friday of month	1.30 pm	Heather Thompson	02891 459688
Elders Emeriti	retired elders	quarterly as arranged	2.00 pm	Gwen Dodds	02891 459688

BUILDING RELATIONS IN PERU

by Mike & Christine Stenning

We returned to Northern Ireland on 1st May after spending a wonderful three and a half months in Peru. This was our sixth time in Peru and our longest trip to date. Our main focus this time was to improve our Spanish conversation and after some intensive study we found that we were able to put this into practice on a day-to-day basis – we still have a long way to go though!!

We are thankful to God for His protection: we had no sicknesses, we travelled safely and we had so much joy and laughter during our time. We took Charles' theme of Building Relationships very much to heart and made some new friendships and strengthened the links with friends we already have in Peru.



Mike & Christine enjoying Peru and 'Building Relationships' with the local Presbyterian Church



Our last two weeks were spent in the north of the country in Moyobamba and Tarapoto and it was wonderful to visit the little Presbyterian church in Lluyllucucha in Moyobamba where, with Charles' permission, we have begun to explore a friendship link between our two churches.

So, what next?

We found that as our friendships have developed that people really opened up to us, sharing deep things in their lives, so we feel that some training would be very beneficial. We are, therefore, going to enrol for a Pastoral Care course at Belfast Bible College in the Autumn which will take us through to May 2020. We are still praying and seeking God's guidance as to His plans for our future.

GREETINGS FROM STRATFORD

by Mike & Lorraine Cahoon

An unbelievably wet Spring has brought great swarms of those little mosquitoes we have grown accustomed to in southern Ontario. We are definitely becoming more immune, but it's still a battle!

We wanted to touch base to share a quick update on our adventures since we last wrote. We were asked to establish a prayer ministry team for our church services and conferences. That has been extended to include other churches who are not in our denomination, but who need support in this area of ministry. Next week we will travel to a Mennonite fellowship about 30 miles away. Our pastor originally comes from a Mennonite background, and has maintained many contacts there. A church of another denomination asked for help at their first ever conference when they hosted Dan Mohler. That was such a great experience of team building and stepping out in faith with others.

It's been great to see how God continues to expand the inner healing ministry which we originally trained for here in Canada, and which continues to energise us, especially when people testify of God's healing in their lives and relationships. At the same time we get to build new relationships with other churches and groups.

A brief update from Carole, whose ministry is also expanding! Christians from Teen Challenge and also from two churches in the city - Evangel and Transformations - have asked if they can support her in the street work in Thunder Bay. She writes about two of these nights on the streets:



Mike's birthday celebration—he's becoming more Canadian each year!

1. Tonight was great. We took some of Evangel youth group with us. Mostly they just passed out candy until the end, when one young girl joined me to see why a lady was so upset. From there we prayed and she made a new friend. Totally changed her night.

There was a big group over by the circle and 3 people surrendered their lives to Jesus, many others wanting prayer, so the team continued ministering.

The youth from 3 churches are getting together and want to have a 24 hour worship time ... exciting times!

2. Last night's worship in the park was so good. We met for prayer at 6pm, and there were already 6 people waiting and hungry. Before the food was ready a fight almost broke out between two young women ... Whoa! A quick prayer. "Peace, please God". The rest of our night was beautiful.

Many came for the food only, but the atmosphere was saturated with the worship and praise of so many wonderful volunteers. We served food for an hour and Transformation church supplied the big BBQ. Some from THOP (Thunder House of Prayer) played music, and at one point broke out into prophetic words over our city. They sounded amazing. So thankful.

So you can see that there's a lot to be encouraged about here in Ontario!

We send you our blessings, love and thanks for each and every way you support us!

Mike and Lorraine

PROGRESS IN PERU

Casa Hogar Community Project

Miriam has now completed her fourth monthly visit to the children on community. She gives a report monthly on the areas of how they are doing spiritually, emotionally and academically, and is obviously helping them bond with the local guardian. She is ensuring a monthly allowance, given to support the children, is spent on school, clothing needs and towards additional nutrition.

It has been a joy to see photographs of the children teaming up together in the local geographical areas, enjoying a meal together with Miriam. Her monthly visits give them added security in their very different home settings, and her monthly devotional times with them, using visual aids (given by a member of West) entitled 'Getting to know Jesus better' are much appreciated.



Pictured above, Miriam with Isael and right, Miriam shoe shopping with Yoel

Update on some of the children

Marcos and Gloria are siblings who's mother died when they were very young. Their father is in prison for a further eight years of a 25 year prison sentence. Marcos is 14 years old and is in the 3rd year of high school. He is studious and wants to be an engineer. Gloria is 12 years old and wants to be a vet as she loves animals. They are with grandparents in the jungle, a four hour journey from Huánuco.

Kelvin, a very intelligent 7 year old, is studying in 2nd grade at primary school. Sadly he was abandoned by both parents and now lives with his grandmother in Huánuco.

Kevin will soon be 10 years old and is studying in the 5th grade of primary school. His ambition is to become an inventor. His father abandoned him when he was very young and he now lives with his mother and brothers in Huánuco, in a rented property. He is a bright young boy with a great smile. He and Kelvin are great friends and Miriam promotes their friendship, bringing them together in Huánuco.

Yoel is 11 years old and in 6th grade of primary school. He is a quiet, studious boy who wants to be a doctor. He lives with his brother Horge and a sister, and recently his mother, in the jungle area of Tingo Maria.

Isaias & Isael are siblings living with their mother and new stepfather, about eight hours travel from Huánuco. They live in very poor accommodation in a rural area. Miriam has however registered them in local schools and connected them with local churches, which their mother attends with them.

I look forward very much to seeing all the children when visiting in September (1st-16th September) with my niece Sara, who has visited Peru previously. Sara (pictured right) lives in Canada and is an intercessory missionary with a House of Prayer based in Toronto.



Pictured above left, Miriam with Marco & Gloria enjoying some devotional time and above right, Kelvin & Kevin enjoying a meal together.



The Bigger Picture

Miriam was due to retire in January 2020, but had to bring it forward due to health reasons. This, coupled with a lack of available house-parents, caused her to bring it forward to March 2019 which obviously concerns FCS members and myself at the required move of the children into much poorer economic conditions. Miriam and her team deserve so much credit under God, for the bonded little family at Casa Hogar. Romans 8:29, 'all things work together for good', was the word on which I felt led to stand as the transition to community took place.

Following detailed research, it has become apparent many missions are now taking a community based approach. Recent research evidence in the UK has also shown that while material benefits are less, most children actually bond better with their own communities, giving them a broader identity basis.

Therefore, it has greatly comforted us to see how Miriam's supportive, overseeing role is in keeping with research and Peruvian Government recommendations. Miriam is also providing continuity in helping the precious children integrate so well which also gives them security.

During my visit in September I will be completing legalities to ensure, as in the local Articles of Association, that the future use of the building will comply with the requirement to be a non-profit similar type of Christian work. At present God has again supernaturally brought about interest from a major international Christian organisation. Miriam, the local CHLPA Association members and myself & Sara will meet with the Directors who will be visiting Huánuco on 5th & 6th September 2019. The organisation, if it receives the building, will ensure the large investment made by many West members will not only be built on, but will endeavour to expand the Kingdom of God in the area.

Further prayer points and information will be available pre and post the mission trip. Your prayers for Sara and myself as we travel in His Name are, as always, greatly valued, as are your prayers for Miriam and the children.

Beverley

As a church we thank Beverley for her passionate advocacy and support for the Casa Hogar Orphanage Project and all that it has accomplished for good. We note the earlier than planned retirement of Miriam and the fact that the children have been re-integrated with their local communities. We commend Miriam for all that she has done to ease that transition. We are also of the view that in the longer term, it is best for the children to live in the community and with their extended families. As a Mission Committee we recognise that we have come to the end of the Casa Hogar Orphanage partnership but we will continue to support the Help Them To Smile Project.

West Church
Mission Committee

SHARING MY HEART, HOUSE AND LIFE WITH STREET KIDS IN KENYA

by Katie Namate

Katie Namaté writes about the work in which she and her husband are engaged; they are affiliated to the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya.

For most of my life, I have felt a call to mission. A strong, overwhelming desire to help these destitute, outcast, broken people. For a long time, I didn't know what it was or where this irresistible desire came from. In 2014 I came to Kenya for the first time just months after recommitting my life to the Lord. From this moment, God was directing me towards His heart for street boys as I grew in faith myself. Over the past 4 and a half years I have shared my heart, house and life with street kids. Along the way God brought me and my husband, Frank together. Great are the plans of God; Frank, as a local social worker and now family reunification specialist is the perfect fit into a ministry full of tough little street-boys. We married in 2017 and now we have our son, Theo.

In October 2018 I moved to Kenya permanently. Years of travelling back and forth between Northern Ireland and Kenya, building up relationships with street boys, their families and their gang leaders has meant we have a solid foundation to build upon in order to make this ministry a successful investment for the kingdom of God. Our ministry is now known as "ShineHisLight". Currently in the town in which we work, there are over one hundred boys living and working on the streets, overcome by spirits of addiction, abuse, anger and rejection. The vision of our ministry is to first rescue boys from the streets, rehabilitate them from addictions and offer trauma counselling from a Christian perspective.

As an organisation and as



Katie & Frank with their little boy Theo

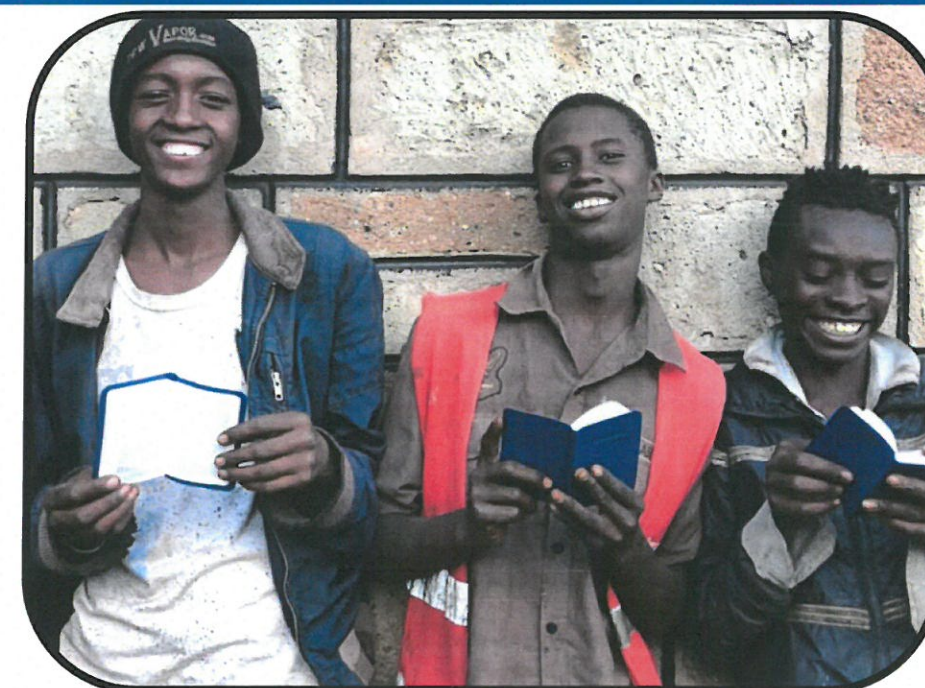
individuals we believe in God's heart for 'the family'. The heart shattering statistics are that over 80% of children on the streets and in children's homes world-wide are falsely labelled 'orphans' and actually have families to go home to. We therefore, do not offer long term care. We believe children belong in natural, God-given families within their own cultural and ethnic communities. After rehabilitation we reintegrate boys back into

their family homes helping parents and sons to reconcile and move forward. Throughout the rehabilitation process we equip the boys as disciples; lights going back into their family home or going out to serve friends still on the streets.

We are now associated with Full Gospel Churches of Kenya, an African run church with more than 2 million church branches across the country – they have placed us as the Head of Children and Youth

Departments in three branches and the Head of Community Development within the same three branches. This allows us to feed into more families and to look out for at-risk boys before they reach the streets. Since taking up these positions in November and implementing our programme, the number of children attending Sunday school has increased from 23 to 72!

Currently, we have successfully reintegrated many boys from the streets and a Street-Family Rehabilitation Centre is being built as I speak. We run fellowships for those boys still on the waiting list to be helped, and continue to build on relationships with them and their families. The local government has also recently taken notice of how we are tackling this epidemic and asked us to present our strategies to help them. This vision is growing into a powerhouse of impact. In order for this work to continue and for our family to be stable while serving, we have the responsibility and privilege to raise all our personal and operational expenses. We are currently working to build a support team of



Some of the Street Boys Katie & Frank work with

financial partners, standing with us as a part of this work.

As we sow into these boys on the streets who do not have access to the Gospel, please contact us via email shinehislight.office@gmail.com or WhatsApp +447955376979 for more information or if you would like to become involved

Kate Namate, Co-Founder, ShineHisLight

BRING JOY IN THE HARDEST OF SITUATIONS

by Harry McBride, Team Leader

Oli otya,

After 17 days away in Uganda we are home! It has been an amazing opportunity for our team of young (and youngish) people to go to Africa to serve and witness God's work in action in a very new context.

After a long period of travel starting from Church on Sunday 14th July we arrived in Kampala on the Monday, tired but ready to get going. Over the 17 days we got to experience some incredible things. We took our Easter Mission program, updated of course, so there were no lab experiments, but we did get to do crafts, Bible stories, songs and of course lots of old favourite Easter Mission songs.

We took this program to the schools in Lweza, to the New Life Homes and also to different areas of street children programs run by Abaana. Although some of these places were very emotional, it's amazing to see the children sing and worship God in a whole new way, that we don't often see here in Bangor.

We also got to take part in our building project, where we spent a week building latrines for Lweza Primary. This was a great chance to serve in a new way, that many of the team had never experienced. Working alongside the Ugandan builders was a chance to bless the school and the community with better facilities that will last for years and help with basic hygiene, keeping the people safe and well.

This trip has been a brilliant time of growth, of witnessing God move amongst the children we interacted with, as well as within the team itself, growing closer to God and seeing where we all fit in to His mission wherever He places us and also in seeing how God can bring



#TeamWest with Abaana in Uganda, pictured back row left - right, Michael, Niall, David, Tom, Angus, Thomas, Jess, Jordan, Andrew and Courtney. Pictured front, Daniel, Orla, Jordan, Sian, Ana, Harry & Patricia and pictured below and right, the team, enjoying interacting with the local school children.



joy even in the hardest situations. The team was of course sad to be leaving the people we got to know, the kids we got to interact with in the schools and on the streets and our wonderful translators, David and Patricia, who never left our side and always kept us right. The team members are excited to get home and see what God has in store for them now, and want to share with anyone and everyone, what they saw and what they experienced. So if you see any of the team members please chat to them about it all, ask questions and see just how amazing this trip was for all who took part and just how worthwhile it really was.

We would like to say a massive thank you to all who supported us, through donations both financial and with items to take to Uganda, and also to those who covered us in prayer. We know that we couldn't have got through all of the travel, work, and emotions without you all being behind us, and for that we are so grateful.

Weebale nnyo,

The Young West Abaana Team



REACHING STUDENTS FOR CHRIST

by Jen Carswell

Ben Carswell became the new National Director of TSCF (Tertiary Students Christian Fellowship), New Zealand. TSCF is part of the worldwide International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES). Ben has been part of the TSCF team for more than a decade and took up the role of National Director in January 2019.

Ben says: "Our vision for TSCF is the same as it's always been: reaching students for Christ and changing students for life. The gospel is at the heart of who we are and what we do. I believe in the mission. I believe students are best placed to reach students for the gospel. We have already seen a steady stream of students coming to Christ in recent years, but the task is not completed. Seeing students applying the gospel in all areas of life, from teaching in schools to working in architecture to playing for the All Blacks—we'd love to see that happen in the next

generations of students." Ben's three top priorities as he begins the role are strengthening the work in Auckland, diversity, and succession planning.

"The work in Auckland is terrific, but we are stretched," Ben said. "We need more workers. That's staff, students and volunteers. We need to think about how we grow the work in New Zealand's biggest city."

This includes developing partnerships with churches and gospel-minded agencies that also want to disciple students. While new staff and partnerships are important around the country, they are critical in a city that has more than a third of the nation's students and just a fraction of TSCF's staff.

"We need to be creative and generous in the way that we do that, thinking collaboratively for the sake of the gospel," Ben said. "I'm keen

to chat to church leaders and anyone interested in having that kind of conversation."

In terms of diversity, TSCF's work includes overseas Christian fellowships and international student ministries. However, "we need to work hard on our bicultural heritage and our bicultural engagement, as well as our multicultural engagement," Ben said. "We are not connecting in the way that we would like with many Māori students and students from Pacific Islands."

The third strategic focus is a part of TSCF's approach to raising up student leaders who in turn disciple others. Several staff have themselves been student leaders, then Minterns (TSCF's Ministry Internship programme) and after beginning their working lives have returned to invest in other students themselves.

Student ministry is dynamic, it's always moving," Ben said. "We need constantly to be growing and developing new staff, new students, new student leaders, and asking who is the next generation. We need to be developing them and giving them new opportunities".

In late June, we had a commissioning service at our own church for this new role (despite him officially taking it up in January!).

To keep up to date with the work that Ben is involved with in TSCF, please visit www.tscf.org.nz

Thank you for your continued prayerful support for Ben's work and for our family.

Jen

Ben & Jen with Sam (10), Josh (8) and Hannah who celebrates her 5th birthday on 18th August



Changes in Districts : New address

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 101 Stephen & Gillian Beggs & family | 505 Raymond Bready & family |
| 404 Jean Major | 604 Stanley & Sharon Dornan & family |
| 404 Etta Jennings | 1002 Eleanor Sloan |
| 404 Isabelle Ross | 1204 Stephen & Lynne McGarrity & family |
| 505 Mark & Toni Matthewson & family | 1204 Joanne McClune |

WELCOME to the following new members: District

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| 101 Maggie Bailie | 1001 Johnathan Bloomer |
| 401 Renee Stokes | 1002 Robert & Bertha Shannon |

The following were brought for Baptism or Dedication

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 09/06/19 Grace Zoe Strong | 23/06/19 Ruby Elizabeth Valerie Beggs |
| 16/06/19 Patrick Alexander James Browne | |

Weddings at West

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 20/02/19 Lynne Anderson & Stephen McGarrity | 27/05/19 Holly Eves & Joel Lux |
| 24/05/19 Louise Welsby & Ian Davison | |

REMOVE the following who have transferred congregations: District

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 402 Nigel & Tracey Kennan & family | 504 Rick & Julie-Ann Hunter & family |
| 402 Andrew & Megan Moag & family | 601 Mark Keenan |
| 404 William & Gillian Newell | |

We regret to announce the following deaths and extend our love and prayers to the families concerned:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 11/03/19 Ronnie Paterson | 05/05/19 Iris Champion |
| 14/03/19 John Tweedie | 07/05/19 Maude Nixon |
| 20/03/19 Ken Mottram | 21/05/19 Jim Quinn |
| 23/03/19 Rosemary Killops | 24/06/19 Albert Adams |
| 06/04/19 Anne Moorhead | 12/07/19 Baby Rosa Joy Coutts |

While out at work or out for the day
I can sit and keep your pets company (small animals, cats & dogs)



Josie is a member of our congregation and can be contacted on 07926 612935

BANGOR CARES WEEK

Back in March a group of about 60 people met in Bangor Academy with the aim of exploring if it would be possible to develop a series of activities, that would focus minds and hearts on mental health and equip one another to harness the power of the internet for good, while working to limit the harmful impact of unsupervised and unregulated screen time in the lives of our children and grandchildren.

Since then the initiative has been developed by a Steering Group, with the benefit of consultation sessions with groups of school children; as a result a week of activities is to be held in the week beginning 23 September across the town.

Rev. Mark Johnston, minister of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Bangor writes, "A common thread from many conversations with young people and primary school staff were the challenges of mental health (in all its forms) and the increasing issue of unsupervised screen time for children and young people who are now being exposed to many unhealthy materials online (e.g. 3 AM Club, occult, pornographic material, violent images etc.). These in turn are causing night terrors, disturbed sleep, and impacting their physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing". He continues to say that following a Board of Governors meeting in his local Primary School, an action was taken to see what could be done together to help educate young people on taking care as they use tablets and phones, and as they look after their own mental health. It is also important to explore ways in which parents, grandparents and families, in general, can be educated on mental health, and how to make wise use of online screen time.

After linking up with local schools to discuss a way forward, Mark's dream was to establish across Bangor a full week of activities, commencing 23rd September, that would focus the town's hearts and minds on mental health, and as part

of this, raise awareness of the opportunities and challenges presented by the internet, social media, gaming etc. The hope would be that schools, businesses, GPs, community groups and churches would come together to bring focus to these issues in creative ways in assemblies, school classrooms, community events, business meetings, and worship gatherings, to educate one another about the various aspects of mental health and the challenges of unsupervised screen time.

As a result, Bangor Cares has a week of activities planned as set out below and we are really excited that Andrew McClelland and his Youth & Children's team are on board with this initiative, linking up with Grange Park Primary School and you can read what he has envisaged for West during this week on the following page.

Bangor Cares... some of the week's proposed Activities

Mindfulness Monday: media activities to promote the event; highlight the work of the agencies which provide support for those facing concerns about mental health issues; Mental Health Awareness Fair in Bangor Academy; information sessions for parents when dropping off or collecting their children from youth activities; mindfulness sessions in the Walled Garden, create a social media account from which young people can get confidential advice, puppy therapy and a trip to Streamvale Farm; art or colouring competition.

Talk about it Tuesday: places for people to go to talk about mental health concerns; visits to primary schools by secondary school students, young people visiting nursing homes; a different approach to school assemblies and homework; real life stories by personalities from sport or music, prayer spaces developed by schools; billboard notices and creative ways to explore "the elephant in the room"

Work out Wednesday: making use of Aurora, football tournament in Bangor Football Club, activities in community and sporting venues, sponsored walks in aid of mental health charities; colour runs, family recreational activities away from screens etc.

Thoughtfulness Thursday: Activities in care homes, healthy eating; random acts of kindness; intergenerational activities; debates on mental health issues; drama competitions; story writing; social media lock down.

Forward looking Friday: encouraging businesses to be involved by encouraging staff to identify messages for the workplace; promote Take 5 Steps to wellbeing; beach BBQ

Social Saturday: potential Digital Detox day where families are encouraged to engage in recreational activities across the town

Sharing Sunday: Church services themed on mental health

Do keep a look out for all the activities as they come to fruition and get involved where you can. Prayer will be essential to ensure the success of this very important week, so please remember to include Bangor Cares in your prayers.

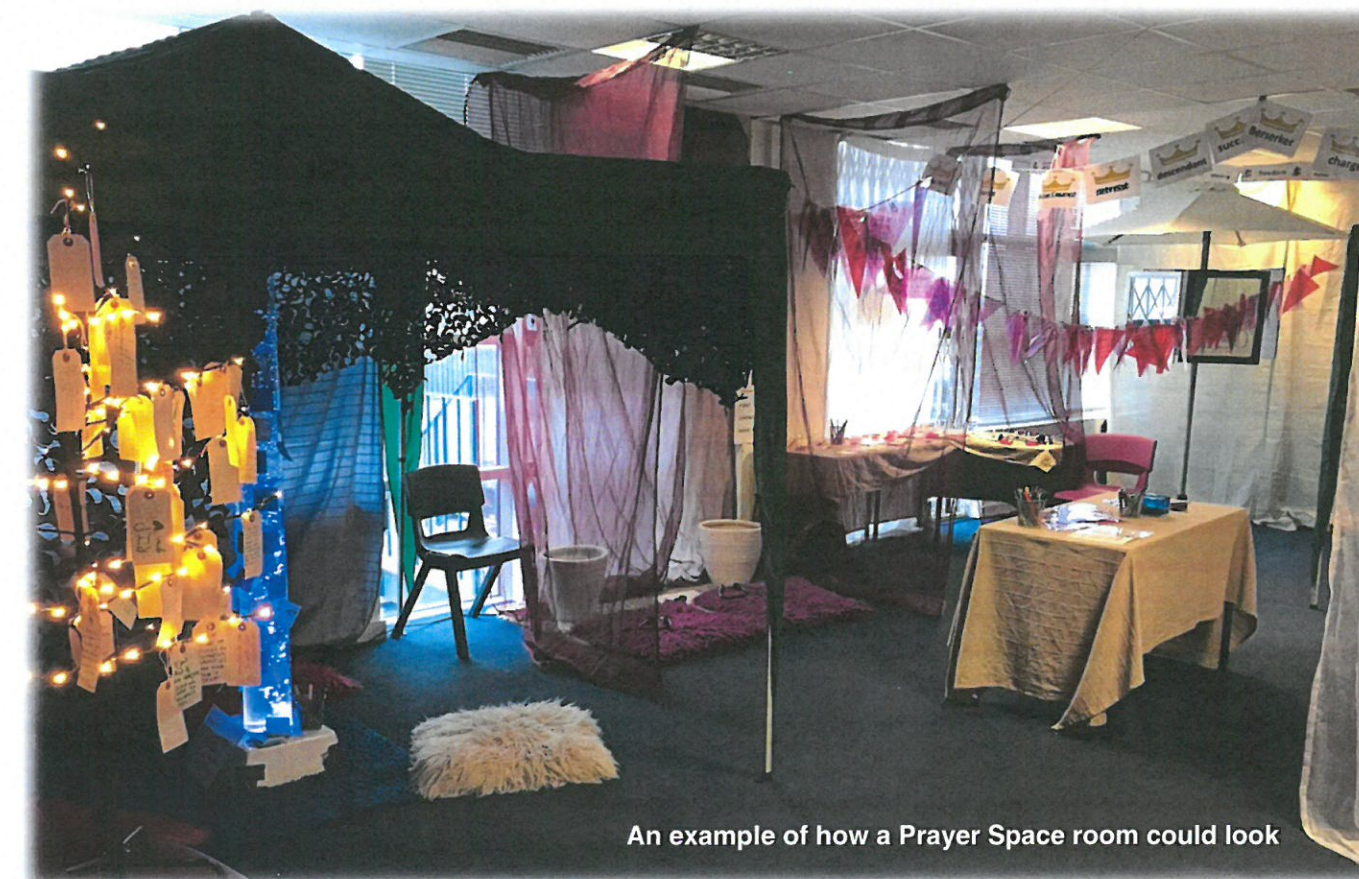
In the new session we will be hosting a Prayer Space for Grange Park Primary School, beginning 23rd September. It will last for a week with each class spending 50 minutes going around various prayer stations in the West Prayer Room and Meeting Room. The stations will range from helping them think of others from around the world and in local Bangor, to providing the children with opportunities to write down their worries, anxieties and concerns.

There are lots of pressures and stresses that children at every stage go through. Many don't know how to process and deal with their emotions. Mental Health is a huge issue for many children and we want to be able to help them feel that they are not alone, that there are people who care for them, and that Christians believe prayer is the perfect way to unload the things that weigh us down.

Regardless of a child's faith, beliefs or backgrounds, we want to provide an open and safe environment for them. We are really excited to host the children of Grange and we pray that it is useful for all who spend time in the Prayer Spaces. Please pray for us during this week.

This initiative will take place between Monday 23rd—Friday 27th September, which coincides with the Bangor Cares events happening across our town. If you would be willing to help throughout the week please get in contact with Andrew or Vic through the Church Office.

Andrew McClelland, Youth & Children's Worker



An example of how a Prayer Space room could look

30 YEARS OF MUMS & TODDLERS

30 years ago, after the Rathmore Hall was upgraded, the Rev. David Bailie asked the congregation to pray for guidance as to how we could use the hall to further His work.

Maureen Blackmore had been discussing with a number of new parents how lovely this hall could be during the day. As a result Maureen had the idea of having a group where parents could bring their children and spend time together.

After discussions with Heather Thompson, Maureen received a call from David asking, "When can you start?". So it was all hands to the pump trying to get a team in place as soon as possible. First call was to Isobel Coburn who agreed to help and has been ever present ever since!

So Maureen, Isobel and four other ladies launched the group at the end of February 1989, baked their tray-bakes and waited! On the first day 6 mums attended and this has grown and grown ever since becoming a large part of West's ministry with around 75 mums/dads/grandparents/child-minders attending regularly.

Many of our congregation had their first experience of West through Mums & Toddlers either as a parent or a child and many of these children who attended have now gone full circle and are bringing their own children!

The attendees are diverse - not all Westies - with people coming from many countries such as South Africa, USA, Holland, Iran, Sweden, France and Bangladesh. Not all are from Christian backgrounds with many of our Muslim neighbours attending over the years.

The highlight of the year has always been the annual Carol Service followed by gifts from Santa. Each child receives a Christian book and the parent a Christmas card with a Christian message.



Our Clerk of Session, Lindsay Conway, pictured with Isobel Coburn (left) and Maureen Blackmore (right)

After 30 years Maureen and Isobel feel that it is time to step aside and let a new generation take over. It is difficult to put into words how thankful West is to these two wonderful ladies and their team of dedicated helpers. It is also impossible to know how many lives have been touched by their work.

All we can say as a congregation is a BIG THANK YOU and God Bless.

If anyone would be interested in giving a few hours each Tuesday to help out with our Mums & Toddlers group, even on a rota basis, please do not hesitate to get in contact with Vic Croft, our Children's Worker.

As you will be aware from our last edition of West Life, Maureen was awarded a Commendation for Outstanding Contribution to the work of the Church by the Council for Social Witness within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The following is an extract from the entry form submitted by West to recognise Maureen's ministry:

"Maureen provides inspirational leadership for her team. The team involved comes with many years of experience, often of rearing their own families; they can and do therefore, share experiences and advice. However, it is Maureen who spearheads the practical activities and gets to know each adult and child; she ensures that each is, for example, acknowledged at the Christmas party with a card and present, provided with an Easter egg and given an end of year treat.

The group still serves its original function, namely to provide support and a relaxed place where parents and others can meet and get to know one another. It also provides a stepping stone in the socialisation process for the young children, helping them to grow in confidence, gradually developing their ability to engage with other children and begin to play together.

Mums and Toddlers is a community outreach ministry, building relationships and in an indirect way sharing the love of Jesus. It is a safe place for the adults and the children and one in which they are known by name and cared for and supported.

It is often a gateway to the Playgroup which West runs or to JClub (Sunday School) or to Cafechurch.

Session is very grateful for the service given by Maureen Blackmore and therefore propose her as a worthy recipient of an award."

The Youth & Children's department say a sincere thank you to Maureen & Isobel for their 30 years service to Mums & Toddlers Tuesday Group and the following is a tribute from Vic...

*Tuesday toddlers, racing round,
lifting toys up off the ground.
Soothing babies, feeding mums,
Eek, have we got enough buns?
Tiny hands reaching up...*

Please can you fill my cup?

Marvellous Maureen

Inspirational Isobel

We can't even begin to guess

Just how many lives you've

blessed.

So let your Tuesdays be a time to rest.

We all think you are the best!

We also say a BIG THANK YOU and goodbye to the wonderful Pamela McDowell who has stepped down from JClub Juniors (Junior Beginners Sunday School) after 30 years of service.

Dedication, dedication, totally unflustered in every situation.

Steady and wise, steady and wise

Teaching scripture to every child.

So calm and loving, Pam that's

you

I'm sure the many Sundays have

flew.

You have blessed so many a

home

For all the years of love you've

shown.

Again, if anyone would be interested in helping out on a rota basis with JClub, JClub Juniors or Crèche, please do not hesitate to speak with Vic.

Thank you



Pamela McDowell (right) with Heather Elliott, JClub Juniors volunteers

DEFINED BY GOD'S OVERWHELMING FAITHFULNESS

by Andrew McClelland, Youth & Children's Worker

Moving Forward...The past year in West Youth & Children's has been defined by God's overwhelming faithfulness. Back in September the team was just Vic and myself, but soon this grew with Harry and Heidi joining us. This was the right team for the year; we've had a lot of fun, we have worked really hard, most of which is never seen, but we love serving in our church. We are extremely thankful for all the support, encouragement and prayer that we receive from every part of the church. To our incredible team of volunteers we are very grateful for giving your time and energy to so many things.

It's been a year of many changes, challenges, but it's been a year of growth in the quality and quantity of what happens each weekend and during the week. I have a deep sense that this is a new season in the life of West's Youth & Children's ministry. There is a hunger across

the age groups in West for more of God; there is a desire to not just go through the motions of faith but to have it affect every area of their lives.

"I'm excited to see what God is going to do in the next year."

ANDREW MCCLELLAND

I have been moved into the position of taking overall responsibility for the Youth & Children ministries in West. Recently Harry McBride was successful in being appointed as Youth Worker and is really looking forward to starting his ministry with us full-time at the beginning of August. Vic, our Children's Worker, continues to do incredible work



Young West praying for Bangor

Pictured below, the Y&C team for 2018/19, (l-r) Andrew, Harry, Heidi & Vic. Heidi has now moved on to a full time job in Little Seedlings, but is still very invested in the lives of many young people through Youth & Children's Ministry and Girls' Brigade.



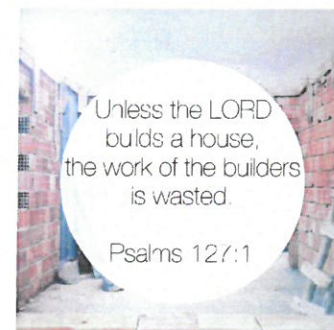
amongst the children in West, and in the growing ministry to our local schools.

As God was so faithful to us last year, He is already moving to bring together a team of interns for this coming year. We are delighted to let you know that Courtney Thompson will be returning to us on placement as part of her final year at University and Daniel Conway, Jessica Dorrian and Jordan McKee were successful with the applications for the Intern positions (pictured right). We really do now have a great team in place moving forward into the new session!

We will be introducing the new interns to the congregation at the beginning of September but please look out for them and stop for a chat and hear what work they will be involved in throughout the year and please remember to pray for them in their intern year.

We can try and do this on our own energy and strength, while this might make us feel good, it's not worth anything unless it is centred on God. **'Unless the Lord builds a house, the work of the builders is wasted.'** Psalm 127:1

So please pray for our team, encourage us, serve with us. Pray for the work that is seen and unseen, pray for more of God to be evident in the lives of all those who work with the children and young in West. Pray for more of God.



dates
to Remember

Sunday 1st September: Young West starts back at 10.00 am in the Conference Room and JClub (in its usual format) starts back during the 11.30 am Service.

Friday 6th September: Coffee Bar starts back in the new location of the Welcome Area from 3.30 - 5.30 pm. This is a chilled, drop in style programme with football, tuck shop, Xbox, Wii, nail polish and board games. Each week we also have a special activity such as baking, sports or team building.

Saturday 14th September: YoungLife (yr 10+) & WyldLife (yr 8-9) starts back from 7.00 - 9.00 pm.

25th - 27th October: Young West Weekend to Castlewellan. Forms will be available in early September.



12TH BANGOR BOYS' BRIGADE

NEW 2019/2020 SESSION RESTARTS FOR ALL BOYS ON THURSDAY, 29TH AUGUST 2019

ANCHOR BOYS : Y1 - Y4 6.30 - 7.45PM

JUNIOR SECTION : Y5 - Y7 6.30 - 7.45PM

COMPANY SECTION : Y8 - Y14 7.45 - 9.45PM

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!



**FOR FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE CONTACT
ROY NESBITT 028 91450419 OR EMAIL
royfnesbitt@aol.com**



Above: President's Badge Men at the recent Boys' Brigade Display

12TH BANGOR BOYS' BRIGADE



Below: Queen's Badge Men at the recent Boys' Brigade Display



40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS AT GANAWAY

ANCHOR BOYS' JOINED THE COMPANY SECTION FOR AN ACTION PACKED WEEKEND TO CELEBRATE 40 YEARS OF BOYS' BRIGADE AT WEST. FOUNDING MEMBERS ALONG WITH CURRENT AND PAST SECTION LEADERS JOINED TOGETHER FOR A SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING IN GANAWAY.



GIRLS' BRIGADE NEWS



by Cheryl Miller

West Presbyterian Girls' Brigade

Save THE Date

UNIFORM SALE & NEW MEMBER REGISTRATION EVENING

Wednesday 28th August 2019

6.00 - 8.00 pm

All current members who require new uniform or who have uniform to sell, along with girls wishing to join us for our new session (registration only), are welcome between 6.00 - 8.00 pm on Wednesday 28th August.

OPENING NIGHT

Wednesday 4th September

Under 5s & Explorers, 6.00 - 7.15 pm

Juniors (P5 - P7), 7.00 - 8.30 pm

Seniors (Y8 - Y10) & Brigaders (Y11+), 7.30 - 9.00 pm

Pre-order your uniform at www.westchurchbangor.org.uk/uniforms/ or by emailing us at westpresgb@hotmail.co.uk
NO LATER THAN Friday 16th August.

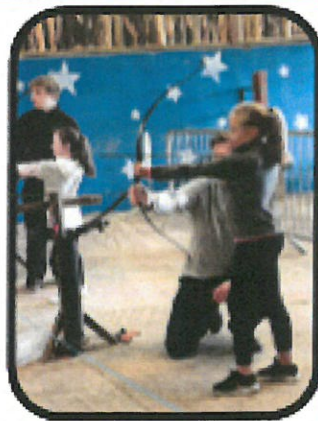
Looking forward to seeing you all soon

As a team, we are very much looking forward to the new session with lots of exciting activities and outings already planned. We are in a really strong position with our leadership team and this year we have Courtney completing Officer training, Katie Robinson & Audrey Worthington are beginning their Officer training and we have seven girls going forward for Sub Officer training, Sarah Blackmore, Sarah McIvor, Lucy McKee, Molly Flowers, Jodie Kennedy, Lauren Jackson and Emily Parker. We also welcome back Lydia McMullen and Jessica McDowell (nee Walsh) but were sorry to lose Julie Bryans & Heather Elliott. Please pray for these girls as they begin their training and for all the leaders as they work with the girls in our care each Wednesday.

A snap shot of our 40th Anniversary celebrations, Display, Dinner (Clan do boye Golf Club) & various outings



Pictured above (back l-r), Andrea & Cheryl and (front l-r), Sandie, Ann & Judith. Pictured below (l-r), Katie, Rebecca, Loren, Hannah, Emma, Nichola & Jade



Top left, (l-r) Jess, Courtney, Lydia & Jessica, top right, the Under 5s celebrating 40 years. Top right, Emily enjoying archery at the Junior Fun Day at Jungle NI. Below left, (l-r) past Captain, Rosemary, pianist, Elizabeth, past Officers, Hilary, Catherine, Evelyn and past helper (& GB mum), Anne. Below middle, Benior PE and below right, Beth, enjoying a 'B poolful of Sugar'.

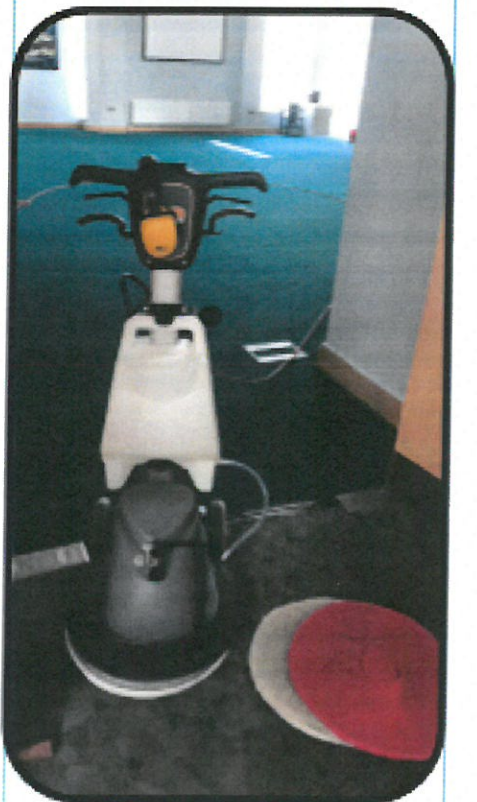


Pictured above left, Basha with P4 girls at the Explorer Zoo Day and the left, the P2s enjoying lunch. Above, Juniors enjoying the zorbing at The Jungle NI.

ENJOY THIS PHOTO GALLERY OF LIFE AROUND WEST



Pictured above, Andrew McClelland's favourite photo from Easter Mission 2019 #FearNot and pictured below, a sea of orange walking the coastal path to raise awareness for World Vision and their Walk for Water Campaign, with award winning dog Poppy (Conway)



Pictured top left, Rev. Andrew Gill receiving a farewell gift from Rev. Andy Galbraith & Lindsay Conway, middle left, Young West and bottom left, World Vision 5k walk. Top right, Rev. Andy Gill enjoying the World Vision 5k 'walk', middle right, supper after Andrew Gill's farewell service and bottom right, a snap shot of carpet cleaning carried out every summer by Martin to ensure the rooms are all in good shape for the new session.

SOAKING UP THE

Over the past few years I have enjoyed travelling with friends to many Cities in Europe. My most recent was to Amsterdam and travelling through Maastricht to Brussels.

After spending four days in Amsterdam we made our way by train to Maastricht. It is here in the immense Square during the month of July that André Rieu holds his yearly concerts for five evenings. Thousands of his fans arrive from all over the world to see and hear him with his Johann Strauss Orchestra. As we were there in August we unfortunately did not have this pleasure, although I have enjoyed his concerts here at home.

The large Square is lined with many trees and cafes where hundreds of folk were sitting enjoying coffee or cold drinks. After walking around the Square and a couple of the Churches we joined in the atmosphere at one of the cafes before heading to our next destination—Brussels.

In Brussels we decided to purchase a ten journey ticket as this was working out really good value. Once again in the centre of the city was a large square which is known as “Brussels’ Grand Place”. It is the focal point of the city with beautiful architectural buildings all around.

An area of the square where Andre Rieu performs his yearly concerts



“The Tapis de Fleurs” in Brussels

“The Tapis de Fleurs” takes place every even-numbered year for five days in mid August and the Grand Palace is taken over by a massive floral display known as the Carpet of Flowers and we were very fortunate to have the pleasure to see this. What an amazing sight and one not to be missed. We were able to see the designers laying out the pattern over the whole square and then the laying of thousands of flower heads to create the final masterpiece which represents a different country every time it is created. Last year, when we visited, the featured country was Mexico. Many other places of interest were visited, such as Parliament Buildings, Galeries Royales and of course a few little Belgium Antique Lace shops which I enjoyed.

We also spent a day in Bruges with the



The beginning of “The Tapis de Fleurs”

central marketplace retaining much of its original outline. Attractive gabled buildings line the “Markt”. The “Markt” is also the site of a large market on Wednesday mornings and the Christmas Market (with an ice-rink taking centre stage) in December. Horses and carriages were touring through the streets. After enjoying a ‘rainbow waffle’ (waffle, strawberries, ice-cream and chocolate sauce...and no I didn’t count the calories!) we went down to the canal where we had a boat trip. We had a frightening few minutes when our

ATMOSPHERE

by Rosemary Laird

boat hit something that had been dumped in the canal but the Captain assured us all was fine after he had stopped and restarted the engine. This was otherwise a very relaxing trip with beautiful scenery along the canal route.

While visiting cities can be very tiring at times, especially in the heat, I have thoroughly enjoyed my many trips and seen so much, enjoying the atmosphere and hospitality along the way and learnt over the years to be as informed as possible before travelling so that we could make the most of our trip!

Pictured top left, European Parliament Buildings, bottom right, a selection of Belgian waffles. Top right & bottom left are various ways to enjoy the beautiful city of Brussels



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“THE DIFFERENCE IS OUR EXPERIENCE”

2019



West Church Our Core Values

Worship—we worship God in Spirit and Truth

Equip—we grow deeper together in Christ

Serve—we welcome and care for everyone together

Tell—we reach out in love and service