

First Presbyterian Church Donaghadee

Newsletter



*The people who in darkness walked
have seen a glorious light.....*

November 2011

From the Study

Acts 1: 14 *They all joined together constantly in prayer*



This account in Acts tells us of the beginning of a new kind of church. Jesus had ascended to heaven and the disciples returned to the Upper Room. Circumstances dictated that they could not return to the Temple, their place of worship, because they were under the threat of death. And so in that Upper Room, along with some of the other followers of Jesus, the Christian Church was born.

I wonder what it was like as they worshipped together?

Well, firstly as they worshipped together in that Upper Room it would have felt very alien to them. They didn't have all the ornate trappings of the Temple. They didn't have the set structure of worship in the Temple. They had to start sharing in the daily tasks; they had to start sharing their resources. I would say that the changes they faced were very difficult for some of them to bear. But they were focused.

In First Donaghadee over the past 20 months we too have seen some changes and for some people these changes have been difficult to accept. Just like those disciples, they have been taken out of their comfort zone. For others the changes have been welcomed. Change in any walk of life is difficult. In 2001, overnight, the Royal Ulster Constabulary, for which I had given over eighteen years of my life to, changed its name to the Police Service of Northern Ireland. This was a massive change for many, bearing in mind all that the RUC had to endure. But with professionalism we accepted the change and did all we could to maintain the professional standard, which the RUC name carried. But it wasn't easy!

I want to go back to those disciples. The change they faced was massive! What was their response?

They all stayed and prayed together. And because of that dedication we worship today as a Christian Church. At a time when more churches are closing, as opposed to opening, let's follow the example of those disciples.

Solomon, after he had built that first Temple, prayed to God. This was God's response:

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will forgive their sin and heal their land.

For me the key to this passage is humility. The humility to accept that even though change might not be your cup of tea, ultimately it is God's will, so that his church can grow and reach out to the community around.

Colin Anderson

Deaths 'At rest with the Lord'

3rd October 2011 Mrs Effie Hansen, 6 Leslie Hill, Donaghadee

7th October 2011 Mr George McLellan, 11 Mount Royal Apts, D'dee

8th October 2011 Mrs Doris Erskine, 17 Union Street, Donaghadee

As a Congregation, we express our sincere sympathy to their grieving families and friends.

Church Flowers

Flowers have been kindly donated by: -

October

2nd Harvest

16th Sam Southern

30th Maureen Black (*Ballyholme*)

November

6th Elizabeth Burch

20th Girls Brigade

27th George McLellan - *who passed away in October*

9th Flowers from Harvest

23rd Anne Donaldson

13th Maureen Donaldson



George had kindly donated to the flower fund in the months prior to his passing so it was decided that these flowers would be purchased and displayed in the Church in memory of him.

December

4th Maureen Freeman

18th Elizabeth Dalzell

11th Alison Donaldson

25th Margaret Curragh

Donations to the Flower Fund were received with thanks from – Mr Bill Vance and Mr & Mrs Roy McConnell.

Letters of thanks for Church flowers received from – Mr & Mrs Roy McConnell and Mrs Maureen Donaldson.

Thanks for Harvest Gifts received from – Mrs Isobel Close, Mrs Joan McClelland & Miss Ann Mahood, Mrs Martha Mynott, Mrs Maureen Black (Ballyholme), Mrs Anne Donaldson, Mrs Maureen Donaldson, Mr & Mrs Roy McConnell, Mrs C. Waring; Mr & Mrs Billy Stitt, Mr Jimmy Bell, Mrs Noreen Boyd, Mr Fred Curragh, Mrs Rene Bennett, Mrs Edna Palmer. Mrs Doreen Bain and Mrs Nan McClurg.

Debra Anderson / Judith Purdy

Thanks

Many thanks for the lovely flowers I received from the Church after my recent stay in hospital and also to Rev Colin and Debra Anderson for their visit. These were much appreciated.

Anne Donaldson

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the members of the congregation who sent flowers, messages and called to see me after the trauma of my recent break-in. It has helped to know so many people cared and is much appreciated.

Yours sincerely, Maureen Donaldson

Freewill Offering Rota

December: Mrs E. Burch, T. Johnston, W. McCausland, W. Leighton.

A new rota for 2012 will be made out soon to include the members of our newly formed Church Committee - details in our next *Newsletter*.

Church Choir

Under the leadership of Dr George Beale the Choir continues to flourish. We now have a membership of 24 who enjoy leading the praise each Sunday. At the moment we are practicing special music for our forthcoming Christmas services. Make sure you come along to join us at the Candlelit Service.

Elizabeth Burch (Secretary)

PW – Afternoon

The PW started the new session with their first meeting held in October. We are delighted to welcome three new members bringing our membership to 20. Our meetings are happy and inspiring and we would be pleased to welcome others to join us.

Elizabeth Burch (Secretary)

Session Report

Members of session have been greatly encouraged by the work which our Youth Intern David Morrison has been doing since he took up his position in September and for the enthusiasm and Evangelical zeal that he brings to the Congregation, young and old. We would ask that you remember David in your Prayers and ask for God's blessing on his work.

The move towards more blended Worship is proving to be a success and whilst we acknowledge that not all are comfortable with the less familiar songs and tunes we will only get to know them by singing them together.

Dr George Beale and the Choir are giving a lead a lead in this and the blend between the Choir and the Praise Group is working well.

Many of the new initiatives are thriving but Session would commend the Prayer group and the Men's Bible study to you as they, and you, would benefit from a greater level of support for this vital work. Prayer and Bible study are at the core of our Worship and we would encourage you to come and enjoy fellowship and learning together.

Sandy Dalzell

Mad Mondays

Mad Mondays' numbers fluctuated quite a lot at the start of the season and at one stage we were down to 5 girls. However, it has been encouraging to see a steady growth in girls over the last month and we now have around 12 with the number of boys at 16.

Games in the Main Hall are still a big favourite and we are very grateful to Emma Currie who has been sharing her Scouting experience with popular team games for the children. We tried skipping with the girls one week and they really enjoyed it so now we try to get some time during the club to have a skipping competition in the Main Hall. However, the boys have been complaining a bit as it cuts into their football time!

We have recently purchased more traditional board games like 'Buckaroo', 'Connect 4' and dominoes to try and encourage the children to participate in games other than the Wii and the Xbox, and it was encouraging to see that the new games grabbed their attention and that they enjoyed the old fashioned ones.

As we approach Christmas, please continue to remember the children of Mad Mondays in your prayers as well as our all our helpers without whom the club simply could not function.

Colin and Debra Anderson



First Steps – Carers & Tots Group



First Steps continues to grow each week and there are now 23 children from the age of 6 months to approximately 3 years old. Initially we had mainly toddlers with a few babies but last week we had so many babies that we had to get more toys out of our store for them! It was such a lovely sight to see the mums, carers and grandparents all mixing and chatting so freely and we were delighted to hear from a lady that she really enjoyed her first time along because of the warm and friendly atmosphere.

We are so thankful for the weekly presence of Edna Robinson and Margaret McKnight who are kept very busy preparing and serving the tea, coffee and pancakes for the ‘Carers’, and the juice, biscuits and orange segments for the ‘tots’. We are especially grateful to them for their help over the last 4 weeks as they have had to run up and down the stairs to the temporary preparation area in the Taylor Room while the new kitchen is being installed!

As the weeks roll on it is proving to be great fun for all attending the group and friendships are being formed and we would ask that you would continue to remember the group in your prayers.

Debra Anderson / Julie Currie / David Morrison

PW Fellowship

At the October meeting of P.W. Fellowship we were pleased to welcome our Youth Leader David Morrison and also two new members. The November meeting was a quiz night which our President Debra Anderson devised for us. We all enjoyed the brain teasers and although there were just three teams, with three members in each, the competition was fierce.

In order to raise some funds we are selling Christmas Puzzle Sheets, contribution £1. Completed sheets should be returned to any member of P.W. Fellowship by 12th December. It would be greatly appreciated if members of the congregation could give their support by buying one of these sheets.

Elizabeth Dalzell

A thought . . .

*Just a bit of praise where it's deserved can bring a happy glow,
Just a hand held out can give some hope to someone feeling low.*

Love-In-A-Box Appeal 2011

Sunday 23rd October saw the culmination of a lot of hard work when the display of the items going to the Love-in-a-box Appeal was set up in the Church Vestibule. In these days of financial restraints it was great to see 80 filled boxes, the rails of clothing for



all ages, 50+ rugs and blankets (all knitted or crocheted), 100+ knitted hats, all the other items so generously given by the congregation including the £250 donation towards the cost of transporting the 'load'. Blytheswood staff says a big 'Thank you' for our contribution, expressing the joy these gifts will bring to people in Eastern Europe and Asia.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the PW Afternoon Committee who helped to set up the display, organised the collection of the boxes and helped pack the items into the Blytheswood van. Thank you ladies – 'many hands make light work'.

Thank you for the contributions to help cover the shoe boxes. With the proceeds I have purchased 11 x 10m rolls of Christmas Gift wrap and 3 large buckets of wall paper paste. The 'lady in charge' appreciates this contribution as she wraps over 1000 boxes per year and is now working on next year's supply. Thanks to everyone who made the 2011 Love-in-a Box so successful!

Margaret Curragh

Thursday Club – for seniors

Thursday Club meetings continue on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month for lunch and fellowship. We've had short quizzes to keep the brains active, an interesting talk about the Belfast Blitz and we look forward to some Christmas music and readings on 22nd December.

Sadly, due to illness we have lost a few of our regular members so if you know of someone who would like to join us please give them a warm invitation to come along – we have a table of six to fill!

Anne Johnston

A thought . . .

When we work, we work.

When we pray, God works.

The Scout Group

The Scout Group is now well settled into the Autumn/Winter programme. All sections have been busy working towards their badges. We welcome Debra Anderson to our leadership team as a Squirrel Leader and Sandie Barbour will join us in the New Year.

Explorers have been working towards their awards and as part of this they are assisting the leadership in Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. They are an invaluable help to the Leaders and very much appreciated. It is good to see that young people of this age group have joined the Explorers since September and are playing an active part too.

Scouts have been busy and recently did the Leaflet Drop for the activities in the Church over the Christmas period. Scouts will also deliver the Christmas Hampers in Donaghadee and look forward to this activity with enthusiasm every year.

Cubs are an active lot too, working towards their first aid, scientist and fitness badges. Congratulations to them on winning the Dora Baxter Trophy when their pioneering, cookery, physical and mental skills were tested. Cubs and Scouts have also been busy making items for the Church Fayre being held on December 2nd.

Beavers have been also working hard having almost completed their Promise, Global, Challenge and Friendship badges. They are looking forward to Christmas at Crawfordsburn in December and a Christmas Party before they break for Christmas.

Squirrels are enjoying their programme of activities and certainly keep their leaders busy too! They will join with the Beavers for Christmas at Crawfordsburn.

As a Group we will join with other Scout Groups in the Ards District for the final Centenary celebrations at a Thanksgiving Service in St Mark's Parish Church early in December. We continue to write and receive letters from our sponsored child in the Philippines. As we celebrate our 50th Anniversary in 2012, plans are well under way for the celebrations. We begin with a Service of Thanksgiving which will be held in the Church on Sunday 12th February at 11.30am, our guest speaker will be the Moderator of the Ards Presbytery. Leaders have also been attending training and various administration meetings outside the normal Wednesday night programme in order to deliver and enhance what is an already busy programme and the Scout Group in general.



Christine Rankin GSL

Financial Notes

Freewill Offering 2011

Contributions to FWO and Sunday Collections up to 13th November 2011 are as follows:-

FWO & Sunday Collections: £ 46,793.72

Stipend: £ 950.00

Total: £ 47,693.72

Total for the same period in 2010 was £43,579.15 so we are £4,114.57 (or 9.5%) up on the year to date.

United Appeal

Our Target of Honour contribution to the United Appeal for 2011 has been set at £6,842, an increase of 11% on the 2010 target. In 2010 we fell short of our target by £642 or 10.4%. To date, ie to 13th November, we have reached £ 2,996, an increase of 11.0% on the same period in 2010. If giving in 2011 continues at the current level we will reach a figure for the year of approximately £6,200 (including gift aid), some 9% below target. The next envelopes for United Appeal are issued with this *Newsletter* together with a leaflet outlining the vital work that the Appeal supports each year.

East Africa Appeal

Contributions to the East Africa Appeal, held in August, totalled £313.45.

Youth Worker Appeal

Contributions to the Youth Worker Appeal, received up to 13th November, stand at £7,225. When pledges for monthly contributions are added, a total of approximately £11,000 should eventually be received - sufficient to cover the projected cost of the Youth Worker position. Sincere thanks are due to the congregation for their generosity.

Earl Haig Appeal

The retiring collection for the Earl Haig Appeal on Sunday 13th November raised a total of £255.00.

Rob McQuiston

5p's

Since the September *Newsletter* I have lodged £36.75 into the Property Fund making the total of £150.55 since January 1st. This is a good increase on last year's total so please keep saving any small silver coins – they soon mount up for Church funds.

Margaret Curragh

Property Fund 2011

Property Fund income from personal contributions and events up to 13 November 2011 is as follows:-

Property Fund envelopes:	£	6826.00
Other income:	£	<u>2995.00</u>
Total:	£	9821.00

A recent addition to the other income is an impressive £ 685.00 from the Sparkle night. Again, a great effort from all those involved, both in organising and taking part - thank you.

Our annual Harvest service has raised £ 2540.00 to date and again this compares favourably to last year's contributions of £ 2692.00.

The total for Property Fund envelopes for the same period in 2010 was £5419.50 so at present we are £ 1406.50 (or 26%) up on the year. So, once again, sincere thanks for your continuing generosity to the Property Fund.

Keith Morrison

Church Committee Report

The newly constituted Church committee met for the first time on Tuesday the 15th November and began by filling various positions such as Treasurer, Property fund convener and Property Co-Ordinator.

The position of Church Secretary has not yet been filled but a candidate has been identified and will be ratified at the next meeting.

The sub committee structure is being overhauled and members were asked to indicate their preference to serve on Property/Finance, Church Life or Youth and Children's Ministry. These new Sub Committees will carry on the work in a more structured way, combining Property and Finance, events being merged into the whole life and fellowship of our Church and a new and vital Youth and Children's Ministry sub committee to build upon the foundation which has already been laid.

Committee are confident that when these Sub Committees are functioning they will lead us forward over the three year life of the Church Committee

Sandy Dalzell

Property Committee

As another year nears an end I would like to report that once again a great deal of work has been undertaken in the daily repairs to the church property and sound system. The following major works have been completed:-

1. The clock at the front of the church was updated and made automatic for the hour change as well as being restored.
2. On Sunday 9th October Rev. Anderson announced that the church kitchen was to be upgraded so a request for help was made to remove the old kitchen, with the work to start on Friday 14th. On that day 14 senior and younger members of the church turned up and in an atmosphere of good comradeship they worked tirelessly, fuelled with a few chip butties, so that by 4pm the old kitchen was removed and the old floor tiles lifted; the trailer was filled for the skip area and reloaded on its return for a second trip on Saturday morning.

I am pleased to report that considerable work has already been completed, the new kitchen has now been installed and all remaining work should be completed by Wednesday 23rd November in time for the Christmas Fair.

3. I would also like to report that the sinks, toilets and cubicles in the caretaker's store have been removed with the floor and ceiling repaired. A number of volunteers have started to paint and tidy it up. It is hoped that this new store for the chairs and tables will be completed by the week commencing 28th November.

Following the recent election of a new Church Committee I would like to pass on my own thanks to the members of the existing Property Committee, Mrs A. Johnston, Mrs E. Leighton, Mr W. Vance and Mr C. Kerr, who have assisted me during the last term.

J. Gibson Property Co-ordinator

JAM

At JAM we have continued to learn through DVDS and activities. Although our numbers are small we are enthusiastic and have a good time on a Sunday morning. Please encourage any children to come along and join us – they will be made very welcome. We have started to practice for the Christmas Service on Sunday 18th December where we will tell the story of the birth of Jesus and it would be a great help if all the JAM children could be there on as many Sundays as possible.

The JAM Leaders

Dee-ciples

Our Dee-ciples group continues to grow in number. We have a consistent number of children who attend every week, whom we have got to know better thanks to our fun filled weekend at Shepherd's Lodge.

We have plenty of discussion time as we work through our Scripture Union booklets, and the children can share any difficulties they have faced in school.

Each week before we all leave, we have a time of prayer together which has proved to be mind blowing as all of these children pray out loud. These can be prayers of thanks or prayers for sick relatives and friends.

Thank you again to you parents and friends for sending them out faithfully each week. We love it and we think they enjoy their time with us too!!!

Please continue to pray for us as we prepare for our Christmas service.

Justin and Rhonda

Girls' Brigade

I hope everyone enjoyed our GB Enrolment Service, our theme this year was 'Women of the Bible' and through drama, song and poems we took a brief look at just a few of the women we read about in the Bible including Rahab, Lydia, Esther, Mary and Martha and the woman from Samaria. I would like to say a big thank you to all the girls, they worked really hard and were fantastic as always and another big thank you to all those who helped us in any way. We will be continuing to work on badgework with all Sections of the Company, except for the last night before the Christmas break when we hope to have a party with a special visitor!



Jennifer MacDougall Officer in Charge

Created – supporting Tearfund

My grateful thanks to all who purchased Christmas cards and the lovely handmade gifts from the Created catalogue this year; everyone appeared to be very happy with their selection. The goods sold amounted to £565, thus helping craftsmen and craftswomen in the developing countries to care for themselves and their families.

In addition, 10% of the cost of goods purchased within our church has been passed on to PW Fellowship, made up to £60 with kind donations, to help sponsor a teenager, Maly, who lives in a poor village in northern Cambodia. She has been trained through CHO Tearfund as a seamstress, sewing jeans and denim jackets. She says, 'My future goal is to be a professional tailor. I love this job!'

Again – thanks for your support!

Anne Johnston

Events

Table Quiz: Unfortunately our quiz which had been planned for Monday 24th October had to be cancelled due to the date clashing with a number of other events in the town. With hindsight it was probably a good decision as the night in question turned out to be one of the worst weather nights of the year to date.

Christmas Fair: This year's event will take place at 7pm on Friday 2nd December with all the usual stalls and activities. As was the case last year the local commercial interests – formerly the Donaghadee Traders' Association – are holding their special Christmas late openings and associated events on the same evening with Santa touring the town before taking up position to distribute gifts in a central location. It is understood that the market stalls used by various traders and in previous years located in our church forecourt, will this year be set up in Shields' car park across High Street.

Once again the presence of a large number of people in the town on the evening in question gives us an excellent opportunity to welcome folk to our premises and by so doing demonstrate our desire to reach those who may have no church connection.

The large numbers likely to attend the Fair also brings challenges such as how to cater in the limited space available and it was very encouraging, following Colin's pulpit announcement on 20th November, to have some twenty five members attending the Fair Planning Meeting on 22nd when detailed arrangements were discussed and agreed. Full details are contained in the separate ad., in this *Newsletter* and will be published through posters and flyers between now and 2nd December.

If you would like to help with setting up for the Fair on the Friday afternoon or in the evening please contact either Colin, myself or any member of the Church Committee.

Tom Johnston

Christmas Services and Events at First Donaghadee

Friday 2nd December 7pm

The Annual Christmas Fair

Sunday 4th December 7pm

Community Carol Service

The Christmas tree lights will be switched on by the Mayor

Sunday 11th December 7pm

Rotary Carol Service

Featuring the Donaghadee Male Voice Choir

Saturday 11th December 7pm

Party Night for Year 7 and above

Live music, Disco and Eats

Sunday 18th December 11.30am

Nativity Play

7pm

Carols by Candlelight

Sunday 25th December 10.30am

Christmas Day Service

Community Carol Service and Christmas Tree Lights

As this issue of the *Newsletter* is being prepared the town Christmas Tree has already been erected in our church forecourt where it will be a focal point for Christmas in Donaghadee.

The official 'switching on' ceremony will be performed by the Mayor of Ards, assisted by Lady Sylvia Hermon, MP, following a joint Community Carol Service in the church at 7pm on Sunday, 4th December. The praise will be led by the Bangor Salvation Army band with the combined church choirs and

Donaghadee and Ballyvester Primary School Choirs. This will be a wonderful opportunity for the whole community of Donaghadee to come together and hail the new-born King at Christmas time. Please plan to attend.



C H R I S T M A S

with

KING'S CHORALE

Conductor – Robert Wilson, MBE

Fisherwick Presbyterian Church, Malone Road, Belfast

Saturday, 3rd December, 2011 at 7.30pm

Guest Artiste: Festival Brass – Conductor Alan Corry

Proceeds for: Every Home Crusade

and Mission Aviation Fellowship

Suggested Donation - £10

*To all church members and friends:
You are warmly invited to the*

CHRISTMAS FAIR

**Friday 2nd December 2011
in the Church Hall at 7.00pm**

Admission	£2.00
Young People	£1.00
(including refreshments)	

STALLS

Cakes, groceries, vegetables, jewellery,
books, toys, bric-a-brac, bran tub,
Christmas gifts and more . . .

EVERYONE WELCOME

Please come and bring your friends

