

Wellington Record



June 2017

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The Church Our Spiritual Family

A W Tozer

The elements of a true church are few and easy to possess. They are a company of believers, the Lord, the Spirit and the Word of the Living God. Let the Lord be worshiped, the Spirit be obeyed, the Word be expounded and followed as the only rule for faith and conduct, and the power of God will begin to show itself as it did to Samson in the camp of Dan. The church will produce a spiritual culture all its own, wholly unlike anything created by the mind of man and superior to any culture known on earth, ancient or modern. God is getting His people ready for another world, and He uses the local church as a workshop in which to carry on His blessed work. That Christian is a happy one who has found a company of true believers in whose heavenly fellowship he can live and love and labour. And nothing else on earth should be as dear to him nor command from him such a degree of loyalty and devotion.

Verse

Treat everyone you meet with dignity. Love your spiritual family. Revere God. Respect the government
1st Peter 2 v 17 (The Message)

Thought

Have we made the church just another social club? Do we sample selected ministries without submerging ourselves in the whole? Easy to do in a large church. But the church is our spiritual family.

Prayer

Forgive me, Lord, for judging my local church on the basis of what it contributes to me rather than becoming fully a part. It is my spiritual family. Amen.

Church website

www.wellingtonpc.co.uk



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 between 10am and 12 noon
 telephone: 2564 7185
 - ask your District Elder
 - ask a member of the
 Ministry Team

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Welcome to the Summer edition of our church magazine.

Over the winter I have been enjoying the gentle game of bowls at the Men's Fellowship on a Tuesday night.

While it may appear too sedate for some, I can assure you that it is a game of some skill. You never quite know where your 'perfectly delivered' bowl will end up. The aim of the game is to finish close to the jack. An errant bowl can, however easily wander off the mat, pull up short, or roll on past the jack. It may even hit an obstacle on its way. Even worse is when you are close to the jack and you get a nudge - or a whack - from your opponent's bowl.

Life as a Christian is a bit like a game of bowls. We have the aim of staying close to Jesus but sometimes we can 'wander off the mat', or hit obstacles as try to live our lives without Him. We may go too far or even pull up short and let others deflect us from our path. While we all have to contend with many issues in life, there is one constant, Jesus. He stands, His hand outstretched, offering us rest and bringing us peace!

So do not fear, for I am
 with you; do not be
 dismayed, for I am your
 God. I will
 strengthen you and
 help you; I will uphold
 you with my righteous
 right hand.
 Isaiah 41 v 10

Mervyn Orr, Editor



Contact:
 editor@
wellingtonpc.co.uk

Filled With The Spirit

Rev Alistair Bates



Within the Presbyterian Church the person and work of the Holy Spirit has sometimes been neglected. To some extent this omission has historical roots. The Reformation focused on the work of Christ. Justification by faith was not as clearly defined as it is today and Protestants focused on this, and other related doctrines, to establish a core of evangelical dogma.

The person and work of the Holy Spirit is present in their writings but it was not their focus and they were not required to defend His work. As a result exposition of His ministry was underdeveloped and only consequential when it referred to the work of salvation.

With the birth of the Pentecostal movement in 1905 in America, a renewal of interest and exploration of the person and work of the Holy Spirit emerged. Unfortunately the debate focused on the Baptism of the Holy Spirit being subsequent to salvation. In other words, you received the Holy Spirit at conversion but you then pursued an experience of God requiring you to be baptized with the Holy Spirit at some later stage. The evidence of this blessing was often denoted by the manifestation of speaking in

tongues. During this event the recipient supernaturally was capable of praising God in a language they had not learned. This gift was not an attempt by God to break down the language barrier to promote evangelism but was a gift of praise and adoration to God. This provided a way of bypassing the restrictions of human language and composite learning ability of the individual.

As you can imagine this experience was not endorsed by the universal church. At the inception of the Pentecostal movement speaking in tongues was controversial and remains so today. Nevertheless this new movement did force mainstream churches into focusing on the person and work of the Holy Spirit, even if it was to counteract what they regard as a deficient theology.

Today there is much more of a meeting of minds on these issues. The consequence of all this is that the church is becoming more acquainted with the third person of the Trinity. The Father sent the Son and the Son sent the Holy Spirit. Our entire salvation has been purchased and maintained by God at work in us. We cannot become aware of our need of salvation without the Holy Spirit

making us aware of our sin and we cannot live the Christian life without the Spirit empowering us to do so. As Ephesians 3 v 16 states:

‘That according to the riches of His glory He may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being’.

As we meet together for worship in September 2017, as well as in our Life Groups and Midweek Meetings, we will be reflecting on the nature and work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. I believe it will be an exciting time. Life Groups will be exploring the book ‘Spirit Rising’ written by Jim Cymbala. You may not agree with everything that is written, or indeed what I too shall say, but it is our prayer that you are transformed in your relationship with Christ as a result of it.

The better acquainted with the person and work of the Holy Spirit we become, the more we will live as God intended us to. What excitement there would be to feel His presence in our times of worship. To experience Him interceding through our prayers for others and expressing His deep desires for our lives. To have a new authority in our declaration of

Jesus as Lord. To receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit so we can equip each other in our service for Christ and then to demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit in our daily living.

This will be a tremendous opportunity for us all to experience God together. I hope and pray you are looking forward to it, I know I certainly am. Please start to pray now for this new preaching series, our studies in the Midweek and those who will meet in Life Groups together. As a whole church family we stand to benefit. The expectation is that if we are truly blessed of God then we, in turn, become a blessing to others. I am convinced the more we find out about what the Spirit wants to do in our lives, the more we will fall in love with God. He did not ask us to be filled with the Holy Spirit, He commanded us to be. Do not wait until September to be filled with the Holy Spirit, instead, ask him right now to be filled with the Spirit and you will be amazed at what you discover.

Marriages

Peter Alistair Bowen
&

Ruth Margaret Acheson
31 March 2017

Ronan Turlough Moore
&

Rosie Arthur
29 April 2017



NEW COMMUNICANT MEMBERS

We welcome these new members into our Church Fellowship. Each attended our New Members Course and affirmed their faith at the Communion Service on 14 May and have been accepted into full Church Membership.



(l-r): Sharon and David Hilditch, Linda and Robert Mairs, Molly and Hugh Moon, Anna and Glenn Kernohan, Kerry and Jamie Pedlow, Eleanor and Frank Warwick



(Front l-r): Tanya George, Ruth Hanbidge, Ruth Moore, Patricia Sterling

(Back l-r): June Hamill, Maureen Rodgers, Lyndsey Simpson, Tracey Lowry



James
Gourley



Jackie
Cullinan



The Romans Road to Salvation

The good news of salvation can be explained using verses from the Book of Romans. It is a simple yet powerful method of explaining why we need salvation, how God provided salvation, how we can receive salvation, and what are the results of salvation.

Romans 3 v 23 is the first verse on the Romans Road to Salvation:

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

We have all sinned. We have all done things that are displeasing to God. There is no one who is innocent. Romans 3 vs 10-18 gives a detailed picture of what sin looks like in our lives. The second Scripture on the Romans Road to salvation, Romans 6 v 23, teaches us about the consequences of sin:

"For the wages of sin is death."

The punishment that we have earned for our sins is death. Not just physical, but eternal death!

The third verse on the Romans Road to salvation picks up where Romans 6 v 23 left off,

"but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Romans 5 v 8 declares,

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Jesus Christ died for us! Jesus' death paid for the price of our sins. Jesus' resurrection proves that God accepted Jesus' death as the payment for our sins.

Romans 10 v 9 is the fourth stop on the Romans Road to Salvation:

"that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

Because of Jesus' death on our behalf, all we have to do is believe in Him, trusting His death as the payment for our sins - and we will be saved! Romans 10 v 13 says it again,

"for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Jesus died to pay the penalty for our sins and rescue us from eternal death. Salvation, the forgiveness of sins, is available to anyone who will trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

The final aspect of the Romans Road to salvation is the results of salvation. Romans 5 v 1 has this wonderful message,

"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Through Jesus Christ we can have a relationship of peace with God.

Romans 8 v 1 teaches,

"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

Because of Jesus' death on our behalf, we will never be condemned for our sins. Finally, we have this precious promise of God from Romans 8 vs 38-39,

"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Would you like to follow the Romans Road to salvation? If so, here is a simple prayer you can pray to God. Saying this prayer is a way to declare to God that you are relying on Jesus Christ for your salvation. The words themselves will not save you. Only faith in Jesus Christ can provide salvation!

"God, I know that I have sinned against you and am deserving of punishment. But Jesus Christ took the punishment that I deserve so that through faith in Him I could be forgiven. With your help, I place my trust in You for salvation. Thank You for Your wonderful grace and forgiveness - the gift of eternal life! Amen!"

Tear Fund Walk

19th May



Tearfund Walk organisers pictured in the beautiful surroundings of Shane's Castle grounds (l-r): Neil Aldred, Elizabeth Green, Gareth Williams, Carol Williams, James McKeown and Roger Green

Rebecca Macfarlane Reports

Before the night of the Tearfund Walk, mum told me that she remembered her first Tearfund walk on Portstewart Strand, away back in the 1980's. She recalled in those days that it was a 10 mile walk up and down the Strand to the Bar Mouth and back. The walk was then held on a Saturday evening and the Rendezvous members took part in the walk every year (The Rendezvous is now called The Net Youth Club). Our local Tear Fund Group has now been holding the annual walk for the last 28 years. Initially it was held at Glenariff Forest Park and more recently it moved to the grounds of Shane's Castle between Antrim and Randalstown.

As in previous years, a specific project is identified to which the money raised is sent through Tearfund. It is hoped that this year's walk will have raised at least £20,000, which was the amount raised last year. This year the

proceeds of the walk will go to help children who have fled the war in Syria.

In Lebanon, more than one in four of the population are refugees. Over 90% of children suffer from high levels of trauma from the horrific things they have experienced and witnessed first-hand. The crisis in Syria and the upheaval of moving to a strange country has resulted in many Syrian refugee children missing months, and even years, of school. Many have forgotten how to read and write. Furthermore, there is a disturbing prevalence of child abuse, exploitation, and neglect since the onset of the crisis. Tearfund aims to provide children with literacy and numeracy classes, as well as counselling and developmental support.

We were blessed with a beautiful evening for the walk this year. The BigFeed members came as a group and a large number of our young, and not so young, members also completed the walk,

making short work of the barbeque at the finish! As in other years, families arrived with their dogs and, in some cases, even bikes. It was great to see families taking part in the walk together.

After the walk there is always time for some fun. The grounds of Shane's Castle are a beautiful place to explore and, if there is any energy left, play games or kick ball. I know that I have many happy memories made over the last few years whilst doing something enjoyable with friends that, in turn, makes a difference in someone's life as they are supported by Tearfund in other parts of the world.

If you didn't manage to join us this year, please make a note in your diary and plan to join with us next year. Your time will be well spent doing the walk along with family and friends, knowing that you are helping Tearfund support very worthwhile causes in other parts of God's big world.



Top left: Are you sure you're going the right way? Top right: I thought you said you were bringing the matches?
 Centre left: Did you see it? I'm sure it's up there somewhere?
 Centre middle: Peter, are we being photo-bombed?
 Centre Right: What exactly are we smiling about? We've still 4km to go!
 Bottom: Members of theBigFeed who took part in the Tearfund Walk - Now, where's that Barbeque?





Steven Lamont



Sawubona...

Greetings all the way from beautiful South Africa. As I write this I am admiring the beauty of another part of the world, amazed that the same God who is alive in Northern Ireland is very much alive here.

I have been privileged to receive the wonderful opportunity to move to South Africa in January 2016 to start working alongside Go Live Dare. God is so good and each step of the way puts simple reminders in place that He is in control and that His hand is on His people.

Over the past 17 months I have been blessed with opportunities to serve in various ministries that have taken me to four different Provinces to Serve God. I have been part of prayer teams, kids' teams, youth teams and training teams as well as speaking and sharing the Word of God.

One of the biggest challenges I have encountered was just before Christmas when, as one of eight young people from the South

Coast (near Durban), we travelled for 20 hours in a Bakkie (pick-up) to Cape Town to take part in a Mission Team. Arriving in Cape Town we spent 6 days working in a Crèche in Khayelitsha, one of the largest townships in the whole of South Africa. After sending time with the kids and leading a Bible Club, we painting the crèche after the kids had left.

Every evening we helped co-ordinate and run a Revival Meeting. This looked at two aspects of revival, firstly for the Church to be revived by the prayer and sharing of the Word of God and secondly for the revival of a country where the Gospel could be proclaimed and the Holy Spirit at work convicting hearts and leading people to Salvation.

So why was this challenging? In Matthew 28 vs 18-20 we read the instruction from Jesus to "Go into all the World". Jesus did not mean to go JUST to the places that look good, the places that feel safe or even the places where your own language is spoken. He means to everyone so that disciples will be made in ALL nations. To be one of

only two white people walking through an area where many said they had never seen a white person before was quite a challenge! You have heard the phrase to be out of your comfort zone - this was out of it in a completely new and exciting way. The experience was a challenge. But it was worth the risk.

Since the start of this year I don't think I have had what might be called a 'normal' week, as there have been so many different things happening. In January my parents, Andy and Nancy, took the opportunity to come to South Africa and 'check up' on me to ensure I was eating, washing and all that. In reality they wanted to experience that which I talked about each time I returned from a trip to South Africa. I believe they now understand the love and passion I have for South Africa as, during their time here, they were challenged by the need they saw and by the opportunities that exist.

I would like to briefly share some of the amazing things that I have been involved in to date.

One of the biggest projects in which I have been involved this year is completing the electrical work in a new Youth Centre in a rural area. This has been built by a couple from near Portadown, who moved to South Africa many years ago to retire. But God had other plans for them and they built an Orphanage in Lesotho. Then the Lord planted this Centre on their hearts and I was blessed to assist during the building and put my trade as an electrician to the test. The Youth Centre will be called 'Limitless'. After all with God there is no limit to what He can and will do.

Each week I endeavour to be involved in the Kids' Ministry in one of two different projects, one in Khula and the other in Masinenge. These two different locations have two very different levels of advancement and structure. Khula is a project heavily supported by Genesis, which Wellington has been supporting for a number of years, whereas Masinenge is, supposedly, government sponsored. During my time with these projects I have endeavoured to show the love of Jesus to the children by helping with class lessons, playing with them and helping to feed them.

However from March to the end of April I haven't had many opportunities for involvement with

the kids' side of ministry and, for a time, I struggled with that. During this time I came to realise that I needed to stop worrying about what other people wanted and what I wanted, but rather start doing those things that the God was prompting me to do. This realisation lifted a burden from me as, for too long, I had been concerned about trying to keep others happy and pleasing man instead of pushing at the doors God was placing in front of me.

God was really beginning to guide my heart towards youth work and especially connecting with and sharing with different people in youth ministry here in South Africa. I have since travelled to Johannesburg where I was able to share information about what Go Live Dare is involved in, such as conferences and equipping leaders.

In March I spent a few days training five youth pastors on the material they were to help us deliver as part of a conference in April. Then in April we saw 130 young people and leaders come together to pray that the Gospel of Jesus Christ would reach the youth of South Africa, their friends, their schools and their communities. We split into groups of three and went to the streets of Rosebank in Johannesburg where we had around 150 conversations, with the

Gospel being shared in about half of them. That was an incredible experience. In July we plan to be in Durban and in October in Cape Town, doing it all over again. These are amazing opportunities to equip and train some of South Africa's youth.

I would love to say life has been easy, being away from home and serving the Lord, but I would be lying. I was reminded back in January that there is no better place to be than in the will of God. It may not be easy but it is always worth it. Being away from home can be difficult, especially when exciting things are happening with family and friends. My being away may, however, be difficult for them as well. I know the best thing to do is pray and leave everything with God. That brings me comfort as He can do much more than I can ever.

I have learned to really lean into God. And that is for each of us to do as believers in The Lord Jesus Christ. We may try to live our own lives and take our own steps and, when everything is going well, that is awesome, but when it all falls apart its more difficult to move on quickly. So let us stop living our own lives and let God take our hand and gently guide us.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support during my time in South Africa thus far.

Steven with 2 kids who have just been sponsored for school.

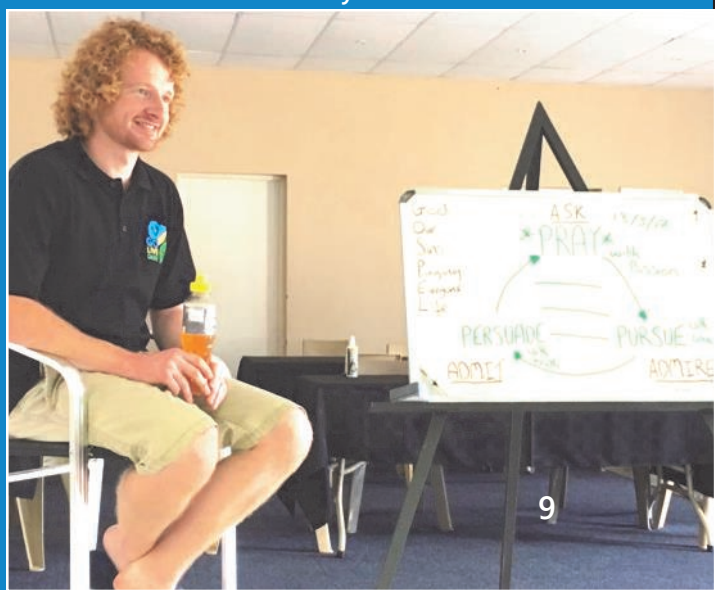


June 2017

Steven's mum, Nancy, with Eunice and some of the kids in Masinenge



Steven delivering training for adult leaders at Sweetwaters youth near Durban



Tear Fund Sunday - 23rd April



(l-r) Tim Magowan, NI Director Of Tearfund, pictured after the service with Ruth Jordan, Elizabeth Green, Julie Whann and Margaret McKeown, members of the Ballymena Tearfund Support Group.

Rebecca Macfarlane Reports

On Sunday 23rd May we held our annual Tearfund Sunday Service, with a simple lunch of soup, bread and cheese to follow. The dedicated team of Tearfund members were ready with the Hall packed full of tables and chairs and the soup prepared just as church finished. During the service Tim Magowan, the NI Director of Tearfund, described some of the work Tearfund is involved in, including in Lebanon.

Three of the Tearfund Group from Ballymena visited a church in Lebanon just before Christmas. There they met some of those who have fled from Syria, leaving behind their homes and all their belongings. They saw first hand the work Tearfund is doing in Lebanon and believe it will make a huge difference to the prospects of many deprived and traumatised children.

There is a story of Karena and what happened to her, and her family, as they fled from Syria. While crossing a checkpoint her husband had been kidnapped, leaving Karena and their children to flee from their home in Syria to a refugee camp in Lebanon. Distraught, Karena considers herself to be a widow because she has lost all hope of seeing her husband again. She and her children are now living in a tent with two other families. Like most of her fellow refugees, she has no money - she left everything behind in Syria. Occasionally she finds work as an agricultural labourer for which she receives a small amount of food. She is constantly worrying about her children and where their next meal will come from.

Our generosity in Wellington can help people like Karena through the work of Tearfund. She and her children are a long way

from home, but they are not struggling alone. They receive regular visits from Tearfund's partners in Lebanon, as well as monthly food and hygiene parcels containing many of the essential items they need. Tearfund partners have also provided the family with clothes and mattresses and the family have attended hygiene classes to help them stay healthy whilst they live in the camp. Karena enjoys attending the Bible Studies organised by the staff and church volunteers of Tearfund's partner and says, 'You are the only ones looking after me - I am really grateful for your visits and all the support that you're giving me'.

Thanks to all who attended the lunch. The donations to Tearfund, so generously given, will make such an incredible difference in the lives of people, like Karena. She had lost hope, but has now been shown God's love through the actions and generosity of others.



Enjoying the Tearfund Lunch in the Church after the morning service on 23 April
(Photos by Rebecca MacFarlane)





Maud Nicholl

The oldest member of the Wellington Family!

"Godliness with contentment is great gain"
1 Timothy 6 v 6



At 107 years old Maud is officially our oldest Church Member. Our roving reporter, Jo Graham, accompanied by Maud's Elder, Tommy Adger, visited Maud at her home a few weeks ago.

A life-long member of Wellington, Maud can still recall her early years at Church and, with a mischievous twinkle in her eye, told me about Miss Beaumont, her 'very strict' Sunday school teacher, who I suspect had her hands full with the young Maud! She related how, as a little girl, she had received a prize for reciting all three Chapters (Matthew chapters 5, 6 & 7) of the 'Sermon on the Mount'. From memory! Would any readers of this magazine be able to equal this feat?

Each Sunday she, and her family, would walk from their house on Dan's Road to the church in Wellington Street as they couldn't afford a horse and cart. On returning home after the service, she and her brother were quickly ordered upstairs to hang up their 'Sunday Best' clothes ready for the next week.

A remarkably bright Maud was 'somewhat unwilling' to concede

that she would be celebrating her 108th Birthday on 3 July this year. She almost seemed to be a little bewildered at how she had managed to reach this ripe old age! Admittedly, her spritely spirit, sharp wit and fresh face do somewhat belie her age... but she certainly knows how to keep her Elder, Tommy Adger, on his toes. That's for sure!

When asked if she had a 'secret' to her 'many years' and what advice she had for us 'young bucks', her answer was intriguing, if not just a little challenging. Without much hesitation Maud replied, "Contentment, I've always been content with what I have been given in life." Indeed, there was genuine ring of truth to her words and I believed this is indeed how she had lived much of her life... in a state of contentment. How very challenging for the generations coming up behind her, who live in a world that promotes a life of relentless pursuit. Maud was also very active, doing a lot walking, and she feels the young people of today would benefit from doing the same!

Maud, who has been single all her life, worked in the linen

(Above: Maud pictured with her Elder, Tommy Adger. Tommy, who had his 80th birthday a few months ago, is a mere youngster compared to Maud who is 27 years his senior!)

manufacturing mills in and around Ballymena where she has lived her whole life, much of it in Dan's Road and laterally at Woodgreen. Maud recalled that her father grew all the family's vegetables in the garden in Dan's Road and she spent many hours helping her dad. When I recalled trying to grow vegetables rather unsuccessfully last year, Maud was quick to suggest that I must have put the seeds in upside down!

She and her brother John lived in the same house for many years and both siblings were very talented artistically, evidenced by the beautiful paintings and cross-stitching adorning the walls of Maud's cosy little home.

We would just like to wish Maud a very Happy 108th Birthday and we are honoured to have such a warm and remarkable woman as part of our Wellington family.

We asked our London Marathon runner **Lynne McFetridge** about her incredible experience....

I guess you just can't turn up in London & run...?

"No, that would be madness although running 26.2 miles, even with the training, is possibly a bit mad too! London is the most popular UK marathon and to get a place you need to enter a ballot or be fast enough to qualify! I somewhat reluctantly put my name in the ballot at Ballymena Runners thinking I would not be picked ...

What does it take to run a Marathon?

I ran the Edinburgh marathon in 2015 and trained for New York in 2012 (although it was subsequently cancelled due to Hurricane Sandy!) so I had some idea of what was involved. I knew it wasn't easy. I suppose it is no different than trying to achieve any goal in life - you need to be committed and disciplined and have a stubborn determination that you are going to finish what you started. The hard work starts well before race day - in the months of training leading up to the marathon, usually in the wet, cold NI weather! Staying motivated isn't always easy and I couldn't have done it without having others in the club to train with.

Did you ever think to yourself, "I must be mad!"?

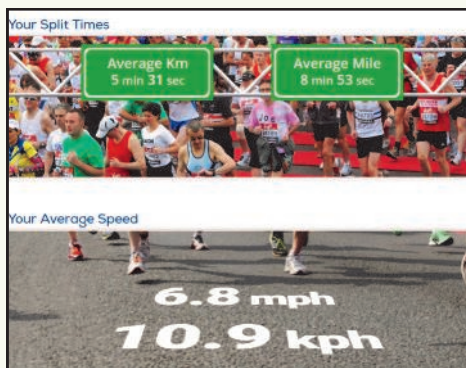
"All the time!! There were plenty of evenings after work when it was the last thing I wanted to do. The early starts every Saturday morning, after a week at work, weren't always easy!



Was there any point in the race where you 'hit the wall'?

I had heard a lot about 'hitting the wall' and was terrified! That was an appropriate response to have because in London I definitely 'hit the wall' and it was horrible! By mile 22 I was physically and mentally exhausted and every part of me wanted to stop. Julie and Paula were my fabulous supporters and if it hadn't been for their encouragement and 'tough love', telling me to keep going I could easily have given up.

It is said a marathon only really starts at mile 20 – meaning that's when the real mental challenge starts, the battle between mind



over body. Despite the crowd encouragement and all the other runners around you, those last few miles are lonely and hard because ultimately the only person who can push through and complete what feels impossible is you. All sorts of things go through your head, like 'Why did I think this was a good idea? I am never ever doing this again!!' However, in the midst of all of those thoughts, it was something Bertie Cupples shared with me two years previously that kept me going! 2 Chronicles 15 v 7,

'But as for you, be strong, do not give up and your hard work will be rewarded'.

Just before the Edinburgh marathon Bertie had shared this verse with me and on race day, I wrote it on my arm and each time I looked at it, it inspired me to keep running. Two years later, it's now firmly etched in my mind and has been a real encouragement to me in many aspects of life but I think it will always be my 'marathon' mantra! Despite my fatigue in London I was able to remember it and say it over and over, willing myself to finish.

You crossed the finish line Lynne...

Yes! I made it in 3 hours 52 mins and 54 sec!! As I passed Buckingham Palace and ran onto The Mall, seeing the finish in sight was such a relief! I was both elated and exhausted. Collecting the medal was a bit of a blur - I'm still not entirely sure how I managed to get the Tube back to the hotel! I'm so thankful I had the opportunity to do the London marathon... as for doing another one, maybe I'll reconsider when the pain of those last few miles fades a bit more !!

META

(μετά-)

from the Greek preposition
and prefix meta-(μετά-)
meaning "after" or "beyond"

In September 2016 we, as a church, launched a new group called "Meta". While many of you may have seen the references to Meta in the church bulletins, the one question I am asked most frequently is, "What is Meta?"

The name Meta is a Greek word meaning "after" and so Meta is an organisation that comes after our various youth organisations. As such, Meta is a discipleship group for the young adults of Wellington, aimed at 18-25 year olds. It is our hope that it becomes a means by which the young adults in and around our church can integrate, meet together and feel part of our church family.



As a group we seek to meet on the second Saturday of each month to enjoy food, fellowship and to seek to grow spiritually.

The team with responsibility for organising and running Meta are pictured above: (l-r) Ronnie Burns Gillian Andrews Jim Diffin, myself, Peter McClelland, Toni Bassett and Mark Hood.

It has been a great joy for us to get to know several young adults much better over this year. One of those who has joined the group is Lauren Young and Lauren shares some of her experiences of Meta below.

We hope that during this year we will have as much fun and that Meta will prove to be as fruitful as this last year. We encourage all our young people aged 18-25 to come along and join with us.

We ask that members of the congregation partner with us by praying for Meta and encouraging any young adults you know to join us. Should you require any further information, please feel free to talk to any of the Meta team. Keep your eyes peeled for any announcements in the bulletin.

Jonathan Boyd

LAUREN YOUNG

Making new friends through META!



I had been coming along to Wellington in the evenings for over a year. I really loved the services and I felt very welcome. I was praying for God's guidance and for Him to direct me to the right church for me. One concern I had was that I didn't really know anyone my age. Then at the beginning of December I got chatting to Peter McClelland at a event being held in the church and he invited me along to the Meta Christmas Dinner. I was very apprehensive about going and I remember walking down the hall to the room where everyone was and feeling so nervous; however within about ten minutes of being there I felt like I had known everybody for years. I was made feel so welcome by everyone there and never at any point did I feel like the 'newbie'. I really feel like God has answered my prayer; since December I have made some really lovely friends through Meta. I now call Wellington my church and really look forward to the second Saturday night of each month when Meta is on. So far I have loved meeting with the group to study God's word, pray together, discuss our encouragements and share our struggles. We have had great times of discussion and I loved the honesty within the groups. I feel very encouraged by the Meta leaders and how much they genuinely have an interest in the young adults of Wellington. I would definitely encourage anyone 18+ to come along to Meta.

**'Therefore encourage one another and build each other up,
just as in fact you are doing'.**

1 Thessalonians 5 v 11

“My identity is in Christ - and in that I rejoice”



Mark Rodgers, pictured with his wife Gillian, after the Service of Recognition for Accredited Preachers in Ballyhenry Presbyterian Church on 21 May

As some of you may be aware, it has been a fairly intense year for me as I have progressed with the application process for Ordained Ministry within PCI.

As part of this process I was required to complete the PCI Accredited Preachers Scheme. This started with a week of 'intensive classroom study' at Union Theological College last summer. Each trainee was then assigned to a Mentor where they were required to conduct three full services in the Mentor's church, followed by a final assessment service.

I was blessed in that my placement was in 2nd Randalstown Presbyterian Church and my mentor was Rev. Robin Brown. Robin has since been called to 1st Portadown congregation. This was a great and tremendously beneficial experience for me. The members of the congregation were loving and encouraging and Robin proved to be a Godly and

pastoral mentor. Each time I conducted a service, Robin and I would meet to discuss and critique the sermon and encourage each other in our walk with Jesus.

Robin proved to be such an encouragement, giving me loving and pastoral advice while sharing his wisdom in all things relating to the ministry. I am so grateful that the Lord ordained that this friendship would happen.

I was privileged, along with 13 others, to receive my Certificate for the Accredited Preachers Scheme from the Moderator of the General Assembly at a service in Ballyhenry Presbyterian Church on the evening of Sunday 21 May.

Running alongside, and sometimes overlapping, the Accredited Preacher Scheme Training, I have been involved in some of the other prerequisites relating to my ongoing application process for Ordained Ministry. This has included an eight week placement in 1st Ballyeaston Presbyterian Church where we, as a family, joined with them each Sunday morning and I took part in the services, perhaps by reading, taking the Children's Address or praying. I also preached during my time in Ballyeaston. I would like to thank Rev Eddie McDowell for his Godly counsel, help and guidance during this time.

I then endured a fairly harrowing two days of interviews at Union College. This proved to

be quite an ordeal, but with God's help I prevailed and was successful. I have now completed the whole application process as required by PCI. However the Degree course at Union College is moderated by Queen's University of Belfast and part of their requirement is to have, as a minimum, an A level qualification in Religious Education, which must be an A or B grade. So as well as everything else I have been travelling to Belfast each Monday evening studying for this. Like many other A level students, I will be awaiting my results in mid-August that will determine whether or not I gain entry to begin my studies in September.

Whilst life has been busy and I have been anxious at many points throughout this past year, my trust in God's sovereign rule and reign over my family's future remains steadfast. He already knows the outcome, He is all powerful, all knowing and all loving.

In the end, my identity is not in whether I am an Accredited Preacher, or if I gain my A-level, or even if I eventually become an Ordained Minister. My identity is in Christ and in that I rejoice.

"For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God".

Colossians 3 v 3

Mark Rodgers

May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing His will, and may He work in us what is pleasing to Him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Hebrews 13 vs 20 & 21



Boys Brigade Display 7th April 2017

Photographs by Rebecca Macfarlane



David McKean, Anchor Boys Leader, presented gifts to Ben McKendry, Scott Keys and Ben Kennedy for their assistance over a number of years in the Anchor Boys Section

Josh Mark received the Harry Spiers Trophy for the greatest contribution to sport from Geoff Eagleson

Simon Penny received the Desmond Reid Challenge Cup for Junior Drill from Geoff Eagleson

Squad 6 (L-R) Jason Irwin, Jack Keys, Callum Lorimer, Simon Penny and Joshua Young winners of the William Holden Trophy for the Best Squad (not in photo: Andrew McDonald)

Anchor Boys moving up to the Junior Section next year were presented with Bible Story books (l-r) Issac Close, Matthew McKean, Jonas McClintock, Caleb Rodgers, Daniel Berry, Jamie Black, Daniel Wylie, Cooper McKinstry, Tom McCarroll, Will Hughes and Ben Johnston





June 2017

17



Anchor Boys

Jim McKeown Shield	Best P1 boy	Seth Connaughty	Runner Up	Ben Templeton & Isaac Kernohan
Sam McDowell Shield	Best P2 boy	Jonah Close	Runner Up	Joel McKean
Robin Lindsay Shield	Best P3 Boy	Joel Graham	Runner Up	Henry Montgomery
McFarland Shield	Best P4 boy	Jonas McClintock	Runner Up	Jamie Black & Matthew McKean

Junior Section

Alderdice Cup	1st Year Attendance/Uniform	Jack McGugan
2nd Year Cup	Attendance/Uniform	Isaac & Noah McClintock
3rd Year Shield	Attendance/Uniform	Ben Wilson
Steele Family Cup	Best All Round Squad	Ben Wilson, Isaac McClintock, Harry Young, Lewis Millar, James Andrews, Jack McGugan, John Richmond
Kilpatrick Cup	Most Promising 1st Year	Daniel Hickey
Jackson Shield	1st Year Scripture	John Richmond
Waddell Cup	2nd Year Scripture	Scott Johnston
Hunter Johnston Cup	3rd Year Scripture	Carter Eagleson
Dennis Logan Memorial Cup	Sportsman of the Year	Adam Black
Logan Perpetual Cup	Best All Round Boy	Noah Scullion

Company Section

Kyle Recruit Shield	Most proficient recruit	Jack Keys & Henry Kernohan
Clarke Cup	Most proficient private (<16)	Scott Mitchell
NCO & Senior Challenge Cup	Most proficient Senior	Andrew McDonald
Philips Perpetual Cup	Most proficient boy in Company	Joshua Shaw & Joshua McNeilly
Burnett Trophy	Attendance/PE contribution	Ben Fleming
Nigel Picken Mem. Shield	Community Award	Ben Kennedy, Scott Keys & Ben McKendry
Harry Spiers Sports Trophy	Greatest contribution in sport	Josh Mark
Weir Carson Trophy	Junior Footballer of the Year	Simon Penny
Senior Footballer of the Year	Senior Footballer of the Year	Jacob Penny
Desmond Reid Challenge Cup	Junior Drill Down	Simon Penny
Harry McCullough Mem. Cup	Senior Drill Down	Timothy Keys & Ben Kennedy
Gordon Shield	Most progress during session	Daniel Winters
William Holden Trophy	Most proficient squad	Squad 6 - Jason Irwin, Jack Keys, Andrew McDonald, Simon Penny, Joshua Young & Callum Lorimer

Explorer Awards

		<i>Winner(s)</i>	<i>Runner(s)-Up</i>
Kenneway Perpetual Shield	Best Junior Tiny Tot	Chloe Charleton & Hannah Patterson	Ellie Hood
McAfee Cup	Best Tiny Tot	Eva Hanbridge	Brooke Davis
Montgomery Cup	Best 5 year old (Bronze)	Isla McCullough	Isla Lorimer
Crooks Cup	Endeavour (Bronze)	Anna Murray	Ellie Nutt
Millar Shield	Scripture (Bronze)	Anna Hickey	Elsie McIlvenna & Emily Clarke
McKeown Cup	Best 6 year old (Silver)	Emily Coffey	Caitlyn Crabbe & Ellen Patterson
Russell Shield	Endeavour (Silver)	Faith MacFarlane	Nicole Wisener
Dickson Shield	Scripture (Silver)	Jane Clarke	Emily Coffey
Stuart & Giffen Cup	Best 7 year old (Gold)	Abbie Hill	Amy Irwin
Clarke Endeavour Cup	Endeavour (Gold)	Mya Kennedy	Grace Davison
Law Cup	Scripture (Gold)	Grace Davison	Abbie Hill
Elizabeth Caves Mem. Cup	PE	Amy Irwin	-
Telford Cup	Best Squad	Gold Squad – Abbie Hill, Grace Davison, Amy Irwin, Mya Kennedy	
GB Week	Highest Collectors	Alannah-May & Billie-Jo Keohe	
Craft Prize		Amy Irwin	
Bibles	Moving up to Juniors	Grace Davison, Abbie Hill, Amy Irwin, Mya Kennedy	

Junior Awards

		<i>Winner(s)</i>	<i>Runner(s)-Up</i>
Kirkwood Cup	Best all round 1 st year	Beth Cruikshank & Grace McClintock	Rachel Graham
Clarke Shield	Most promising 1 st year	Olivia Moody	Sophie Charleton
Wilson Perpetual Cup	Best all round 2 nd year	Ruby Thompson	Alex Suitters
Vogan Cup	Best all round 3 rd year	Katie Young	Taylor Nutt
McDowell Perpetual Shield	Endeavour (all years)	Katie Shaw	Rebecca Foster
Stuart Rose Bowl	Scripture	Sarah Jackson	Sophie Charleton
Gillen Cup	Drill	Abi Montgomery	Emily Russell
McClure Shield	PE (Squad)	Abi Montgomery, Mya Kennedy, Ruby Thompson, Jessica Carson, Molly Lorimer, Kali Croskrey, Katie Mairs, Rachel Carson, Evie McKeown, Amie McCarroll	

Senior Awards

		<i>Winner(s)</i>	<i>Runner(s)-Up</i>
Stevenson Perpetual Cup	Best Senior	Jessica Mark	Katie Alexander & Sophie Kenendy
W Smyth Cup	Drill	Jenna Semple	Sophie Kennedy
Telford Cup	PE	Louise McMullan	Robyn Fullerton
Moore Endeavour Cup	Endeavour	Katherine Stronge	Leah Carson
K Greer Shield	Scripture	Katie Alexander & Sophie Kenendy	Ella Dunlop & Katherine Stronge
Heather Law Perpetual Shield	Best Squad	Sophie Kennedy, Jenna Semple, Sarah MacFarlane, Leah Carson, Louise McMullan	
Bobby Stewart Memorial Shield	Sport	GB Futsal Team - Louise McMullan, Robyn Fullerton, Lois Davison, Priscilla Kirk, Ella Dunlop and Ellie O'Melvena	

Brigader Awards

		<i>Winner(s)</i>	<i>Runner(s)-Up</i>
Giffen Cup	Best Brigader	Rachelle Mitchell	Morgan Wilkinson
Hunter Johnston Mem. Award	Scripture	Lyndsey Simpson	Rachelle Mitchell
Rae Logan Perpetual Shield	Endeavour	Nicole Erwin	Sarah Carroll
Knox Cup	PE	Jamie-Lee Mark & Rachel Fullerton	Rebecca Hamilton
McKay Shield	Drill	Jamie-Lee Mark & Katie Surgenor	Lyndsey Simpson
Brigader Brooch		Emily Agnew, Rachel Fullerton, Megan Gillen, Amy Hayes, Jamie-Lee Mark, Lynsey Simpson, Jessica Walker	



Rachel Fullerton, Amy Hayes, Megan Gillen, Jessica Walker, Emily Agnew, Jamie-Lee Mark & Lyndsey Simpson were presented with their Brigader Brooches at the Girls' Brigade Display. They are pictured with mums - and a dad.

Special guest Yvonne Reid with Captain Clare Neeson





Amy Irwin, Grace Davison, Mya Kennedy & Abbie Hill Explorers who were moving up into Junior Section were presented with Bibles

Carol Dickey and Anita Jordan who had retiring as Girls' Brigade leaders pictured with Captain Clare Neeson at the Display

GIRLS' BRIGADE DISPLAY



June 2017

DAVID McCLEAN

Life saving
Immunotherapy
Treatment Appeal



Sam Davison with David's wife, Dawn and daughter, Charlotte.



Tom White and Harold Patterson present Gary Millar with a cheque



Many hands make light work during the Car Wash



My brother-in-law David McClean was diagnosed in October 2016 with Grade 4 Glioblastoma, a very dangerous and aggressive form of brain cancer. The prognosis was bleak, and so my sister undertook her own research and sought a second opinion from Dr Paul Mulholland at University College London (UCL). After consulting with David, Dr Mulholland confirmed that he could remove most, if not all, of the two tumours. In November 2016, David underwent an 8 hour, "fully awake" operation at UCL Hospital; the surgical team removed the two tumours completely. The elation was short-lived however when they were informed at the review that the immunotherapy treatment David needed was not available on the NHS, and would cost £350,000!

After a six-week course of chemotherapy and radiotherapy David flew to London to start the Immunotherapy treatment at University College London Hospital. Over 8 weeks, the immunotherapy treatment cost David £200,000. He is currently taking a chemotherapy tablet and attending for reviews at the Cancer Centre in Belfast.

The journey.

This has been such an ordeal for David, his wife Dawn and adult children, Charlotte and Christopher. In addition to the shock of the brain tumours, they have had to cope with the constant pressure to raise funds to pay for the immunotherapy treatment. It has been a real journey of discovery with many incidences of overwhelming generosity, as well as disappointments. As I

write the parable of the Good Samaritan springs to mind; God has provided financial and practical support from unexpected sources such as Green Pastures. I left some information flyers into Green Pastures and asked for prayer. The Prayer Co-ordinator rang me before I even reached Cullybackey! A lady from GP then saw my sister and niece on UTV Live and the next day saw my flyers in GP. That, coupled with a conversation with someone she knew, cemented her belief that the chosen local charity for their Women's Passion Conference would be my brother-in-law's treatment appeal.

Lisnamurrigan Young Farmers held their first charity tractor run in support of David's Treatment Appeal, expecting about 100 tractors; almost 230 turned up. I can tell you that the novelty of my first tractor run wore off after 4 hours! The scenery though was outstanding.

These are just two examples of how people have responded to the urgent medical need faced by David.

The Wellington input.

Hugo Carlin and those who are brave enough for circuits held a Charity Circuit Training Session with all donations going to David's Treatment Appeal. The Men's Fellowship also presented me with a cheque, an expression of their desire to help someone in desperate need.

One Sunday morning Margaret McKeown sat down beside me after worship and told me that some people were thinking of holding a Car Wash



Hugo Carlin (centre) pictured with those that were involved in the Charity Circuit Training event.

and Coffee Morning to raise funds for David's Appeal and asked, "Would that be okay?" I quite happily said yes. As long as it's legal, people can go ahead with any fundraising idea!

Sam Davison and his team planned the Car Wash, and Margaret the Coffee Morning. On Saturday 21st April, some 62 cars left Wellington sparkling. I need to take this opportunity again to thank everyone who helped in any way. Apologies for singling out the men, but some of them arrived before 9am and laid down the pressure hoses and sponges just after 1pm, and then they had to tidy up. That level of commitment speaks volumes and left a deep impression on my sister and niece who attended. That people who, in the main don't

know David, would give up their time and put in so much effort to help raise funds for his treatment was a great witness, and harks back to my thoughts about the Good Samaritan parable. No-one asked GP, Hugo, Lisnamurrican YFC, the Men's Fellowship, Sam or Margaret to help, but they did. This was truly God's love in action.

Alistair has been preaching on being a church close to home. What does that look like in practice? A fund-raising Circuits Night, a Car Wash and Coffee Morning! We have many opportunities in Wellington to help change lives; rarely do we get the chance to quite literally save a life. Thank you to everyone who has donated to date; your gift of love speaks volumes to the family.

What now?

David's treatment is going well, and he has been able to resume working. His medical journey will continue for some time to come, as will the unrelenting financial pressures of covering the cost of the immunotherapy treatment. That said we are all thankful for what God has provided to date.

Please, please continue to pray daily for David and for the family.

You can keep up to date with David's progress at www.helpsavealife.uk

Gary Millar

Wellington Car Wash and Coffee Morning helpers pictured with David's wife and daughter





“A Ministry of Sweeties”

Jo Graham

So here I am, sitting in my frequent perch, freezing, on the loch's bank, for hours, while 'the boys' fish. It's gonna be a loooong afternoon! I guess the pile of ironing will just have to wait. I'm also supposed to be going out with the girls tonight but instead of getting glammed up, here I sit, so I'll be rushing at the last minute in a car stinking of fish!

Never mind, I have my laptop and a wee bag of sweeties to keep me company. Looking at this paper bag of sweets makes me think of another time and person who, you could say, had a 'ministry of sweeties'. The end of church every Sunday and Tuesday evening was the highlight of the service for me (and I suspect all the other kids too) because on the way out the door, we would all get to pick a sweetie out of the 'sweetie bag'!

These sweets didn't magically appear from the church store nor were they paid for out of the church budget. No they were the ministry of the most ordinary, yet extraordinary, old man in our church... 'Uncle Andrew.' Every single week, Andrew would turn up with his bag of sweets, never once forgetting and never once disappointing the kids. Although seemingly such a small thing, his commitment in doing this reflected his faithfulness in many other areas of his life.

As a child, I was so unaware of some of the Godly hallmarks of this man. To us he was just 'Uncle Andrew' with the sweeties. Looking back, I consider him one of the most genuine Christians I have ever known. Andrew has been in heaven many years now but let me tell you a little of the legacy this remarkable man left behind.

Having worked most of his life as the local postman, there was hardly an individual in the village that Andrew didn't know. He could speak to every person he passed in the street.... and he did. The people he shared God's love with I would venture is innumerable. He always knew of any death in the town and, with each occurrence, would faithfully write to every grieving family, sending words of sympathy and comfort. Who knows what God might have been doing through that simple unassuming ministry!

This gentle, kind man was plagued for many years with severe back pain and yet he walked, slightly stooped with one arm behind his back, in hail, rain or snow three or four times a week to open up the church ready for everyone else arriving. His faithfulness in this over many years was amazing!

I am aware now life was not always easy for Andrew and yet I

never once remember him looking 'down' or heard him complain. I'm sure though in the privacy of his own space, his heart was often broken with the trials of life. Nevertheless, Andrew lived his everyday life with a joy and glow, always having a good word to say about everyone. He faithfully served his wife with a devotion and care that would put many a man to shame. He had no great status or achievements to brag or boast of by this world's standards. I don't think he wanted any of that 'stuff' anyway, his whole conversation and interest in life was taken up with Christ. He always seemed so thankful, never having a critical spirit but possessed a humility and tenderness that I have ever only witnessed in a person who is walking close to Jesus.

Many times, sitting in the Bible Study, it was obvious that Andrew had no deep academic knowledge of the Scriptures. While others would bamboozle him with words he couldn't pronounce, never mind understand, he would simply take the Scriptures at face value and beautifully, and at times comically, apply them to his life. He had such a childlike, though not childish, faith in what the Bible said. He couldn't always get his words out right about what he thought certain passages meant but there was no mistaking the heart from which the mouth

spoke. This was a man who was totally and utterly in love with his Lord Jesus Christ.

This love was demonstrated almost every Sunday morning when he would get up in church and ask to sing his chosen hymn - a usual custom in that denomination. As he would rise to his feet and say, "...Can we sing hymn number ...?" you could catch a few rolling eyes and feel the silent groans coming from others in the congregation. This was because Andrew chose the same hymn, same words, same tune, week after week after week!

But, as he read out the words while we looked it up in our hymnbooks, his love for Jesus was expressed in every word he spoke. It was as if he'd just seen the words for the first time! It was as if the wonder of what Christ had done for him had hit him again

anew. He was truly in adoration of our Lord and filled with a humble gratitude that was fresh every week. Is this not rare indeed?

Every week of my young life I witnessed the wonder of true worship by being in the presence of this faithful servant. I believe this was because Andrew 'got it'. I think he was man who practiced daily 'drawing close to God' and who lived his life really believing that if he didn't hang onto Jesus, he wasn't going to make it without Him. I think he knew in such a real way that he had no righteousness in and of himself and that all he was, was because of the mercy of Christ.

The words of 'Andrew's Hymn' hang in my dining room. They remind me so much of my own conversion and my desire is that as I read them, my heart would be full of genuine worship and that,

like Andrew, I would know my righteousness is in Christ alone.

I can't wait to meet Andrew in Heaven and have no doubt he will have already heard the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant". I think heaven will be full of these amazing 'Andrews' who were marked by a simple faithfulness. Sometimes we get life so distorted you'd nearly think God was going to say: "Well done, good and successful servant"! O no.... it's humble faithful ones He's after.

As you read 'Andrew's poem' by Robert Murray McShane, take a moment to consider the words and rediscover their impact on your soul. They may even remind some of you of your own journey to Jesus and let your heart be full of worship to Christ and that He alone is 'Jehovah Tsidkenu'.. 'God is my righteousness'.

'Jehovah Tsidkenu'

'God is my righteousness'

I once was a stranger to grace and to God,
I knew not my danger, and felt not my load;
Though friends spoke in rapture of Christ on the tree,
Jehovah Tsidkenu was nothing to me.

I oft read with pleasure, to sooth or engage,
Isaiah's wild measure and John's simple page;
But e'en when they pictured the blood sprinkled tree
Jehovah Tsidkenu seemed nothing to me.

Like tears from the daughters of Zion that roll,
I wept when the waters went over His soul;
Yet thought not that my sins had nailed to the tree
Jehovah Tsidkenu - 'twas nothing to me.

When free grace awoke me, by light from on high,
Then legal fears shook me, I trembled to die;
No refuge, no safety in self could I see -
Jehovah Tsidkenu my Saviour must be.

My terrors all vanished before the sweet name;
My guilty fears banished, with boldness I came
To drink at the fountain, life giving and free -
Jehovah Tsidkenu is all things to me.

Jehovah Tsidkenu! my treasure and boast,
Jehovah Tsidkenu! I ne'er can be lost;
In thee I shall conquer by flood and by field,
My cable, my anchor, my breast-plate and shield!

Even treading the valley, the shadow of death,
This watchword shall rally my faltering breath;
For while from life's fever my God sets me free,
Jehovah Tsidkenu, my death song shall be.

Colossians 3 vs 12-17

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.



A great year - but a busy one!

Peter McClelland, our Youth and Community Worker reflects!

What has a year in my life as the Youth and Community Worker in Wellington been like?

First of all, my life has changed quite a bit since my last piece in the Wellington Record about a year ago. I am now an old married man with a house to look after and bills to pay! But I wouldn't have it any other way!

Amy and I were married on 15th April this year. It really was the best day ever and we even managed to get the one dry, sunny day in an otherwise wet and windy week! Since then we have been to Newcastle for our 'mini-moon' and we've moved into our new house in Cullybackey. We may not quite have mastered the accent yet, but we're getting there! We are really looking forward to jetting off to Florida in July for our

honeymoon to meet Mickey and Minnie! Amy has also recently secured a post as a P2 teacher for next year and we're very excited about that!

This year has been a busy one! A great one but a busy one! I've really enjoyed my first year as the 'Youth and Community Worker' in Wellington and Amy and I both feel like we've settled well into the church family. We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has encouraged, helped and supported us practically and prayerfully throughout the past year - it is so appreciated!

Being new to the church my plan for the first year was to get stuck into as much youth work as possible and to get a real understanding of how the various

organisations work. I've enjoyed spending and investing time in the Girls' Brigade, Boys' Brigade, 360 and theBigFeed. I have also visited families, taken services in church, and spoken at church events, allowing me to spend time getting to know the leaders and the young people. I've also had opportunities to work alongside youth workers and leaders from other local churches, with the aim of developing and extending joint youth ministry within Ballymena.

Last summer I was involved in the SPARK programme and I hope to be involved again this year. This was a great opportunity, as the new Youth Worker, to get to know people in the local community and to start building relationships.

I have been invited to speak and take part in various Scripture

Union Groups in local Primary and Secondary schools and at some other Youth Fellowships in the area. This has been great as it has enabled me to establish further connections and develop links with other youth groups. I, along with the rest of the ministry team, also regularly lead school assemblies in local primary schools. Having a primary school teacher as my wife comes in very handy in preparing for this!

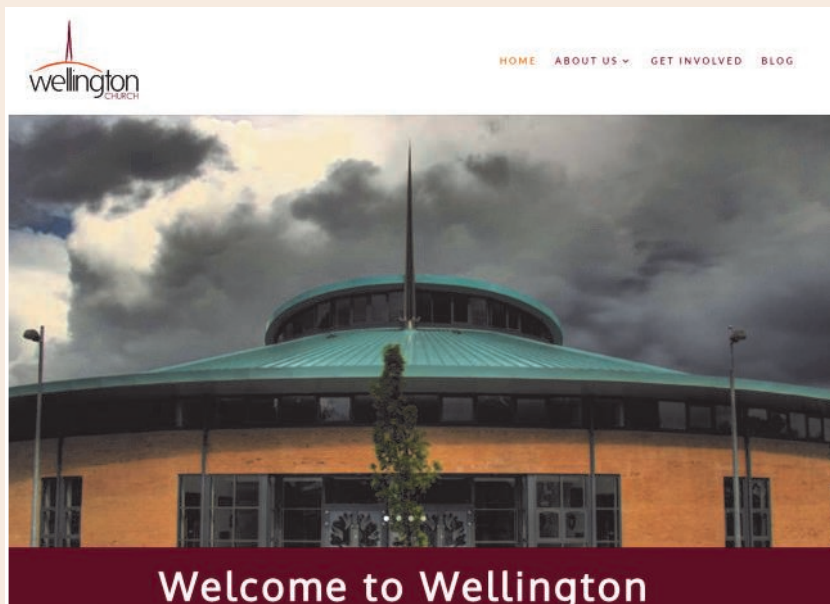
I'm really looking forward to the Holiday Bible Club coming up in the next couple of weeks as it creates a great opportunity to share the amazing story of Jesus with so many kids. I may have to practice all my action songs though!

One of the highlights from my first year was speaking at the BigFeed weekend in October last. It proved to be such a great weekend where I had time to spend with many of the young people in the church family. I was able to really get to know them and understand where they were at on their individual journeys.

A big part of what I have focused on over the last year has been working alongside the Youth Action Team to develop a vision for our youth ministry. We believe God is leading us, as a Youth Ministry Team, to focus on moving forward in a certain direction and you will hear more about this in September. So watch this space!

Both Amy and I feel incredibly blessed to be in the position we are in at the minute. We have gained so many new friends over the past year and the support we have received from the church family has been just amazing. We are both looking forward to the next couple of years in Wellington to see what God has in store for us and for the church.

New Wellington Website



Have you recently logged in to the church website? Well. If you have, you will notice that big changes have occurred to the layout and presentation. Church websites are important as research shows that 46% of church attenders indicate that a church's website is important when making a decision to attend a particular church.

To address our aging website, that was getting difficult to manage, the new site was developed over the past number of months with the aim of having a modern up-to-date web presence that works equally well on computers, tablets and phones. For those looking after the website, it will be much easier to add and manage content.

Richard Parkinson and James Diffin, under the direction of the Communications Team, headed up the project to get the new website live, with the assistance of the professional web development company, MCC who are based in Galgorm. MCC have been involved in the development of a number of church web sites, the latest of which is Wellington.

Please log in and make yourself familiar with the website - it may take a few moments initially but it will soon prove to be much more streamlined and user friendly than before.

www.wellingtonpc.co.uk



Church Golf Outing

Galgorm Castle Golf Club

Friday 26 May

The Annual Golf Outing, expertly organised by David Keys, once more proved to be a very enjoyable (well for most participants) day as some 42 players competed for the prizes.

The weather was fantastic - David managed to book the warmest day of the year so far with temperatures in the mid-twenties. A brisk breeze kept everyone from overheating and ensured the golfers (?) explored the furthest reaches of the golf course - many shots were 'straight up the middle' (according to the players) but casual observation might have indicated that many explored the more picturesque and perhaps inhospitable parts of the course - bunkers, rough, lakes and river come quickly to mind.

A good number turned up at the Church Hall afterwards and enjoyed the scrumptious meal provided by the ladies. The pavlova was yummy! Thanks for all your hard work in a hot kitchen on a very hot day! Being revived with the food made some start to talk as if they were ready for more golf - hopefully not until Saturday at least!

Paul Steenson proved to be the winner scoring a creditable 41 points playing off a handicap of 13. Paul carded birdies at the 2nd and 10th holes and a further 8 pars. He may well be playing off a reduced handicap next year! Second place went to William Backus with a score of 40 points. William's handicap is 20. Bearing in mind that William failed to score at 3 holes, 40 points off 15 holes was some going! Third place, announced in a very quiet voice, was David Keys (he was after all presenting the prizes). David scored 38 points playing off 8, scoring points at every hole except the 6th.

The day was brought to a conclusion with a short challenging epilogue from Roy Walker. Not only is Roy a brilliant speaker, he is also pretty handy at golf!

Happy golfing until our outing next year!

Winners (l-r)
Paul Steenson, William Backus and David Keys

David Keys, Golf Outing
organiser, thanks Roy Walker for speaking at the event





Ballymena Academy Team preparing to work with Asha in the slums of New Delhi

*One of our young people, **Rachelle Mitchell** (2nd from right front row above), along with fourteen other pupils and three teachers from Ballymena Academy, plan to go to India to work with Asha on 24 October 2017.*

We will be going to the Tigri slum in New Delhi for a period of eleven days to work within Asha. Our team is split into four groups, and each is focusing on a different task to help us prepare. I, with four others, make up the teaching team and we are preparing to teach English lessons to children of all ages. There are four in the sports team and they will be in charge of organising games and activities for the children. Another three are the art team who will design murals to decorate walls in some of the Asha buildings as well as planning crafts to engage with the children. Finally the Media team, also with three, have the task of setting up a blog to document our journey.

While in India, as well as working in the resource centre with the children, we will be attending clinics and visiting

people within the slum. This will give us a greater insight into what life is like living in such surroundings. The main purpose of the trip is to try to make a difference in the lives of these children and to show them that they do matter. We also hope to support and provide encouragement for Dr Kiran Martin and her team as they work in the slums and to help bring hope to the people we meet.

We have been fundraising by holding coffee mornings, marathons, curry nights and other events. We also have had an afternoon tea, an Indian dinner and bake sales to raise funds to support Asha, with all money raised being donated directly to Asha to help provide medical care and education for children.

Having the opportunity to visit India at such a young age is a massive privilege. I can't wait to get involved with the children in the Asha centre and I will be so excited to meet the Asha staff who help run this incredible organisation. The idea of being

able to give something back to others fills me with excitement. Growing up in a relatively sheltered environment, I have some fears about what we will encounter and I am nervous as to how I will handle the massive culture shock. I do hope that seeing joy on people's faces will soon turn any fears and concerns into happiness.

As I look forward to the trip, I realise that travelling to India and working in the slums will change my outlook on life and will prove to be extremely challenging. But I am reassured by knowing God has given me this chance for a reason.

Please pray for the team and especially for:

- Safety when travelling and working in India.
- The ongoing work of Dr Kiran Martin and her team.
- The work we will be carrying out in the slums.
- The young people and families we will be working with.
- Team unity.
- Lives to be changed.

Rachelle Mitchell

(Left photo) Members of the Asha Team from Ballymena Academy held a Coffee Morning in Wellington on 18 March
(Centre and right photo) Some of the many who came along to the Coffee Morning to support the young people.





Wellington Street Presbyterian Church was opened in 1828



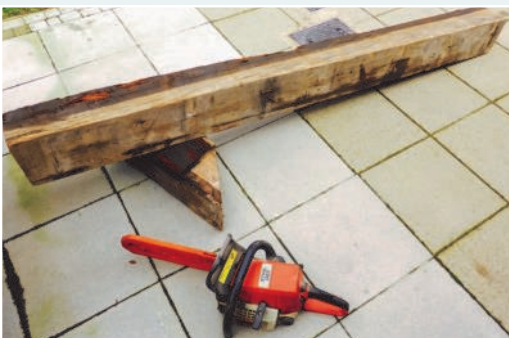
The last service was held in the church on 15 March 2009



The church was demolished in 2017, some 189 years after it was built



Along came David Hilditch (heavily disguised here but please see photo on Page 4!).....



..... and salvaged a part of an old pitch pine roof truss.



David reduced the timber to a number of shorter lengths, with the help of his trusty chain-saw



He then spent a lot of time measuring, whittling, turning, sanding, polishing and.....



.....transformed the old pieces of wood into beautiful candlesticks and bowls!

A New Creation!

In 2 Corinthians 5 v 17 we read:

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come".

David Hilditch looked at an old beam that had helped hold up the roof of our former church building in Wellington Street for 189 years. He saw the potential to create something beautiful out of what might have been dismissed as an ugly old piece of wood that had reached the end of its days and had no useful purpose left. There was nothing in particular to commend it. It might have been chopped up and used as firewood. But using his craftsman's eye, David saw something else. He took the old wood and gave it a new life, preserving it for the future and transforming it into something that was useful and beautiful.

Paul, in 2 Corinthians, wrote to the people in Corinth reminding them that Christ can take lives that are scarred with sin, burdened down with the trials of this life, without hope and destined for the scrap heap and transform them into something new, something beautiful, pure and useful. This verse reminds us that, 'if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation'. To be in Christ requires us, through faith, to accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour. Only then can we truly say with Paul that 'the old has gone, the new has come'. When we reach out to the Master we realise His transforming power can make us into a new creation. Only He can release us from our burden of sin and give us a new purpose. Only He can renew our lives and provide us with a direction in life. Only He can see the potential to live a life for Him, a life full of love and beauty. 'If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation'.

LOVE WORD SEARCH

The words below in bold are hidden!
Can you find them all?

K Y D S N G E G I P B E E E H
U P A E M L G A A V E A B O N
W R T V Q F P R R J A T P W E
U E I E Z J R B R Z R E O P Z
U N R I G H T E O U S N E S S
N E B L B Q P P G F M H C J K
N S Q E K E R S A V P P R P X
E J E B C O P T N C M L C X Q
R N S C V O N E T N X J J T C
D P D O I E M D E R E F F U S
Y N K U I O R I J E A L O U S
R E I T R D J O N F L C G V K
D R A K F E Z E A G X M K O F
Z P Y Z D A S R R R L S R A W
Q T K X B W R E V E N Y Y C N

Is **PATIENT**

Is **KIND**

Is not **JEALOUS**

Does not **BRAG**

Is not **ARROGANT**

Does not act **UNBECOMINGLY**

Does not seek its **OWN**

Is not **PROVOKED**

Does not take into account wrong
SUFFERED

Does not rejoice in **UNRIGHTEOUSNESS**

REJOICES with the truth

BEARS all things

BELIEVES all things

HOPES all things

ENDURES all things



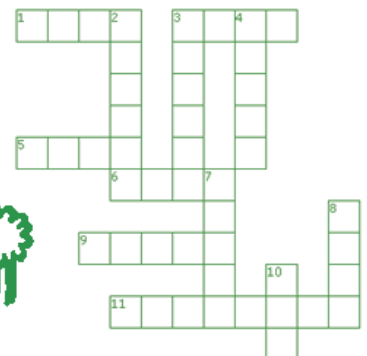
Books of the New Testament

1. HATETWM _____
2. ARKM _____
3. KEUL _____
4. ONHJ _____
5. TCAS _____
6. ONMSAR _____
7. ANSCHRNOTII _____
8. TAAIGNLSA _____
9. NPAHSEEIS _____
10. LSAIPHNIIP _____
11. CSSLANOSIO _____
12. HNSISALOTANSE _____
13. YHITTMO _____
14. TSTIU _____
15. IPMHOLON _____
16. EWSBRHE _____
17. SEAMJ _____
18. TEREPI _____
19. EDJU _____
20. NETOEIRLVA _____

Some activities to occupy the kids!

The Good Shepherd

John 10:11-18 (NIV)



ACROSS

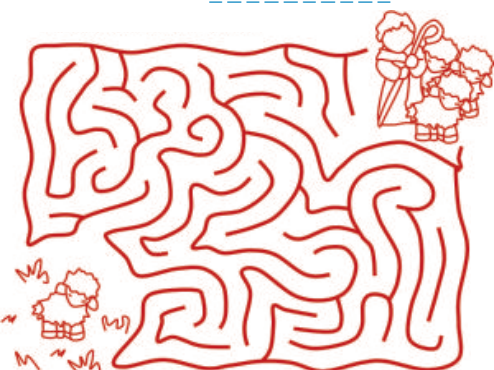
1. Wild animal that looks like a dog and hunts in packs
3. The period from birth to death
5. A strong feeling of affection
6. Goes faster than walking
9. What we use to speak
11. One who takes care of the sheep

DOWN

2. The male parent
3. To hear or pay attention to something
4. A group of sheep herded together
7. Woolly animals which are similar to goats
8. The opposite of bad
10. A small place where animals are kept

Words Used

good	sheep	runs	listen
shepherd	wolf	father	pen
life	flock	voice	love



Help the shepherd find his lost sheep!

WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS



Romans 8 v 18 & vs 28-39

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be

slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The above passage from Romans was read by Rev Bates at the opening of the Thanksgiving Service for the life, service and witness of George Backus who passed away suddenly as a result of an accident on 5 May.

George, elected as an Elder and installed at a service in Wellington on 29 May last year, had been a member of the church for just a few years, during which time he had made a significant impact on the lives of those he had met. George was frequently found working around the church doing whatever was needed, whether vacuuming floors with the cleaning team on a Monday morning, weeding the flowerbeds or helping in some other way; he was always busy, always cheerful and always working for his Lord and Master. George was a true servant of God, a sincere Christian and a good friend to many. He will be missed by the congregation and more especially by his wife Anne, son David, daughter Heather, mother Agnes and the members of the wider family circle.

Rev Bates, commenting on George during the Thanksgiving Service, said:

"What can you say about George Backus? I know what George might say if he saw so many people gathered here today. He was such a self-effacing man that he would be astonished so many had gathered to pay tribute

to the life that he had led. How can a man like George, who in relative terms, spent just a few years in this congregation and many years in Trinity in Ballymoney make such an impact. Not only did you feel you had known him for years but he was so transparent in his life that you could not help but love him, respect him or take banter from him. He was a man full of pranks and full of fun who never uttered a harsh word, but who always tried to find the good in people and support, provide and care for them."

"George had all the qualities anyone would want in a husband, father, son or brother. Whatever your relationship to him was, George more than fitted that description. He was everything and more. Out of genuine concern people sent messages, prayed and shared prayer requests with an urgency and desire when they heard of his injuries. Whatever happened they wanted God to be present with the whole family. Receiving a phone call from one of the medical staff in the Causeway Hospital to come to the emergency room I knew things were not good and you can never be sure as to the extent such news or anxiety might be. It was quickly evident that things were a challenge and, as the family started to gather, we spent some time together. You will understand how difficult it was."

"The Greater the Pain the Greater the Hope – Anne and George were a model of love, meeting when just 14, engaged at 18 and married at the tender age of 20. They were blessed with two children, David and Heather, and had a rich family connection. George, a butcher, had taken on the family butcher's shop and endeared himself to many people, tending to his customers with care

and attention, building relationships and often going the extra mile. His testimony was clear and there were always words of encouragement or of challenge to help point someone to Christ. Many may have known George's kindness but few knew about it. He had no desire to bring attention to himself or to draw merit before God. This was the fruit of his salvation and from his deep love for Christ he loved others and wished to share life with them."

In his Address at the Thanksgiving Service, Rev Bates gave the following address (abridged):

In Ephesians 5 we read; "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church - for we are members of his body. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a profound mystery - but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband."

Why is the loss of our husband or our wife so painful, particularly if we are Christians? Within a marriage, Paul is saying something quite profound, if we stop, think and take a moment to look up to its source. The Bible uses a wonderful description of two people, in love with each other, becoming 'one flesh', almost as one person. They

begin to think together, grow together, love together and experience challenges together. They will laugh together, cry together, become one person, become one flesh - and God designed that to be the case. In the Garden of Eden God created Adam and Eve and their relationship was to reflect that of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit who shared the perfect bond, perfect love and perfect unity experienced by Adam and Eve.

But Satan, being denied this relationship with God, planned to destroy what God had created. There was no love, no joy and no value in any relationship that Satan could form as he hated and despised everything that denoted the love and unity of God. He despised the perfect bond between Adam and Eve and tempted Eve with the result they both succumbed to temptation, fracturing their relationship. But God wasn't to be defeated and sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to this earth to die on the cross at Calvary and atone for our sin.

Jesus became our Saviour and Lord and began a journey to repair what had been lost in the Garden of Eden and re-establish this perfect bond and relationship out of love for each other. In Ephesians we read how Christ loved the Church and husbands and wives must love each other through the power of the Spirit just as Christ loved His Church and gave Himself up for Her. Yes, it's painful when a bond and a unity brought about by them coming together as one flesh has been disrupted - but we thank God it is but a temporary separation.

In Ephesians 4 we read: "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were

called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."

When we gather as God's people we are one body. When one suffers, all suffer and when one rejoices all rejoice. We do not grieve as those without hope but in the sure and certain resurrection to eternal life and we can say, "The greater the pain the greater the hope." Because we are one body together any disruption is temporary and in the meantime we will love and support each other, we will edify and encourage each other until that day when we are united with Christ in eternity. This is our great hope and what makes pain bearable for the Christian.

If we do not have that certainty we cannot have that hope. It is this one hope that makes days like this manageable. We are but temporarily separated and, in the twinkling of an eye, all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ will be reunited in worship of Jesus Christ. Then we will enter that final and perfected state we have longed and yearned for. In the meantime we take comfort from Paul's tremendous words and remember the greater the pain the greater the hope and the greater the loss the greater the comfort. Blessed are they that mourn for they will be comforted.

1 Corinthians 15 contains some remarkable words (v 24 - 26):

"Then the end will come, when He hands over the kingdom to God the Father after He has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For He must reign until

He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death."

The bigger the enemy, the greater the triumph! We all live in a broken world and many questions can be asked about why people who have lived such good and Godly lives who have cared, provided, supported others and loved each other can be taken when many wicked, unruly and ungodly people are left.

God loves His Church and He wants His followers to receive their reward. Our loving and caring Father sometimes beckons home those who have served Christ on earth long enough. Now is your time to receive your crown, now is your time for reward. We all, and especially a family, miss those God has called home, but all will soon join them in Glory. All who loved Jesus will, one day, join Jesus. On that day the final enemy of death will be destroyed, there will be no more heartache, no more pain, no more suffering and no more tears

at a graveside. All the hurt and heartache of that broken union that happened all those years ago, all the disruption will be defeated and Satan will finally be gone.

We all live in the hope that one day the final enemy will be taken away and we will stand together in God's presence, singing His praises. There will be no more tears, no more heartbreak, no more pain, it will all be gone. Jesus will have seen enough of it and will call His people home. He will say spend eternity with Me. For those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ our moment here on earth may not be long enough for many but it is long enough to do what God has beckoned each of us to do.

And you, do you have this same hope? When your moment comes will you have the confidence amid the pain and the tears? Will you have a deep reassurance that this will not be for ever. The pain of a moment passes. Those who trust in Jesus will go some day and be

united with Christ in eternal life. Christians can say with Paul, "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain." If you are not a Christian you will find these words absurd for it is only when you open your life to Jesus and to His love can you truly understand. Do you truly understand?

The greater our loss here the greater our hope, for we do not grieve as those without hope but in the sure and certain resurrection to eternal life. So to Christians, the greater the sense of loss, the greater the prospect of reunion and the greater the enemy death, the more triumphant will be the resurrection. Jesus has the final word. He is the way, the truth and the life and you cannot come to the Father but by Him. Let our testimony be that we want you to follow Jesus just as we have done. Follow Him with the deep reassurance that He is watching over you. That God will carry you through and will help manage the loss and the pain until the day He takes that pain away as well.

PRAY EVERY DAY

The famous evangelist, RA Torrey, said two of the greatest secrets to effective prayer lay in:

1. Studying the Word of God and finding His will as revealed in the promises.
2. Taking these promises and spreading them out before God in prayer, with the unwavering expectation that He will do what He said.

Don't tolerate prayerlessness in your life. Don't allow the stress of so-called progress to dictate how much time you will sit at the feet of your Saviour. Crave those times. Schedule those times. Protect those times.

In her poem, **The Difference**, Grace L Naessens puts it like this.

I woke early one morning and rushed right into the day;
I had so much to accomplish I didn't have time to pray.
Problems just tumbled about me and heavier became each task.
"Why doesn't God help me," I wondered; He answered, "You didn't ask."
I wanted to see joy and beauty, but the day toiled on, grey and bleak.
I wondered why God didn't show me; He said, "But you didn't seek."
I tried to come into God's presence; I used all of my keys in the lock.
God gently and lovingly chided, "My child, you didn't knock."

I woke up early this morning, and paused before entering the day.
I had so much to accomplish, I just had to take time to pray.'

When we pray we are prepared for the inevitable crises of life. It's foolish to wait until trouble shows up at your doorstep to begin this essential, spiritual discipline.



Session Report 2016

As I bring you the Session Report, I would like to provide an update on some issues that were underway towards the end of 2015.

Appointment of Youth and Community Worker - the post attracted a lot of interest with 36 expressing an interest, 19 applying and eight people shortlisted for interview. God was most certainly leading and guiding the seven members of the interview panel as they selected Peter McClelland as their preferred candidate. Throughout the interview, and since starting to work with us, Peter has demonstrated his strong Christian faith and his desire and passion for youth ministry, both inside and outside the church. Peter has an open and humble approach and Session are most appreciative of his work to date. Peter and his fiancée Amy were married recently (15th April 2017). We welcome Amy into the fellowship in Wellington and as she supports Peter's work.

New Ruling Elders - Session, using Method Two (Selection by Kirk Session), invited nominations from the Congregation and at a meeting on 3 April 2016 the voting members confirmed the election and call of 6 new elders. A service of ordination and installation was held at the end of May when we were delighted to welcome George Backus, Geoff Eagleson,

David Marshall, Roy McClelland, John McClintock and Mark Rodgers into the eldership.

2016 Uganda Team - a team of 10 of our young people, under the leadership of Rachael Keys, Jonny McClelland and Jack Fleming, travelled to Uganda in July as part of Exodus Summer Teams. This proved to be a great experience for all involved. I believe the 'stand out evening' was when Session met with ALL our young people involved in Summer Teams, whether at home or overseas, before they headed off either individually or as part of a group. It was most uplifting and encouraging as we spent time together in praise, worship and prayer, committing our young people into God's care and protection.

Review of Youth Club - Following much discussion and prayer seeking God's will and direction, including having the courage and openness to embrace change, the Youth Club was relaunched in September 2016 as 'The Net'. The number of places available was reduced as a deliberate starting point to allow opportunities for developing better relationships and give opportunities to engage with the young people attending. After a slow start numbers have been growing steadily. The Session acknowledges the work of the faithful band of leaders under the joint leadership of James and Siobhan Millar and Sam and Judith McCullough. It is never easy to dismantle the traditional way of doing things that had been in place and we thank all the leaders for their participation and willingness to propose and accept change during the review process.

During 2016 we once again witnessed a huge commitment in the area of Pastoral Care provided

by our Ministry team of Alistair, Eleanor, Jonathan, Peter, Ken and Alec. They are augmented by a small group of voluntary workers, efficiently coordinated by Gareth Williams, who help with specific visitation. Last August the Rev Alec Boyd gave notice that he wished to retire from pastoral care duties in Wellington. Alec showed great commitment, dedication and a sound work ethic as he faithfully visited senior members of the congregation, assisting with funeral services and the preaching of God's word on many occasions. We wish Alec and his wife Margaret a long and happy retirement.

Session reluctantly accepted notices of retirement from the eldership, from Mr Andrew Caves and Mr George Graham who had served for 44 and 27 years respectively, serving in Kirk Session and in church life from Wellington Street days right up to the present. We give thanks to God for their many years of service and we wish each good health and continued strength in retirement.

In April we celebrated, as a Church family, marking 50 years of ordained eldership for four senior elders - William Caves, Alexander Kirk, James Kennedy and Ernest McKeown. This was a most significant milestone in the life of Wellington Church and for each of these elders and their families. We were, however, saddened some four months later by the death of Mr Alexander Kirk. Alec had, for many years, served His Lord and Master faithfully in Wellington and had held many positions within the church, not least his musical gift of trumpet playing.

We continue to be thankful for the faithful preaching of God's word Sunday by Sunday, morning and evening. We praise God for His word and the challenge it

brings to many. This year we received 23 people on affirmation of faith into full membership of the church and a further 5 by affirmation of faith and transfer from other congregations. Ten people moved away on disjunction certificate. During the year there were 8 baptisms and 7 weddings. In a large congregation, such as ours, death and its accompanying loss and grief was experienced by 25 families.

Attendance continues to be excellent across our organisations and groups and we are indebted to those who give of their time to lead and share the Gospel and the love of God in so many varied and practical ways. We appreciate the work of those who staff our youth organisations and prioritise a safe environment for our children and young people. If our leaders didn't turn up our organisations wouldn't open up! Thank you for what you do. Of course leadership roles

evolve and change, and this year Jonathan and Emma McKeown stepped down from leadership in theBigFeed and Samantha Walker from Crèche. They need a well deserved break after many years of work and we wish them well.

Within our congregation there are many ways for our people to engage. There is the newly formed META group for 18-25 year olds; helping in Holiday Bible Club; encouraging someone to attend the Christianity Explored Course; helping and encouraging a specific outreach such as the Ultimate Goal 2016 or service in the mission field either at home or overseas. And you can challenge yourself by engaging with others outside of the church groups, being salt and light in our town or community.

I would like to share a very simple statement adopted by our youth action team and endorsed by our Youth Worker - COME...

GROW... GO. That's what God is asking His people to do in Wellington, regardless of their age.

COME in worship and praise to Almighty GOD,
GROW in a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and
GO tell it to the world.

So wherever God has placed us, let us all Come, Grow and Go, whether that is where we live, where we work or where we spend time with others.

Wherever God may take us, the study of His word and devotion to prayer are pivotal to all that we do. So let us continue to COME .. to GROW .. and to GO in 2017 as we live in the strength of the Almighty God who had given so much for each one of us.

Geoff Marshall, Clerk of Session



Above left: Looks of anticipation as Hugh, George, Tom and Harold load up their plates after the AGM.

Above Right: Enjoying a cup of tea and a wee bun after the AGM

Left: Alistair concluded the AGM with a short epilogue.

Right: Jessica Walker sang and played the piano, as well as accompanying the worship at the AGM





Church Committee Report 2016

This is my second report as Secretary of the Congregational Committee. The Committee met on five scheduled dates during 2016, namely on 25 January, 21 March, 23 May, 26 September and 21 November with an additional meeting on 29 May 2016 to update the Committee on the sale of our former church premises.

During the year the sale of our Wellington Street premises was completed. I would like to record our thanks to Stewart Ballentine (of James Ballentine & Son, Solicitors) for all his work and support throughout the sale process. I'm sure many have watched the demolition and clearance of the former church with a feeling of sadness and, while we can thank God for the memories, we must remember that the church is more than a place to which we go, it's something we are. The 'church' of the Bible refers to the people of God and not the building or meeting place.

Within our new complex changes have been made to some rooms during the year. A new kitchen/tea area was constructed in the Wellington Room and some work was carried out in the Totzone and Prayer Rooms. Money raised from the congregation through the 'One Day' appeal was used to acquire equipment for the

new children's play area in the Crèche, a fantastic asset for our children's ministry. A special word of thanks to Mr Neil Fry for his work installing the equipment and carrying out additional joinery work.

During the year Mr William Caves stepped down from membership of the Property Committee. We are grateful for his hard work, wisdom and advice over many years. Following many years of service a number of people also stepped down from the count teams. Thanks to them for their very valuable contribution in this area of our work. A former member of committee, Mr Lyle Davison, sadly passed away in September 2016.

Normal maintenance continues around the church complex as well as some matters that incur unexpected expenditure. This with the renewal of Church Insurance, Entertainments Licence, Christian Copyright Licences, servicing of equipment, Health and Safety, fire alarm and fire extinguisher servicing/inspection, to mention a few, make up some of the issues that are addressed annually to keep a large church like Wellington ticking over.

I would acknowledge the vast amount of voluntary work that is carried out on a regular basis to keep our premises in ship-shape condition. While many of these tasks may appear menial or mundane and are not up front, each, however, is a ministry in itself. So if you are involved in a cleaning team, car park duty, ensuring we have heat, opening up in the morning or closing at night, weekly security, general maintenance, staffing the office, weeding the flower and shrub beds, setting up rooms for meetings, moving chairs, lighting the Christmas tree, meeting and

greeting, attending with first aid, updating the website, helping with sound and recording, emptying bins, baking, catering, cleaning the kitchen, washing and ironing table cloths or simply making a cup of tea, I want to say a sincere thank you.

Thank you to our full time caretakers Anne and George Eagleson, the members of the Property and Finance Committees, Iris McDowell, assistant secretary, Geoff Marshall and David Compton for your on-going encouragement, advice and support.

When considering how we work together in Wellington serving God and how we should live our lives, I believe that one of the most important things is how we, as Christians, interact with each other so that, in everything, God is glorified. We have such a great body of volunteers in the church who work tirelessly and our prayer for our work is that we might do it well, that it might serve others and that God might be praised.

I read a story recently about a leaving party for a person who had faced a lot of challenges and big decisions in his work. He had required much wisdom. In a speech one of his closest colleagues talked about the individual's Christian character when responding in difficult situations. This person, he said, 'was like a catcher in baseball (or a wicketkeeper in cricket) - no matter how hard you threw the ball at him, it always came back gently'. I just love that image.

I finish with verse 16 of Matthew chapter 5:

'In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.'



Treasurer's Report

Year ending 31 December 2016

It is a privilege and a pleasure to present the Treasurer's Report for Wellington Presbyterian Church for the year ended 31 December 2016.

Reviewing the past year, the Church has much to be grateful for and we thank God that our work has continued to prosper. Total consolidated income from all sources was just over £1.2 million. As Ann Frank wrote in her diary, "no one has ever become poor by giving."

Before being too excited by the aforementioned number I should point out that the main contributing factors to this large total were a number of abnormal non-recurring items. This included the sale of the old Church premises on Wellington Street for £200,000, the sale of the manse sites which yielded £220,000 and a generous bequest from the estate of the late Miss Nessie Wilson amounting to £180,000. This cash inflow of £600,000 had a major impact on our results for the year and gave a huge boost to our bank balances.

We live in difficult times. For many the harsh realities of economic hardship are all too real. Cutbacks in social benefits, unemployment, rising costs and

uncertainty bring many attendant problems and reduce disposable income. In actual fact when you put our 'givings' for the year under the microscope the picture is unfortunately one of diminishing contributions. All our envelope offerings were down on the previous year, which in turn had been down on the preceding year.

Freewill Offering contributions were down by 2%. Envelope contributions, loose offering and Gift Aid produced an income of £339,000. Although down on the previous two years, I do feel that contributions to the general account have held up well. In fact, I think some confusion over the timing of the year end cut off meant that quite a number of envelopes dated 25th December did not get entered until the new year. We operate a real time system and have to close down the system quickly at the year end and unfortunately, with Christmas Day falling on a Sunday a day when traditionally we do not take an offering, it was impossible to avoid this timing issue.

Mission support contributions fell by 14%, from £46,000 to £40,000, this coming on the heels of an 8% fall in the prior year. However, with the Elsie Steel Endowment Fund for foreign Missions generating income of some £20,000 per annum the Missionary Committee generally have sufficient income to channel into their designated projects. Additional assistance was given to Gateway Morocco and the Bread Project and a full list of beneficiaries can be found in the Church accounts.

With regard to the Church accounts the committee has decided that instead of printing over 700 copies, they will now be available for perusal and download from the church website. There will

be a small number of printed copies for individuals who would still prefer to receive a hardcopy.

The most disappointing feature of the last year was the fall of 5.6% in contributions to the Building Fund. This coupled with the 13.5% fall between 2014 and 2015 means that the positive upturn of 2014, which saw envelope donations rise by 27%, has not been sustained and that last year's backward step was not a one off blip that we had hoped. We are still bringing in sufficient income to cover our loan commitments, which are running at £17,712 per month. However, at this rate of giving it would be unlikely that we would be able to appreciably shorten the payback period remaining, currently standing at 13 years.

Finally, with regard to income, catering receipts and room hire brought in £18,000. Most organizations, though not all, made generous contributions to defray heating and lighting costs. These are important income streams in view of the fact FWO, loose and Gift Aid realized £339,000 and expenditure going through the general account amounted to £360,000. They enable us to cover costs and even provide a small surplus of discretionary income that we can channel through to wherever needed.

As stated in relation to costs the general account expenditure totalled £360,000. Of this total salaries and related expenditure made up 45% of the total, Church House assessments 20%, property costs 15% and general overheads 20%. This was well up on last year's total of £286,000 - an increase of 25%. Realistically we can't expect our costs to decline significantly so the pressure is on to maintain and increase the existing income streams.

The proceeds from the 'one offs' previously alluded to enabled us to make a noticeable impact on our debt mountain. Abnormal contributions of £420,000 plus our normal contributions of £212,000 enabled us to reduce the Ulster Bank loan from £2,302,797 at the start of the year to £1,739,506 at the end of December.

The committee had not yet agreed on the allocation of the Nessie Wilson bequest monies. I can now inform you that it has been decided to allocate £20,000 to missionary purposes and to use the balance of £160,000 against the Ulster Bank loan, bringing it down to £1,579,506. If our giving could replicate what we were achieving in the period 2005 to 2009, this balance would be cleared in four years.

During the year the bank charged interest of £69,000, the corresponding figure for 2015 being £83,000.

It would be remiss of me not to thank the dedicated band of colleagues and assistants who do so much behind the scenes without fuss or fanfare to ensure the smooth running of the financial function of the Church. Few can appreciate the toil and

dedication involved. In an age when no one wants to be 'tied down' their selfless devotion is greatly appreciated.

Reflecting back on another year we can thank God for His provision. Like King David in Psalm 34 we can say ..

**" I will extol the Lord at all times,
his praise will always be on my
lips. I sought the Lord and He
answered me... Blessed is the one
who takes refuge in Him.
Fear the Lord for those who
fear Him lack nothing."**

Finally to all our faithful members it is my pleasure, on behalf of the committee, to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude for your financial donations, whether large or small, and in particular for those given in sacrificial circumstances. As well as our dependence on God we know that we can continue to rely on you, our fellow members, to help us to the best of your ability in the work for His Kingdom in which we are engaged.

**John Marshall,
Honorary Treasurer**

THANKS



Jess by the river!

Thanks to Gary Millar for the photograph on the front page. Gary took the photo on the family farm at Buckna



Thanks to **Jo Graham** and **Rebecca Macfarlane** for their assistance in putting together this magazine.

Jo loves talking to people to find out their story and what God is doing in their lives.

Watch out - you may be next!

Rebecca is currently working towards her Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award and, as part of her service, has been helping with photography and page layouts - the pages on the BB Display, the Tearfund Articles and the Kids' Page are all Rebecca's work. My camera is getting a bit of a rest - so keep smiling, Rebecca's about!

Editor

Deaths 2017

12 March	Elizabeth (Lily) McIlhagga	Brooke Park	Interred in Ballymena Cemetery
2 April	William (Bill) McClure	Slaght Road	Interred in Ballee Cemetery
6 April	Rachael (Rae) Warwick	Corlea Gardens	Interred in Conor New Cemetery
10 April	June Hume	Sandmount Drive, Galgorm	Interred in Ballee Cemetery
11 April	Jane (Jean) Robinson	Pinewood Care Home	Interred in Ballymena Cemetery
24 April	Rosemary Aiken	Ballyloughan Park	Interred in Kirkinriola Burying Ground
26 April	Dorothy Dodds	Killane Park	Interred in Ahoghill Cemetery
5 May	George Backus	Bann Road, Ballymoney	Interred in Ballymoney Cemetery
20 May	Anna Bell	Toome Road	Interred in Ballymena Cemetery

THANKSGIVING



Valentina Evangeline, daughter of
Andrea and Angeline Mola,
Rosses Lane.
23 April 2017

ADULT BAPTISM



(l-r) Jamie Pedlow, Dan's Road;
June Hamill, Carnburn Park and
Maureen Rodgers, Glenhugh Park, Ahoghill
12 May 2017

BAPTISMS



Faye Sydney, daughter of
Stuart and Amanda McIvor,
Carndale Meadows.
Included is sister Penny.
28 May 2017



James Edmund, son of
Christopher and Lynne Gamble,
Carnearney Road, Ahoghill.
Included is brother Isaac.
28 May 2017