



**WELLINGTON**  
R E C O R D  
D E C 2 0 2 0

# EDITOR'S COMMENTS



ALISON  
WOODROW

**Hello all, and every blessing of the Christmas season to you! Thanks for picking up this copy of the Wellington Record – I pray it's of use and interest to you.**

What a strange year it's been – I suspect that's a sentence that we'll all repeat and hear repeated many times during December and January. 2020 has been a year like no other, and one we'll not forget in a hurry.

This time last year we never could've envisioned that this Christmas, we'd have no packed-out carol service in our church, no Christmas lights switch-on, no children's activities and dinners. We couldn't have imagined that many of us would be contemplating a Christmas Day that's very different from the normal.

For most of us, it's been a tough year. For some, it's been incredibly hard and painful. Yet through it all – and even through our church's Christmas plans – God's hand has been so evident. I hope as you read through these articles, you'll be reminded of that, and be so encouraged. I know that many of us have felt somewhat disconnected from our church family, even in spite of all of the wonderful provisions that have been made for us. We're built for community, for fellowship. I hope that you'll feel brought closer by reading the words and seeing the pictures contained here.

As with the last magazine in September, I have no idea as I write these words what we'll be facing by the time you read them. I know that I personally feel weary at the moment, and, honestly, tired of 2020! I suspect I'm not alone. But the contributors to this magazine have chosen their words and their Bible references so very wisely – it's been good for my heart

to read them. They've reminded me that God is still in control of everything that is going on, and I pray that it'll be the same for you.

Rev. William Dickey starts us off with a lovely (and important) reminder about rest, and waiting on God. William joined our Pastoral Care team in Wellington earlier this year, and we're grateful for his time and his words here.

We'll then catch up with some of our missionary friends, and hear from a Wellington member and familiar face to many, Matthew Houston, about how God is leading his life right now.

The book reviews might provide some late Christmas present ideas, and children, don't forget to enter your competition in the Kids' Page, for the chance to win a book recommended by Isaac Kernohan (who himself won a book several months ago).

We have all this and much more – I hope and pray, as ever, that you enjoy this magazine and find it to be beneficial.

I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you a peaceful Christmas season, whatever it may look like this year, and a happy 2021.

In Christ, who came that we might have abundant life ■

*Alison*



If you would like to include photos of your wedding in the church magazine, we'll be happy to print them. Please send via email to the editor: [alisonwoodrow1@gmail.com](mailto:alisonwoodrow1@gmail.com)

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# CHRISTMAS STORY

*Kindly submitted by Margaret Weston*

In a little town called Bethlehem  
The birthplace of our Lord  
So the story thus began  
According to his word

That night was cold and frosty  
No rooms were to be found  
They came upon a stable  
And bedded on the ground

The humble little cradle  
Where our infant Jesus lay  
Was neatly put together  
With little strands of hay

Three kings were guided by a star  
To the infant baby boy  
Bearing gifts and holy blessings  
Praising God with heartfelt joy

The sound of angels' voices  
Rang out from heaven above  
Singing glory in the highest  
To the infant child of love

So on this Christmas morning  
Let us celebrate and sing  
Unto us is born a Saviour  
Jesus Christ our King

# WAIT ON THE LORD



REV. WILLIAM  
DICKEY

**Another year has almost slipped past. And how quickly too! Now that's a sign of age, I'm sometimes told – when one feels the brevity of time. But I'm inclined to think that it's not just we oldies who are affected. The younger generation is too. This is the age of faster everything; we eat faster, grow up faster, work faster, travel faster – life is in the fast lane, all sound-bites and video-clips.**

Maybe it's always been that way – from the sixties anyway (most of my lifetime) – but I'm sure its been accelerating of late. After all, how many people today have time for others? A trip in the car, or to the supermarket will soon answer that question. All our modern inventions, rather than providing us with 'free' time, have given us more time to be busier than ever, yet we leave in our trail an assortment of

unpaid visits, unanswered letters, unread books and unfinished jobs.

We live in a generation of 'tired lives' – all ages! We have forgotten that times of relaxation, meditation and quietness are not wasted idleness but provide very necessary and positive influences on busy lives. The psalmist David points us in the right direction, and don't we know the words so well!

*The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want;  
He makes me lie down in green pastures,  
He leads me beside still waters.  
He restores my soul.*

The secret is not to be driven by the tyranny of modern living, but to be led by the Shepherd. That requires taking time to 'wait on the Lord'.

For some of us who 'have no time to wait', that will mean a determined re-ordering of our daily schedule. There is a time for everything, wrote the writer of Ecclesiastes, and he learned, eventually, through disappointment, frustration and dissatisfaction with the busy, fast-life, that time for God was the priority.

One positive result of Covid-19, for the busy younger generation at least, is the fact that restriction of movement and the attendant re-organization of lives has offered new opportunities to appreciate and enjoy the benefits of slowing down, taking stock and rediscovering some of the joys of family that may have been lost to a degree in the hullabaloo of life. And for those of us separated from family and friends it has also been an opportunity to discover, in the flux and unpredictability of our circumstances, that there is One who is the same yesterday, today and forever.

The reformer Martin Luther discovered the secret of escaping the tyranny of time. The busier his day ahead was going to be, the more time he spent in the presence of God. 'I wouldn't have his courage,' someone will say. But then it isn't a question of courage – it's a matter of faith. It's simply the practical thing to do seeing that it is the Lord who holds the outcome of all things in his hand.

Soon we will celebrate the Advent of the eternal Son, incarnate Deity, God in

human flesh. With a human physiology and human psychology, in every respect like us, sin excepting, Jesus was subject to pressures, temptations, weariness, disappointments, the clamouring crowd constantly on His heels, yet unruffled in the face of the urgent, led and driven only by the Spirit as He pursued His Father-given commission. And what was the divine commission? "I am come", said Jesus, "that you might have life, and that more abundantly", words spoken in the context of His discourse on the good shepherd, and His self – authentication as the shepherd of Psalm 23 – "I am the good shepherd" (John 10). To bring life to a dying world was the grand object of the Incarnation of the Son of God. And the means by which He would bring life would be by the forfeit of His own life – "the good shepherd gives His life for the sheep".

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”



The Incarnation of the Son of God we may hold to be the greatest of all miracles; without it there is no salvation... “since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, He himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death He might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage... therefore He had to be made like His brethren in every respect, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people (Hebrews 2:14-17). Without the Incarnation of the eternal Son there would be no Cross, no Resurrection, no Enthronement; and for us no Great High Priest, no sacrificial Lamb of God, no Atonement, no hope, no heaven, no glory.

But glory to His name, when the fullness of time had come, “God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons” (Galatians 4:4-5).

A new year beckons. What will it hold for us? God alone knows. But His are a safe pair of hands, He who “works all things together for good for those who love Him”. Let us make the most of these challenging days to grow deeper in the knowledge of our Triune God and remember if God is for us, as He surely is, who or what can be against us? Read Romans 8:31-39. “Nothing in all creation (Covid-19 included) will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” ■

# NEWS

## FROM SESSION



**GEOFF MARSHALL**  
Clerk of Session

**One million people have now died from COVID-19, just over six months after the disease was declared a pandemic. As cases and deaths increase, hope for a vaccine early next year remains... Until then, restrictions on people’s lives around the world remain, and the virus continues to spread.**

*(Sky News reporter Alix Culbertson - Oct 2020)*

Sobering words describing a global pandemic which has impacted all of us. The enormity and scale of it is almost beyond belief.

Life and livelihoods are being tested to the full, leaving some struggling to survive whilst others are trying to adapt and plan the best way forward. Fear, worry and anxious thoughts are never far away. It is tough – particularly as we enter a winter season beset with conditions and restrictions as never before.

So, what are we to do? We must follow NI Executive regulations/guidelines, but as Christians we hold firmly to a faithful God. God is in charge, doing a million things across the world.

*“You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand”.* **PSALM 16:11**

*So we say with confidence,  
“The Lord is my helper; I will  
not be afraid. What can man  
do to me?” HEBREWS 13:6*

Through God’s word we can experience a life of peace, free from fear and without conditions or restrictions. Through this pandemic we must trust in God.

We will continue to meet together on **Sunday** for worship in the church building (unless local government decrees otherwise). And whilst our meeting together in church is different, our worship and the teaching of God’s word remain unchanged. We are so pleased that on average 145 people are worshipping together at each of the morning services. Around 235 join worship via live stream at 11.30am (average 1000 views per Sunday service).

Early October we piloted a return of our Sunday morning children’s ministry (the Well). Numbers are restricted to around 19 family bubbles and feedback is positive. Going forward, we plan to have the Well up and running again after morning services. Also, on Sunday evenings we have commenced up-front Bible study and worship for Collective teenagers, meeting in the main church.

Around 40 young people gather together on alternate Sunday evenings. This is encouraging!

Our midweek Bible study has recommenced in the church on **Wednesday** evenings. Attendance at the study has been up and down. The opportunity to meet online or in the building is provided, leaving us with the discipline of personal choice. This study alternates weekly with the online prayer meeting which is also live-streamed from church. A small group from the prayer ministry team meets to pray during live-stream. Gathering together on Sunday and Wednesday are the main anchor points which we want to maintain, cherish and enjoy at this time.

Kirk Session, supported by the work of the COVID group, are constantly reviewing and tentatively trying to progress things. Our next step will be the reintegration of other organisations which we anticipate will be early in the New Year. Use of our premises by outside groups will follow thereafter. As Christmas approaches planning is underway for a drive-in carol service at Ballymena Showgrounds on Saturday 19th December followed by two carol services the following evening. The drive-in is giving us the opportunity and space to invite many from the community to attend.

None of us knows if this virus will infect us personally, therefore as a Church - God’s people gathered together - we must do so in the safest way possible. That’s a huge responsibility, but through God’s grace, wisdom and guidance we will strive to do what is right in all circumstances.

## POINT FOR PRAYER

Pray for the well-being of each other; Kirk Session as they lead; Covid group discussions and recommendations; the work of NI Chief Medical Officer & Chief Scientific Adviser; NI Executive and Assembly members as they govern at this time ■



# 2020 HARVEST APPEAL

approx £57,000 and with the addition of gift aid = £70,000.

Yet again many people have shown faithfulness and commitment in giving to God’s work. In the midst of this pandemic the joy of giving has not been overlooked nor indeed sidetracked. We have reached a significant milestone – our main property debt is now below £1 million (it currently stands around £800,000).

God is faithful. We will continue to be energized and be His church in Wellington reaching out to the local community and our wider world in the days that lie ahead.

Thank you so much for  
your generosity in 2020.

Missionary  
Report



INDIA

# HOPE



GARETH  
WILLIAMS

**We've been supporting the work of Asha in Delhi, India, since 2001. "Asha" is the Hindi word for "Hope" – and hope becomes a reality this autumn as some 200+ young people from slum communities enrol for university! Here are just 2 of these wonderful success stories.**

Anjali's home is on a dry river bed in East Delhi. It is made of bamboo and grass. Most years the river bed floods during monsoon. They lose their home and move onto the side of the main road to live for weeks. Anjali's father is a labourer and earns £70 per month. Anjali scored 81% in her high school exams and will now

study History and Political Science in Delhi university. Asha has mentored and supported her and will pay her university expenses.

Nisha's father is a labourer and her mother collects scrap for recycling. Nisha's grandmother sadly passed away during lockdown, without the needed medical help. Nisha scored 84% in her exams. This girl, who has been selling mud lamps by the roadside, will now study English and Political Science at Delhi university.

As a church we have been gifting £5,000 annually to Asha, as well as sending teams of volunteers ■



ANJALI



NISHA



Missionary  
Report

SLOVENIA

# GORAN & METKA

Slovenia



**We hope this finds you healthy and safe. This year definitely looks different than we expected and what we found the most important is to keep our eyes on Jesus and give Him all the plans since we really do not know what the next day holds.**

For the last year we were praying that God will give us an opportunity to move to Domžale if that is His will. For the whole time that looked impossible but we kept looking. Since the lockdown there were more apartments available and we went to see some. We found one really close to Goran's job (2 min walking distance) and our church. We liked the place right away and the landlady chose us, so we were able to move to Domžale in the end of June. Then we applied for Timeja's kindergarten and they told us it is not possible that she could get a free spot since we do not have a permanent residence in Domžale. But guess what? God is bigger and she got a free spot. She starts in September. God also used our moving to bring our small community in Domžale closer together. Everyone helped with the move and that helped us to get to know each other even better.

Goran started to work back in the restaurant in the end of May. People are back and they have even more questions about God. Many had a really hard time while in lockdown and some experienced deep loneliness and depression. One man who works with Goran started drinking

more and that brought a big sadness to all the family – he also got divorced which made a situation even worse. But where there is darkness, Jesus's light shines even brighter. They are seeking the hope which Jesus is offering and they see more and more that he is the only hope.

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BRIGHTER.**

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In the summer we were studying the Lord's prayer in our group and at the end we organised a movie night where we watched the movie “War room”. We also invited some non- Christian friends and some came. One of them meets up with Goran for one-to-one Bible study. He has a lot of deep pain from his youth, so he is using drugs to “function better”, as he describes it. Another man has been coming to different events for the last 4 months. He says he is coming because Goran invites him but we all know that



God's word can totally transform his heart and we can all pray for that. He comes to the restaurant just to ask questions about God. He is searching but he is not willing to make any changes. Please pray with us for a deep hunger in people.

Metka is also starting two Bible studies in September with three ladies who want to trust the Lord but do not know him yet. Metka is praying for wisdom and guidance that God will deeply touch those hearts.

This summer we were able to have 2 summer camps. Till the last moment we did not know if we would be able to have them since the Covid regulations were changing all the time. But God made it happen and we filled both camps (children and teens). Children's camp was very encouraging to me. My schoolmate from University called me and enrolled her daughter. We have stayed friends but she has never opened her heart to Jesus. Last year was super hard for her and she remembered the conversations we have had. She wanted to give "something extra" (her words) this summer to her daughter and she thought of me. It was God's miracle since she was very closed for the last two years. God is not done with her yet – what a big God we have. At both camps God was moving children's hearts. We had 60 children and teens this summer. At teen camp we had many of them who had come back from previous

years, so they had heard about God before. We split them all into smaller groups where they were able to ask questions. There were so many good evening conversations. One girl said that she really needed to come back this year because she wanted to see if she really wants to give her life to the Lord. The last day she knew and surrendered her life to Jesus.

The last couple of months have been very busy. Goran started to feel bad and he went to get tested for Covid - the result was positive. We were shocked - we planned so many more things but all we got was a quarantine for 2 weeks. It was a shock at first but we took advantage of it and we really rested. We both got Covid but we both had a mild one (a temperature for a day and we lost smell and taste for 5 days – and thanks to the Lord that was all). Timeja did not get it. It was a good time just being together.

Our family THANK YOU for praying for us and supporting us financially. God bless you all. We love you and thank God for you every day. We could not do it without you ■

## 2020 THE YEAR THAT TURNED LIVES UPSIDE DOWN

None of us has escaped the impact of Covid-19 on our daily lives, but for some, truly enormous challenges have had to be faced during this year. Here, three members of our church family talk about how God has been working in some incredibly difficult personal circumstances.



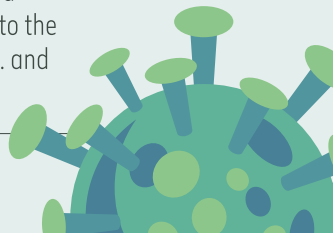
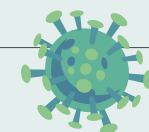
**TREVOR  
McKEOWN**

My story begins just a few weeks before the news of a potential global pandemic broke. My father was living on his own but becoming more and more unsteady on his feet, so much so that he was beginning to fall on a regular basis. Living independently was presenting challenges and raising the question of whether this was now a safe environment for him.

The sequence of events that followed was unpleasant at the time, and the loss that dad would experience in giving up his independence was tangible, especially as he is such a sociable man. However, as we look back we can now see so clearly that God was

working out His plan for him. A plan which would mean dad would no longer spend long hours alone in his wee flat, he would have company, 24/7 care, routine to his day and be looked after to the highest standard. Almost immediately we watched as his mood lifted, and that cheeky smile that we know and love returned. What a relief and blessing, that he had been spared the risks of infection and the loneliness of isolation, brought on by weeks in lockdown.

Dad always loves to hear about family. He was just as thrilled as us when we gave him the news of another little grandchild on the way. We were delighted to hear that our daughter Emma, was expecting our 2nd grandchild in Scotland – excitement had been building in the weeks leading up to the expected arrival and then... pandemic... and



lockdown. What way would this affect us as a family when baby would be born? We had shared in the joy of holding Benjamin a few hours after his birth, but it was becoming clear that this wasn't going to happen second time around. Little Theo was born 2 weeks into the lockdown, his dad waiting in the car for permission to enter the hospital for his birth, and nana and papa anxious by the phone. Week in, week out, we listened to Nicola Sturgeon, Scotland's First Minister, briefing the country regarding lockdown measures. We joked that the latest addition to the family would be walking before we could see him, but our hearts were breaking. Eventually the answer came, we booked our sailing and 4 months later, we were introduced to our little grandson. What joy!

At the height of the crisis we both worked on, sometimes from home, other times I worked in and out of shops, with none of the precautions of PPE. Due to a few of my staff shielding for themselves or family, those of us who remained carried the operational burden. So you can imagine my feelings and emotions, when after long weeks of putting my shoulder to the wheel for my employers, I was forced into furlough, in order that they could maintain some of their profitability. That's business. In order to stay alive, hard choices have to be made.

But, through all of this, I am reminded that man is not in complete control. We kept hearing from world leaders that we will "beat this virus", we will soon be "back to normal" -

whatever that means. They were wrong. We are seeing more and more cases daily, still no vaccine and here we are on the verge of another lockdown or 'circuit breaker'.

Here's my point. God is in control. God is sovereign. God is working out His plan. Even in what seems like chaos. We must reverence and fear Him in the right sense of those words. The world doesn't fear Him and sometimes it takes major events, like a global pandemic, to shake us all up, even God's people. To make us see again that He holds us, our families, our jobs, our health, our world and its leaders, in His total control. We must get back to the basics of His Word, be found in the place of prayer, sharing His truth with all. Let's not look at things with an earthly perspective, but instead have confidence in God and through eyes that have studied His Word, let us live a life shaped by it ■



There is no doubt that 2020 has been a crazy year for all of us, and I don't think I could've ever imagined the whirlwind that unfolded in my life as a result of Coronavirus - not in a million years.

When the Lord led me to take a gap year before university, I thought it would be the perfect opportunity to head back to South

Africa where I spent some time in the summer of 2018 and 2019. After praying about timing and the plans I thought might work, I eventually booked a six week trip starting in March of this year. Little did I know, those six weeks would turn into six months.

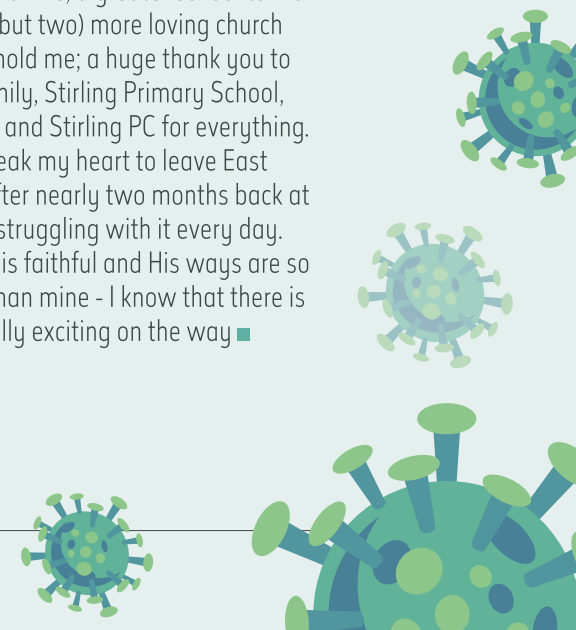
Everything went very smoothly until about two weeks into my trip to East London, when a national lockdown was implemented to curb the spread of Covid-19. We were initially told it would last for three weeks, but of course this virus is more vicious than any human mind could've foreseen and all of a sudden, I was stuck. It's worth noting that to this day, South Africa is still in a level of "lockdown" - those three weeks have been stretched to over two hundred days.

With May, another tough choice arrived - do I opt for an insecure and uncertain repatriation back to the UK, or, as the British government very encouragingly put it, do I stay in South Africa for "some time" longer? Ultimately, my gut and my heart were telling me to stay. Despite missing home and fearing future travel plans, I knew that there was more to be taught in and through my uncertainty and weakness. I was being pushed to take a leap of faith unlike any I'd ever taken before, but honestly, I would do it a thousand times over just to learn an ounce more about God.

When I made the difficult decision to stay away from home for the lockdown, I was terrified. I didn't have a clue what the future held, and I think it might have sent me over

the edge if I'd known I wouldn't see my family again until September - for once, I'm incredibly thankful that I was protected from the specifics. As a self-confessed control freak, I've always battled with the reins being out of my reach; this is obviously a big issue for any Christian and it's one of those sins from which I have prayed for deliverance for years. I am so excited to say that God used 2020 to really and truly teach me the reason why our fickle, infirm minds cannot and should not know the future: the unknown is daunting, but the known is more so. I am not made to be in control, and this truth has finally taken root in my soul - praise God!

The six months that I spent in South Africa passed in the blink of an eye. Time went by so quickly and I had settled so well into a routine that when the news of a secure flight came, I couldn't help but feel a bittersweet sting. I could not have wished for a better family to care for me, a greater school to work in or (not one, but two) more loving church families to uphold me; a huge thank you to the Moore Family, Stirling Primary School, Wellington PC and Stirling PC for everything. It really did break my heart to leave East London and after nearly two months back at home I'm still struggling with it every day. However, God is faithful and His ways are so much higher than mine - I know that there is something really exciting on the way ■





Like most people, my life changed dramatically because of the impact of lockdown. As well as being put on furlough for 3 ½ months, I also had to self-isolate for 12 weeks. I have a medical condition called Crohn's Disease and as a result of this, I'm on treatment which weakens my immune system, making me more vulnerable to picking up infections. During this period my mum was redeployed to work in ICU with COVID-19 patients and my dad was a key worker in the food industry. We decided, due to the increased risks, that it would make sense for me to move out and isolate at my late grandparents' house.

The first few weeks were great. It allowed me time to relax and watch Netflix. It also allowed me to do things that I couldn't have imagined a few months earlier such as going on numerous long walks and even spending time doing some gardening! However, after a few weeks the novelty started to wear off a little and I began to find it more of a challenge to fill my day and keep motivated. As time went on, one of the things I struggled with most was being on my own for long parts of the day. It made me realise how difficult it must be for people who are living on their own all the time.

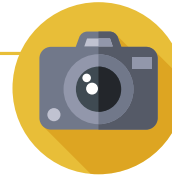
I want to say a massive thank you to the Helping Hands ministry for their support during lockdown. I was also really thankful for

a number of friends from church who, from a safe distance, called by to say hello and kept in touch. Whenever someone made contact with you, it probably didn't seem like a big thing to them, but when you were on the receiving end it was such an encouragement and you realised how much you appreciated them taking the time to do it.

I'm sure we could all agree that these last few months have brought many challenges, some more difficult than others and if we were being honest, we wish it would all go away. I think however that nothing is ever wasted and God has used this crisis to teach us new things. During the 12 weeks of lockdown, one of the things I had valued most was having the opportunity to spend more time each day with God, reading his word and praying. In those challenging times I was drawn to 2 of my favourite verses in the Bible - Romans 8:38-39 which remind us that no matter what we are going through, and no matter how bad things get, nothing can separate us from the love of God. Not even a virus, which has caused so much chaos and disruption, so much pain and suffering, can separate us from God's love.

Since moving back home and going back to work, I've been constantly challenging myself as to how I am now spending my time and trying hard not to forget the lessons that God has taught me through this ■

# DOWN MEMORY LANE...



This year, increased amounts of time spent at home led some of our members to home renovations, DIY, and clearing out the attic! The result was that I was sent a few photos from Wellington in years gone by, which may be of interest – and amusement – to a lot of our readers. Enjoy!

If you have any old photos (minimum 15 years old) of church events or people that you'd like to share, please email the editor: [alisonwoodrow1@gmail.com](mailto:alisonwoodrow1@gmail.com)



BB football team 1978/79

Back row L-R: F White, K Cuthbert, U Kernohan, K Henry, G McCaig, J McAuley, R Steele, S Lamont, N Reid, R Wilson.  
Front row L-R: D Fullerton, D McAleese, D Keys, A Stewart, R Stirling, L Telford, D Alderdice, A Balmer, P McCullough.



**LEFT**

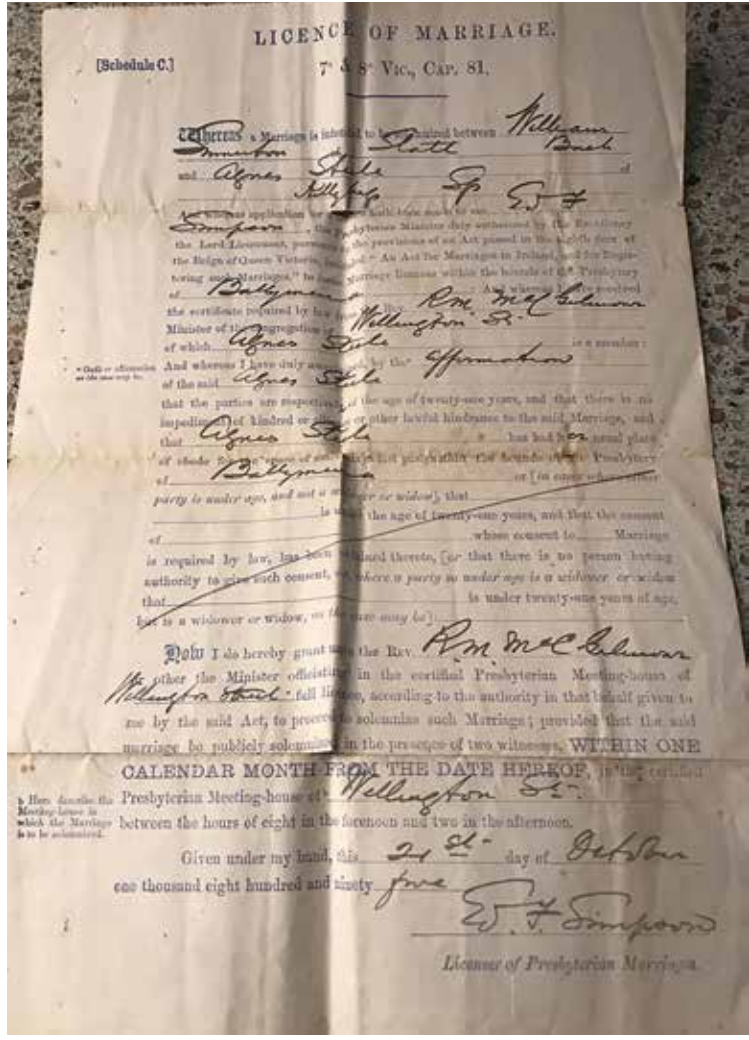
A Boxing Day football match – late 90s. The youth club boys played the leaders. Sadly we don't have a photo of the boys, but the leaders' team is pictured here. One wife told me: "my recollection is they started well, but by the 2nd half, the leaders were seriously flagging!" Perhaps the Christmas Day turkey taking its toll...

**Back row L-R:**  
S Ellis, A Hanna, A Scullion, J McClintock, W Richmond, R Adams

**Front Row L-R:**  
R Willighan, G Marshall, J Sinnerton, W Moody

**RIGHT**

John Sinnerton has provided this photo of his grandparents' wedding licence, dated 1895! The ceremony was to be held in "the Presbyterian meeting house at Wellington Street".



James and Anne McIlvenna sent these pictures from youth weekends gone by. Spot any familiar faces?



# BACK TO SCHOOL

**MATTHEW HOUSTON**



**I went back to school in September. Again. When I went back to university for the umpteenth time in 2015, I was sure that it would be the last time. As I neared the end of my studies in 2018 several people asked if I'd consider applying to train as a minister in PCI.**

I had always ruled it out, saying I lacked life experience and didn't think I had the right sort of personality. That was true. I'd been thinking about ministry for years but insisted to myself, and God, that it wasn't the work for me.



At the same time, Hannah had told me occasionally that she didn't want to be a minister's wife. There was no way that I'd have considered exploring ministry without Hannah being on board.

I had planned, after university, to find work as a lecturer or researcher but academic jobs for historians in Northern Ireland are few and far between, and Hannah and I didn't want to leave the country. I applied, unsuccessfully, for several academic posts while working as an agency worker in Antrim Hospital in October 2018. I didn't mind the job but knew it wasn't what I wanted to do with my life. At that time I began to realise that perhaps my plan for my life wasn't God's plan. Hannah and I also started to accept that God's plan for me might involve ministry: I had an inescapable desire for it, and other people recommending it as a vocation for me showed me that I might have some aptitude for it. Our realisation grew clearer when Hannah told me she could accept being the wife of a minister.

We agreed that I should do PCI's Accredited Preacher Scheme as it would tell us more about whether God was calling me to ministry. I did the scheme and loved it. That, and feedback from a placement in Ahoghill, confirmed that I was at least called to preach. So, after a lot of thinking and prayer, I applied to train as a minister. After a year-long process of interview and placement, I was accepted to study at Union Theological College.

Growing up, Proverbs 16:9 hung at the top of the stairs in our house, daily reminding me that 'The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps.' I've learned the truth of that verse over the last few years. I planned to be a professional historian but God has directed my steps another way. Every aspect of the journey so far has confirmed that. My plans and timings failed, but God's have not. I ruled ministry out because I had no life experience. I believe my two years in the working world before college were God's way of equipping me with life experience.

“

**SO, AFTER A LOT OF THINKING AND PRAYER, I APPLIED TO TRAIN AS A MINISTER.**

”

Please pray for Hannah and me. Pray that we'll continue to know God's guidance, especially as the next couple of years will bring big changes to our lives. Please pray too that, as I train, God will equip me for the task to which he has called me ■

## EVERY MOMENT HOLY

Doug McKelvey  
(The Rabbit Room Press)

This is hands-down the most beautiful book I've ever owned, in every way. *Every Moment Holy* is a collection of newly-written liturgies, or prayers, designed for the times in our lives when we wouldn't necessarily think of praying or worshipping, or which seem distinctly unremarkable and maybe even unholy. The forward says this: "There are no unsacred moments; there are only sacred moments and moments we have forgotten are sacred". Whether at our work, or in our garden. Whether in times of sadness, or in times of great celebration. Whether in the presence of immense beauty, or in front of a pile of laundry – God is there with his child. And so, these are sacred moments.

Some of the prayers can be used in a group / congregation setting, but all of them can be read alone. The idea is not that you would read the book from start to finish, but rather that you would find the prayer that suits your situation, and let it guide your thoughts, prayers and attitudes towards your day.

The topics are wide-ranging, but here are just a few examples:

- For the Washing of Windows
- For Sunsets
- Before Consuming Media
- For the Marking of Birthdays



- Before Shopping
- For One who has Suffered a Nightmare
- For Waiting in Line

And what you'll find on each page are beautiful words, leading our thoughts to God and teaching us to pray in EVERYTHING.

This book comes in several lovely editions and would make a great gift for any age, or perhaps for a family or small group to use together.

The benediction says this:

*"Our thoughts of you,  
O Lord, have been too small, too few...  
There is no quarter over which you  
are not King."*

Alison Woodrow



## WHEREVER YOU GO, I WANT YOU TO KNOW...

Melissa Kruger  
(The Good Book Company)



One of the things that I missed most during lockdown was being able to cuddle up with a book with my grandchildren.

This playfully illustrated rhyming book for 3-6 year olds is a favourite of Toby's, my grandson. It's great for those who are beginning to enjoy imaginative play and dreaming of what they can be or where they could go. There are fun pictures, and the rhymes beg you to join in – whether it's dreams of being a fireman or travelling to the moon.

It's a delightful book, and it finishes with the powerful message that "wherever you go, I want you to know" that the best dream of all is to love and follow Jesus.

Definitely one for your shopping list.

Carol Williams

## WOMEN IN A PATRIARCHAL WORLD

Elaine Storkey  
(SPCK Publishing)

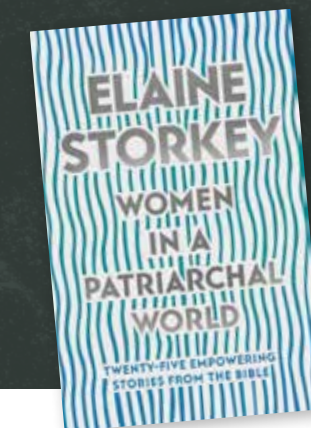


Having heard Elaine Storkey speak, and knowing her passion for justice issues, I was keen to read her latest book. I was not disappointed.

In 25 snapshot stories we see women from the bible from a new perspective: mothers and midwives, a prostitute and a prophet, a business woman and an outcast. Some are famous, like Ruth, others nameless – read the book to find out about the 5 daughters of Zelophehad.

Whatever your age, these short, insightful stories will surprise and enlighten. The challenges we face today are really not much different to theirs. It's an imaginative book which has left me pondering.

Carol Williams





# WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?

Sadly we don't need so many pages for this section of the magazine these days! But here are some moments we wanted to share.

**01-03** Collective had their first in-person night in months on 11 October. The meeting was held in the church, with all the proper measures in place, and although it wasn't like normal, it was a welcome step in the right direction for the young people and their leaders.

**04** Baptisms are ordinarily a regular occurrence in Wellington, but there was an 8-month gap between the last one and Matthew McBride's baptism on 18 October. Matthew is pictured here with his parents, Rian and Laura, and his big brother Thomas.

The DofE Certificate of Achievement is an official recognition, by the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, of just how much a young person achieved by completing their Skills, Volunteering and Physical sections.

It was introduced in response to this unprecedented situation, because we know some young people will not be able to do their expedition to achieve their Award for some time. It's important they receive something formal to celebrate and recognise the vital skills and qualities they've developed and the effort they've put in.

So congratulations to the 6 boys from 2nd Ballymena Boys Brigade who have obtained their Certificates of Achievement!





When you come to church and it looks like this...



As opposed to this...



It's because the Gardening Team, assisted by 5 boys from the BB who are volunteering as part of the Queen's Badge, give of their time each week to maintain the church grounds.

If you'd be interested in joining the Gardening Team, contact the Church Office for details.



# GARDENING TEAM

# KIDS' PAGE

## Competition time!

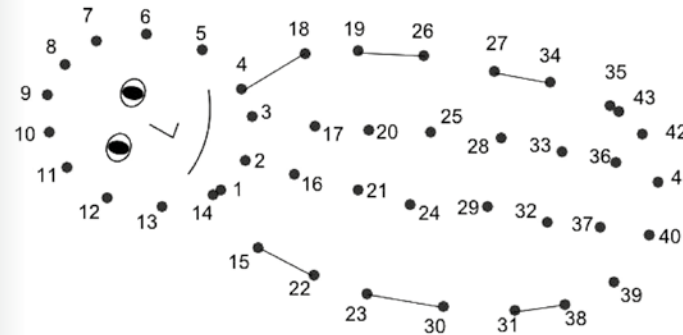
If you'd like to be in with the chance of winning a copy of this brilliant book, answer this question from this edition of our church magazine, and ask your grown-up to email it to: [alisonwoodrow1@gmail.com](mailto:alisonwoodrow1@gmail.com)



**Q:** How many boys from the BB are currently helping out on the Gardening Team?



Connect the dots to see who was born in Bethlehem:



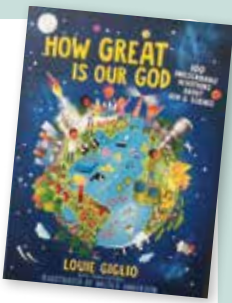
Finish the story with the words at the right.

M \_\_\_\_\_ and J \_\_\_\_\_ traveled to  
 B \_\_\_\_\_.  
 M \_\_\_\_\_ had a baby and named him  
 J \_\_\_\_\_. He was God's Son.  
 She placed J \_\_\_\_\_ in a m \_\_\_\_\_  
 which was a place for animals to eat.  
 He was wrapped in s \_\_\_\_\_  
 clothes, which were strips of cloth.



## Book Review

**How Great is our God**  
 by Louie Giglio



I have recently finished reading the book 'How Great is our God' by Louie Giglio. I really enjoyed it and I want to tell you all about it. If you are like me and you have lots of questions about Science and the world, you really have to read this book! It has helped me to learn more about God and the amazing things he has created. Psalm 147:5 says "Great is our Lord and mighty in power, his understanding has no limit."

In 100 devotions I have found out some fun facts - that just one lap around our sun is about 584 million miles, that there are 165 major rivers across the world and that a butterfly's wings are covered in tiny scales that overlap and soak up the sun's warmth to help it fly. My favourite devotion was number 30, 'That's Amazing!' It was all about the wonderful bodies God has given us. Your nose can remember about a trillion different smells and your heart beats about 100,000 times each day and 36,500,000 times each year. But the most powerful stuff happens inside your heart when you decide to follow Jesus. He gets to work in your life. God is a great big God!

**Isaac Kernohan** age 9

# RAISE YOUR VOICE



We're a church that loves to sing, and we're grateful to the music team for regularly introducing us to wonderful new songs. It's incredible that nowadays we can access such a wealth of musical theology so easily, allowing us to use what other Christians have written to help us in our worship.

With this in mind, we've pulled together a list of songs which we've been learning or are planning to learn in the coming months, as well as ministry songs which have been a blessing in recent services. We would love you to listen to them – both to help us learn them as a church, but also so that they can minister to you and encourage you in your own quiet times.

To make things extra easy, we've compiled playlists on Spotify and YouTube. Simply search for:

**WELLINGTON PC DECEMBER 2020**

## **Natalie Grant**

- No Stranger
- Face to Face
- My Weapon

## **Shane and Shane**

- Come Ye Sinners
- New Jerusalem
- Such An Awesome God
- The Story I'll Tell
- Miracle or Not

## **Christ Church Choir**

- Waymaker

## **Michael W Smith**

- Steadfast Pt 1
- Broken Pt 2
- Hope Pt 3
- Shelter Pt 4
- Blessing Pt 5
- All Is Well

## **Casting Crowns**

- Somewhere In Your Silent Night

## **Sovereign Grace**

- O Come All You Unfaithful

## **Christy Nockels**

- Advent Hymn
- Silent Night

## **Hillsong**

- Seasons
- Prince of Heaven
- When I Think Upon Christmas

## **Matt Papa & Matt Boswell**

- Sing We The Song of Emmanuel

## **Matt Maher**

- Always Carry You

## **Paul Baloche**

- When Love Crossed Over

## **Chris Tomlin**

- Christmas Day
- Hope of Israel



“You have made known to me  
the path of life; you will fill me with  
joy in your presence, with eternal  
pleasures at your right hand”.

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PSALM 16:11

[www.wellingtonpc.co.uk](http://www.wellingtonpc.co.uk)

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