



THE LATEST FROM THE CHURCH:

What's Been Happening

What's Coming Up

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CONNECTIONS MAGAZINE

FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Autumn has arrived and we feel the change in temperatures and notice the darker hours in the evenings. Colder, wet, miserable weather, and pressures on our finances bring real concerns for people, wondering what is coming in the next few dark months and how to face the winter ahead.

At our Harvest Service and our Light Party earlier this month, we could take comfort from all God provides for us, and how he sent Christ Jesus to be the Light of the World for us - let us do our bit for our family, neighbours, community and be a "Spark in the Dark"!

Our magazine is available via our website and we will post to those we know prefer it in paper copy but please feel free to print a copy for neighbours, friends or family.

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Knowing Christ and Making Him Known



@trinityboardmills

It is with sadness that we learn of the passing of several of our members over the last few months and we extend our sympathy to the family circles and friends of

Molly Graham

Sadie Scott

Joe Bell

We also pray for comfort for any who have been touched by bereavement in recent months within their own families and that they may know God's love at this time.

From the Manse

I wonder if you saw the massive pumpkin at Harvest and thought to yourself “what gifted farmer grew such a thing?” Well, it was no farmer, and he was and is not gifted at cultivating the earth. It was I who grew the monster and now have the joy of eating pumpkin soup throughout the rest of the winter.

I’ve been asked by many people how I grew it so big, and the answer always disappoints them. It was neglect and panic. I would forget about the pumpkin plants and then in a flurry of activity during the heatwaves in the summer I would drown them to make up for not watering the plants regularly. The fruit of this activity is the large pumpkin.

Yet, I’ve been reflecting on what I can learn from such an approach to farming and life.

Wisdom says that it was purely by coincidence that anything grew at all, let alone a 30Kg pumpkin. If I were to take that approach to anything else in life, I would not expect it to go well, a flurry of panicked activity will not yield the same result as what careful sustained effort will produce.

Moreso in our spiritual lives, we can neglect God, His Word, His Church, His gifts and go through a spiritual drought of our own making. Then when times become hard, we sprint to the proverbial hose and drown ourselves in religious activity only to relax again when the scorching sun has passed.

Whatever growth may have been gained at that time will surely disappear as we neglect to read, pray, study, meet or serve. As we head into the winter and begin to look again at the familiar stories can I encourage you to not grow your faith the way I grow pumpkins. Daily, regular periods in the Bible and in prayer, weekly habitual worship, and study together in fellowship will see our faith grow strong, our love for Jesus deepen and our joy in each other abound over time.



We just celebrated our very successful ‘Light Party’ which saw up to 200 people come over to the Killaney Football Pitch to enjoy some warmth round a fire, hotdogs, games and crafts in the hall, a fire show from our very own Sam Shaw and fireworks to light up the night. It was great to fill the car park with people from throughout our community, to build new connections and meet some new neighbours. In this magazine you’ll get the opportunity to see some pictures from the event that really capture the warm atmosphere of that evening.

This is the beginning of our winter invitational events in the run up to Christmas. You’ll hear much more about them in the next few pages but each one presents an incredible opportunity to come and bring a friend along whether it be building gingerbread houses, gathering for a Christmas meal together, turning on our Christmas tree lights, or our Carols by Candlelight service.

Each one of these are wonderful moments to easily share the hope of the gospel and the light of Jesus as our days get darker in the winter.

Obituary: Queen Elizabeth II, Beacon of Grace

By Mark Greene

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The first time I ever thought seriously about the Queen was when God told me to. It was 2015. And Elizabeth was 89. I had asked God a specific question: please show me someone in the public eye who is an outstanding whole-life disciple of Jesus, someone whose faith shapes all they do and say. 'Elizabeth' was God's answer. Swift, clear, weighty. And to be shared.

Since that day it has become ever clearer to me that Elizabeth was a gift from God to nation, Commonwealth, and indeed the global community, a beacon of humility, grace, astuteness, good humour, generosity, and deep faith – God's woman, God's follower, God's Queen. Like many I suppose, I had never been a 'royal-watcher'. I admired the Queen, appreciated the clarity and warmth with which she spoke, almost every Christmas, of her trust in Christ and the difference he made to her life, but I hadn't thought deeply about her particular vision or how God might be working in and through her. Yes, she was a remarkable woman, and a remarkable monarch, but what I came to see, and had confirmed by others who knew her better, was that she was first and foremost a remarkable disciple of Christ. As such, she offered us an extraordinary example of consistent godliness in one of the longest and most public global ministries in the history of the world.

Since her death, our screens and papers have been filled with eulogies from family and friends, from former Prime Ministers, commonwealth leaders, world leaders, religious leaders from every major faith, royal correspondents, celebrities, honourees, former staff...

We have heard of her extraordinary dedication to duty, of her dignity, of her diligence, of her capacity to change with the times, of her astute leadership of the Royal Family, of her curiosity and intelligence and her ability to make almost anyone feel comfortable and, more importantly, valued...

We have heard of her contribution to international relations, to trade deals, to tourism, to the Commonwealth, to public morale.

We have heard of her emotional resilience as she dealt with bereavement, and fires, and the divorces of three of her children, and many a scandal along the way, not least around Prince Andrew.

We have heard of her capacity to forgive, not just to shake the hands of people responsible for killing her soldiers and her husband's mentor Lord Mountbatten but do so with great grace and a warm smile, like someone who rejoices in peace and reconciliation. But there has not been much about what made her the woman she was. There has been little attempt in the mainstream media to look at her and her life through the lens of what she said made the difference to her – her faith in Christ.

Indeed, about that, she was crystal clear, and repeatedly so. In her 2014 Christmas broadcast she put it this way:

'For me, the life of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, whose birth we celebrate today, is an inspiration and an anchor in my life. A role-model of reconciliation and forgiveness, he stretched out his hands in love, acceptance and healing. Christ's example has taught me to seek to respect and value all people of whatever faith or none.'

Brilliantly, in an age that is on the one hand increasingly secular, and on the other, fraught by religious conflicts, her approach was winsomely inclusive. She pointed to Jesus and how he expanded her capacity to love people with different beliefs. Her approach was testimonial, not argumentative. She told the world the inspiration that Jesus had been in her own life and left the world to decide if they were interested in being inspired themselves:

'I hope that, like me, you will be comforted by the example of Jesus of Nazareth who, often in circumstances of great adversity, managed to live an outgoing, unselfish and sacrificial life. Countless millions of people around the world continue to celebrate his birthday at Christmas, inspired by his teaching. He makes it clear that genuine human happiness and satisfaction lie more in giving than receiving; more in serving than in being served. We can surely be grateful that, two thousand years after the birth of Jesus, so many of us are able to draw inspiration from his life and message, and to find in him a source of strength and courage.'

More broadly, we can see the influence of Christ on her understanding of her job and how she did it. At the heart of this is the extraordinary impact of one particular moment in the Coronation. It was not when the solid gold St Edward's Crown was laid on her head and she officially became Queen, but the moment that was not televised because it was deemed to be too holy for mass broadcast. It was the moment when, stripped of all her flowing robes, she knelt in a simple white dress and was anointed with holy oil. It was the moment when she dedicated herself to God to serve him by serving her people.

At one level, her Queenship was an accident of birth, an inevitable consequence of her uncle's abdication, but she saw it as God's will, as God's calling, and therefore as something that she would need his help to do. And it was a calling she embraced. Wholly. Royal biographer, William Shawcross, wrote, 'She found, like her mother before her... an almost sacrificial quality at the heart of the service.'

Of course, sacrifice is at the heart of the gospel – Jesus giving his life for ours. And it is at the heart of our own discipleship – taking up our cross daily to follow him. But sacrifice is intertwined with service. We no longer live for ourselves but for God and others. And that is what characterized Elizabeth's approach not only to her own work, but to her understanding of citizenship. So, for example, at Christmas 2012 she said:

'This is the time of the year when we remember that God sent his only Son "to serve, not to be served." He restored love and service to the centre of our lives in the person of Jesus Christ.'

We are meant to be there for one another. Indeed, her broadcasts – Christmas and occasional – tended to highlight the particular qualities she valued – resilience, kindness, neighbourliness – qualities she'd seen in the wartime generation. When she spoke to the nation during the COVID pandemic she focused on those qualities, summoning us to live up to our heritage:

'I hope in the years to come, everyone will be able to take pride in how they responded to this challenge, and those who come after us will say the Britons of this generation were as strong as any, that the attributes of self-discipline, quiet, good-humoured resolve and of fellow feeling still characterise this country. The pride in who we are in not a part of our past. It defines our present and our future.'

Intrinsic to that understanding of 'fellow-feeling' was her understanding of what it meant to be a good neighbour. Indeed, time and again, in her Christmas addresses, she referred to the parable of the Good Samaritan, summoning us to serve our neighbours and our countries in whatever role we found ourselves. Indeed, in 1980 she offered a comprehensive picture of neighbourly citizenship that is unmatched in contemporary public rhetoric. Even Barack Obama was never so far-reaching in his communication of good citizenship. That address highlighted unselfish service as the key to citizenship... and she cited examples from every sphere. From health care to the armed forces, from central government to voluntary organisations, from hospital staff to neighbours caring for neighbours in need. And then she closed that section of her address with these words:

'To all of you on this Christmas Day, whatever your conditions of work and life, easy or difficult; whether you feel that you are achieving something or whether you feel frustrated; I want to say a word of thanks.

'And I include all those who do not realise that they deserve thanks and are content that what they do is unseen and unrewarded. The very act of living a decent and upright life is in itself a positive factor in maintaining civilised standards.'

It is as if the Queen had internalised the truth of Colossians 3:17. Yes, we can... 'do whatever we do for God.'

How refreshing to find a global leader who recognised so clearly the value and beauty of a life lived kindly.

Indeed, Elizabeth's understanding of her role and our nation's role in the world were, it seems, similarly shaped by a robust biblical framework. So back in 1957 she said:

'I cannot lead you into battle, I do not give you laws or administer justice, but I can do something else. I can give you my heart and my devotion to these old islands and to all the people of our brotherhood of nations. I believe in our qualities and in our strength. I believe that together we can set an example to the world which will encourage upright people everywhere...'

In the context of Britain's imperial past this is a remarkable vision. It is not a vision of military superiority, economic dominance, ideological hegemony, creative brilliance, or sporting excellence but of moral example, a vision that would not inspire envy or fear but encourage generosity, justice, kindness, 'uprightness'. It is similar to God's original hope for the people of Israel in the Bible, that they would be 'a light to the nations. Britain's military power had diminished but for her size really didn't matter – even as the granddaughter of a king who had ruled over a quarter of the planet. What mattered was the quality of our example.

We see a similarly robust vision in her commitment to the development of the Commonwealth, arguably one of her greatest achievements. When she became Queen, it consisted of eight nations, primarily ruled by white men. Today, it consists of 54 nations and territories.

How do you turn nations you have conquered, ruled and exploited for decades into friends? How has it happened that, in our deeply fractured world, 54 nations should choose to meet regularly, not out of military expediency or vital economic self-interest but out of a commitment to a common vision for a different kind of world?

The short answer is through the determination, the warmth, and relational skills of the Queen. When she took the throne, she said:

'The Commonwealth bears no resemblance to the empires of the past. It is an entirely new conception built on the highest qualities of the spirit of man: friendship, loyalty, and the desire for freedom and peace. To that new conception of an equal partnership of nations and races I shall give myself heart and soul every day of my life.'

It was another promise she would keep. At the Silver Jubilee, she said that she had witnessed: 'From a unique position ... the last great phase of the Empire into Commonwealth and the transformation of the Crown from an emblem of dominion into a symbol of free and voluntary association. In all history, this has no precedent.'

Where did the Queen get such a vision?

It was an idea that belonged to neither the left nor the right. In reality, it comes straight out of the biblical promise of a day when the tanks will be turned into tractors, or as Isaiah 2:4 puts it, 'swords into ploughshares'. A day when nation will not fight against nation, when peace will reign across the globe. Elizabeth knew that it would only be fully realised when Christ returned and creation is renewed but that did not stop her working to create a context in which understanding could grow, cooperation flourish, and inequalities be addressed.

And if all that were not enough, she seemed to enjoy life – riding and horses and dogs and family and nice clothes and mimicking people and the occasional gin before lunch. But even here in the way she chose to spend her leisure time we saw her Christian devotion expressing itself. She didn't have to invite a different pastor every weekend of her six-week Balmoral holiday to spend time with her family, but she did. She didn't have to drive herself to the Sunday service in the church on the Sandringham estate when she was there, but she often did. She didn't have to find out the names of the Sunday School prize winners and choose and present their prizes, but she did.

There is certainly no doubt about the identity of the King our Queen served. Nor is there any doubt that the prayer that her people have so often prayed (perhaps without realising that it was a prayer) was answered. God saved our Queen. Our Queen was 'gracious' and 'noble' and 'victorious' in the things that really matter – hope and faith in Christ, love of God and of the people she has been empowered to serve.

Indeed, there can be few greater indications of God's mercy and grace to our nation, despite our idolatrous turning away from him, than to have given us a Queen who loved us so faithfully and pointed us to him so clearly.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for the gift of his servant Elizabeth. And may God grace our King in his reign as he graced his mother's in hers.

Mark Greene is co-author of The Servant Queen, and author of The Queen's Way and new release A Life of Grace, a tribute to Queen Elizabeth II. He is Mission Champion at the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity. (www.licc.org.uk).



Sometimes we get some surprises in life, and sometimes they are even nice ones!!
A little late, we heard of a very well deserved surprise that June received back in 2020.

I have been Secretary of Presbyterian Orphans (now Childrens Society) longer than I was treasurer. I was Secretary for First Boardmills initially in Rev Caughey's time and when Sadie Scott retired as Secretary of Killaney and Second, I was asked to become Secretary of the joint congregation.

I didn't realise that it was over 40 years when one day in October 2020 during lock down a man came to the door and presented me with a crystal dish to show the appreciation of the Society of the work done. He wouldn't come in because of lockdown and I was so shocked that I didn't even think about having a photograph taken or ask the man his name. He informed me that normally a special presentation would have been made at the AGM in Belfast but with the pandemic it was decided to come to our home to make the presentation in person.

I was very thankful that they recognised the time even if I had forgotten how long it was. It's good that the work is recognised in some way. June.

If you would like to contribute to the ongoing work of the Children's Society please put donations on the collection plate with your name and Freewill number or pass directly to June - and take a moment to thank her for her wonderful service !





Bringing in the Bales

When I wrote this article, we had just round baled our final two fields of silage for this year. It was a great day, perfect for baling the sweet-smelling grass. The sky was bright blue (so no risk of rain), and the sun shone strongly, with just a rustle of breeze to help the grass dry. Everywhere I looked I saw farmers busy in the fields: cutting silage, spreading lime, or, like us, bringing in the bales.

While we were waiting for the wrapper to arrive, I transported the bales to the top field, nearest the road. Leaving them close to the gate, to save time for my dad who would later bring them the short distance up the road to where we were storing them for winter.

Each bale I put on the bale lifter followed a similar pattern. I drove towards the bale, then reversed back to it, lifted it and headed off in the opposite direction. It's something many farmers have done countless times. But it struck me (it's taken me thirty years to realise this) that what I did with the bale helps us understand how Jesus wants us to respond to His good news, the gospel. I'll let Jesus speak for Himself: "'The time has come,' he said. 'The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!'" (Mark 1:15).

What did Jesus mean? Well, "God's kingdom" is God's rule. And God, simply because He is God, should be in charge of our lives. But we have all rebelled against God's rule: we want to live for ourselves, instead of living for God, who has made us and who loves us so deeply he has actually sent His Son Jesus to die on the cross so that our sinful rebellion can be forgiven.

Where does bringing in the bales come in? Well, just like I had to turn around in my tractor and take each bale in a new direction, Jesus tells us that we need to do this too. We need to "repent" of going our own way, give Jesus the steering wheel of our lives and ask Him to help us live in His way and no longer go in our own wrong direction.

Bringing in the bales also helps us understand something else. When I put the bale onto the bale lifter, I wasn't trusting in my strength to get the bale off the ground; my complete trust was in the hydraulics of the tractor to do the work. Likewise with us, we need to "believe the good news" - to put our faith, not in ourselves, but in Jesus alone. Trusting that through Jesus' death on the cross our sinful rebellion against God is forgiven and that by Jesus' rising from the dead, death has been beaten for us and we now enjoy God's best and forever life.

I would encourage you to please give this serious thought. And to then respond to Jesus. When we do, then we discover, whether we are bringing in the bales, or in any situation whatsoever, that with Jesus at the steering wheel of our lives, we have his strength and wisdom and encouragement, no matter how bumpy the journey may be at times.

This article was first published in Farming Life (2020) and reproduce here with kind permission of Rev Kenny Hanna, Rural Chaplain for Armagh and Down.

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT THE BLUEHOUSES?

Summer 2022 was simply phenomenal. We delivered 97 sessions and 122 different group activities. We engaged with 214 young people, 124 male and 90 female through weekly groups and drop in nights. We also had the privilege of taking young people to both Summer Madness and Summer Camp. We enjoyed our annual week long football camp where we connected with 58 young people, many of which were new to us.



September is always a funny one. Recovering from and processing and evaluating the summer. Team building and staff time together. Strategising, decision making, launching programmes and trying to find rhythm and routine! Across September and October we were blessed with 61 Juniors and 86 Seniors through our doors on our 3 Drop In Nights each week. As a team we have also chatted lots about youth culture and changing and shifting dynamics in how young people engage and therefore how we engage and develop programmes for them.

New Staff - Our new female youth worker, Lydia joined us over the summer. This has really boosted our ability to move forward with new ideas and opens up new doors for our work. We have started a Year 8&9 girls group and also started mentoring in schools and pushing into educational support for those who need additional support

Our educational (tutoring & homework club) and Bluehouses Academy programmes (Joinery, Life Skills & Cookery, Music and Young Leaders) will really take off over this next term. It is exciting to venture into new things but it's a reminder that we need people and resources to sustain it. Please pray for volunteers for drop in nights, helping with homework club, people with the expertise to tutor a young person with education or music or maybe even the time to help keep our centre tidy? Do you have any old instruments that you don't use anymore? Our Music Academy would love to make use of them.



LOUISE'S 30 FOR 30 CHALLENGE - WEST HIGHLAND WAY ADVENTURES

In June 2023, the Bluehouses will celebrate its 30th Birthday! I have taken on the challenge of completing 30 challenges over the next year in celebration of the work of the Bluehouses and also to raise some funds to support the work of the centre and new Bluehouses Academy.



Challenge 1 took place from 21st-28th August as I travelled to Scotland to take on the West Highland Way. A 96 mile trek from just outside Glasgow, north to Fortwilliam. Throughout the walk there was lots of forest, hills, sunshine, rain, stunning views, being eaten alive by midges, meeting people from all over the world and even a few tears on the hard days, but I made it.

After 8 days, 96 miles, 11,000ft of ascent and 207,797 steps I made it across the finish line!

Why am I doing it?

I love the Bluehouses...It's a very special place

We journey and do life with people, families and the wider community in Ballysillan through the good times and the really messy, difficult times too.

We call out their gifts and talents and support them to achieve their potential.

We aim to break the cycle and help each person understand that they are made for more and can do incredible things.

We are a lighthouse on the Hill, shining light into the darkness, restoring hope and making people feel safe, loved, valued and worthy.

We help each person discover who God has made them to be.

Finally but most importantly...We Love Jesus - We are church in action. This is what makes the difference and ultimately changes people's lives.

29 MORE CHALLENGES TO GO...between now and July 2023.

Upcoming Challenges include - doing 30 5k runs, 10k run, half-marathon, learning to crochet, swimming 30 lengths for 30 days and wearing funny outfits for a week.



There are so many ways you can be involved - pray & encourage, donate, take part and take on a challenge or maybe you'd like to come up with a challenge for me to do?

Thank You for your generous support and continued encouragement and prayers.

Louise



Hello folks,

I would like to start by thanking you for your continued support and prayers both for myself as I continue on my ministry training journey and also for Victoria and I as we begin married life together.

Following my summer placement in Annalong Presbyterian, I have returned to college for second year. This year has been a busy one so far with plenty of assignments to keep on top of alongside the dreaded Hebrew and Greek.

The modules I am studying this semester include Irish Church History, tracing the history of Christianity on this island from the time of St. Patrick through to the Reformation and right up to more recent history within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. This semester also includes a module called Reformation Theology: Past, Present and Future seeing how the Reformation and the theology of the Reformers impacts our thinking and ministry. Alongside these we also have a module on mission and weekly classes on preaching.

I am settling into life in the foreign Kingdom of Mourne and beginning to adapt to the commute to college each day. Alongside college, I have had many opportunities to share God's word in various congregations. Life has changed this summer and many more changes await in our journey of ministry but I am very grateful to call Trinity Boardmills my home and for the church family I have there. You are very much in our prayers and we would value your prayers as we navigate married life, employment, study and begin to think about what the future holds for us. In the new year, I will learn of the congregation I will serve as a 3-year assistant and would value your prayers for that.

Psalm 115:1
All for His glory,

Ellis



We highlighted the story of June and her amazing length of service for the Presbyterian Children's Society, and you can find out more on their website about the amazing help that they can offer at just the time a family or single parent may need it the most.

Offering unconditional support in the name of Jesus can be life changing - offering both financial support either as a one off or on a recurring basis, and the prayerful thought and emotional support offered too can really change lives.

Read more here: www.presbyterianchildrensociety.org

Summer Camps and activities have been impacted over the last couple of years, but some of our young people are still getting involved in ministries which run in the middle of the year. Ben fills us in on what a busy summer he has had.

Hello!

For those of you that don't know me, my name is Ben. I've went to church here for all 21 years of my life, and on a typical Sunday morning you would find me hidden in the back corner pretending to know which buttons to press and hoping that all of the mics turn on.

Over the past 2 years, I've been at Belfast Bible College, completing a theology degree. For those of you that don't know, a theology degree is just a fancy way of saying that we study things about God and about the Bible. For example, some days we might be learning about the conquest of Canaan in the Old Testament or maybe other days we would learn about different denominations views on baptism or maybe about the doctrine of the Trinity.

Bible College has given me a diverse education on the things of God. It has caused me to see just how much I don't know and to fall in love more deeply with His precious Word, the Bible.

But it's not all theory, its not all just big words and complicated doctrine. We have an opportunity to put the knowledge we learn into practice through placement.

My placement during the summer was 4 weeks with CEF - Child Evangelism Fellowship. An organisation that we are no strangers to as a congregation. 4 completely different weeks, that were used by God in different ways to shape and mould me as I served Him.



Week 1 saw a trip to Portstewart for Northeast Down Area's Inters Camp. So, this was young people aged 12-15, who came from places like Bangor, Newtownards, and Portaferry to name a few. It was a brand-new experience for me as I'd never met any of the young people or team before doing the camp, so the first couple of days were all about names and introductions. The camp was held in Portstewart Primary School, which was handy to Morelli's or the beach but not so handy to showers, so two trips to the swimming pool were required to help with the smell. It was rough. Despite the lack of showering facilities, we had a really enjoyable week and God truly blessed our time together. Some of my favourite times where our discussion groups at night before bed. I was surprised by the lack of Biblical knowledge some of these guys had but as leaders we were honoured to teach them stories and concepts from the Bible that we might normally take for granted.

One young man in particular, didn't know lots of Biblical facts but had such an enthusiasm to find out more. He didn't own a Bible of his own. As leaders we decided to get one for him, but to our delight we didn't need to, as he decided to take it upon himself during our shopping trip to Coleraine to go to the Faith Mission and buy himself his very own Bible.

Another highlight of that week was seeing one of the girls become a Christian. Right at the end of the week after hearing all the teaching, she chose to put her trust in Jesus as her own personal Saviour.

So that was week 1 in Portstewart, and then my summer saw a quick detour away from placement for a wee family holiday. It was thoroughly enjoyed. A quick turn around (8 hours to be exact) between the holiday and the next week of placement was somewhat stressful, but we got there. Luke and I, hopped on a bus to Dublin, to catch a flight to exotic Scotland. I promise it was cheaper to fly from Dublin.

Week 2 in Scotland was a week I won't forget in a long time. There were 4 of us that travelled from NI, Luke, Ruth, Jack and myself and we joined Simon and Hannah Snodgrass, the local CEF workers in that area of Scotland. Oh and I can't forget about baby Edith.

Scotland is incredibly different from Northern Ireland, only a stone's throw away, but yet so lost in so many ways. Most children here have some loose church connection or maybe at least know some of the Biblical stories, but in Scotland very few even know the basics.

We were based between Glasgow and Edinburgh in a little town called Shotts. We knew it was a proper mission team as we stayed in a church hall, showered in the leisure centre and were fed so well in different people's homes.

Our main focus during the week was carrying out 3 different 4-day clubs in the local area.

One of the towns, a little place called Chapelton, was challenging as no kids turned up any of the days we were there. I think it was frustrating as there were children around just none willing to come to the club.

Another of the clubs was in a place called Armadale, it was encouraging as there were a couple of kids who came along each day, and they had such enthusiasm to be there.

The final club, our evening one was in a housing development called Greenrigg. We had been told about the reputation of this place, about how it was going to be chaos and nothing like we have ever seen before, so I'll admit I was a little worried going into it, but God was so good and blessed us with an amazing 4 nights of club. I had the privilege of teaching a Bible lesson, taking a quiz and organising some games at the beginning.

A really good group of about 20 came each night, with such enthusiasm. Thankfully we were able to use an old church building, so we didn't have to worry about the weather. It was busy and loud at some points, the age range was sometimes 4 to about 15, but it was definitely my favourite part of the week.

One night at club, we were in full flow of the Bible story, and we heard the door open behind us. One of the young guys walked in and sat down, holding a large chip that he'd just bought from the chippy. He decided to offer everyone in the rows around him a chip, distracting everyone from the Bible lesson. It was definitely an unexpected distraction but at least he was sharing!

Scotland was intense but we always made sure to have fun as a team. Trolley racing, gaming and hide and seek in the dark where some of the favourites!



I was well out of my comfort zone during some parts of that Scotland trip, but God sustained me and taught me so much about relying on Him and not doing things in our own strength.

Just to give you a full picture of my summer the next week between placement things, saw me agree to stay in a tent with 3 other lads as we toured about sunny Donegal. Well the weather wasn't exactly warm and sunny... more like wet and windy!

After drying off for the hundredth time, having very little sleep but the best craic in Donegal it was time for week 3 of placement. I was back to familiar territory Lagan Valley Junior Camp in Kilkeel.

Having served at this camp for a number of years now, it was really good to be back in person after Covid. David and Heather Cowan led the camp and this time we had a team of about 20 leaders and about 65 children, aged 9 to 11. Becky was another leader on our team and it was really good to have Fern join the team as a leader at her very first camp.

Some of the highlights at this camp were the team competitions, real life Mario Kart races, the talent show and quiet times in our dorm. The enthusiasm and comradery of the kids at this camp was phenomenal. It is always a pleasure to lead an activity or teach a Bible lesson.

Our stories all week were about the life of Elijah and we enjoyed hearing testimonies from some of the leaders in our evening meetings as well. One of my favourite parts of camp is the final meeting on Friday night, the testimony time. All the campers have an opportunity to come to the front and tell their friends the story of how they became a Christian. It is amazing to see the faith that some of those children have and the assurance they have in Jesus. It is always a powerful meeting in which the leaders are inspired by the campers.



This picture was taken in Kilkeel believe it or not, it was the really warm week at the start of August. There was never any concern about rain but we did have to deal with a lot of sickness due to the heat, our first aider was very busy but the whole team rallied together, a few sleepless nights, messy clean ups and a lot of cups of water and we got through it. I believe that God sustained us as a team through that, providing the right amount of energy and sparing us from sickness until after camp.

Junior Camp always has a great atmosphere about it and this year was no exception. It was such a rewarding week and I'm excited for next year already.

The next week was my first week at home after 6 away, so as you can imagine I lay low. Then came the final week of the summer, and my final week of placement.

Week 4 was back to Kilkeel for Teen Camp 2. A crazy camp with 90 odd people involved, I am aware at this point that I've said every week was unreal - but it's true, this one was no exception.

This camp involved activities such as climbing a mountain, a water fight and some outdoor pursuits. The age range at teen camp is 14 to 17, so it was a little different to my previous three weeks of placement.

My roles varied throughout the week, but I found myself doing a range of things like hosting a social, making a campfire and dorm competition (which also meant giving lots of people terrible forfeits...which I enjoyed). I also had the opportunity to speak to the young people on the Sunday night on the theme of 'Transformed Versus Conformed'. It was based on Romans 12:2-3 which says,

'Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.'

There were many great discussions in dorm time, about deep theological issues, and it was an encouragement to see so many young people wrestle with these issues. God was truly working amongst these young people. Exam results were looming for so many of them, so we were able to point them towards what is important in life despite what they got.

Possibly the biggest encouragement of this week was seeing one of the girls come to know Jesus as her personal Saviour. It was quite a moment to see someone stand up the day after becoming a Christian and profess to her peers that Jesus is Lord.

So that was my Bible College placement, a week in Portstewart, Scotland, and two weeks in Kilkeel, it was very busy but very rewarding. God definitely blessed me through all of the different experiences. I'm currently four weeks deep into my final year of my theology degree and my brain is melted but we will get there.

As to what's next...I don't know yet, I'm still awaiting God's guidance and leading for the future. I would love it if you could pray that I'd have clarity and peace over my future in the coming months.

Thanks to anyone who prayed for the teams over the summer it was greatly appreciated and if you have any questions or want to hear more stories feel free to stop by the back corner, I'd be happy to talk about it. Thanks.





Christmas is just around the corner,
and we have a few dates for your
diaries so you don't miss out!

Trinity Women Christmas Night



When? 2nd December 7:30pm

Where? McKee Hall

Cost: £10

*Contact a member of PW committee
or email office@trinityboardmills.org
for more details.*

Sunday 4th December 2022 - we will bring our gifts to be forwarded and distributed by the Belfast City Mission (BCM) to families in need this Christmas time. As well as age-specific gifts, non-perishable foodstuffs are always welcome. Gifts should not be wrapped but wrapping paper of course would be appreciated.

Monday 5th December 2022 - Members, friends, and neighbours in the local community are invited to a **CHRISTMAS LUNCH** at 12.30pm
The guest singer will be Mr John Porter and the event will finish around 2.30pm.
To have your name included please speak with George Hanna or Angela Patterson.

Sunday 18th December 2022 - Family Service @11.30am and our Carol Service at 4pm

Sunday 25th December 2022 - Christmas Morning Service 10 am

There have been recent changes to our graveyard rules, and a copy of these is now attached for our information.

Trinity Presbyterian Church Boardmills



Graveyard Management and Fees

Effective: 1 June 2022

Trinity Presbyterian Church Boardmills, 35 Church Road, Boardmills, BT27 6UP

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105216)

Minister: Rev. Richard Patton

Foreword

The graveyards at Trinity are available to and reserved for church members. However, this term (member) as used previously in this particular context has led to some confusion. This is due in some part to the fluid nature of connections to the congregation. Some who may not worship with us regularly because they have moved away, or perhaps have grown up in the congregation and have a family connection here but have no direct involvement in the life of the congregation, will often maintain this loose connection by visiting occasionally and contributing financially in some form to the funds of our congregation. We recognise these historical contexts, and do appreciate the financial support. However, those who have no regular involvement in the life of the fellowship are perhaps better classified as 'subscribers'. Membership of the church family is altogether different, and outside the bounds of this particular document.

As this document is principally concerned with financial matters the term 'contributor' is used throughout in place of member/subscriber or any other descriptor.

Costs in relation to maintenance of the three graveyard sites we have here at Trinity Boardmills are considerable and constantly rising. Effectively this has meant that the Church has been subsidising this routine maintenance. Our charges have therefore undergone a full review, taking into account typical charges applying elsewhere and the considerable annual maintenance requirements pertaining here.

Fees:

With effect from 1 June 2022 the following will apply:

	Qualifying Contributors	Contributors	Non-Affiliated, Non-Contributing Persons
New Grave Plots	£500	Not Available	Not Available
Interment Fee	£100*	£300	£450
Transfer of Grave Plots	£100	£250	£400
Erection of Memorials	No Charge	£30	£100
Burial of Cremated Ashes (Existing Plots only)	£50	£75	£100

* Not applicable for a new plot

For the purposes of interpretation and clarity the following principles apply:

Qualifying Contributors - Those who have contributed for each of the previous three years and whose contributions for each of those years have averaged at least £120 pa.

Contributors - Those who have not met the contribution levels described above.

Non-Affiliated, Non-Contributing - Those who do not meet either of the qualifications outlined above, but have a grave registered in their name or have permission from a grave-holder to bury.

Transfers - Requests to Transfer must be made in writing to the Church Committee for approval or otherwise.

Miscellaneous

- Burial Certificates are required by Government Regulations to be surrendered on or before dates of funerals, with the appropriate interment fee.
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- Applications for interment are to be made to the Graveyard Convenor and a Graveyard Registration card is to be produced.
-
- Right of Burial is to be registered in one name only - joint ownership is not permitted.
-
- Planting of flowers or shrubs is prohibited as graves must be sown out in grass.
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- No person is allowed, under any circumstances whatsoever, to enter the graveyards to erect headstones, surrounds, open graves, or make any alteration to burying ground, without first consulting with the Church Committee or the Convenor, and obtaining permission. Every proposal in this respect shall be in writing accompanied with a plan drawn to scale and containing the detailed particulars.
-
- Proprietors are required to keep their graves in good order, and all discarded materials such as flowers and wreaths are to be placed in the appropriate waste receptacles.

Graveyard Convenor:
Mr John Price

The Church Committee, at their absolute discretion, reserves the right to circumvent any of the above rules or principles at any time or for any particular reason or situation and their decision shall be final and binding at all times.

There were some lovely occasions to celebrate over the summer with 4 weddings!
Congratulations to all our lovely couples !



Ellis & Victoria



Chris and Jenny



Robbie and Naomi



David & Rachel



TRINITY SPORTS CONNECT

It was great to be back again at Trinity Summer Camp in August. We had amazing weather for the week, and in typical Northern Ireland style only we could complain that it was too hot on the one week of summer all year!

Our primary aged session ran up at Killaney Hall and Football Pitch and we had football, games and craft for everyone to get involved in. We loved being able to get outside for the full week and made good use of the new marquee to shelter from the sun and not rain this time!

Our Tots session met at McKee Hall at the same time as the Primary age, and they had lots of fun playing games, doing craft and singing & dancing.

Our week wouldn't have been complete without our Annual Water Fight and Slide with the teens - which you can see from the pictures the leaders loved getting involved in.



We had our annual Harvest Service at the beginning of October, and as always the church looked beautiful with the windows and vestibule being decorated to reflect God's very gracious and plentiful bounty to us.





You are welcome here
Come join us for services on a Sunday morning or evening or
check out our website for what else goes on during the week