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The Chronicle



The magazine of
Newtownbreda (St. John's)
Presbyterian Church



EDITORIAL

This issue reports on the Annual General Meeting when the church's year was reviewed and plans for the future outlined. The need for volunteers was voiced again, and thanks were offered to those who have already contributed so much to the life of the congregation. While Easter is late this year, it is never too late to experience the real meaning of the resurrection and begin to serve the risen Christ in all sorts of ways. The Mission Plan issues a challenge to everyone of us to take risks for Him, as we are sent into the world to spread the gospel message.



From the Study

‘Let him easter in us, be a dayspring to the dimness of us, be a crimson-cressed east.’ (G.M.Hopkins)

Easter is an event we often think about as something which happened outside ourselves and was witnessed by others long ago. However, the poet, Hopkins, suggests that we can experience something of the resurrection within our own lives: the truth of the risen Jesus can be more immediate to our own faith; the resurrection affecting our lives now.

Looking at the Gospel, the writer Gerard Hughes, recognises three features common to those who found the risen Christ.

The first comes across as being in a negative frame of mind. Mary Magdalene is distraught: the disciples on the road to Emmaus are down and disillusioned: the disciples are behind closed doors: Thomas is in doubt. This suggests that there is a particular way of coming to know the risen Christ, only when we have experienced some kind of death, some disillusionment with ourselves or others, some sense of meaninglessness or fear and we have not tried to run away or hide from it. Our very pain and helplessness create the condition in which Christ will show himself to us.

Another feature common to the resurrection accounts is how slow those to whom Christ appears are to recognise him. Mary mistakes Jesus for the gardener: the disciples, by the time they reach Emmaus have walked quite some distance before they sense who it is with them. We close the risen Christ out by our over familiarity with the Gospel story, by our inner scepticism; but as our faith grows we come to know the resurrection as something happening to us now. He enters through the closed doors of our minds and emotions, closed through our fear of ourselves and fear of others. As he comes, he gives us hope where we thought there was none and gives us the vulnerability and strength to be open to others where we thought first of our own needs and security.

The third feature common to the resurrection appearances has to do with commissioning: those to whom Jesus appears are charged to go and tell others. “As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you....” The spirit of the risen Christ was found and known as the Church was formed and began to serve him and take risks for him.

The resurrection is not just a doctrine of faith. It is more than hope when we die. We will come to know the risen Jesus, perhaps gradually, as when we open ourselves to him in our needs, and lean upon him in our service. This Easter, let us all try that in our own lives, and as a congregation, prompted by our Mission Plan we strive to grow both in quiet meditation and in opportunities to volunteer our help. Let the risen Christ “easter in us.”

Wishing you all a very good Easter season:



Wilfred Orr

‘Holy Ground – Common Ground’ a Celtic Passion

It’s almost time for this unique event: more worship than drama. Our church will be full of the sound of music, arranged and brought by the well known McPeak family, much of it the haunting and catchy sound of Irish pipes, violin and voice in the Celtic tradition. This is a cross community and cross cultural evening in which we remember the death of Christ and celebrate his resurrection: a night not to be missed. If you have not already done so, make sure of your ticket. Phone Matilde Stevens or Mr. Orr and plan to come for 8.00 p.m. on Friday evening 15th April.

Christian Aid Week



This will be held as usual in the middle of May. Fiona will be looking for a small army of volunteers to help with house to house collection in the locality of the church. A couple of evenings during the course of the week will cover it. We have a wonderful bunch of ‘regulars’ but could always do with more. If you haven’t really thought seriously about it before, then maybe this is the year! We would be very glad to have your help. There is a very needy world out there, and Christ gives us an opportunity to do something practical about it.

Volunteers required:

Our congregation is run by committed volunteers to whom the warmest tribute is paid, but we need more. At present, we have waiting lists for some of our organisations. One way to react to this is one of smug satisfaction. But there is another way! Children who want to be part of us and with friends already in our organisations are being turned away. Parents who would like to have their children grow up under our influence are being disappointed. For example, work that might grow within our bulging 'Carers and Toddlers' group is being thwarted for want of a few motherly types who could give a Tuesday morning to make coffee and talk to carers. Don't let it fall on those who are already volunteering in some way. There seems to be a growth of children in the area at present: nursery schools are full and primary schools seeing modest growth. Let the church grow. As the old hymn puts it: 'The fields are all white.....'.



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

As our season comes to an end, we have been **“Stirred to Action”** by our leader Lorna Gray. With the support of the committee we enjoyed a programme of interesting speakers, and were encouraged to know that we are helping to fulfil our purpose of supporting missionaries at home and abroad. Our annual fundraiser this year is a concert in March by Jubilate, led by our Musical Director David Stewart.

On our Visitors' night we were pleased to have so many from churches in the area to hear our speaker Pamela Forrest on **“Working with Fashion, Walking with Christ”**.

We continue to keep contact with the PW in Clontarf, Dublin and are hoping to travel there in April to enjoy a day of friendship including a visit to their Manse. The PW Rally will be held on Thursday 26th May in Church House at 2pm, and we hope to welcome our friends from Clontarf for lunch in Olio's Restaurant beforehand.

Any woman in the congregation will be very welcome to join us at the start of the new season in the autumn, but in the meantime here's hoping everyone has a good spring and summer.

Patricia Ferguson



Find us on
Facebook

We now have a presence on Facebook!

A recent Facebook wall status from one of our past members:

“Stevie Pointon had social networking when he was a kid. I think back then it was called ‘outside’ ”

... that was then, this is now! Over the last few years, members of the I.T. Sub-Committee have worked on developing our congregational website. We continue to update news and calendar information, add photographs from congregational events and provide an internet presence for many of our organisations. The announcements are uploaded to the website every weekend and (when we’re in the Church!) the sermons are available for download at any time!

But, recently, the ‘next big thing’ has been online social networking sites, with Facebook leading the way. Many churches have a Facebook page which members and friends of the congregation can ‘like’ and, recently, we became one of those churches. The page provides some basic information on our location and a link to our congregational website. So, if you are on Facebook, search for ***Newtownbreda (St John’s) Presbyterian Church*** and ‘like’ us now!

And if it’s a while since you’ve had a look at our website, check it out at:
<http://www.newtownbreda.org/>

Simon Doherty

"Too many TOMATOES!!!
Ormeau Churches Together Community Big Breakfast
22nd January 2011
Challenge for all Churches

We were very encouraged by the turn out of one hundred people who got up early to attend this year`s inter Church breakfast. Among the many attendees of The Ballynafeigh Clergy Fellowship was the Rev Morris Gault the new minister from Cooke. This year we were very pleased to have as speakers our Moderator Dr. Norman Hamilton and Duncan Morrow, director of The Community Relations Council in Northern Ireland .

Norman began by commending Ballynafeigh`s good track record of ecumenical activity over many years. He stressed not only the importance of this work but also the way it provided an example to others. He then went on to challenge us to get more involved with people from different faith backgrounds and perspectives. He continued to warn us that there remain deep divisions within our communities and things may not have moved on as much as we might like to think. He also expressed his disappointment with the government CSI consultation document which he felt actually encourages division and differences instead of a greater integration of the communities Duncan Morrow then chaired an animated discussion on community issues including how the churches can contribute towards making a meaningful contribution to permanent peace

Lastly a special thanks to Messrs Robinson, Guiler & Meek for their enthusiastic culinary skills displayed with great ac-

claim on the Friday evening while they multitasked cooking bacon and running a Beetle Drive. Had we realised their skills we would have given them the tomatoes to cook as well and we would not have had so many left over!



Janet and Bruce Robinson cooking in the kitchen with Lynn Jennings, St Jude's



The Moderator Rev Norman Hamilton addressing the Big Breakfast!



Raymond McNeill with Canon Norman Jardine, St Jude's



Rev Newell and his wife Val with Rev Orr carrying the PA system



TWENTY YEARS AGO.....



The spring edition of the 1991 of the Chronicle detailed that

- Rev Ian Crooks was the assistant minister
- Rev Mooney showed slides of his trip to the Holy Land to the PWA
- Mac Allen thanked the church for the new installation of the Loop Hearing System
- Fiona Doherty encouraged the congregation to have Traidcraft evenings in their own homes, suggesting ‘taster’ nights of for instance the cashew nuts which were essential to the Zambian economy
- Mr McCully, the organist, advertised for young musicians to come forward to play in the 150th anniversary celebrations planned for 1992
- Trevor Pollock, the Congregational secretary, noted the church’s financial shortfall, but also the significant increase in the Freewill Offerings as a result of appeals
- At the AGM Hilary McCourt reported on the newly constituted Young Women’s Group
- The young people of Focus performed a short pantomime entitled ‘Robin Hood’
- Monthly plans for 1992 celebrations included anniversary services, a week of renewal, a weekend of celebration, a bible week, a Flower Festival, concert and performance of ‘The Messiah’
- Ronnie Ross wrote how on 4th April 1891 fifty years after the founding of the congregation, the foundation stones of the present church were laid in a ceremony led by the Mayor of Belfast Alderman Connor. The building work was carried out by the firm of Robert Corry’s, and the architect was Vincent Craig, brother of Lord Craigavon, the first Prime Minister of Northern Ireland. The minister of the church was Rev Robert Workman and the stone was laid by Mrs Workman Senior of University Square and Mr McCrum of Armagh, after which inscribed silver trowels were presented to them both by the congregation.

NB One of the silver trowels is on display in the nave of the church nowadays

Habitat for Humanity



On Saturday the 26th of February I, along with a number of other people, abseiled down the side of Dromore Viaduct to raise money for Habitat for Humanity. Although I am sure lots of you know about the work Habitat does through teams which have gone on Global Village trips through St John's, here's some more detail about Habitat for those of you who don't!

Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit, non-denominational Christian charity, open to those of all faiths and none, dedicated to eliminating poverty housing and making adequate, affordable shelter. Since its foundation in 1976 Habitat has built more than 350,000 houses worldwide for more than 1.7 million people. A Habitat home is completed somewhere in the world every 10 minutes!

This summer I will be travelling to Ethiopia with a group of 13 people, including Duncan Orr, from all over Northern Ireland to work alongside local people building houses in some of the communities there. Ethiopia has a desperate need of simple, decent, affordable housing. 85% of houses have mud or thatch walls and 73% of people do not have access to safe drinking water. In order to travel we have to do a lot of fundraising to cover the costs of transport and also to pay for the homes we will be building.

The abseil was my first big fundraiser and it was a huge success! I went to Dromore, after being dragged out of bed at 7 on a Saturday morning, not prepared for how high the Viaduct was going to be. 74 feet is a lot taller than I was expecting! The other people abseiling with me were all very nice and we all panicked together as each one of us went over the edge and a smaller and smaller group was left at the top! Standing waiting 74 feet up and getting yourself over the edge were definitely the most nerve wracking parts! But we all made it down safely and wondered what we'd been worrying about in the first place! So thanks to everyone who sponsored me to take part in this abseil, I really appreciate it and your money is going to a wonderful charity doing amazing work!

Ruth Agnew



Ruth abseiling down the Dromore Viaduct for Habitat for Humanity



400TH ANNIVERSARY OF KING JAMES BIBLE

On 2nd May 2011 the King James or authorized version of the Bible will be 400 years old! The occasion will be marked by the issue of a commemorative set of stamps and by an exhibition of Bibles in Bristol in July. Obviously there have been many versions since 1611 and to some degree more modern ones have become more popular in recent times. **In fact a survey by the Daily Mail (23/11/10) indicated that 51% of under 35's did not know what the authorised version was, compared with 28% of over 55's.** But when the KJV came into being it had an enormous effect on people's lives, and while its language and terminology may be archaic today, then it was the everyday speech of ordinary people, and its language has become entwined into English literature over many generations and in many parts of the English speaking world.

Before the Reformation most Bibles were in Latin and Greek, which meant ordinary people relied on the clergy to interpret the scriptures for them, or else their understanding was through religious plays and oral traditions, where they heard about the Bible rather than being able to read it for themselves.

Early attempts to bring the Bible to the ordinary man were rare, but examples would be the Anglo Saxon and Lindisfarne Gospels. Wycliffe's "Middle English" version in 13th century was a translation of the Latin Bible itself written in the 4th century. However the revival of learning in the Renaissance period allowed increased knowledge and understanding of Hebrew and Greek scriptures. A new translation of the New Testament into Greek in the 1500's by a Greek scholar called Erasmus, who spent time in England with English scholars, was used by William Tyndale who translated it into English.

Soon new versions came into being, each building on a previous one---the Coverdale Bible in 1535, two years later the Great Bible for use in parish churches, the Geneva Bible in 1557 and then revisions of the Great Bible called the Bishop's Bible which remained in use until King James convened a Hampton Court Conference in 1604. There they decided to provide an entirely new translation from the original scriptural languages. Work started in 1607 and after drafting and redrafting it was completed for publication in 1611.

No further revisions were made for 270 years, although some translation amendments were introduced in the 1700's. A full revision known as the Revised Version was published in 1881. Since then many different versions have come into being, each having their own nuances or slant depending on the objectives and makeup of the project groups involved, the New English Bible, Revised Standard Bible and the New King James being good examples.

A 90 minute DVD on the King James Version called *The Book That Changed the World* priced at £12-99 is now available in shops. It is a drama documentary on how the King James Bible was born, directed by the BAFTA and EMMY award winning director Norman Stone.

BIBLE QUIZ

1. What language was the Bible originally written in?
2. How many books are there in the Bible?
3. How many books are there in the Old Testament?
4. How many books are there in the New Testament?
5. What is the longest book in the Bible?
6. What is the shortest book in the Bible?
7. How many chapters are there in the Bible?
8. What is the shortest chapter in the Bible?
9. What is the longest chapter in the Bible?
10. When did the Bible first use chapter and verses?
11. What is the longest verse in the Bible?
12. What is the shortest verse in the Bible?
13. Is the Bible the best selling book of all time?
14. Who was the oldest person in the Bible?

Answers on page 15

The Message

**Our job isn't to change the message.
Our job is to let the message change us**

CELTIC BLESSING FOR HOSPITALITY

I saw a stranger yestreen,
I put food in the eating place
Drink in the drinking place
Music in the listening place
And in the sacred name of the Triune
He blessed myself and my house
my cattle and my dear ones
And the lark said in her song
Often, often, often
Goes the Christ in the stranger's guise

The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** is over 60 years old and with television and computers we are all conscious that we live in a 'global village'. This makes us all too aware of our common humanity with people from other lands and cultures, and how we should desire common standards for all persons irrespective of race, religion or jurisdiction.

Article One:

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood

Article Two:

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore no distinction should be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non self governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

But how do we individually put these rights into practice in our own daily lives in the way we interact with other people who are different from ourselves? We may be rationally anti racist and against discrimination on the grounds of identity, but still be subject to stereotypes inherited from our culture and upbringing.

Try this exercise at home or with a friend:

Write down the first thing that comes into your head (without censorship) when you read each of the following categories.

People with red hair; women drivers; gays; members of the travelling community; Americans; social workers; Roma people; unemployed people; soccer fans; politicians; asylum seekers.

What stereotypes are you carrying without even realising?

(source What the Bible says about THE STRANGER, Kieran O'Mahony : Irish Inter Church Meeting, AICCMR)



Robin Mark is a Northern Irish Christian singer, songwriter, worship leader and recording artist based in Belfast. Robin has written several songs sung throughout the world. He is best known for “Days of Elijah”, “Revival”, “All for Jesus”, “The Wonder of the Cross”, “Not by Might” and many more. He has published 13 albums in total with sales of over 2 million world wide and has won the GMA’s international award. He recorded his latest album in Bangor Elim Church in January, an event at which the editor was present enjoying an uplifting evening of inspiring worship music.

Answers to Bible Quiz

1. *Hebrew and Aramaic for Old Testament, Greek for New Testament,*
2. 66 3. 39 4. 27 5. *Psalms* 6. *2nd John* 7. 1,189 8. *Psalm 117* 9. *Psalm 119* 10. *The Geneva Bible 1560* 11. *Esther 8,9* 12. *John 11, 35*
13. *Yes estimates between 2-6 billion, where Mai Zedong and the Quran 800 million* 14. *Methusaleh recorded as living 969 years*

Missionary Memoirs

Rev Joe Mooney, our Senior Minister for many years, now lives in retirement in the Dean Crookes Fold on the Upper Newtownards Road. Despite being in his 90's Joe has not been idle, and he has written an inspiring account of his time in Nigeria as a missionary, which he has given the editor permission to summarize here....

Joe felt called to missionary work as a result of a talk in a Boys' Brigade Bible class in Oldpark Presbyterian Church. In 1937 he applied to the Bible Training Institute in Glasgow and became a student there travelling back and forth on the boat for two years when he had many an adventure, including losing his pyjamas to a fellow traveller who thought they were supplied free by the Steamship Company! By the time he had been accepted by the Sudan Interior Mission, war had broken out and he celebrated his 23rd birthday on board ship. He spent his first year learning Hausa, a tonal language where the word for 'hyena' and 'dust' are spelled the same way creating much confusion if the wrong tone is used.

He began his missionary work by 'trekking' - a prelude to church planting-going out into the bush on a bicycle for two weeks at a time with a local boy, and staying in mud huts in various villages. He tried to teach the children to read and write, and treated villagers' ailments with Epsom salts and sodium bicarbonate, using the idea of a physician to tell how Jesus could help people. After two years Joe was invited to speak at an Easter missionary conference where he ended up with malaria. However when he recovered, his return journey turned out to be very eventful, as his canoe was rowed out to the wrong steamer, and he ended up on a boat belonging to the manager of the River Canteens along the Niger river with a full bacon and egg breakfast the next morning, something he had not tasted for some years!!

On a visit to the Qua Iboe mission once he got left behind by mistake on the railway platform, so had to take a goods train with no seats and bare floors until an inspector of the railway befriended him. He hooked his beautifully appointed carriage onto the goods train and gave him a lift, in exchange for Joe sharpening his razor blades which were in short supply in war time!



Joe goes on to describe how his 18 month courtship of his wife Margaret was conducted completely by correspondence, after an initial meeting at Bible College many years earlier; how he sent money for her to buy herself an engagement ring and it was not until when home on furlough much later that they managed to spend time together as she completed her Nursing training. She then obtained a post in a leper settlement in the north of Nigeria, and when they got a replacement for her some months later she met up with Joe again complete with a dose of malaria, passed her language exam the next day and got married the following one!

They were then assigned to church planting at Angwa Takwa, an isolated outpost with the nearest mission fifty miles away, and they were there for over seven years, with Joe preaching the Gospel and Margaret nursing and pulling teeth. Their son Gordon was born there and locals had never seen a white baby before, believing they had webbed feet due to coming from out of the sea! Witchcraft was endemic in the area, and had to be fought with the Gospel news. A motor bike was purchased at one stage which made life easier, as the nearest shop was 200 miles away, but an accident on it one time caused Joe to have to stitch up his own leg! After a while a school was needed and the church members built it together. Joe started a Boys' Brigade company with home made uniforms from which he developed dermatitis due to the indigo dye used to stain the shirts!



Eileen their daughter entered the world two years later after a difficult birth, but soon Margaret was able to bring her home from hospital to great rejoicing. Later she engaged help from a church member so she was able to work in the dispensary and Eileen was fluent in Hausa by the age of three, by dint of playing with the helper's daughter! Sadly while they served abroad Margaret's parents died, and due to travel difficulties they did not manage to get home for their funerals. On their next furlough Oldpark Church collected enough money to buy them an eight seater van in Lagos, and they used it to take local Christians to other villages to encourage isolated believers.

After 15 years in Africa they were transferred to Kaltongo, an established missionary station in a town with a church seating over a thousand people. There was a dispensary in which Margaret worked, a leper colony nearby, a teacher training college, a hospital with a resident doctor and a Bible College where local pastors were trained. After a year there Joe was elected District Superintendent to oversee all the work in forty small outstations and six missionary ones. What a change to live in an area with facilities nearby, and to change the behaviour of the local people on issues like abandoning twins to die at birth!

When Gordon had to go to school it meant leaving for three months at a time to attend a mission school 250 miles away, initially travelling there by lorry, but eventually flying when a mission aeroplane was obtained. Two years later Eileen joined her big brother, leaving two sad parents behind, although weekly letters and the annual month's leave helped, as it was spent in a Rest Home beside the school. One holiday was memorable for the wrong reasons as Gordon got stung by a large scorpion, but luckily they reached the nearest mission nurse in time for the antidote to be injected!

Joe and Margaret worked in Nigeria over a twenty year period, but in those days it was not advisable to keep missionaries' children in Africa beyond the age of twelve, so after much prayer they decided to go home and take responsibility for their children's education. They said their goodbyes sadly to the people and work they loved, and back in Ireland after further theological studies Joe was called to serve as minister to Grange Church in Co Antrim. He was there for twenty one years till on retirement he moved to Belfast and joined St John's as pastoral assistant. His children have families of their own now, with Eileen in Belfast and Gordon in Canada, while his beloved partner Margaret was called to "Higher Service" in 2009.

Joe thanks God for his time in Africa and His love and faithfulness to all who trust in Him. He has offered his memoirs, which are packed with wonderful anecdotes, to anyone who would wish to read them. He can be contacted on jbmooney@talktalk.net.

SHIRLEY AND MACEY

A mother was concerned about her kindergarten son walking to school, so she asked a neighbour if she would please follow him in the mornings, staying at a distance, so he probably wouldn't notice her. The next school day, the neighbour and her little girl followed Timmy as he walked to school with another neighbour girl he knew.

As the two walked and chatted, Timmy's little friend noticed the same lady was following them as she seemed to do every day all week. Finally she said 'Do you know her?' Timmy nonchalantly replied, 'Yeah, I know who she is. That's just Shirley Goodnest, and her daughter Marcy.'

'Shirley Goodnest?' Who the heck is she and why is she following us?'

'Well,' Timmy explained, 'every night my Mum makes me say the 23rd Psalm with my prayers, 'cuz she worries about me so much. And in the Psalm, it says, 'Shirley Goodnest and Marcy shall follow me all the days of my life', so I guess I'll just have to get used to it!'

LUNCH CLUB 2010

The Lunch Club had another very successful year meeting on alternate Wednesdays from end of September to the end of May, at 12.15 pm in the Rosetta Hall.

About 36 to 46 attend and enjoy good chat while eating... Some meet new companions while others catch up with 'old' friends.

Three teams of ladies (about 30) under the leadership of Margaret Elliott, Joan Henderson & Muriel Bloomer prepare and serve the lunch

A special thank you to one and all

We are indebted to 8 or 9 car drivers who bring a number of people to the Rosetta Hall.

A special thank you to all drivers

We appreciate the contribution by members who clear away the tables and chairs.

Thank you

In May, after lunch at the hall, we travelled to the private cinema in Comber where we watched the 'Young Victoria'.

Christmas dinner is always a special event and 2010 was no exception, **with all praising the team who provided the meal.**

David Lindsay entertained us with songs, playing the harmonica and guitar and ending with 'Abide with Me'. **Thank you David**

Do come and join the Luncheon Club, if you require transport just let me know and a member of the driving team will bring you to the Rosetta Hall.

Irene Younge 9065 9895





What it's like being a Christian in a Church

Sundays night's Focus group is currently looking at the experience of being a Christian in various settings such as university, today's society, sport, charity and poverty. I was pleased to take part in discussing Christians in Church along with nine members, led by Pete, our youth worker, summarized as follows:

The Church in general is made up of all kinds of people with different feelings about it, ranging from perhaps feeling excluded or judged by others, or pretending to be happy when life is actually very hard, to those who appear to be totally at one with its format, message and activities. As Christians we need to say sorry if people in our midst are made to feel unhappy or excluded. **Churches are not perfect, with some open to change and others not.** Pete showed some short films illustrating the difference between the churchgoer and a true Christian, one busy doing 'good works' and the other full of faith and the love of God, showing the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes people try to please other people too much rather than please God, worrying about the numbers in their church rather than the quality of the relationships. Another film clip showed the Christian comedian Tim Hawkins illustrate how the use of old fashioned or 'religious' language can sometimes act as a barrier, and the way in which people do things in churches, ie traditions and rituals, must be differentiated from the reasons why they are done, ie the basis of our faith.

A lively debate followed on whether tradition should have an important place in churches today. It was acknowledged that tradition gives each church a sense of identity, and people in previous centuries have died for the sake of establishing new Christian denominations, however nowadays the original purpose of doing something in a particular way has often been lost and it has just become a habit. Changes which were innovative and original in the past, such as the controversial introduction of the organ into St John's, are now merely established traditions, so we need to examine our traditions and why they are part of our worship. Change is good but it must not be solely for change's sake. Rituals can change but the core beliefs on Christ's love for us and His death on the cross for our salvation must not be changed. People find familiar practices safe and comfortable, and change must not be divisive, but we do need to challenge ourselves, so our worship is meaningful. So tradition was deemed to have a place in churches today but not the most important place.

Joan McQuoid

“A HARD ACT TO FOLLOW”

Bob Meek, our Congregational Secretary, took up the position three years ago, and pays tribute to the tremendous work done by his predecessor Trevor Pollock. Nobody realized just how much work Trevor did for the church, he says, especially with the halls redevelopment and commissioning the new buildings which frequently involved opening up and closing (and many other unsung tasks and chores). The job of Halls' Convenor, formerly performed by Ross Irvine, became part of the job of Congregational Secretary when Bob took over. Following Roy Hopper's retirement Scott Guiler had subsequently been acting caretaker but when he returned to full time studies, this left the church without any caretaker. If it had not been for George Turkington's loyal support Bob feels he would not have survived the experience. He is slowly managing to set up procedures so that bookings can be made by email, and the problem of accessing the Halls is spread through selective personnel possessing keys.

So who is the man behind the job? ---Bob was born and bred in Mount Merrion and has been a lifelong member of St John's. He attended RBAI and then Queen's, where he initially studied Architecture and then Chemistry. After a PGCE he went back to his old school to teach Chemistry with General Science and he has been there ever since. Not only a teacher however as he has involved himself totally in the life of the school, both as a Scout Leader, a stage manager of countless drama productions and taking choirs and music groups away on trips. He has led the Mountaineering Club since 1979 and climbed with them in places like Arctic Norway. He laughingly says he has calculated he has spent two years away from home because of all his extra curricular activities!

Bob married Allison Ross in 1980, having met her through the church, and they have three sons – Gavin, an electrical engineer with NIE, Craig who is in the final year of a Maths degree in Scotland and Adam who is at school. Bob himself did a Masters degree in Educational Management a few years ago. Together they combine busy careers (Allison as a GP), family life and service to the church. Bob has been a member of the Congregational Committee since his twenties, secretary of the Property Committee twice, and editor of the Chronicle.

His present post has a finite length of seven years, and he thought long and hard before accepting it. He had a sense of calling however and as he is in the later stages of his thirty year career, felt it was time for something beyond school, especially as there is so much change in teaching. As well as trying to develop new processes and procedures for the use of the Halls, he is keen to encourage members of the congregation to become involved in the Committee as new elections are taking place. The challenges for the church are ever increasing due to an overload of bureaucracy, such as fire risk assessments, entertainments licences, and the cost of external consultants so that the Halls can meet the conditions imposed by Health and Safety. Bob sees himself as the HUB in an itemised chain

of command, where others are delegated to different jobs through him and the website.

Bob's personal future involves retirement in a few years, where he can finally complete the job of renovating and redecorating the house that he and Allison built on his uncle's farm when they married. He hopes for more time on the mountains and in the boat he owns with Denis Guiler and Kevin Robinson. The last few years have been hectic as family illnesses and responsibilities have taken up much of his energies, but he feels he is now resurfacing and energised for a challenging future, both for himself personally and Newtownbreda church!

Report of Kirk Session Meeting 14 December 2010

The Moderator the Rev Wilfred Orr opened the meeting with Bible Study from 1st John 4 commencing v 7, "Love One Another", and constituted the Kirk Session with Prayer.

Youth Committee: Debbie Eve reported that Pete Graham's annual appraisal was very positive. A meeting of all Youth and Children's organization leaders took place at the end of November, where ideas were shared. The progress of the Youth Strategy will be reviewed in January.

Communion Service: A communion service was held at the evening service on Sunday 28th when 32 members partook of the elements.

Ministry, Finance and Mission: This paper was sent by the General Assembly for comment by all congregations in regard to use of property, salaries for Ministers in smaller charges. We were also asked to comment on assessments and Newtownbreda's contribution to Central funds.

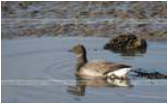
Mission Plan: The Moderator reported that representatives of the Mission Development Committee met with Presbytery representatives. The feedback was very positive and encouraging. A series of meetings as reported in the last Chronicle will be led by the Rev Tom Wilson minister in Kilmakee congregation.

Congregational Committee: The 3 yearly elections to the Committee will be held early in 2011.

Congregational AGM: The AGM will be held on Friday 1 March 2011 at 7.15pm when a meal will be served at 7.30pm prior to the AGM and entertainment.

Irene Younge

CASTLE ESPIE



“Days before the Canadian Brent geese arrived at their wintering grounds on Strangford Lough **Debbie McCamphill** landed at the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust Centre at Castle Espie” – begins an article in a local newspaper last year. But Debbie is better known to us as the **wife of Fergal, mother of Aoife (10), Poppy (7) and Rory (5), and a member of St John’s for the last two and a half years.** Originally from Ballymena, Debbie attended Cambridge House Grammar School and graduated from Sheffield University with a degree in Arts and Tourism. Her career started in England but then she returned to N Ireland, firstly as centre manager of the Palace Stables Heritage Centre and then for seven years as Property Manager of the National Trust Mount Stewart. In order to spend more time with her children she then worked part time in Larchfield Estate assisting with their wedding and corporate functions. However with more time for her career again she took up her position in Castle Espie last September, her role being to increase visitor numbers, encourage group bookings and develop the corporate market, such as weddings, conferences and musical events. Castle Espie is supported by a wonderful core of volunteers who are dedicated to the birds and protecting the environment, but the current developments mean more are needed for administration, marketing, events, education, grounds reserve management and looking after the proposed new duckery.

Debbie grew up in **High Kirk in Ballymena** and was a keen member of the Girls Brigade there, with her mother an officer in the company. When she lived near Mount Stewart she was a member of Ballyblack church whose minister is the Rev Haslett, himself a former assistant here. So when the family decided to move to Belfast to be nearer her new job at Castle Espie, Rev Haslett recommended Newtownbreda, and when Rev Orr called at the house within a week of their arrival, she was hooked! Her daughters joined the Rainbows and then Brownies and her son is now in the Squirrels, while Debbie herself has helped in the Creche and was on the committee for the Autumn Fair. Debbie wishes she had more time to be more involved, but her work has unsocial hours and a serious family illness has drawn her increasingly back to Ballymena to support her parents.

Newtownbreda wishes you well Debbie in your role in Castle Espie and hopes that you have found, and will continue to find, the church as friendly, welcoming and supportive as the Centre is to the returning Brent Geese each year!

Joan McQuoid



CARERS AND TOTS

This new church organisation commenced in September 2010 and runs every **Tuesday from 10am to noon in the Rosetta Hall during term time.** It gives carers (mums, dads, grannies, granddads, child minders etc) a chance to meet up for a cup of coffee and a chat whilst their pre-school children play together, enjoy toast and juice and finish the session with a sing song.

When we thought that there might be a need for such a group none of us anticipated that we would have between 20 and 27 children plus their carers every week.

It can only be described as a real pleasure to watch new friendships form between children and between carers, and what a delight to have several ‘tummy bumps’ attending as new borns now!

If you have a pre-school child please join us – you’ll receive a very warm welcome.

Additionally, if you would like to help out at our group by making tea and coffee, buttering toast and making juice, we simply need volunteers on a monthly rota for about 1 hour, so please do consider offering your services to Pete.

THE BIG BEN HYMN

A member of the congregation passed me Rev David Jebson’s Thought for the Week from a recent South Belfast Community Telegraph....

He writes that the prayer “**O Lord my God, be thou my help and guide, that by Thy help, no foot may slide**” can be sung to the four chimes of Big Ben.

The clock first chimed on 31st May 1859, the year of a wonderful revival of Christianity in the western world. In Britain the powerful proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ was packing the churches to the doors and changing the lives of hundreds of thousands.

If we all prayed and obeyed the Big Ben prayer this year, our nation would be blessed again.



GIRL GUIDES

The 19th Belfast Guides and Senior Section have been learning a range of crafts since January. These include learning to make pom-poms, knitting, paper weaving and working with felt and glue. In February we celebrated Thinking Day by thinking about Guides in countries facing trouble such as Egypt and New Zealand.

Six of our senior Guides are in the final stages of the Baden Powell Challenge Award and we are all working hard to help them complete this top award for Guides. All our younger Guides are working on their annual Challenge Badges. The Senior Section Girls are working towards the Chief Guide Challenge and the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Thanks to everyone who supported our fundraising coffee morning after the uniformed organisations service in February.

We are collecting Sainsbury's Active Kids Vouchers again this year and we have a collecting box for them in the foyer of the halls if you would like to help us.

Laurel and Hardy Appreciation Night



Thanks to all who supported the *Sons of the Desert* society who showed four Laurel and Hardy films on 12th February in aid of the Halls Redevelopment Fund and Cruse Bereavement Care, when £547 was raised.



Callum and Lewis Doherty joined in the spirit of the evening by dressing up as the comic duo, one of them wearing a well known politician's bowler hat! They were duly rewarded with T shirts with Laurel and Hardy logos.

Joan McQuoid

THE MEANING OF LENT

As you know Lent is a **period of fasting and repentance** traditionally observed by Catholics and some Protestant denominations in preparation for Easter. It was established in the 4th century as 40 days to mirror the time that Jesus fasted in the wilderness, and is marked nowadays by eating sparingly or giving up a particular food or habit.

Mardi Gras, literally Fat Tuesday, is known as the carnival season which in some Latin American cultures begins after epiphany, ie Twelfth night and lasts right up to the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday – it is the time when people traditionally feast, celebrate and have parades, eating fatty and sugary foods before the period of fasting. In other countries it merely marks the day before Lent, ie Shrove Tuesday, when pancakes are eaten.

Ash Wednesday occurs 46 days before Easter (40 plus Sundays) when ash is marked on people's foreheads as a sign of repentance. The ashes are typically gathered from the burned Palm Crosses from the previous year's Palm Sunday and mixed with Holy Water or oil. In the Republic of Ireland their National No Smoking Day coincides with Ash Wednesday, as it mirrors the idea of giving up a bad habit.

Some churches believe Lent has a 'sacramental' value, while others feel that while it is good to give up sinful habits and practices and set aside a time when we focus on Jesus' death and resurrection, these should be done all through the year. The key is not to think that by observing Lent we are somehow earning God's favour or increasing His love for us. We cannot earn God's love – it is freely given through the blood of His dear son Jesus Christ.

BEST FORMULA

1 cross + 3 nails = 4 forgiven



62nd Scouts

Adam Meek will be attending the World Jamboree in Sweden this summer so a Beetle Drive was organised to help raise funds for this camp. UK and Scouts from other wealthy countries are charged extra so that 3rd World Scouts can be subsidised. There are more countries represented at a Scout Jamboree than at any other event worldwide. Only three countries failed to have a representative at the last one in 2007.

After much hard work making arrangements the event exceeded our wildest expectations. **Donald Milliken, dressed as only Donald knows how, in his kilt, was Beetle master.** Over 150 people from the congregation, parents and of course Scouts and Cubs from our own Group and also 104th Saintfield Rd packed the hall for a night of fast furious fun. Dice were shaken, shouts of ‘Beetle’ filled the air and general chaos occurred for the first couple of rounds as we all learnt how to move around in the approved fashion. All were exhausted after a dozen rounds so we moved on to the entertainment provided by a group of the Scouts mainly using a circus theme. Monocyclists, jugglers, tight rope walkers and a couple who could do amazing things with hats showed us, if we ever doubted it, how talented Scouts can be when encouraged. A cellist and guitarist provided some musical interludes.

A supper was provided by Allison Meek and her team before the prizes were presented. And the overall winner – **Scott Robinson** of course, who can always be relied on to be doing his best.

If we needed a rest after that we certainly did not get it at **Basecamp – a large cottage in Castleward, near Strangford**, which we have visited many times before. Over 20 Scouts with 4 leaders packed into the cottage which has 14 bunks so everyone had to be very friendly for the weekend.

We had a **midnight hike** to Audley’s Castle on the first night where the older Scouts told the younger ones about the ghosts which sprang out from the shadows and they in turn will frighten next year’s youngsters with similar tales. We built a bridge and did orienteering, had Battlesports, and chopped up many logs, all to practise Scouting skills. The sun shone throughout.

We still found time to take in the glorious surroundings of this lovely estate, have a Scouts Own Service on Sunday morning and cook some delightful meals to provide the calories to keep them all going. I understand most of them were fast asleep in the cars as they were driven home.

John Lyons



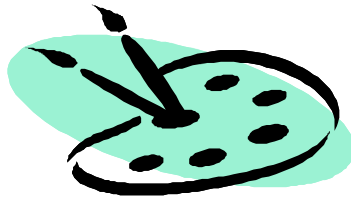


**Preview Evening
of
ART EXHIBITION & SALE**

**Wednesday 18th May 2011 7.30pm to 9.30pm
in the Church Halls**

**Subscription £10.00 Finger Buffet & catalogue
Newtownbreda Presbyterian Church**

**Tickets available from Lorna Gray 90682304;
Helen Maxwell 90794438; Irene Younge 90659895
All proceeds in aid of Halls Redevelopment Fund**



ART EXHIBITION & SALE

Thursday	19th May	10am to 6pm
Friday	20th May	10am to 9pm
Saturday	21st May	10am to 5pm

Newtownbreda Presbyterian Church

**Subscription £3 - includes Catalogue and
Tea/Coffee**

**All proceeds in aid of Halls Redevelopment
Fund**



Letter from America

As one reads the Beatitudes we are challenged in Matthew 5:8 that “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”

Christmas has come and gone and as we look out around Batesville, the grass is starting to turn green and the daffodils are beginning to enter the world. We had the worst winter weather in living memory with a grand total of 12 inches of snow. Last week however we also touched 80 degrees (Fahrenheit) and it won't be long until the magic 100 degrees is around the corner. Snowfall here is much like in Belfast...schools are closed and society comes to a complete halt. It was fun to watch many young people witness their first heavy snowfall and enjoy the time to relax and recuperate.

Following the melt, in the church **we have just left a month of discipleship.** We challenged our congregation to consider what it means to be a disciple for the entire month of February. We challenged people to go to Sunday school for adults and for children (we currently offer 5 different adult classes on a Sunday morning in between our 2 Worship services), we challenged them to make a commitment to their church and to their lifestyle and challenged them to come to church for 4 consecutive Sundays to develop a healthy habit. We had a fantastic month of fellowship, growth, nurture and community. We peaked at 110 adults in Sunday school but more than that we rejoiced in a spirit of excitement and energy felt around the place.

As you study Matthew 5:8 in detail you begin to see that **being pure in heart isn't just an exterior life change it is also an interior life change. It is about getting our 'inside world' right so we can see God move in our 'outside world.'**

I have noticed many similarities recently between Batesville and Newtownbreda. Both communities are excellent at reaching out not just to the community but across the denominational divide and to other churches. This was witnessed most over Valentine's weekend when our group of high schoolers in the church took part in a Youth Weekend with 500 other young people from all walks of life from every part of town. The conference was organized by all of the different church Youth Pastors and Youth workers in town and was just a fantastic weekend filled with seeing many of those young people considering their 'inside world' in order to live out their faith in their 'outside world.' We are privileged to live in a place where we have opportunities to take time to de-clutter ourselves. As we transition from this winter time of dormant and burst into spring with new life and new energy, I pray that we all have time to make the necessary changes in our own lives. **My prayer for you this spring time is that as the flowers begin to bloom so to might your faith.** May your inside world be refreshed and renewed and may your outside world reflect the pureness of that.

As we begin our Lenten journey may we be challenged to grow, through word and study and may the pureness of our inside be reflected in the actions of our outside.

Steve Pointon

LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO READ?

"If You could ask God one question" is a book by Paul Williams and Barry Cooper, which attempts to answer some of the big questions that many of us ask daily. "Isn't the Bible Just a Bunch of Made-up Stories?", "Why do You Allow Suffering?", "Why do you hate sex?", "Why don't you just do a Miracle?". The chapters begin with the question, which is answered clearly, then one or two questions relating to that answer. Also, it has small quotes from the Bible which relate to the question, and these are clearly interpreted. It is a book for those already steeped in the Christian faith as well as those just beginning to develop a relationship with God, written clearly, succinctly and easy to understand.



Biblefresh

Biblefresh is a movement involving over fifty agencies, festivals, colleges and denominations which aims to encourage and inspire churches across the UK to make the most of the year 2011 to empower Christians to a deeper level of engagement with the Bible. It aims to raise the level of bible literacy in four tracks:

- **Bible reading** – only 1 in 7 Christians read the Bible outside a church meeting, so people are encouraged to read using the latest developments in digital technology and creative publishing
- **Bible training** – only half of church leaders are confident in their bible knowledge and 40% feel undermined after the recent militant atheism onslaught by Dawkins etc, so this track aims to equip Christians with improved bible handling skills through Christian festivals, special courses and seminars
- **Bible translation** – with over 200 million people without the scripture in their own language, churches are asked in 2011 to give financial support to translation project, facilitated by the Bible Society and Wycliffe Bible Translators
- **Bible experiences** – the provision of fresh experiences of the Bible through film, music and painting to draw people back to reading and living it

Since the Pledge of Allegiance and the Lord's Prayer are not allowed in most American public schools anymore because the word 'God' is mentioned, a kid in Arizona wrote this new school prayer.....



Now I sit me down in school
Where praying is against the rule
For this great nation under God
Finds mention of Him very odd.
If scripture now the class recites
It violates the Bill of Rights
And anytime my head I bow
Becomes a Federal matter now.

Our hair can be purple, orange or green,
That's no offence; it's freedom scene.
The law is specific, the law is precise
Prayers spoken aloud are a serious vice.
For praying in a public hall
Might offend someone with no faith at all
In silence we must meditate
God's name is prohibited by the State.

We're allowed to cuss and dress like freaks
And pierce our noses, tongues and cheeks-
They've outlawed guns, but first the Bible
To quote the Good Book makes me liable.
We can elect a pregnant Senior Queen,
And the 'unwed daddy' our Senior King.
It's inappropriate to teach right from wrong
We're taught that such judgments do not belong.

We can get our condoms and birth controls,
Study witchcraft, vampires and totem poles.
But the ten commandments are not allowed,
No word of God must reach this crowd.
It's scary here I must confess
When chaos reigns the school's a mess
So Lord this silent plea I make:
Should I be shot; My soul please take.
Amen

WHEN 1 BECOMES 8

If you were given an opportunity to invest £1 and in one month get £8 back it's fair to say you'd grab the chance with both hands, and why not?

Well we're not offering you a financial investment; this is much more important but the returns are as, if not more, rewarding! **This is an opportunity to invest in our children, the future of our church.**

Currently Newtownbreda Presbyterian Church has a superb number of organisations for children and young people, and whilst our Youth Worker, Pete, and his small band of helpers work tirelessly setting up interesting and stimulating programmes they can't do it on their own. For example, **for every eight children at Wacky Wednesday and Connect we need one adult, and each organisation requires a mixture of male and female helpers. Every 1 adult gives a 'return' of 8 children.**

Wacky Wednesday runs from 3pm to 4.30pm every Wednesday afternoon for P5 to P7 children: it requires at least four adults per week (based on current numbers of children). Connect runs from 7pm to 8.30pm on Thursday evenings for P7 to 3rd formers (years 7-10) and requires at least three adults. Both organisations run during school term times only.

Your investment of 1½ hours per month to either of these organisations (and there are others, too many to mention here) could have a huge impact on their existence; organisations which give children a social life within the Christian Church and a stepping stone to becoming the adults of our future Church. This opportunity to make a difference is not age exclusive or experience related; the more variety in age and experience the better!

If you can invest 1½ hours per month to either of these organisations please phone or email Pete as soon as possible. If these times don't suit, but you'd be prepared to cover absences/illnesses or you can help out at other organisations, please contact Pete to discuss the many other roles that need filled. This may be the greatest investment you'll make for a long time!

You can contact Pete on 07824 849204 or at youthworker@newtownbreda.org, or speak to him in person.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The weather on the evening of the AGM had relinquished its first timid steps towards the Spring Season and reverted to its winter attire. **It was cold, there was rain and sleet and the threat of snow.**

In the St John's Hall there was a totally different atmosphere, **fifteen tables** each with settings for eight people and with a very genial host or hostess welcomed all who had braved the elements to attend this important annual event in the life of the congregation.

A simple meal had been promised but all were served a **dinner of excellence** with a variety of hot dishes and vegetables. This was followed by a selection of mouth-watering desserts. It was noted that quite a few of the diners risked the intake of surplus calories to have second helpings.

After tea or coffee the **Rev Orr** commenced the more formal part of the evening. **His message was one of thanks.** Thanks to his associates in the ministerial team, thanks to those who filled the various offices of the church and who worked tirelessly, thanks to the numerous volunteers in all aspects of the church's life at Newtownbreda, including our essential outreach in our community. The efforts of all were creating a deep Christian atmosphere of a family dedicated to the promotion of our Lord Jesus Christ in our lives.

The report of the Clerk of Session, **Sir Bruce Robinson, dealt with the Christian life of our church.** It could have been a heavy and tortuous account of the past years working; instead he turned it into a very informative journey of the Kirk Session, highlighting individuals for praise and thanks and reporting the general success of the years' work. It was delivered with humour and with a note of personal thanks for the help and support he had received. He reflected that his recent public award had been made possible from the personal strength he received from being a member of the congregation.

Maurice Doherty, as sub-committee convener, gave a full account of how our **mission plan** had been drafted, approved and submitted to the Presbytery where it was accepted with many compliments for its content. The full report is readily available, but it had been reduced to a simpler shortened form and circulated to every family of the congregation. This was a very promising start and as we implement these plans we shall all see the results in the work of our church in the next few years.

It was then the turn of **Bob Meek to give the congregational secretary's report.** This report which contains much factual statistics about the financial affairs was saved from being a monotonous litany about the work carried out and money expended. He cleverly drew an analogy between the church and a boat and using this nautical reference throughout his report he had everyone listening with great interest to very informative details and statistics.

The formal adoption of these reports was unanimously passed on the proposal of **Christine McGibbon and seconded by Noel Breen**. Christine in making her proposal used the occasion to pay a very moving and very personal tribute and thanks for the help and friendship she had received since she joined the congregation. It left her audience feeling both humble and yet proud.

The musical section of the evening was provided by **Loreto McAuley on keyboard and singers Elizabeth and Jenny known as the ‘Belfast Operatic Belles’**. It would not be an understatement to class their performance as a true enchantment. The quality of the playing, the expression and strength of the singing voices had everyone held spellbound -a unique and uplifting conclusion.

The meeting over, people gradually departed after many friendly exchanges and goodbyes. Altogether it had been a very memorable evening which had greatly enhanced the feeling of belonging within our congregation. Outside the winter conditions had been well established and there was rain, sleet and snow. But those departing did not appear to be discomforted, no doubt being sustained by the evening they had just experienced, and with the thought that ‘this was the day that the Lord had made and that they **had** rejoiced and enjoyed it’.

Donald Milliken

Newtownbreda Presbyterian Church (St John’s)

Kirk Session Report for 2010

Our work over the last year has been dominated by the **Mission Plan**. It was a substantial achievement to meet the Presbytery timetable of developing the plan by March and much has flowed directly from that as Maurice Doherty will outline in his report shortly. The Plan is the product of a fundamental rethink of our congregational work and as such deserves our full commitment, and it is for this reason that it is being reported separately.

Another very important milestone last year was the complete revision of our **Child Protection Guidelines (CPG)**. This work entailed an extensive audit of the arrangements for each of the organisations attached to the congregation that catered for young people and children; the provision of training for all the leaders (a total of 56 in the congregation) and extensive engagement with Church House. We are particularly grateful for the significant work undertaken on the CPG by Dr Allison Meek and Jim McManus. Also our Youth Leader, Pete Graham, qualified as a trainer on CPG and this greatly facilitated running the training programme for leaders.

Excellent progress has been sustained on all our **Youth Work**. I believe this has confirmed the decision that we took in faith last year to continue with a full-time youth worker. We have been very well served in this regard by Pete Graham – as I have already indicated in addition to all his work with our young people, he led the CPG training. I would also like to thank Johnny Browne who chairs the Youth Committee and the other members Debbie Eve, Vilma Patterson, Brian Compston, Denis Guiler, Kevin Robinson, David Ramsay and Neal Brown for their hard work and commitment to this vital area of our work. Without their contributions our work could not be as effective as it is.

During the summer the Presbyterian Church in Ireland held a **Special Assembly entitled “Confident in Christ”** at which Newtownbreda was well represented with Raymond McNeill, Peter Pallin and John Peacock attending. The Assembly was very successful and our assistant Minister Jane Nelson played a significant role in it, as a member of the organising team.

Just prior to this on 27 June, **Jane was licensed in her home congregation of Rosemary in a very uplifting service**. Jane has become very much part of the Ministerial team in Newtownbreda in a remarkably short time; we have all been impressed by her very open and friendly manner and her deep Christian conviction.

We continue to be **exceptionally well served by our Minister, Rev Wilfred Orr**. His preaching and teaching are of the highest standards and delivered consistently to us: for me personally one of the highlights was how he conducted the Elders’ Conference developing the themes of our Mission Plan under the title of “The Prayer of Jesus for his Church”.

I would like to thank **David Stewart, our music director**, for the excellent music and praise which contribute so much to worship. David is so ably supported by the choir, the singing groups and the instrumentalists.

This year was notable for two very committed members handing over responsibility for organisations: **Sandra Arnold passed leadership of the Friendship Group to Pat Mills** after many years of quiet, highly effective service; **Maurice Doherty retired from heading the Senior Bible Class** after 30+ years. On everyone’s behalf I thank them for their dedication, hard work and unassuming Christian witness.

It is with sadness that I also record the **deaths of two of our elders, Honor Hanna and John Mackey**. Honor had been an elder for 25 years and to this work she brought her strong faith and her gifts of enthusiasm and en-

couragement. She was always very supportive of innovative thinking, of trying out new ideas. John was an elder in the congregation for 35 years. John was a very faithful, committed member of Session with a particular gift for pastoral visiting.

I would also like to note in particular **the passing of another one of our members David Stevens who was the leader of the Corrymeela Community**. David's Christian service was particularly in the ecumenical field; he was a very acute and incisive commentator on all aspects of community relations and local politics. All three of them will be missed.

Finally the last year had a number of notable anniversaries. While the Guiding movement celebrated its centenary, we celebrated **90 years of guiding in Newtownbreda**. We also noted that it was 125 years since Cooke Centenary was established and 50 years since Saintfield Road Presbyterian Church was set up – a church extension facilitated by this congregation.

I would like to conclude my report on a personal note. At the conclusion of the year I had the **enormous privilege to be honoured in the New Year's list**. This evening gives me the opportunity to respond to the numerous good wishes that I received from members of the congregation. It will come as no surprise that the first message of congratulations that I received and also the message that came the greatest distance both came from a member of Newtownbreda. In the message which Wilfred sent and which Jane read during the announcements on the first Sunday in January, it said that "as a congregation we feel proud to be associated with Bruce".

I want everyone here to know that **I consider this congregation to be much much more than "associated with me"**. I would want the congregation to feel fully part of this recognition which I received since Newtownbreda has been and continues to be a huge source of energy and inspiration to me. When I have felt under pressure in work, and there have been many such occasions over the years, I have experienced very directly enormous support from very good people here, and very good people no longer here. That support has come to me in the form of your prayers, in the form of your encouragement and in the form of Wilfred's preaching.

Bruce Robinson

11th March 2011

The problem ahead of us is never as great as the Power behind us

KNOWING YOUR PLACE

You are seated with Christ at God's right hand...
Nothing is higher than that !
God loves you with an everlasting love...
Nothing is deeper than that !
He invites you to drink from the river of His delights...
Nothing is purer than that !
He shares His heart with you in communion...
Nothing is dearer than that !
He watches over you with tender mercies...
Nothing is kinder than that !
He is with you and will never leave you...
Nothing is nearer than that !
He leads you according to the counsel of His own will...
Nothing is wiser than that !
He faithfully feeds you from His word...
Nothing is truer than that !
He is in you and joined to your spirit...
Nothing is closer than that !

-Roy Lessin

SOME THOUGHTFUL PUNS!

Those who jump off a bridge in Paris are in Seine.
A man's home is his castle, in a manor of speaking!
Dijon vu—the same mustard as before.
Reading while sunbathing makes you well red!

When two egoists meet, it's an I for an I.

What's the definition of a will? (It's a dead give away!)
In democracy your vote counts. In feudalism your count votes!
She was engaged to a man with a wooden leg but broke it off!
With her marriage she got a new name and a dress.

*This speech was made by **Christine McGibbon** at the Annual General Meeting in March. May we all have the kind of relationships which a community of Christ's people should offer.....*

“If I was to relate to you the many times that I have felt love and blessings throughout our 11 years in the congregation, it would take me a long time. As such, I will restrict my reflections to the last 12 months. Many of these are small things in themselves but each is very important.

Firstly, the opportunities my children have been given to contribute and feel valued as part of the church ... be that, in their work on the sound desk, or by the opportunity to take part musically c/o Jacynth Hamill and David Stewart or to participate in some other aspect of church worship. A structure of support is provided, encouragement and praise are given and confidence grows. I could not put a price on the fatherly interest shown in my children's development. Thank you Newtownbreda St Johns.

Secondly, the frequently unsolicited and practical help given. When I had a minor car accident in the Autumn, and needed to deal both with my car, which was written off by the insurance co, and find and buy a suitable replacement, help was on hand. Advice was given, contacts were made, stress was alleviated and a car was purchased.

Thirdly, there is the wide range of church activities running regularly through the circuit of the year. In going to Homegroup I find the fellowship and friendships which our congregational mission plan seeks to develop. This happens by simply spending time and thoughts together, doing all manner of activities, with an open and caring group of people.

Likewise, in 2010 there was the new initiative of the summer evening walks. Thanks go to Jane Nelson and Ken Orr for executing this successful programme which provided a great opportunity for all ages to get to know others informally.

And finally some other things which I enjoy are the regular tea and coffee times after morning service, the Third Way Focus evening services taken by our young people each month or the individual fun events such as the very memorable St John's Got Talent evening.

My aim in this speech has been to acknowledge and endorse the workings of the different committees and individuals which you have previously heard about in the reports tonight. I want to give recognition to Rev Orr's leadership and to thank all those who are part of this church. I want to let them know that the impact and outcome of their efforts is bearing fruit. Newtownbreda is a caring place to be and I know many others feel the same.

Earlier this week I was given the following verse from II Timothy. *For God has not given us the spirit of fear: but of power, and of love and of a sound mind.*

I sense the spirit of God's love, strength and sound mind are present in this church, and so Moderator, ladies and gentlemen, I am very happy and confident to propose the adoption of the reports of the Kirk Session and the Congregational Committee for 2010.”

FLOWER LIST

APRIL	3	Mrs Christine McCurry
	10	Mrs Olive Cairns
	17	Mr Trevor Pallin
	24	Mr S. Cairns
MAY	1	Dr J McQuoid
	8	Mrs M McKersie
	15	Mrs I McCord
	22	Mrs J Orr
	29	Mrs O Jennings
JUNE	5	Ms Deborah Pollock
	12	Mrs M McNeill
	19	Mrs Hilary McCourt
	26	Dr A Meek



CONGRATULATIONS!



to

Deborah Pollock and Simon Doherty

and

Pete Graham and Christine Martin

on their

ENGAGEMENTS

CONGREGATIONAL RECORD

DEATHS:

29 th Dec	Betty Morrow, Kirk House
4 th Jan	May Adams, Ailsa Nursing Home, Bangor
6 th Jan	Harry Martin, 23 Belvoir View Park
7 th Jan	Betty Arnold, Nazareth Care Village
7 th Jan	Rene Milne, 69 St John's Park
17 th Jan	Emma McEvoy, Beechill Nursing Home
30 th Jan	Mabel Canning, 29 Burnside Park
5 th Feb	Tom Neill, 16 Knockbreda Drive
6 th Feb	Mervyn Patterson, 69 Sharman Road
23 rd Feb	Ronnie McCully, Dunlady House, Dundonald
10 th Mar	Tom O'Hara, 18 Glencregagh Ave

NEW MEMBERS:

Joanne and Andrew Priest (& baby William), 28 Knockeden Park
Carol Connolly, 6 Lough Caragh Park, Carryduff

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

APRIL

Friday 8 th – Sunday 10 th	Congregation's Family Week-end in Newcastle
Friday 15 th	7.30 pm The Celtic Passion in Newtownbreda Church
Friday 22 nd	Good Friday: Joint worship in Ormeau Park 11.15am Evening Service of Meditation in the Church
Sunday 24 th	Easter Sunday 7.00 pm United Service in St Jude's

JUNE

Sunday 5 th	10.30 am Children's Day Service
Mon 6 th – Thurs 9 th	Meetings of the General Assembly