



news

from Railway Street Presbyterian Church

Be still and know...

The summer, or what there was of it, is past and autumn is setting in. As evenings darken, we wonder what is happening to our world, politically and financially. Perhaps we all need to heed the words of the Psalmist: 'Be still and know that I am God'.

Since our last edition of 'News', the main church building has been re-dedicated and we are happily enjoying using what is a very beautiful and functional place to meet for worship. The Re-dedication Service was inspirational and many people have been very financially generous. We are grateful to everyone who worked so hard on the refurbishment project and would encourage you to continue helping us pay off the debt.

Deepak Samson finished his time with us as our Youth Worker. We are grateful to

him for the leadership he brought to the youth ministries within our congregation. We are in the process of trying to employ someone who will coordinate not only the work among teens but also among children and families.

It is not very long since we had decided to sell the Manse and further develop the building to the rear of the main church building. However, as we are all aware, the property market and financial situation around us has now changed. We therefore need to think again about future property development and will keep you informed.

Thank you for your support, your encouragement and your prayers. May the Lord be with you throughout the months ahead.

Brian Gibson

Fellowship Groups

Someone has described 'fellowship' as 'two fellows in the same ship'! It is no doubt true that most of us like to spend time with others whom we feel are sailing in the same direction as we are. This is one of the reasons why more and more church members are joining the groups which meet fortnightly to study and pray together in homes or in the church hall. From September to Christmas all the Fellowship groups are using video material to look further into Thessalonians, following up on the theme of Sunday morning sermons. January will see a changed programme. It is never too late to join a group. New members will be welcome at any of them. If you need more details, speak to Roger Thompson who co-ordinates this aspect of church life.

Bible Reading

Do you know that the Bible remains the best selling book in Western Europe in spite of the decline we see in church membership, and indeed in moral standards, nearly everywhere we look? But how many of us actually read it regularly? Although it is wonderful to have the very Word of God at our fingertips, it is not always easy to understand it. For those who would like the help and encouragement of Bible Reading Notes, these can be ordered on an annual basis through our agent Anne Shane. She will be glad to advise you if you are not sure what is suitable for you.

Rambling through Austria

Eleven members of Railway Street enjoyed glorious weather and plenty of fresh Tyrolean air when they joined a Sport Active walking holiday in Austria from 6-13 September. The photo shows our intrepid climbers with their guides for the trip.



Start the month with prayer (SMP) runs on the first Monday of each month. Its purpose is to encourage all of us to pause and acknowledge our need to be guided and renewed by God's Spirit and to pray for various needs in our congregation, community and overseas.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Communion Services 2008/09:

Morning: Nov 30, Feb 22 and May 31

Evening: Jan 25 and Jun 28 at 6.30pm

Good Friday: Apr 10 at 8pm

Christmas Tree Service
– Sun 7 Dec at 10.30am

Carols & Lessons by Candlelight
– Sun 21 Dec at 6.30pm

PW Service
– 29 Mar at 10.30am

Stainer's Crucifixion – Sun 29 Mar at 8pm

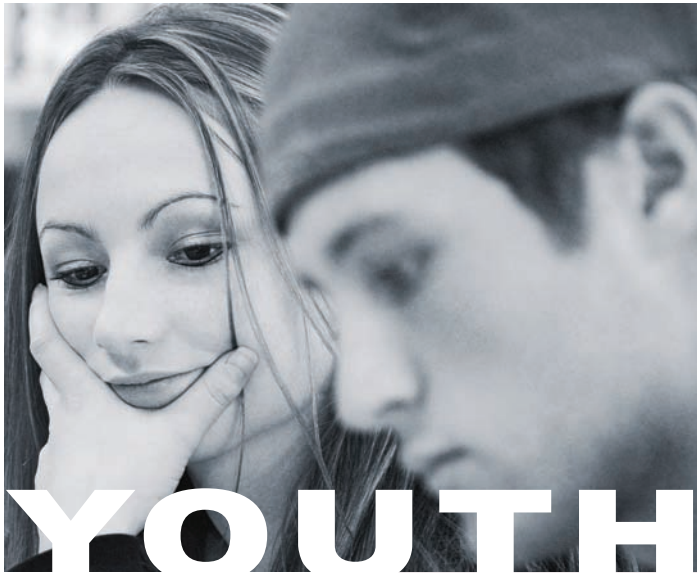
Easter Meditations – Mon 6 – Fri 10 Apr

Dawn Service at Castle Gardens (joining with other Lisburn churches) – Sun 12 Apr at 7.00am

Easter Morning Service – Sun 12 Apr at 10.30am

Senior Members' Tea and Service – Sun 31 May

Youth Service – Sun 7 Jun at 10.30am



YOUTH ZONE

At the end of August 08, we said goodbye to Deepak Sampson after seven years as our church's Youth Leader. He will be missed by many, not least those with whom he worked most closely.....

“Deepak, the only Church leader who ever got me to challenge exactly what I believe and why I believe it! I'm so grateful for that.” **Chris Weir**

“Deepak – an amazing person with tremendous vision! He challenged my faith, releasing me into the freedom to explore and question it, in the end, encouraging me to seek a more personal and authentic faith. He was not only a brilliant leader and wise teacher but a great friend. I will miss Deepak, Preeti and Sid a lot!” **Laura Bittle**

“Deepak is someone that has given talks that have stuck in my head more than others, I'm not sure if it's his way of telling a story and relating it to something more important but it's brilliant. On the mission trip and the church weekend away that I was at he always was such a laid back leader which made both very enjoyable. I think that the leader's mood has a great influence over the overall group's mood so by staying calm and chilled out we all seemed to get more out of the experience. Thank you Deepak!”

Abi Graham

“Deepak was a great guy. He did so much for our youth and during his talks you would always take something away. He helped me in my journey with Jesus and I got to know him better.”

Sam McConaghie

“What a legend. Can definitely see how God has used him and other leaders to make me the Christian I am today. Church won't be the same without him Preeti or Sid.” **Laura MacDonald**

“Deepak really changed how I looked at a church youth worker! He was one of the greatest influences in the beginnings of my faith! Will be seriously missed. Preeti, Sid and undefined included.”

Lynette Guiney

“Deepak was a great inspiration for me during the years he was youth worker. He's been a great youth worker and brought a lot to the youth of this church!” **Steven Woods**

“Deepak was an inspiration to us all, and will be missed at church. Lets just hope he's on time for his new job!” **Alan Wall**



Senior Youth Club Pilot Scheme for Years 8-12

Senior Youth Club commenced on Friday 19 September 2008 for children in Year 8 to Year 12. Approximately 30 children attended the first night and enjoyed a range of activities including sports, craft / cooking, tuck shop, playstation games and music. In the future there may be occasional special events. Senior Youth Club runs on a fortnightly basis on Friday nights 8.30pm to 10pm. If the interest is maintained until the end of this year then this will become a permanent fixture in the congregational diary.

Upcoming events for young people

Saturday 13 December 08 – BB Sale

Saturday 4 April 09 – BB Display

Young peoples' home groups – if you are interested in joining, contact Naomi and Graham – 07790379918 / 028 9266 1991

Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme for both boys and girls

– anybody 14+ interested in participating,

contact Geoff Baird – 07713061826

Youth overseas

During the past summer Jamie Humphries and Johnnie Wales worked overseas. Jamie along with a group from Oxford University worked among schools in Uganda, having raised money to help equip the schools. Johnnie worked in New Jersey, USA, with the Salvation Army helping to run Camps for very needy children. Thomas McConaghie continues to work in Australia with YWAM, both studying and engaging in outreach.

How lovely is Your dwelling-place

The hymn 'How lovely is Your dwelling-place' aptly summed up the feeling of the many members, former members and friends who packed our tastefully refurbished church on the morning of Sunday 1 June 2008. At a special Rededication Service, our Senior Minister Very Rev Dr Howard Cromie unveiled a brass plaque inscribed with the words 'It is our prayer that this building will enable us to fulfil our vision of following Christ and serving the community'.

Rev David Porter, Moderator of Dromore Presbytery, led the service and the preacher was Rev Norman Brown, a former member of Railway Street. Guests included Jeffrey Donaldson MP and Lisburn Mayor, Councillor James Tinsley.

The church choir, under the leadership of Janet Ferguson, led the praise and the guest organist was Peter Wilson, fondly remembered by many



as the organist of Railway Street from 1974-2000. Brian Patterson (Convener of the Refurbishment Team) and Mr Brian Knox (Architects Knox and Markwell) read the Scripture lessons.

The service was the pinnacle of a weekend of praise and worship, which also included a concert led by Dromore and District Male Voice Choir and Symington Silver Band and a Sunday evening service led by Ballydown Presbyterian Church Musicians and Rev David Bruce.

150 Years of Railway Street footprints

As we approach the 150th anniversary of our congregation within the next few years, John Kelly has published a historical record covering all the years of the church's life. We look forward to the launch on Thursday 4 December at 7.30pm of this home grown publication called 'Footprints on the Sands of Time' and perhaps you can think of some former Railway Street members who would love to receive a copy. It



would make an excellent Christmas gift!

Our photo shows John Kelly with Victor Hamilton, grandson of a former Railway Street minister and sponsor of the book.

Brownlee connection

One important name in the history of Railway Street Presbyterian Church was Miss Isabella Brownlee. Due to her very generous legacy, Brownlee Memorial Primary School was founded in 1913. Our church has maintained close links with the school ever since, being represented by four members on the Board of Governors. The present principal, Colin Elliott, took part in an evening service in August and the whole school led us in worship for our Harvest evening service on 12 October.

Good news... but still a long way to go

Firstly our contributions to Freewill Offering are continuing to match those of 2007 (just about!) and our response to the United Appeal is approximately 7.5% higher than this time last year.

Although we still have a long way to go it is gratifying to be able to give some good news about our Property Account. Direct giving, the most important source of income, has recovered after a lull during the summer and the Fund-raising committee have been greatly encouraged by recent endeavours realising approximately £1800. A large proportion of

this has arisen out of the 20/20 Vision scheme and it reflects good work done by various members of our congregation. Also, we have been aware that since our church is 'Listed' we should be entitled to claim back VAT paid on certain categories of repair work done and the first fruits of this entitlement have just been harvested – we have received £10,307 from the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme representing the amount of VAT we paid in relation to the work done on the roof alone. This is reassuring and we intend to try to retrieve VAT regarding

Phase 2. The good news continues.... as a result of sterling work by key members of the Refurbishment Project Team considerable savings have been made and the final total for Phase 2 is going to be in the region of £450,000 instead of approximately £500,000 reported at the outset.....great news indeed!

What does all of this mean?

We must make sure we don't neglect our contributions through FWO. This is the life blood of our finances and the total to date is rather less than we would

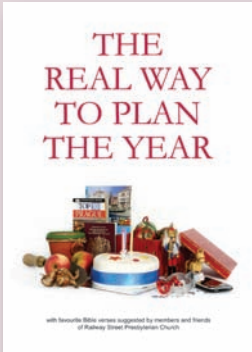
have hoped for.

Although the Property a/c is at present £87,000 in the red we are only paying interest on £60,000 since we have a credit balance in our Congregational Account. The final bills for Phase 2 have yet to come but it would now seem that our debt will not peak as high as we had feared but could still creep to over £200,000. It is important, therefore, that we continue to give as much as we can directly to this account and that we play our part in the fund-raising activities.

*Maurice Gowdy, Treasurer
14 October 2008*

The Real Way to Plan the Year

Delighted with the success of the church cookery book *The Real Way To Cook* (which sold 3000 copies and, along with the cookery demonstration to launch the book, brought in £17,100 for our refurbishment fund) the Fundraising Committee have another exciting venture in the pipeline. With your support we have decided to create and launch a new book called *The Real Way To Plan The Year*, and intend that this should be available for Christmas. Designed in the same format as our cookery book, this will be a useful way of planning your engagements, keeping on top of anniversary dates or even as a personal diary. Most importantly, however, it will also serve as an aid to worship, as each day will



have an inspirational or challenging Bible verse chosen by members and friends of the congregation. This should make the diary more personal and of greater interest and value to its users. By the time you read this, the book should be ready for sale through the usual outlets and as it is suitable for men and women, young and old, we hope that it will solve some of your Christmas present dilemmas. The Committee are grateful to the many people who encouraged and supported us in this project. Without your help we would be unable to proceed, and now with your help we hope that once again we can go a little way towards paying off our refurbishment costs.

Zold family send greetings

Below is a letter from the Zold family who returned to Transylvania last August after spending a year with us in Railway Street

Dear friends in Railway Street,

We had a very busy summer and it was very blessed. In the family we are all well. Noemi, as a mum and full time babysitter, is staying mainly at home with the children but we are happy because she has opportunity to participate sometimes in different camps and conferences for women's associations etc.

Vera started the kindergarten here in Culpiu she likes very much it and is happy to go. She is asking and asking and asking why and why? She is painting amazingly and she is very diligent. Dora started to walk alone and she is really good fun, wanting to stay all the time outside playing in the garden eating fruits and sometimes everything.

We organised a few special programs in our congregation for different ages such as a camp for children, a trip to the mountains for young people and a Holiday Bible Camp. I have one more plan for the near future - a day out for adults. It was the first attempt to take out children and young people for a weekend from their home. It was a positive experience for them and us as well.

The refurbishment of our church was started in August. The temple is almost 300 years old and the ground water rose up to the walls and it was damaged very much. It is a big project but hopefully we can complete it in 3-4 years' time.

We really miss you and the community but we think we were privileged to have our last year among you.

Many greetings,
Imre, Noemi Vera & Dora

The 'Point' of Night Reach

NIGHT REACH continues each Saturday Night at 'The Point' in Lisburn, whatever the weather! Denise Baird has stepped back from her role as coordinator, having done a very good job over the past three years. People continue to be amazed that anyone would want to stand out in all weathers just to hand out a cup

of tea or coffee in the name of Christ and some have engaged in very meaningful conversations with members of the team. If you would like to join these intrepid volunteers, or to hear more information, please speak to one of our leaders - Victor Hutchinson, Jeremy Bowden or Craig Adair.

Can we pray for you?

A group of nine people from the congregation attended a Prayer Ministry Training Course at Fisherwick Presbyterian Church during the Autumn of last year. The group intends to meet on the

third Wednesday of each month to pray for those who are ill or in need of spiritual support. They will also be available to pray with people after our Sunday Services or in their homes.

BAPTISMS, MARRIAGES, DEATHS

'We rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep.'

BAPTISMS

17 Aug Amber, daughter of Neil and BeeYen Buchanan

DEATHS


24 May John McBurney
 24 May Margaret Black
 1 July Alice Shaw
 12 July Margaret Carlisle
 11 Oct Bob Thompson

Rev Brian Gibson

If I can be of any help to you please contact me on:

028 9266 2149 (Manse)

028 9260 2766 (Church Office, Tuesday to Friday, 10am to 12.30pm)



We have been glad to see Rev Bob Lockhart and his wife back at worship with us in recent weeks. He is recovering well from his surgery and looks forward to taking up his pastoral care duties again soon.