

May/June 2023

THE bulletin



“God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of
kings and Lord of lords.” 1 Timothy 6:15

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Dear Friends,

When I was studying history thirty years ago at Queen's University Belfast I never imagined that I would find myself living through so many events of truly historical significance. Such as the signing of the Belfast / Good Friday Agreement that led to a much more peaceful and prosperous

society for my children to grow up in than the one I knew as a child. I can still remember where I was on the day the news came through of the attack on the Twin Towers in New York on 9/11. In addition we continue to see the devastation of full scale war in Europe with the Russian invasion of Ukraine that began in February 2022. Perhaps most significantly of all, having celebrated the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II in June 2022, we then mourned her death in September 2022. Now in just a few days and for the first time in 70 years, we will witness the Coronation of the new King - Charles III.

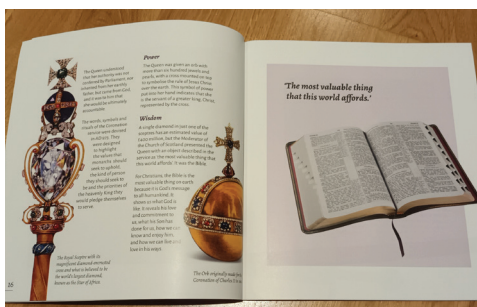
The Coronation will be a hugely significant event attended by the leaders of many different nations and once again the eyes of the world turn to this relatively small island nation which seems to have had such a disproportionate influence on the affairs of the world.

The last Coronation in 1953 was the first to be televised. Some people saved up to buy their first television set for that occasion and family and neighbours gathered round to watch together. The world has changed dramatically since 1953. Millions around the world will be able to watch this Coronation on any internet enabled devices in every part of the world. The UK is also a very different place from 1953. It is now a multi faith, multi cultural society, those who identify as Christians are no longer a majority. However since



the tenth century the coronations of the kings and queens of this nation have always taken place in the context of Christian worship and I hope it stays this way on 6th May.

At the late Queen's Coronation service on 2nd June 1953 the Moderator of the Church of Scotland presented a copy of the Scriptures to the Queen with these words, 'Our gracious Queen: to keep your Majesty ever mindful of the law and the Gospel of God as the Rule for the whole life and government of Christian Princes, we present you with this Book, the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is Wisdom; This is the royal Law; These are the lively Oracles of God.'



The most frequently used symbol on the Crown Jewels is the cross. There are crosses on the crown, the orb, the sceptre and the 'wedding ring of England.' The orb in particular is set under the cross reflecting that this whole world is ultimately under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and our kings or queens are called to exercise their rule as His servants.



As Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher, who conducted Queen Elizabeth II's coronation once explained, "The whole world is subject to the power and empire of Christ our Redeemer, but the cross was the price which our Saviour

paid for our liberty which he has won for us: the cross is the sign of his victory and his kingship and his eternal kingdom."

I hope and pray that this Coronation service will, despite King Charles's desire to be the 'protector of faiths,' remain a distinctly Christian one. I pray that in a nation that is now by and large ignorant of the Scriptures and which no longer understands the significance of the cross, many will learn through watching the coronation of how Christianity was once the bedrock and foundation of our nation. I pray that people might understand that as we continue to chip away at this Christian foundation that increasing cracks are opening up in our nation and in our culture.

I am proud to be able to say that in the Presbyterian Church In Ireland we continue to firmly and unapologetically hold to the belief that the Word of God as set forth in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments is the only infallible rule of faith and practice, and the supreme standard of the Church. We continue to affirm the centrality of the cross and the preaching of Christ and him crucified as the only path to salvation.

We understand, that while the Scriptures call us to be loyal and obedient subjects of the rulers that God has appointed over us, our ultimate allegiance is to a kingdom that is not of this world. A kingdom that will one day overturn every earthly kingdom, a kingdom that will endure forever. We are citizens of the Kingdom of God and we affirm the truth that one day every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. So can I ask you - do you know and serve that King?

On Sunday May 7th we will acknowledge the significance of the coronation weekend as we join together at 10:30am for a family service on the theme of - **'Who Will be King?'** I would like to invite all of you to join with us.



Yours in His service,
Michael Davidson

SERVICES FOR MAY

7th May

10:30am 'Who Will Be King?' Family Service

14th May

10:30am Genesis 33 'Brothers Reunited & Reconciled?'
Michael Davidson

6:30pm 1 Timothy 5:17-25
'What Sheep Owe Their Shepherds'
Michael Davidson

21st May

10:30am Genesis 34 'Trouble With the Next Generation'
Michael Davidson

28th May

10:30am Genesis 35 'Back to Bethel'
Michael Davidson

COMMUNION

6:30pm 1 Timothy 6:1-2 'Terms of Service'
Michael Davidson



Watch online at
www.railwaystreet.org



Telephone Line Service
028 9244 8979

SERVICES FOR JUNE

4th June

10:30am Rev Dr S.J. Dixon
(Minister Emeritus - First Antrim Presbyterian)

11th June

10:30am Youth Sunday
Nathan Donnell (Elmwood Presbyterian)

6:30pm 1 Timothy 6:3-10 'Learning Contentment'
Michael Davidson

18th June

10:30am Matthew 13:44-52
'The Parables of Treasure, Pearls & Nets'
Michael Davidson

25th June

10:30am Matthew 21:28-32 'The Parable of the Two Sons'
Michael Davidson

6:30pm 1 Timothy 6:11-21 'Rules of Engagement'
Michael Davidson
COMMUNION



Watch online at
www.railwaystreet.org



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Discipleship Groups Launch

As you will have seen from our Strategic Mission Plan, Discipleship is one of the key areas we want to focus on and see real growth in during the next 3 years. Kirk Session believes that one of the best ways to do this is to see Discipleship Groups start and develop, building on the foundation of the Home Groups we had running before Covid.

It is essential that we meet together as a Church Family for worship every Sunday as we share in prayer, praise, the preaching of God's Word and in fellowship together. It has been really encouraging to see our Link packed with people of all ages sharing time and developing friendships after our service on a Sunday morning. Yet, this should not be our only interaction with our church family members as growing in our love for the Lord Jesus and for each other does not really develop when we only spend an hour or two together each week.

One of the most effective ways of growing as a Christian is through being part of a discipleship group. These groups, usually of 8-10 people, help those who belong to them experience God with others outside Sunday services and



Photo by Hannah Busing on Unsplash

provide the opportunities to study God's word, discuss the issues we face as Christians on a deeper level, help develop practical solutions to our challenges, spend time praying together and develop closer friendships than may be possible in other areas of church life.

We are planning to have Discipleship Groups starting to meet in September 2023 with these meeting at different times during the week to try to accommodate as many people as possible. Some groups will meet in people's homes and others will meet in the Link so we trust that you will find a group meeting at a time that suits you in a place you are comfortable with.

In coming weeks we will be starting the Discipleship Group sign up process and we expect that a number of groups may want to meet socially before September to allow members to get to know one another. It does not matter what age you are or how long you have been a Christian, you will be very welcome to join a group. If you are not yet a Christian but would like to learn more in a smaller group then it would be great to have you come and join a group too.

If you are not sure or would like more information about Discipleship Groups please speak to our Minister, Deaconess, Youth Worker or Session Clerk.



Photo by Hannah Busing on Unsplash

Freewill Offering

We shared the unwelcome news about the challenging position on our main account in the last Bulletin and are pleased to be able to share that we are seeing an increase in giving to Freewill Offering as a result. It is true that we are still in the early stages of getting our finances back onto a sound footing but we want to thank our church family for your initial positive response to dealing with our current problems.

At their last meeting the Congregational Committee continued to review our finances and agreed that there are two more steps we can take to help manage our finances more effectively.

The Committee noticed that approximately half of our contributing families now give their offering by standing order directly to the church bank account. This is very helpful in our planning and budgeting as a congregation as we can get a much clearer picture of the flow of funds into our account. We are therefore asking all our contributing members who do not yet do so to consider whether you could give by standing order rather than by weekly envelope. If you are able to make this change please speak to our Treasurer, Gordon Wallace or to our Gift Aid Secretary, Edith McConnell and they will be able to help you.

We appreciate that giving an offering by standing order does not suit everyone and so to help those who want to continue to give by weekly envelope we will be going back to lifting the offering as part of our worship during our morning and evening services. This change will take place from Sunday 30th April. This does not mean that we are asking those who give by standing order to give twice, if you give in



this way please just pass the plate on without any embarrassment. The current arrangements for counting the offering and the addresses for delivering offering envelopes for those who are unable to get to church remain the same.

Thank you for your ongoing financial support for the work of our congregation. We will continue to provide you with progress updates as we work our way back to financial stability.

The Link Gift Day - Sunday 5th June 2023



It hardly seems like 6 months have passed since we joined together for the official service of thanksgiving and opening of our new Link and refurbished Minor Hall. It is wonderful to see these facilities being used week by week as our Church family seeks to fulfil our mission of “Following Christ and Serving the Community” with a whole range of activities taking place proving to be a blessing and encouragement to so many.

In the early part of this year we finalised with our bank the amount we needed to borrow at £625,000. The changes in the way that banks operate since the financial crisis of just over a decade ago means that we are no longer able to take this borrowing on overdraft and repay through periodic lump sums as we did with previous projects. Instead we now have our borrowing structured on a term loan with minimum monthly repayments of £6,000 and the opportunity to make additional lump sum payments whenever we are in a position to do so.



We have been funding the Link project with a combination of regular monthly giving and Gift Days – a pattern of giving that has worked well to date and we hope to continue. At present we receive around £2,500 (including Gift Aid) for the Link each month which means that we effectively have a monthly shortfall of £3,500 in our payments. However, your generous giving on our Gift Days means that we can cover this without any concerns from our bank about our ability to repay.

We understand and appreciate that the current financial climate is difficult but we are asking for your generous giving on our Gift Day to ensure that we can continue to meet our monthly repayments and the payment of the final retention amount later this year. Your support through regular giving and on previous Gift Days has helped us reach where we are today and this is very greatly appreciated.



We are asking for your support on 5th June to help us continue the journey to becoming debt free as soon as this can realistically be achieved. You can give by:

Returning your Gift Day envelope
at the Sunday Services on 5th June

Delivering your Gift Day envelope to one of the usual addresses

By Bank transfer to the Link Project Account, the details are:

Sorting Code – 950361 Account Number: 61042858

Please use your FWO number as a reference.

Thank you for your continued generosity as we continue to move forward trusting in the God who is able to supply all of our needs.



422

Thursday 25th May
at 2.30pm
in the Minor Hall

Brownlee School Choir

Come along and be entertained by our
local school pupils. All welcome.

422

Thursday 22nd June
at 2.30pm in the Minor Hall

Come As You Find Us

Finish off our 22/23 session with **f**riendship,
fellowship and **re**freshments. All welcome.



Prayer Focus

Luke 11:1 “Lord, teach us to pray.”

“How Marvellous, How Wonderful,
And my song shall ever be,
How Marvellous, How Wonderful,
Is my Saviour’s love for me.”

This is our motivation for coming together
as a church family to pray.

We warmly invite any member of the
congregation who hasn’t been to
Prayer Focus for a long time to
join us in **the Link** on

Monday 15th May & Monday 19th June
from 8.00-9.00pm



Presbyterian Women's Annual Conference

"Being Transformed" Guest speaker Ali Calvin

Thursday 4th May 2023 in Assembly Buildings Belfast
2.00pm to 3.30pm and 7.30pm to 9.00pm

We are hoping to go out for tea to Fratellis.

There are 3 choices.

- Go to both sessions and have coffee and tea in between
- Go to afternoon session and stay for tea
- Go to evening session and come for tea at 5/5.30pm.

If you want further details about any of these options please speak to a member of committee. We intend to travel by train.

The Thatch at Ballydougan has been booked for

Afternoon Tea at 3.00pm

on Saturday 10th June for 25 people.

The cost will be £24 per person.

A deposit of £5 per person is required. Afternoon Tea includes sandwiches, scones and a selection of desserts. Ladies need to indicate any special dietary requirements. It will be held in a private room on the ground floor. There are places still available. If you are interested please speak to a member of committee as soon as possible.



Christian Aid Appeal Week

14th - 20th May 2023

Further to the preliminary notice included in last month's April bulletin please note the following more detailed and important information -

Special Christian Aid envelopes will be available for you to pick up from the table in the vestibule from Sunday 7th May. They can then be returned, along with your contribution inside, by placing on the offering plate on subsequent Sundays. Alternatively, they can be given or sent to Edith McConnell or Gordon Wallace. Note also that if you wish to have your contribution gift-aided you need to complete the details requested on the form which is included as part of the envelope.

Elders please note:

If you know of any members in your district who are currently not attending church but who may wish to contribute to this appeal, you should take as many envelopes as you may require and deliver one to each of those persons.

With thanks in anticipation,

Roger (Agent for Christian Aid)

YOUTH NEWS

ROOTED & ABOUNDING

G23 CAMPER REGISTRATION OPEN FROM 30TH APRIL
g23.railwaystreet.org




EXODUS ROMANIA TEAM 21

QUIZ NIGHT



Saturday 20th May, 7:30pm
in the Link & Minor Hall

Everyone welcome!

SCAN TO
DONATE! 



RAILWAY STREET SUMMER 2023 TEAMS

Railway Street will be sending 19 young people to Romania this Summer to serve God and His Church. We have been meeting weekly as two teams since February in preparation for our summer mission, where we have been looking at Matthew and learning what it means to exchange our way for His way.

Team 21

Leaders: Anna Curragh
Peter Gillanders
Ben McCleary

Members: Antony Spence
Rebecca Wallace
Sam Nixon
Jonathan Gillespie
Kavan Wilson
Susie Barnes
Katie O'Connor

Team 26

Leaders: Andrew Johnston
Sophie Blythe

Members: Luka Matchett
Abigail McCleary
Amber Buchanan
Caleb Morrell
Charis Faulkner
Grace Moore
Beth Ward

On 30th June we will be travelling as one big team to Cluj-Napoca. We will then spend the first 3 days at the Exodus Centre in Sutor where there will be a launch camp and simulation experience led by Exodus. Then, we will travel to our placements in the west of Romania (team 21 in Oradea and team 26 in Osorhei, 3km away) where we will be spending a week working with a local church. This will consist of running kids' camps, spending time in fellowship with the youth, doing practical work, visiting local church families, and engaging in the church services. Finally, we will have a free day in Oradea before travelling back to Cluj and flying home!

Team 21



Team 26



Things you can pray for:

- Team unity
- Preparation for the Summer Mission
- Meeting our fundraising targets
- Safe travels
- The churches in Oradea and Osorhei
- Communication with hosts



SUNDAYS AT RAILWAY STREET

MORNING SERVICE 10.30am

BEGINNERS CHURCH - No. 31

KIDS CHURCH - Upper Room

YOUTH CHURCH - Minor Hall

Service will be live streamed.

BOYS' BRIGADE (Sept to April)

Monday - Company Section 7.30pm-9.00pm

Tuesday - Anchor Section 6.30pm-7.30pm &

Junior Section 7.00pm-8.15pm

GIRLS' BRIGADE (Sept to April)

Thursdays

Tiny Tots & Explorers - 6.00pm-7.00pm

Juniors, Seniors & Brigaders - 7.30pm-9.00pm

PRAYER FOCUS

3rd Monday of each month 8.00pm-9.00pm

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN (Sept - June)

Fourth Monday of each month

Main Hall at 8.00pm

422 (Sept - June)

4th Thursday of each month at 2.30pm

BIBLE DISCOVERY (Sept - April)

1st & 3rd Thursday of each month at 10.45am