

July/August 2023

THE bulletin

“Come to me all you who are weary and
burdened, and I will give you rest.”

Matthew 11:28



Photo by Ian Dooley on Unsplash

Minister: Rev Michael Davidson

Deaconess: Heidi England

Youth Worker: Hannah Craig

t: 028 9266 7010

t: 07895 883895

t: 07875 161472

e: mdavidson@presbyterianireland.org

e: heidi@railwaystreet.org

e: hannah@railwaystreet.org

Dear Friends,

The 30th June marks the end of term and the beginning of the summer holidays. It is a date that



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is looked forward to with eager anticipation by both pupils and teachers!

It also marks something similar in terms of the annual programme in Railway Street Church. Most of our regular activities cease during the summer with the exception of Sunday worship and times of prayer. This is important and necessary because our leaders need time to rest and recharge before the new session's work in September.

I want to pay tribute to and give thanks for all who have engaged in every form of leadership and ministry among all ages. I know of other congregations coming out of Covid that have really struggled to restart activities because some of their leaders from pre-Covid announced that they would not be returning to serve in leadership as Covid restrictions eased. That has put stress and pressure on ministers and Kirk Sessions as they have sought to try and identify new leaders and in some congregations certain ministries have not resumed.

I am very thankful that in Railway Street we have not had that problem. We saw nearly all our previous leaders return and quite a few new leaders offering to serve. In particular we saw a completely new leadership team established to launch our Girls' Brigade.

I know too that in the wider church there is a fair degree of pessimism as some congregations have struggled to bounce back after the time of Covid restrictions and as the number of vacant congregations continues to rise.

I am happy to say that our Kirk Session does not share that pessimism. Rather we find ourselves looking back over the church's year of worship, work and witness extremely thankful to God for His gracious hand upon RSPC and we can see plenty of evidence of the Lord of the church honouring His promise to build His church.

As I opened the June meeting of our Congregational Committee in prayer I sought to list many of those encouragements and to give thanks where it is due – to the Lord Jesus Christ – the sole king and head of the church. I include just some of those encouragements below:

- We give thanks for the completion of the Link Redevelopment and the ministry and mission being undertaken in it among people of all ages from both inside and outside the church
- The generous increased giving of so many of our members that has seen a dramatic improvement in our finances over the last 3 months. You can read more details of that from our treasurer elsewhere in this bulletin
- We give thanks for a really encouraging and informative service on our Youth Sunday on 11th June. We give thanks for Hannah Craig our Youth Coordinator and all our youth leaders for their faithful service and teaching
- We give thanks for the resumption of the Exodus/ Railway Street Work Teams to the Exodus Centre in Sutor and all that the 2023 team were able to accomplish and experience. We also give thanks for all those going out to serve on our Exodus Youth Teams to Romania at the end of June

- We look forward to our 2023 Ganaway Youth Camp and rejoice in both a large leadership team and a large number of campers
- For the increasing numbers attending worship – both existing members still returning following Covid and new members who have joined us in more recent times – especially 13 new members who joined RSPC back at the end of May on profession of faith or by transfer
- For our reputation as a friendly welcoming church where the Bible is faithfully taught
- For all those who use their gifts to serve on Sundays facilitating our worship – musicians, the AV Team, the Welcome Team and all those who teach God’s Word
- For the many different ways in which pastoral care is offered and received by Railway Street members and particularly for our deaconess Heidi’s pastoral ministry
- For every way in which people of every age have grown in grace and in their knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

For all this and more we give thanks to God and we say with the apostle Paul, “Now to the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.” (1 Timothy 1:17)

Have a great summer and I hope that along with us in Kirk Session you are encouraged and are looking forward to all that God is going to continue to do among us in the new church year beginning in September.

Yours In His service,
Michael Davidson

Pastoral Team Holidays

Heidi:

10th - 23rd July &

25th - 31st August

Michael:

23rd July - 14th August

Please do not attempt to contact Heidi or Michael during these dates.

You will note that these dates do not overlap so Michael will be here while Heidi is away and Heidi will be here while Michael is away.

In addition there will also be a local minister on call during Michael's time away. Please contact Stephen Johnston or Heidi if you need the services of a minister in an emergency.



Photo by Heather McKean on Unsplash

Bereavements

It is with sadness that we record the deaths of:

Dennis Ian McClure died 29th April 2023

Margaret Smyth died 24th May 2023

Joseph James (**Jim**) Dornan died 9th June 2023

The congregation extends their heartfelt sympathy and prayers to all their families at this time of loss.

SERVICES FOR JULY

2nd July

10:30am Psalm 12 False Words or Faithful Words?
Michael Davidson

9th July

10:30am Psalm 13 From Anguish to Assurance
Michael Davidson

16th July

10:30am Psalm 14 When Fools Speak - Michael Davidson
Sunday Evening: Ganaway Family BBQ & Beacon Session

23rd July

10:30am Psalm 15 A Man After God's Own Heart
Michael Davidson

30th July

10:30am Psalm 16 Home Truths
Ashley Parkes (PCI Ministry Student)



Watch online at
www.railwaystreet.org



Telephone Line Service
028 9244 8979

SERVICES FOR AUGUST

6th August

10:30am Psalm 17 A Prayer for Life's Journey
Stephen Johnston

13th August

10:30am Psalm 18 My God Is My Rock - Charlie Hadjiev

20th August

10:30am Psalm 19 Worship From the Top Down
Michael Davidson

27th August

10:30am Psalm 21 Rejoicing in God's Strength
Michael Davidson

3rd September

10:30am Back to School With God – 'Be Strong & Brave'

6:30pm Evening Services Resume



Watch online at
www.railwaystreet.org



Telephone Line Service
028 9244 8979

Discipleship Groups - How to Sign Up

In the April/May Bulletin we shared some information about launching Discipleship Groups for our church family. This has generated a great deal of interest from people of all ages and so we are pleased to be able to share how you can sign up to be a part of digging down deeper into God's Word by joining one of these Groups.

We want to be as flexible as we can to allow as many people as possible to join a Group. In order to do this we are asking everyone interested in being part of a Discipleship Group to sign up as soon as possible, letting us know all the times you are available to attend a Group and where you would like to meet (for example, if you can attend a group on a Tuesday or Wednesday then choose both of those options). If you could sign up before 16 July 2023, this will allow us time to see how many Groups we will need, when and where they will meet and confirm who the Group leaders will be. Don't worry if you are not able to sign up by this date as we will do our best to link you into a Group that suits you if you sign up later.

You can sign up using either the online form in the "Resources" section of the church website or by using the paper form in this Bulletin. If you are using the paper form, please place it in the box on the table in the porch marked "Discipleship Groups."

In August, we will contact you and let you know which Discipleship Group you are part of, who its leader will be and when and where it will be meeting. This will allow Groups to meet socially over the second half of the Summer (if they wish to) before starting to meet officially later in September.

We will share details of what Groups can choose to study nearer to the beginning of September.

If you would like more information about Discipleship Groups, or the sign up process, please speak to our Minister, Deaconess, Youth Worker or Session Clerk.

Railway Street Presbyterian Church - Discipleship Group Sign Up

We would love to have you as part of our Discipleship Groups.

Your Information

Please complete one form per person who wishes to join a Discipleship Group.

Name:

Address:

Contact No:

Email Address:

We need to be able to contact you to share details of your Discipleship Group. Including your email address is preferable to put you in touch with others in your Group.

What suits?

These answers will be used to place you in a Discipleship Group. We'll do our best to accommodate different schedules!

I can attend a Discipleship Group on the following days: (please circle all that apply)

Tuesday Wednesday Thursday

I'm available to attend a Discipleship Group in the: (please circle all that apply)

Morning Evening

I'd like to attend a Discipleship Group meeting in: (please circle all that apply)

The Link Someone's home

I would be happy to host a Discipleship Group in my home:

Yes No

I would be happy to help lead a Discipleship Group:

Yes No

TREASURER'S UPDATE

Some good news The Link Gift Day

In the previous Bulletin, we highlighted the necessity for regular Gift Day giving over and above the regular standing order payments to the church property account in order to meet the monthly repayments to the bank on the loan for the Link Redevelopment. As with previous gift “days” donations come in over a period of a couple of weeks and June was no exception with total giving to the fund for the Link Appeal exceeding £30,500 including the Gift Aid at the time of writing.

It is comforting to have this money “in the bank” and it should cover loan repayments for the next 6 months ahead of payment of the final retention for the build towards the end of the year.

At this time, it is felt the bi-annual gift days give individuals the opportunity to make contributions at a time of the year which suits their own personal circumstances best. We understand and appreciate that the current financial climate continues to be difficult but the generous giving on the gift days is encouraging. Your support on this and previous gift days has helped us maintain loan repayments and is greatly appreciated in this time of cost of living crisis.

And some more good news Freewill Offering

The previous bulletin had indicated an encouraging initial response to the appeal to cover the £30,000 “hole” in church finances and I am pleased to say this has continued in the three months since the



initial unwelcome news was shared with the congregation.

As well as significant increases in monthly and weekly offering through standing orders, there has been a significant upturn in the offering collected through weekly envelopes in the last few months also, resulting in additional funds compared to the same period last year in the region of £10,000 at the time of writing. This is undoubtedly a good start to address the deficit and if it can be maintained for the rest of the year could well put us back on an “even keel” by the end of 2024.

Despite the on-going increases on individual’s personal bills, Railway Street congregation continues to answer appeals not only for our own church needs but has also maintained the level of offering to the PCI United Appeal.

A further update will of course be provided after the summer period.

Thank you for your ongoing generosity.



Christian Aid Appeal Week

It is very pleasing and encouraging to report that, in response to this recent appeal, our congregation raised a total sum of £1,468.75 – and this includes the addition of gift aid.

This is an excellent amount and it is significantly greater than last year’s total.

Most sincere thanks and appreciation is due to those members who generously contributed to this most worthy cause which supports in a practical way many who are in great need and demonstrates the love and compassion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

KESWICK at PORTSTEWART 8th-14th July 2023



THIS YEAR'S PROGRAMME

Morning Bible Teaching

Monday 10th – Friday 14th, 11.00am

Speaker: Gilbert Lennox

Evening Celebration

Saturday 8th – Friday 14th

From 7.30pm

Speakers: **Jonathan Thomas**

(Sat / Sun / Mon)

Andrew Ollerton

(Tues / Wed / Thur / Fri)

Praise: **Stevie Johnston & team**

Daily Prayer Meeting

Monday – Friday, 9.45am – 10.30am

Held in the Prayer Tent

If you plan to be “up north” this summer, please make the effort to drop in to Keswick and share in Christian fellowship and learn from God’s word.

The theme for this summer is UNSHAKEABLE. The speakers are:

Jonathan Thomas, Pastor of Cornerstone Church, Abergavenny, Wales

Dr Andrew Ollerton, the Bible Society

Gilbert Lennox, retired from Glenabbey Church

Keswick works closely with Portstewart CSSM, who provide a Holiday Bible Club for 5-18 year olds, so your children can enjoy the wonderful programme they provide from 3rd -15th July.

NEW HORIZON at COLERAINE UNIVERSITY

5th-11th August 2023

@ Ulster University, Coleraine

JOY

FROM THE ASHES

5-11 AUGUST 2023

Join us for Bible teaching, worship & fellowship

With Tony Horsfall, Archbishop Ben Kwashi &
Arianna Walker with worship from New Irish Arts

NH
newhorizon

NH
newhorizon

Prayer Focus

Luke 11:1 “Lord, teach us to pray.”

The children are off school for the summer and the church family will be away on holidays at different times. Let's not forget that God's work goes on and our prayers are important. Please try to keep these dates free if at all possible and do come along to share in this ministry. The two dates are:

**Monday 17th July &
Monday 21st August
from 8.00-9.00pm
in The Link**

Jews For Jesus – Ziggy Rogoff

Serving the Lord in a thriving Jewish community in London.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile” (Romans 1:16)

Please pray with me:

- For God to soften the hearts of the Jewish people we've met
- Ziggy is meeting up with a number of Jewish people in London who drop into the Wiener Holocaust Museum and also into his local Community Centre. Please pray the Holy Spirit will lead him to Jewish people who are open to the Gospel
- For us to be led by His Spirit through His Word.





Come and join us for a BBQ and worship at Ganaway!

**Sunday 16th July | 6pm | Ganaway Activity Centre
All church family are very welcome!**

For more information contact Hannah
hannah@railwaystreet.org or 07875161472



Photo by Vincent Keiman on Unsplash

What's happening?

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

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BOYS' BRIGADE (Sept to April)

Monday - Company Section 7.30pm-9.00pm

Tuesday - Anchor Boy Section 6.30pm-7.30pm &
Junior Section 7.00pm-8.15pm

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GIRLS' BRIGADE (Sept to April)

Thursdays

Tiny Tots & Explorers - 6.00pm-7.00pm

Juniors, Seniors & Brigaders - 7.30pm-9.00pm

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PRAYER FOCUS

3rd Monday of each month 8.00pm-9.00pm

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PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN (Sept - June)

4th Monday of each month

Main Hall at 8.00pm

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422 (Sept - June)

4th Thursday of each month at 2.30pm

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BIBLE DISCOVERY (Sept - April)

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