

September / October 2024

THE bulletin

“There is a time for everything, and a season for
every activity under the heavens”

Ecclesiastes 3:1

Photo by Erik Jan Leusink on Unsplash

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“The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.” (Mark 6:30-31)

Dear Friends,

I trust that, despite the awful weather, you have been able to know rest and refreshment over the summer. I enjoy the summer and the opportunity for holidays but I also enjoy seeing our building filling up again in September as people return from their summer holidays and we enter into a new season of worship, work and witness in RSPC.

This September however I will not be present with you. The Dromore Presbytery Consultation Report into the life and witness of Railway Street Congregation issued in November 2023 had the following as one of its recommendations: “The Minister should avail of the opportunity to take a Sabbatical within the next 12 months.”

Following this I applied for, and received permission from, the Presbytery of Dromore to take a Sabbatical from 26th August until

the 30th September. I will be released from all ministerial duties during this time.

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland has for many years now provided a scheme for ministers to take time out for Sabbatical leave recognising the demanding and unrelenting nature of pastoral ministry. A PCI Minister is entitled to bank one week's sabbatical leave for each calendar year from ordination, up to a maximum of seven weeks, with the opportunity to use this leave as appropriate.

Sabbatical leave has its emphasis both on enabling a Minister to seek personal spiritual renewal and refreshment and also to have time and space to reflect on aspects of his ministry within the wider mission and ministry priorities of the congregation. While recognising that this may well include the enhancing of knowledge and skills in a specific area, and can include academic study, the aim of sabbatical leave is to enable Ministers to refocus on their calling under God both as a Minister and as a believer.

By September 2024 I will have been Minister of Railway Street for nine years. It continues to be both an honour and privilege to be the Teaching Elder in this fine congregation. A lot has happened during those nine years. God has been pleased to answer our prayers by sending many new people of all ages to join our church family. I have been privileged to have brought some 50 people through Full Membership Classes. In particular the growth among those in their twenties and thirties has been particularly encouraging and this has greatly changed the age profile of our congregation to the extent that we are no longer the aging congregation that we were several years ago. We pray that this process will continue.

Other great encouragements have been - the completion of the Link Redevelopment Project and the great use of our new facilities to develop worship, discipleship, fellowship, service and outreach,

the strides forward that we have taken in terms of our digital and online ministry and the ongoing listening and engagement with the teaching of God's word week by week.

There have also been great challenges – not least the challenge of leading the congregation through the COVID pandemic with all the restrictions and changes this involved.

Many in our church family have known times of illness and the sorrow of bereavement during my time as your Minister. It has been my privilege to sit and share with those who have been ill, as well as to officiate at the funerals of those whose earthly journey came to an end.

Back in 2021 I served as the Moderator of the Dromore Presbytery. I have been the Student Convenor for the Dromore Presbytery as well as the Presbytery In Service Training Agent for seven years and serve as a member of the General Assembly's Council for Training In Ministry, as part of which I sit on the Ministerial Studies and Development Committee which oversees the selection and training of students for the Presbyterian ministry.

I am also honoured to serve as a governor of Brownlee Primary School.

Finally since January of this year I have been carrying the pastoral responsibility for two congregations as a result of having been appointed as vacancy convenor in 1st Dromara Presbyterian Church.

I badly feel the need to step back for a while and rest and reflect and be refreshed.

The good news is the work of the church goes on and is never dependent on any one individual. I learnt this lesson very clearly while on sick leave in 2019. It is Jesus who said, "I will build my church." He is continuing to do that in Railway Street through the

work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of people of all ages and through the faithful ministry of many in our church family who are active in serving others in many different ways. During my time away there will be a number of very capable preachers filling the pulpit in Railway Street.

As we enter into another busy church year with all the opportunities and challenges this will present, there are several things that all of us need to recommit ourselves to do:

To turn up Sunday by Sunday to worship our great God and Saviour together and to be encouraged and built up in our faith.

“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:24-25)

To continually and faithfully pray together to the Lord of the church asking Him to build and extend His church.

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people. Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel.” (Ephesians 6:18-19)

To continue to give generously as the Lord has prospered us for the work of the church in Railway Street, throughout Ireland and to the ends of the earth.

“Now about the collection for the Lord’s people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income.” (1 Corinthians 16:1)

To find avenues for service within the church using whatever gift we have been given.

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”
(1 Peter 4:10)

To serve the community of Lisburn by bearing witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ and seeking to make disciples.

“But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.”
(1 Peter 3:15)

May we recommit ourselves to those tasks for the glory and honour of Jesus’ name and the extension of his church.

I look forward (DV) to being back with you on Sunday 6th October.

Yours in His service,

Michael Davidson



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MINISTER’S SABBATICAL

Monday 26th August to Monday 30th September

If you need the services of a minister during this time please contact our Clerk of Session Stephen Johnston

SERVICES FOR SEPTEMBER

1st September

10:30am Rev Leslie Addis

6.30pm No Evening Service

8th September

10:30am Mission Focus

Rev David Moore (West Belfast Special Project)

6.30pm Acts 2:42-47 'What Does A Healthy Church Look Like?'
Stephen Johnston

15th September

10:30am Rev Dr SJ Dixon

6.30pm Graeme Read (Assistant Minister in Elmwood)

22nd September

10:30am Rev Leslie Addis

6.30pm Sunday Evening Praise in the Link

29th September

10:30am Communion

Rev Brian Gibson

6.30pm Alan Martin (former member of Railway Street)



Watch online at
www.railwaystreet.org



Telephone Line Service
028 9244 8979

SERVICES FOR OCTOBER

6th October

- 10:30am Revelation 1 'Jesus the Saviour Reigns'
Michael Davidson
- 6.30pm Mission Focus
Belfast City Mission - Jordan Neill

13th October

- 10:30am HARVEST
Rev Philip McConnell (former member of Railway Street)
- 6.30pm HARVEST
Michael Davidson & Ashley (Lisburn Foodbank)

20th October

- 10:30am Boys' Brigade - Annual Service of Enrolment
- 6.30pm Service led by Senior Youth

27th October

- 10:30am Revelation 2:1-7 'The Loveless Church'
Michael Davidson
- 6.30pm Communion
Michael Davidson



Watch online at
www.railwaystreet.org



Telephone Line Service
028 9244 8979

Bereavements

It is with sadness that we record the deaths of:

George David Pollock, 3rd June 2024

Walter James (Ritchie) Richards, 22nd June 2024

Maurice Edward Reid, 3rd August 2024

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

Baptism

Elsie Jan Marjorie Neill - 11th August 2024

Daughter of John and Alex Neill

Thanksgiving and Blessing for

Laylah Norma Jane McGrath - 24th August 2024

Daughter of Andy and Sarah McGrath

Prayer Focus



Luke 11:1 "Lord, teach us to pray."

The summer is over and another busy church year is well underway. Let us come together in really large numbers to bring our thanks and requests to God. Help us, through prayer, to seek God's will and see what happens!

Please don't leave this prayer ministry to others.

We encourage you to come along and play your part.

Your presence will be a great encouragement.

Monday 16th September &

Monday 21st October

from 8.00-9.00pm in the Link

Finance update



Following on from the traditional quiet summer period in the church calendar we are thankful to the congregation who continue to give generously so that our main account continues to run without a deficit.

As previously noted, one-off receipts in the first half of the year have returned our main account to a credit balance position and having paid the third quarter PCI Assessment in August, the account has a balance of around £3,000 at the time of writing.

The second half of the church year normally shows increased giving to FWO which will help to produce a breakeven position for the year. Alongside this, giving to the United Appeal continues to meet our Target of Honour of £12,345 for 2024.

The Property Account maintains a healthy balance of almost £70,000 at time of writing ahead of payment of the final Retention due. The bi-annual Gift Day covers the shortfall to meet the Loan monthly payments of £6,500 each month. We receive monthly giving of £2,500 into the Property Account to meet these payments. The May 2024 appeal raised in excess of £25,000 including Gift Aid.

Our next “Gift Day” will be on 17 November and we ask for your continued generous support in repaying our bank loan. Special envelopes will be available and remember to include your name, address and FWO number so that the church can claim Gift Aid of 25% on your gift (unless the Labour Govt change the rules!).

Many thanks, in advance, for your generosity as we continue on our journey to make our church debt free.

Gordon Wallace,
RSPC Treasurer



OpenDoors
Serving persecuted Christians worldwide



‘Standing Strong’

Saturday 5th October, Lagan Valley Vineyard, Lisburn
10am – 3pm, Doors open for coffee at 9:30am

Standing Strong is coming to Lisburn and we’d love for you to join us as we gather to celebrate what God is doing in some of the most dangerous places in the world to be a Christian.

This is a precious and unique opportunity to meet your persecuted family and hear their stories, ask them questions and pray with them. There will be space for worship and you’ll also get to sample what life is like for millions of believers worldwide. It’s an experience not to miss!

We will be joined by Manga from Nigeria. Manga survived being knifed when Boko Haram militants attacked his family home in 2012, but his father was tragically killed. “At first, we were shy of these scars,” says Manga, whose brother was also wounded. “But later we came to realise it is a testimony. It is evidence of the existence of God.”

Tickets are available on the Open Doors website: £7-£10

Discipleship Groups

Discipleship Groups will recommence during September and will meet fortnightly on a Tuesday/Wednesday.

Leaders will be in touch with their groups to let members know arrangements.

Everyone is welcome to join a group - if you have not become part of a group as yet and would like to, please speak to our Session Clerk, Stephen Johnston.

Bible Discovery

Bible Discovery is open to anyone and meets in the Minor Hall at 10.45am on alternate Thursday mornings

Tea and coffee are available from 10.30am

Resumes: Thursday 19th September

October dates: 3rd October and 17th October

The theme for this term will be 'The Exodus'

PW First meeting of a new session

23rd September 2024 @ 8pm

Our theme for this year is 'ENTRUSTED'



Guest Speaker is Rosie Kennedy 'Trusting God with our plans'

All ladies of the congregation are very welcome to join us.

A SPECIAL MEETING in addition to our normal Monday meeting

Monday 30th September 2024 @10:30 am in The Link

We are delighted to have a visit from Diane Cusick – Mission Worker in Zambia.

ALL MEMBERS of the congregation are welcome at this event.

Coffee and scones will be served.





THE POLICE MALE VOICE CHOIR

Concert in Railway Street
Presbyterian Church, Lisburn

FRIDAY 18 OCTOBER 2024
7:30PM

Proceeds in aid of
PW Mission Projects
and the Church Link Project

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS SERVED

422

ALL WELCOME

September 26 - “Serving in the Local Community”

Billy Moore from ‘Resurgam Trust’

October 24 - “A Better Future”

Audrey Curry from ‘Equipping for Life’



422 is open to everyone and meets at 2.30pm on the fourth Thursday in the month in the Minor Hall, followed by refreshments in the Link

REQUEST FOR HELP

Our BB and GB leaders greatly value the service of the Parents’ Room during their respective evenings. It would be great if a few more people would be willing to be added to the Rota in the LINK for BB and GB.

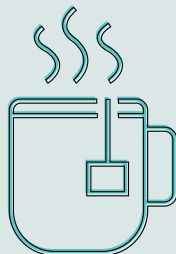
You only need to be able to boil a kettle / dunk a teabag / put a teaspoon of coffee into a cup and make a glass of juice.

The boiler / coffee maker & dish washer aren’t used.
Tea / coffee / milk / sugar / juice are all provided.

BB on Tuesday is 6.30-7.45pm

GB on Thursday is 6.00-7.00pm

Please speak to Janet 028 9081 3480 if you would like more information or if you would like to join the team. Thank you for your consideration.





GB NEWS

Girls' Brigade

We are looking forward to seeing all our current members again, and to welcoming new members too!

Thursday 29th August

Registration evening and opportunity to order uniform items

6-7pm

Tiny Tots & Explorers

Princess Party - girls can come in their princess dresses

Fun and activities for the girls while parents complete registration forms

7.30-8.30pm

Juniors, Seniors & Brigaders

Thursday 5th September will be our first normal evening

6-7pm Tiny Tots & Brigaders

7.30-9pm Juniors, Seniors & Brigaders



BB NEWS



Hi everyone,

We hope you've all had a great summer so far and looking forward to getting back to BB.

You'll also notice our new email address:

1stlisburnbb@gmail.com

Our registration nights will take place on:

Monday 2nd September: 7.30pm - 8.30pm

COMPANY SECTION

Tuesday 3rd September: 7pm - 8.15pm

ANCHOR BOYS & JUNIOR SECTION

Then we start back on:

Monday 9th September: 7.30pm - 9pm

COMPANY SECTION (High School age)

Tuesday 10th September: 6.30pm - 7.30pm

ANCHOR BOYS (P1 to P4)

Tuesday 10th September: 7.15pm - 8.30pm

JUNIOR SECTION (P5 to P7)

FEES: £40 per boy, or £75 for a family



DATES FOR THE DIARY:

Sunday 29th September

Lisburn Group Parade to 78th Belfast (Dunmurry) - afternoon

Sunday 20th October

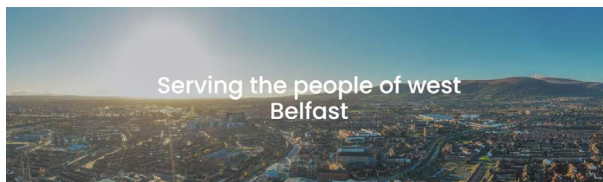
1st Lisburn Company Service of Enrolment in Railway Street Presbyterian Church at 10:30am

Thanks for your continued support.

Sure & Steadfast



Congratulations to Matthew Nelson on playing for Ireland Men's hockey team at the Paris 2024 Olympics. A number of the Railway Street Church family travelled out to Paris to cheer Matthew and the team on at the Yves-du-Manoir Stadium where Eric Liddell (Chariots of Fire) won gold in the 400m at the Paris 1924 Olympics!



This project is based in the west of the city of Belfast in an area designated as a Special Area of Mission, where the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has not had a presence for over 40 years. It has only been in operation since 1st September 2022, when David Moore was appointed to it as minister in Special Work for West Belfast. The project is initially intended to last for four years.



The proposal to establish this project described its main function as, “to present the gospel to the local community through word and action, with the aim that, as people encounter Jesus Christ, they will be drawn to faith and trust in him as Saviour and Lord, and be built up in discipleship. Although this is not being described as a ‘Church Plant’, it is intended that a living, worshipping, reformed community of Christians be established in the area and a new congregation may come from that - although perhaps not be recognisable as a traditional Presbyterian congregation.”



Ulster Orchestra, soloists and the Belfast Philharmonic Choir present:

Mendelssohn's 'Elijah' on Friday 29th November at 7.45pm in the Ulster Hall, Belfast

Handel's 'Messiah' on Saturday 14th December at 7.30pm in The Waterfront, Belfast

For further information speak to Keith Bailie

RSPC CHILDREN AND YOUTH SEP - DEC 2024

Date	Beginners	Kids	Junior Youth	Senior Youth
08/09/24	Elijah and the Drought 1 Kings 16:29 – 17:24			
15/09/24	Elijah on Mount Carmel 1 Kings 18:1-46		The Eternal Saviour Revelation 1:1-8	
22/09/24	Elijah on Mount Horeb 1 Kings 19:1-18		The Glorious Judge Revelation 1:9-20	
29/09/24	Elijah and Elisha 1 Kings 19:19-21, 2 Kings 2:1-18		Ephesus - The Loveless Church Revelation 2:1-7	
06/10/24	Elisha's Miracles 2 Kings 2:19-25; 4:38-44; 6:1-7		Smyrna - The Suffering Church Revelation 2:8-11	
13/10/24	Elisha and the Widow 2 Kings 4:1-7		Pergamum - The Compromising Church Revelation 2:12-17	
20/10/24	BB Enrolment			Youth Service
27/10/24	Elisha and the Shunammite 2 Kings 4:8-37		Thyatira - The Tolerant Church Revelation 2:18-29	

Date	Beginners	Kids	Junior Youth	Senior Youth
03/11/24	Elisha and the Leper 2 Kings 5:1-27		Sardis - The Zombie Church Revelation 3:1-6	
10/11/24	Elisha and the Arameans 2 Kings 6:8-23		Philadelphia - The Faithful Church Revelation 3:7-13	
17/11/24	GB Enrolment			Social
24/11/24	Elisha and the Famine 2 Kings 6:24-7:20		Laodicea - The Lukewarm Church Revelation 3:14-22	
01/12/24	Christmas Gift Service			Youth Service
08/12/24	The Perfect Promise Isaiah 7:1-17			
15/12/24	The Perfect King Isaiah 9:1-7			
22/12/24	The Perfect Kingdom Isaiah 11:1-9			
29/12/24	No Beginners, Kids or Youth			



What's happening?

SUNDAYS AT RAILWAY STREET

MORNING SERVICE 10.30am (live streamed)

BEGINNERS - No. 31

KIDS - Upper Room

JUNIOR YOUTH - Minor Hall

EVENING SERVICE 6.30pm

SENIOR YOUTH - Upper Room

BOYS' BRIGADE (Sept to April)

Monday - Company Section 7.30pm-9pm

Tuesday - Anchor Boy Section 6.30pm-7.30pm &
Junior Section 7pm-8.15pm

GIRLS' BRIGADE (Sept to April)

Thursdays: Tiny Tots & Explorers - 6pm-7pm

Juniors, Seniors & Brigaders - 7.30pm-9pm

PRAYER FOCUS

3rd Monday of each month 8pm-9pm in the Link

BIBLE DISCOVERY (Sept - April)

1st & 3rd Thursday each month at 10.45am - Minor Hall

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS (Sept - June)

Tues & Wed bi-monthly 8pm-9.30pm in various homes

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN (Sept - June)

4th Monday of each month at 8pm - Minor Hall

422 (Sept - June)

4th Thursday of each month at 2.30pm - Minor Hall

THE LINK UP

Every Wednesday 10am - 12noon in the Link