

July - August 2026

...he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves
to a quiet place and get some rest."

Mark 6:31



THE bulletin

Photo by Sheila Jamieson

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Summer Adventures

Dear friends,

As I write this we have had two warm, dry, and sunny days in a row! My weather app tells me the next few days are to be similar. Could it be that we will enjoy a good summer or will we return to the normal pattern by the end of this week? By the time you read this we will know the answer.



Photo by Warren Umoh on Unsplash

Many of us really look forward to the summer – especially teachers and ministers! For many the summer provides the opportunity for holidays – time for rest and refreshment. That also often includes visiting new places and enjoying new experiences.

For some of us this summer will present new experiences whilst staying at home. That is certainly true for the Manse family as Joanna gets married on 29th July. While weddings are more than familiar to me this wedding puts me in the unique situation of being both the father of the bride and the officiating minister.

For others in Railway Street this summer will mean time away on



Photo by K. Mitch Hodge on Unsplash

holidays. That will involve for a number the opportunity to spend time on the beautiful North Coast. While for a few of us, it will be the South Down coast. For others it will mean

leaving these shores entirely in order to be sure of warm and dry weather.

One type of holiday that has become increasingly popular in recent times are ‘City Breaks’. The expression emerged in the late 20th century as airlines and rail operators began marketing cheap, short-haul flights specifically for weekend travellers. Early brochures used the phrase ‘city break’ to differentiate these trips from long beach holidays or mountain retreats. The idea is simple: you trade a few days of work for a burst of city life. A city break is a short urban vacation, usually lasting only a few days to explore a city’s culture, attractions, and lifestyle. Last summer we enjoyed a city break to Krakow.



Photo by Yoav Aziz on Unsplash

On Sundays during July & August we are going to experience a number of ‘City Breaks’ as a congregation as we journey with Paul and Silas on their second missionary journey as they travel to some of the ancient cities of Greece – Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens & Corinth. In their case they were not primarily going to experience these cities’ history, culture and cuisine, although at times that did come into it. For Paul his primary motivation was as he shared in Acts 20: 24 to, **“complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God’s**

grace.”



So if you are staying at home, or even if you are away, you can join us via the livestream as we join Paul and Silas on their city breaks and learn how the Gospel

(from Free Bible Images - <https://freebibleimages.org>)

spread and the early church grew and the lessons for us in Railway Street as those called to follow Christ and serve the community.

And then when I take my holidays you will be left in the capable hands of some familiar faces and at least one new face as they lead worship in Railway Street in my absence.

I am delighted to say that a good number of our young people and young adults have again chosen to use some of their summer holidays to serve the Lord Jesus, seeking like Paul to share in “the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace.” In some cases they will be travelling to familiar places here in Ireland but for others they will be travelling overseas to serve in such places as Romania, Spain, Hungary and South Africa. The details of those who are going and where they are going is provided on pages 10-11 in this bulletin and I would encourage you to remember them in your prayers.

So I wish you all an enjoyable and fulfilling summer and we remember that whatever we do or wherever we go the Lord goes with us. As the Psalmist reminds us, **“Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.” (Psalm 139:7-10)**

Yours in His service,
Michael Davidson

Minister’s Holidays

Michael will be off from 25th July - 17th August

Please contact our Clerk of Session Stephen Johnston if you need the services of a minister during this time.

Births

It is with delight that we announce the birth of **Naomi Baird**, daughter of Judith & Adam Baird on 19th May 2026



It is with delight that we announce the birth of **Ella Johnston**, daughter of Niamh & Mark Johnston on 13th June 2026



Baptisms

17th May – on Profession of Faith - Richard McFadden

New members

On the 17th May the following new members were received.

On profession of faith:

Ryan Adair

Isaac Allen

Adam Finnegan

Jonathan & Heather Hemphill

Richard McFadden

Alice Thompson

By transfer certificate:

Ben Thompson (from the congregation of Elmwood)

SUNDAYS IN JULY

Summer City Breaks – Paul's Second Missionary Journey (Acts 16-18)

5th July

10:30am Summer City Breaks: Philippi Acts 16:11-40
Rev Michael Davidson

12th July

10:30am Summer City Breaks: Thessalonica Acts 17:1-9
Rev Michael Davidson

19th July

10:30am Summer City Breaks: Berea Acts 17:10-15
Rev Michael Davidson

26th July

10:30am Rev Leslie Addis (Woodlands Presbyterian Church
Minister Emeritus)

Sunday morning services are livestreamed at

www.railwaystreet.org

An edited service for those without internet access
is available by telephone line

Tel: 028 9244 8979



Watch online at
www.railwaystreet.org



Telephone Line Service
028 9244 8979

SUNDAYS IN AUGUST

Summer City Breaks – Paul's Second Missionary Journey (Acts 16-18)

2nd August

10:30am 'A Time to Celebrate' John 2:1-12
Mr Stephen Johnston

9th August

10:30am 'Unto the Hills' Psalm 121
Mr Peter Todd (Legacurry)

16th August

10:30am 'The Garden, the Cross & the Crown' Romans 5:12-21
Mr Stuart McIlwaine (Moir)

23rd August

10:30am Summer City Breaks: Athens Acts 17:16-34
Rev Michael Davidson

30th August

10:30am Summer City Breaks: Athens Acts 18:1-17
Rev Michael Davidson



Watch online at
www.railwaystreet.org



Telephone Line Service
028 9244 8979

Prayer Focus

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

Every day we are reminded of the fragility of our world and the destruction left behind as a result of conflict.

This is not the world God planned for us. Our Sovereign God sent his son to die so that we may be set free and enjoy eternal life.

We invite you to join us as we meet for prayer, asking for wisdom and courage to follow his leading through these difficult days.

**We will meet on Monday 20th July
and Monday 17th August from
8-9pm in the Link**

BB NEWS

BB registration nights:

COMPANY SECTION **Monday 7th September: 7pm - 8pm**

ANCHOR BOYS **Tuesday 8th September: 6.45pm - 7.30pm**

JUNIOR SECTION **Tuesday 8th September: 7.30pm - 8.30pm**



PW Dates for your diary

Monday 28th September at 8.00pm

Melanie Bond 'Wearable Truth'

Melanie from Melanie Bond Boutique in Dromore talks about faith and fashion. She will also share her own faith journey.

Fashion, accessories and handmade jewellery from her boutique will be on display on the evening.



Monday 26th October at 8pm

'Friends in Action' – bringing water of life to thirsty people

Volunteers from Legacurry Presbyterian Church will share their recent experiences digging water wells in the Ivory Coast, West Africa.

Advance date for the congregation

Special Evening with Colin Elliott, Leigh Brown and Tim Boyle of the group **Mercy Junction** and guest soloist Bethany Givan.

Saturday 10th October at 7.30pm in Railway Street Presbyterian Church.

This event will be hosted by PW ladies and is **open to everyone**. A light supper will be served at the end of the performance.

All proceeds will go to PW mission projects.

Summer Servants & Mission Information

**Daniel & Jessica Nelson, Callum Patterson
and Max Spence**

11th - 21st July

Exodus Support Launch Team, Romania



Ella Cassidy and Alanah Houston

16th - 27th July

Exodus Spain



Emma McCleary

11th - 21st July

Exodus Hungary



Abigail McCleary

16th - 26th July

Exodus Serbia



Hannah McBurney

6th - 18th August

Exodus South Africa



Summer Servants & Mission Information

David Wallace
2nd - 12th July
Exodus Hungary



Andrew Johnston
16th - 27th July
Exodus Spain



Isaac Allen
4th - 17th July
Portstewart CSSM



Christina and Rebecca Wallace
6th - 17th July
Castlerock CSSM



Jessica Nelson and Lydia Finnegan
9th - 14th August
Crossroads CSSM





Girls' Brigade – we are looking forward to seeing all our current members again, and welcoming new members at the start of our 6th GB year in Railway Street!

Thursday 27th August

Registration evening & opportunity to order uniform items (in Main Hall)

6-6.45pm

Tiny Tots & Explorers – Princess Party - girls can come in their princess dresses. Fun and activities for the girls while parents complete registration forms.

7.15-8.15pm

Juniors, Seniors & Brigaders – fun, games and activities. No uniform required.

Thursday 3rd September will be our first normal evening

6-7pm Tiny Tots & Brigaders

7.30-9pm Juniors, Seniors & Brigaders

Contact Hilary Milligan (Captain) on 07899 896 879 or speak to any GB leader for further information.



RAILWAY STREET YOUTH

youth weekend away

18TH - 20TH SEPTEMBER 2026

CONTACT HANNAH FOR MORE DETAILS
HANNAH@RAILWAYSTREET.ORG
07875161472





KESWICK AT
PORTSTEWART

04 - 10 JULY 2026

ROOTED

OUR 2026 SPEAKERS



Jonathan Thomas



Clive Bowsher



Mark Meynell

Find out more at
keswickatportstewart.org

Church Contact Details

Those who belonged to our Church during Covid might remember that we asked each family to provide us with a mobile phone number and / or an email address (where these were available) so that we could keep in contact during those challenging times. This proved to be very successful and we managed to cover over 95% of the families connected with us by electronic means.

We believe that the time has come to update our records and obtain mobile numbers and email addresses for all those aged 18 and over who are connected with our church family.

From the exercise in 2020 and some work we have done on this in recent years, we already have mobile numbers for almost 75% of our adults, with a similar percentage for email addresses. Following the changes to Elders' Districts in April, we began the task of gathering this information from those in our church family where we do not yet have it. We are very grateful to those who have already provided this information to us and hope to be able to gather the outstanding information before our organisations and activities begin again in September.

If you receive a request for this information from your District Elder (or our Session Clerk) please respond as quickly as you can. Once we have these contact details our plan is to use them, as part of our Strategic Mission Plan, to keep everyone connected with our Church informed on what is happening in the life of our fellowship.

If you have any questions about this project please contact our Session Clerk, Stephen Johnston.

June News from the Rogoffs

We hope that our newsletter finds you well and that despite the challenging times we are living in, you are still standing strong in our Lord Jesus Christ who is never changing and whose love endures forever.



Rummikub

Rummikub continues to take place every Thursday. It is a social event that I started in a Jewish area in North London in the hope that we will be able to befriend people and share the gospel with them.

At the end of the last week's session, Peter approached me to discuss spiritual matters. The conversation quickly focused on the unrest in Northern Ireland. Peter was convinced that religion itself is the root cause of the troubles, arguing that the violence, hostility towards immigrants, and acts of destruction are all evidence that religion does more harm than good. What struck me most was that he genuinely viewed these actions as being carried out in service to God. In his mind, those involved are not merely using religion as a justification for their behaviour; rather, their religion is the very thing motivating it.

He asserted that he is an atheist and that people should simply try to do good. I suggested that this raises a key question: if there is no God and the universe is the product of random chance, on what basis can we speak of objective meaning, purpose, or goodness?



Peter smiled and avoided my question.

So, I gave him the space he needed and left him with my question, praying that he will reflect on it and realise that his desire to see good in the world comes from the fact that he as well was created in the image of God, a God who made himself known in the person of Jesus. Please join me in my prayers for Peter.

Love your Jewish neighbour

I strongly encourage you to have a look at this website and pass it onto others. This could well be a valuable way of connecting to Jewish people. Please promote it far and wide to your friends and pastors.

<https://www.loveyourjewishneighbor.com/about>

Nova Exhibition

You might be interested to attend the Nova Exhibition in London that showcases cutting-edge digital art to create a unifying space of memory and solidarity for those who died on 7 October 2023 in Israel. The last date for the exhibition is 5 July.

<https://www.eventim.co.uk/event/the-nova-exhibition-london-the-nova-exhibition-30-curtain-rd-london-ec2a-3nz-21581409/?affiliate=N0V>

For May half term, we went to Romania to visit Cristiana's family.

Yours in our Messiah

Ziggy, Cristiana, Noah & Joseph

A Jesus-like response to Henry Nowak's murder.



Last week, Vikrum Digwa was sentenced to life imprisonment for the fatal stabbing of 18-year-old student Henry Nowak. The case drew international attention – and the release of police bodycam footage showing Henry being handcuffed as he lay dying has led to intense scrutiny of the police response.

The footage, released with the permission of Henry's family, shows him pleading, 'I can't breathe' and 'I've been stabbed', only for an officer to reply, 'I don't think you have, mate.' The distressing images have prompted calls for a public inquiry and reignited debates about knife crime, race, policing, and public trust. Commenting on the incident, Reform leader Nigel Farage called on people to respond to Henry's death with 'pure, cold rage'.

How should we respond to such comments?

First, we should recognise that anger is a legitimate emotion. Indeed, the circumstances surrounding Henry's death should provoke anger. He was murdered, and his treatment was inhumane and degrading. Anger is often the natural and morally appropriate response to injustice. A society that feels no anger in the face of suffering risks becoming indifferent to it.

Second, politicians should avoid politicising either their own anger or the anger of others. In an interview with Trevor Phillips, Deputy Prime Minister David Lammy argued that there was a distinction between his call for 'righteous anger', following George Floyd's death in 2020, and Nigel Farage's call for 'rage' after Henry Nowak's death. The distinction may not be as clear-cut as some suggest. Both appeals draw on powerful emotions and seek to channel public outrage in response to injustice.

Third, public figures must recognise that their words carry weight. Whether speaking of 'righteous anger' or 'pure, cold rage', politicians should take care not to inflame already tense situations for political advantage. This concern was evident in the extraordinarily dignified response of Henry's family. Following the verdict, his father said, 'We do not want Henry's death to be used to create further division, hatred, or tension.'

In the Gospels, Jesus' anger was directed towards hypocrisy, the exploitation of the vulnerable, and anything that prevented people from experiencing God's love and healing. For his followers, the lesson is clear. There are times when anger is not only understandable but necessary. Yet anger must be directed towards justice rather than vengeance. The challenge is not whether we feel anger, but what we do with it.

Safeguarding Update

The recent General Assembly received a number of reports on the action our Church is taking to deal with both the Safeguarding failures that caused the current crisis and the actions that are being taken across the Church to ensure, as far as is humanly possible, that these failures cannot happen again.

In terms of what this means for our congregation, Kirk Session appointed a Safeguarding Team at its Stated Meeting in May 2026. The members of this team are Rev Michael Davidson (Minister), Stephen Johnston (Session Clerk), Sam Mitchell (Designated Person for Safeguarding), Mrs Pamela McElhinney (Deputy Designated Person for Safeguarding) and Miss Hannah Craig (Youth & Family Coordinator). This team is accountable to our Kirk Session which retains overall responsibility for Safeguarding in our congregation.

In order to ensure that we discharge our Safeguarding responsibilities as we should, Kirk Session has determined that **all of the leaders in all of our Youth Organisations must have an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate from Access NI before the new session's work begins in September**. Any leader who does not have this certificate will not be allowed to serve in our youth work until they receive it.

Any of our youth leaders who do not have a valid Enhanced Disclosure Certificate must submit their request through the process set out in the Safeguarding section of the PCI website before the middle of July.

<https://s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/presbyterianireland.s3-assets.com/Safeguarding/Safeguarding-Forms/How-to-apply-for-an-AccessNI-V003-April-2026.pdf>



If any of our youth leaders need further guidance they should contact either Sam Mitchell or Pamela McElhinney as soon as possible.

If anyone in our church family has any questions regarding Safeguarding, they should contact a member of our Safeguarding Team. Should our Safeguarding Team be unable to provide a satisfactory answer to a question, the answer should then be sought from the Safeguarding Team in Church House, Belfast.

Finance Update June 2026

As reported to the recent church committee, there has been some improvement in our finances from the second half of 2025 and into the start of 2026 with the possibility of a “break-even” position for 2026 remaining for our main bank account.

Whilst energy costs remain high in the current economic climate, FWO is in the region of £10,000 higher than at the same time last year and reflects both an increase in the number of families contributing as well as those who have increased their giving recently. These are all greatly appreciated.

The bi-annual Gift Days continue to generate significant funds as we maintain monthly repayments on the loan. The May 2026 total of £29,500 received from the congregation will substantially cover the repayments for the next 6 months of around £35,500, whilst regular giving to the property account covers the shortfall and allows for spend on maintenance and ongoing building costs.

United Appeal remains on course to meet our Target of Honour for 2026 with over £6,000 raised to date.

Many Thanks

Gordon Wallace
RSPC Treasurer

Election of Congregational Committee – Update

The process agreed by Kirk Session for the election of our new Congregational Committee was outlined in the May & June Bulletin.

This commenced when the draft Voters' List was published on 7th June, with the announcement required by the Code made on that Sunday and the following two Sundays. I am pleased to advise that no objections were raised in relation to the list and it has been confirmed by Kirk Session for the election.

While the election process pauses for the months of July and August, the Voters' Lists will remain displayed in the Vestibule and in the Link so that voters can consider prayerfully who they might nominate. Remember that all those named on the list can nominate but members of Kirk Session should not be nominated as they are already ex officio members of Committee.

On the first two Sundays of September - the 6th and 13th, voting members will be able to submit their nominations. A form will be available for this purpose.

In order to submit a nomination, a qualified voter will need to:

- Complete the names of those they wish to nominate
- Confirm that their nominee has agreed to their nomination
- Add their own name, address and signature.

A box will be available on the Vestibule table for submission of



Photo by Planet Volumes on Unsplash

nominations. Any qualified voter who does not want their name to be considered for the Committee should advise the Session Clerk no later that 10pm on 13th September.

At its meeting on 14th September, Kirk Session will prepare a list of up to 20 qualified voters who have been duly nominated and have agreed to allow their name to go forward to the congregation. This list will be read to the congregation on 20th and 27th September.

There will be a short congregational meeting after the morning service on 18th October. At this meeting, a poll of the qualified voters attending shall be taken by secret ballot in respect of each person on the list, who shall be deemed elected if two-thirds of those who vote are in favour of them.

As this will be Harvest Sunday, it is planned that we will have a lunch after the congregational meeting to allow the votes to be counted and the result announced to those present. The result will also be announced the following Sunday and a suitable date will then be arranged for the new Congregational Committee to have its first meeting.

If you have any questions regarding the election of our new Committee please speak to our Session Clerk, Stephen Johnston.



Photo by Planet Volumes on Unsplash

What's happening?

SUNDAYS AT RAILWAY STREET

MORNING SERVICE 10.30am (live streamed)

BEGINNERS - No. 31

KIDS - Upper Room

JUNIOR YOUTH - The Board Room

EVENING SERVICE 6.30pm (1st Sunday of the month)

SENIOR YOUTH - Upper Room, 6.30pm-8.30pm

BOYS' BRIGADE (Sept to April)

Monday - Company Section 7.30pm-9pm

Tuesday - Anchor Boy Section 6.30pm-7.30pm &

Junior Section 7.15pm-8.30pm

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 Upper Room

BIBLE DISCOVERY (Sept - April)

1st & 3rd Thursday each month at 10.45am - No.31

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS (Sept - June)

Tues & Wed fortnightly 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