



FIRST LISBURN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AUTUMN MAGAZINE 2024



To all members of the First Lisburn Church Family

As I write this at the start of October, the summer is now a fading memory, and autumn beckons. I hope you were able to enjoy some time of refreshment during the warmer weather - even if it wasn't the hottest or driest summer on record!

The vacancy process is now progressing apace, following the completion of our consultations with the Presbytery of Dromore. The Presbytery is recommending that we be granted leave to call on the basis of a five-year reviewable tenure. This means that when we identify and call a new minister, a Presbytery-led review of progress will be held after five years, which may lead to some further changes. The Presbytery have asked us to note the possibility of a linkage or merger with another congregation at that time. We have submitted all the necessary papers to the Linkage Commission, and can expect a decision on these matters at their November meeting.

You will see below that I have included some suggestions to help us pray about these important decisions, and I invite you to do this both privately, and where possible together (at Bible Study groups and other gatherings) in coming months. As we have looked at 1 Samuel over recent weeks in church, the choice of a leader for God's work in the world is deeply important, and not always straightforward. The person of God's own heart is the person we need to seek for the future, so let us be sure to make this a priority in our prayers.

On Sunday 27th October we will be presenting the church accounts at a meeting of the congregation following morning worship. Can I ask that each member of First Lisburn considers the level of financial support we offer to the congregation? In particular, if you give by Standing Order from your bank, could you take a moment to review the level of your regular contribution, and increase it if you are able? Thank you so much. FWO envelopes for 2025 are included with this Newsletter. We also enclose the United Appeal envelopes for this year, and I invite you to generously support this vital central work of our denomination.

As the autumn programmes in Church begin, I hope you will both enjoy and benefit from the many different avenues of service to be found within First Lisburn.

David Bruce

How can we pray for the decisions ahead of us?

A suggestion for private, personal prayer

Lord God, as I think about our church, I thank you for all it means to me. For its long history, the many friendships I have made there and the sense of family we have together, I say 'thank you'. I pray today for our vacancy, and especially about the decisions which are being made about the future.

Give wisdom to the elders and the Presbytery, and please lead us to the person of your choosing to be our new minister. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Some suggestions for prayer at a small group.

Go round the group and ask what people would like to see in the future of First Lisburn.

Having heard what members of the group have shared, a time of open prayer might be started, reflecting on what the group has heard.

A prayer to close this time might be:

Lord, you know what we need as a church, because this is your church, your work and your plan. Help us as we pray and support the process of identifying a new minister, and bless the elders, the convener and others as they help us decide on the person to be our next minister. We pray for the decisions yet to be made by the Linkage Commission in November, and pray for the representatives of First Lisburn who will be present at that meeting.
In Jesus' Name, Amen.

David Bruce
028 9262 1367 (H)
07736 47500 (M)
davidbruce@me.com

Coffee Dock Cafe

The Coffee Dock Café warmly welcomes you back!

By popular demand, the Coffee Dock Café re-opened its doors promptly at 10am on the first Tuesday of September. It wasn't a minute too soon! A great gathering of our regular visitors, along with friends from the Cross Community Group and also several newcomers received a warm welcome from our volunteers. Indeed the enthusiastic friendly chat created quite a buzz, which was really encouraging after the two month closure.

Two young ladies visiting last week for the first time left us a note saying they were so pleased that their friend, who is a member of 1st Lisburn, had recommended they visit the café.
'We are so delighted to meet you all. It's fab!'. No doubt we'll see them back again soon!

This month we were delighted to welcome on board yet another member to our team of very loyal volunteers. Julia, who is a member of our congregation, has volunteered to help out as an invaluable Barista once a month, in addition to helping out any time we are short staffed, which is fantastic! Welcome Julia and very many thanks for giving of your time and skills to be part of our community outreach.

Incidentally, if anyone wishes to be one of our volunteers, please don't hesitate to speak to one of our team. You don't need to be a member of 1st Lisburn. We will be delighted to have your assistance once or perhaps twice a month, and you don't need to be a baker!

The growing popularity of the Coffee Dock Café is so encouraging as it continues to be an important and effective means of outreach in the community of Lisburn and beyond. Your regular attendance, and the fellowship given and received each week is so heartening.

Your generosity enabled us last year to make donations totalling £5,000 to charities chosen by the volunteers. These included:



Some of the volunteers and bakers with their delicious variety of scones and cakes

- £1,000 to Christian Aid
- £1,000 to PCI United Appeal
- £500 to NI Children's Hospice
- £500 to The Leprosy Mission
- £500 to The Alzheimer's Society NI
- £500 to HOPE 365
- £500 to Motor Neurone Disease NI
- £500 to the Lord Mayor's chosen charity

This is in no small part due to our loyal band of volunteers who give so willingly of their time and talents.

I would like to give recognition and sincere thanks to the bakers on our team, who week on week provide freshly baked scones, fruit cake, lemon drizzle cake and carrot cake to mention but a few of their delicious contributions.

Judging by the comments I receive every week from visitors and speaking from personal experience, the home bakes are truly scrumptious!

So my advice to you all would be to come early to secure your favourite bake before they are sold out, and avoid disappointment!



Christian Aid receiving their cheque for £1,000 in May 2024

The Lord Mayor meeting Jade, a young mother who was recently diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease. She is accompanied by Cath who is a volunteer for the MND Association. They received a donation of £500 from the Coffee Dock Café.

The Coffee Dock Café is open every Tuesday from 10am to 12 noon.

We look forward to giving you a warm welcome!



First Lisburn Presbyterian Women

The ladies of PW enjoyed their day out to Brownlow House in June.

It was a lovely sunny day and we had a very informative and entertaining tour of the house learning much about its history.



Then we enjoyed a delicious afternoon tea and plenty of chat! A great time was had by all!

All ladies will be made most welcome as we commence our 2024 Season:

- 1st October-** Prison Fellowship Northern Ireland- one of the PW home projects for the year.
- 5th November-** Sandra Leckey- the memory lady takes us back to bygone days.
- 3rd December-** An early Christmas celebration including our secret Santa!
- 7th January -** Kathy McAllister with some gentle exercise for the New Year.
- 4th February -** A visit from the PSNI
- 4th March-** Zoe Bruce shares some of her experience with volunteering at the International Meeting Point

24th March PW Service and PW Lunch

1st April - AGM, some fun and special supper!

Inspire Magazine

Thank you to all who are subscribers to INSPIRE (formerly Wider World).

This well illustrated magazine has a wonderful range of articles with current news of PW groups around Ireland, news of our missionaries serving abroad, prayers and editorials.

Church House is trying to encourage more folk to become subscribers.

As you are well aware, costs are on the increase all around us - also impacting the print industry - and the cost of paper and printing has risen significantly in the past year. Sadly it has been a difficult decision to increase the Annual Subscription for the four issues of the magazine to £10.00.

This still represents very good value for money and I would encourage you all to renew your subscription for 2025.

The last date for ordering is Sunday 1st December 2024.

Please speak to Maureen Staniland if you would like more information or if you would like a copy.

Downtown Centre

Downtown have many events that everyone would be welcome to and also some ongoing groups that the Congregation and the wider community may be interested in attending.

Downtown Choir

Open to everyone.

This mixed ability choir meets every Thursday from 11am – 12 noon in the Vestibule.

No auditions, no previous experience required and no judgement.

If you enjoy music, love to sing and want to have fun, this is the place for you!

DOWNTOWNCHOIR

FREE

A community choir open to ALL

No auditions, No previous experience required & No judgement.

All we ask is that you enjoy **music**, love to **sing** & want to have **fun**!



WHEN?

Thursdays, 11am

WHERE?

In the Foyer of First Lisburn
Presbyterian Church

 info@downtowncentre.org

 028 92 672 052

 49 Market Square South, BT28 1AD



WHERE ? Lisburn Downtown Centre
49a Market Square South, Lisburn. BT28 1AD

WHEN ? Bi-weekly: 2nd & 4th Thursday of each month
1:00pm-2:00pm

Thursday 12th September	Thursday 14th November
Thursday 26th September	Thursday 28th November
Thursday 10th October	Thursday 12th December
Thursday 24th October	

028 9267 2052 info@downtowncentre.org www.downtowncentre.org LISBURN DOWNTOWN CENTRE

Sitches and Giggles

A Knitting and Crochet Group - meets the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month in the Downtown Centre

Cheer You Up Club

Meets the first Wednesday of each month from 2 – 3.45pm in the Vestibule.

This is a vibrant social club for older people to make new friends, share experiences and enjoy a variety of activities together



COMMUNITY - CONNECTION - FRIENDSHIP

The CYU club is a vibrant social group for older people to make new friends, share experiences and enjoy a variety of activities together.



When is it? 1st Wednesday of each month,
2.00pm – 3.45pm (*September- June*)

Where? Based in the Foyer of First Lisburn Presbyterian Church, Market Square

Reach out to find out more!



COMMUNITY WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY EVENT

Connect in the heart of the City
Market Square, Lisburn City Centre

**TUESDAY 8TH
OCTOBER 2024
1PM - 3PM**

*Connecting directly with those who need us.
Together, let's break the stigma around mental health
and build a stronger, more compassionate community.*

- GAZEBO COVER WITH A STATION PER ORGANISATION.
- FREE TEA AND COFFEE PROVIDED.
- DEBUT PERFORMANCE BY THE DOWNTOWN CHOIR.

**ANNUAL EVENT
FUNDED BY**  **ANNUAL EVENT
ORGANISED BY**   028 92 672 052

Community World Mental Health Day event

Tuesday 8th October from 1 – 3pm
at Market Square Lisburn
AND the Downtown Choir will be singing

Quiz night fundraiser

Friday 8th November at The Crafty Hound,
101 Queensway, Lambeg
Doors open at 7pm
In aid of the Downtown Centre



QUIZ Night

Friday 8th November 2024

Doors open 7pm | The Crafty Hound Gastro & Grog
101 Queensway, Lisburn BT27 4QS

Tickets – £5.00
(pay at door)
Raffle on the night

In aid of the Lisburn Downtown Centre

 028 92 672 052
info@downtowncentre.org
supporting those struggling in our community since 1988



Christmas Carol Service

EVERYONE WELCOME

Get in on the excitement and let the Downtown Choir add a dash of Christmas enchantment to your festive season!



**Friday 20th December,
12 noon in First Lisburn Presbyterian Church**

Get in touch to get involved!

 info@downtowncentre.org

 028 92 672 052

 49 Market Square South, BT28 1AD

In Memoriam



Bill Wright died on 5th June (peacefully) at hospital after a short illness. Late of 47 Barban Hill, Dromore Co Down. Dearly beloved husband of the late Evelyn, much loved Father of Jill and the late David, dear Father-in-law of Alan and Helen, devoted Grandfather of David, Tori, Jamie, Patrick and Ellen and loving Great-Grandfather of Callum, Keelan, Logan, Evie, Zander, Devon and Mary Evelyn. His funeral took place on 8th June 2024 in FLPC.

Mirdza Oak died on 15th July 2024 peacefully in hospital. Late of Killowen Park, Lisburn. Beloved sister of Sylvia and the late Raymond and Bobby. She was 101 years old. Her funeral took place in Bobby Morrison's Funeral Home on Tuesday 23rd July at 11.00am with committal afterwards in Roselawn Crematorium.

At Mirdza Oak's 100th birthday party, she told her Elder, David Flinn, the amazing story of her father who was Lithuanian. He escaped from Lithuania in 1916 when Lithuania was under Russian control and people were being forced to fight in the First World War. He got on a boat and landed in Dublin in 1916; obviously not a great time to arrive there.

He managed to get a job as a Baker at Bewleys and worked there for the rest of his working life. He married a lady from Lithuania who never spoke English. Mirdza left Dublin when she was 18 and came north. She was apparently one of the first, if not the first woman, to qualify as an accountant. She worked after that for the Health Service. She was still driving at 100 and was annoyed that her Bowls had not resumed!



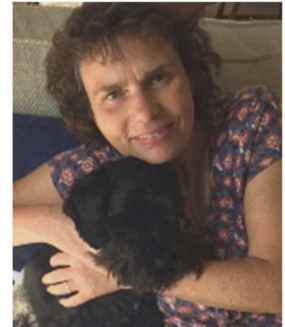
Ken McElwaine died on 27th July 2024 peacefully at home in Hillsborough. Beloved husband of Susan, much loved dad of Barry and Georgina, and loving father-in-law to Miranda and Simon. Devoted grandpa to Finn, Henry, Clementine and Sigrid. Dear brother of Alan and Joyce and his late sister Lorna. His service of thanksgiving took place on 6th August at FLPC



Maureen McAllister died on 29th July at hospital, aged 92 years. Late of Annahilt Care home, formerly of Plantation Road, Lisburn. Loving wife of the late John. Devoted and much-loved mother to Ian, Brian and Kathy, mother-in-law of Vanessa and Laura. Granny to Stuart and the late Georgina. Great granny to T.J and Luke. Her funeral took place on 3rd August at FLPC.

Michelle Armstrong died on 1st September, peacefully at Marie Curie Hospice, aged 55 years. Late of 15 Ashvale Park, Hillsborough. Dearly beloved wife of Jim, much loved and loving mum to Rachel, dearest sister of Gillian and sister-in-law of Darren, Sharon, David and Rosi.

Her service of thanksgiving took place in First Lisburn Presbyterian Church on Wednesday 4th September at 3.00pm, with a private cremation after



Exodus Team in July

Exodus Team - Bushcamp

As you all know, Grace and I were serving on an Exodus team from the 18th-29th July in a Hungarian village in Slovakia called Batorkeszi. Batorkeszi is on the border between Hungary and Slovakia just at the other of the Danube River and used to belong to Hungary, therefore the people in this community still identify as Hungarian.

We flew into Budapest and spent the first three days in the Hungarian Mountains (with no wifi or reception) where we spent time with two other teams. We were trained in using translators and putting together last minute youth sessions (which came in very useful) and studied the sermon on the Mount. We were challenged to think about who we are living our lives for, to impress the world or the audience of one which is God.

During these few days we gave our team members the opportunity to spend uninterrupted quiet time with God. Myself and my co leader Dan then took everyone aside to have one on one conversations with them and how their team experience had been to that point and got to really see the ways in which they had already grown. Jim Brown, who's the director of Exodus, took us back to Budapest for the night and gave us a tour around the beautiful city before we rested up and planned for the mission beginning the next day.



Batorkeszi



We arrived to our home for the next week in Batorkeszi and met our host Timea who is the pastor of the church and her family. We settled in and got ready for the kids arriving at camp on Monday morning.

As you entered Batorkeszi you could see a real mix of living conditions from two story houses to large families living in cramped conditions.

Throughout our week in camp it became clear which of the young people came from what background. Because of all the donations we received from team, we were able to sponsor kids to go to the camp who couldn't otherwise have afforded it. We had a few surprises throughout the first couple of days. The first was that this wasn't going to be a day camp but the kids were going to be living with us for the week! Shortly after that we then learnt that instead of 40 kids there would be 54 including lots of teenagers, who we didn't know about. This was where Grace and my experience with FLY came in very useful.

Before the kids arrived, we then had to go into planning mode so we rewrote some of our material to suit teenagers and plan youth sessions.

Throughout all of the last minute changes God gave us wisdom on how to adapt and provided us with enough material for the many more kids that we were now in charge of.

A typical day

A standard day of team life began with breakfast with the kids at 8am, where we taught them the Exodus tradition of singing for 'health and strength' as grace. We then went over to the church to have our morning holiday bible club service, where each team member took it in turn to lead worship, teach the memory verse and give a talk.



After a snack break we would then all split off into our four small groups. Grace and I were with two separate groups of teenagers and had the opportunity to delve deeper into the topic. My group always did a reflection exercise and then play loads of youth group games and sports until lunch. Their favourite game of the week was a mixture of capture the flag and stuck in the mud which I cannot wait to play with FLY soon. We would then have a hot 2 course meal for lunch with the kids which usually consisted of a soup and a pasta or a rice dish of some sort but we had a culture shock one day when we were given a plate of chocolate pasta! The kids explained to me that this is a popular dish in Hungary and Slovakia for poorer households as it's cheap to make and uses ingredients that are usually in the cupboard.

After lunch there was an hour of rest time where the kids and leaders could have a nap due to the very hot weather - but very often we would use this time to catch up on planning for last minute jobs we were given or have some team time where we would study the bible together.



Each day after rest time we would have a different activity with the kids. These included the Olympics- Watersport games that turned into a water-fight, a craft afternoon and a scavenger hunt around Bátorkeszi.

After dinner the kids all had free time until 8pm where the Transylvanian team had Hungarian worship and a movie for them and on the Thursday night we held our Irish night where we taught them local folklore, a bit about St Patrick, made them fifteens and had a mini social with them.

After such a full day everyone including the kids were in bed by 10.30pm

Highlights

One part of the experience that really stood out for me was during my small group on the Thursday. We had quite a deep chat about the worst thing that they have done and the worst thing that had happened to them- all pointing to how there is forgiveness through Jesus. As you can imagine there were some stories here that were very hard to listen to - they had gone through things nobody ever deserves to go through - but we gave them the opportunity to then leave it in the hands of Jesus.



The next day we then discussed hope. We discussed that through Jesus' resurrection there is hope for our future, there is a meaning for all that we have been through. The young people shared their plans for the future and we discussed how Jesus brings value and meaning to everything we do.

Over these two days especially the young people in my group were stepping out to pray aloud for the first time with one praying, 'thank you Jesus that when we go through difficult times, you are there with us holding our hands'. This touched all of the leaders' hearts that these young people could grasp the reality that God is always with them through everything that they have faced and will face - he can lead them through the storms of life - and I will continue to pray that they will remember this truth when they need it the most.

As team leader I loved watching the team members grow in confidence and grow in love with the kids that we were serving. It was amazing watching them interact with the kids at meal times and free time, showing them God's love through their actions and by taking the step to lead up front. Grace led a few fitness dances with the young people getting up in the morning earlier than everyone else to lead the kids morning exercises. I have told them all how amazing they are and that they were the epitome of the Exodus theme this year of going 'above and beyond'. On our last night with the kids the camp held a talent show where Grace and I performed an amazing rendition of the Irish rap song that's recently gone viral called 'the spark'- which left the kids laughing before we had a campfire.



We were sad to see the campers leave and got loads of hugs, goodbyes and many many photos with the young people. We had such an amazing time on team and were sad to leave but ready for a good sleep! As we were saying our goodbyes to the pastor and volunteer team, she welcomed us to come back and gave us God's blessing.



Since arriving home we have had messages from young people and leaders sharing how amazing it was to see God at work during our visit. We definitely learnt a lot about ourselves and God through this experience. We can't wait to see how God can use our experiences with the youth and children at first Lisburn.

Children and Youth Summer Schemes

We had a successful summer at First Lisburn with our children's and youth programmes that ran throughout July and August.

There were various hangouts planned for the youth such as our day trip to Belfast where we enjoyed a walk around the sites of the city.

Our next big event after Grace and I returned from our Exodus team was Holiday Bible Club- Mega Makers.



groups, games, snacks bringing home a printed

This week would not have been possible without the amazing volunteers who gave up their time to serve and who attended. We wrapped up Holiday bible Club family at Wallace Park which was a great time of fellowship together.

We had a successful week with roughly 30 children attending each day, most of which did not have a connection with the church.

We had an amazing opportunity here for outreach and built great relationships with the kids who attended and the families that we met. Each day consisted of fun, singing, a memory verse, science experiments, craft, talks, small and quizzes, with each child memory verse.



have been possible without the

The week after Holiday Bible Club was the youth's turn! We had a week of 'Escape' where we met



together each night, studied the bible, prayed together, sang worship songs, had either a craft or baking activity, and then a more energetic activity! This was such a fun and successful week where the young people and leaders got to learn more about God and each other.



We left the youth week excited for FLY returning and are so excited about what God has in store for our youth group this term!

FLY meets every week from 7pm-8.30pm.

If you know a young person who wishes to attend or would like to volunteer please contact Caitlin!



Ashley Parks Ministry Training Prayer Update

Dear supporter,

Second year has begun, and we are thankful for a great summer. I spent most of my summer in prison (it's ok- they let me out!). I was serving on the Chaplaincy team at HMP Maghaberry. I really enjoyed the experience, and learned a lot from the example of my supervising minister, Graham, as well as the rest of the team, and from the 'parishioners' themselves! It is a place full of heartbreaking stories, but also of amazing transformation. One of the other chaplains told me "prison isn't full of bad men, its full of men who have done bad things." The difference is significant. I met a number of people who are on an exciting journey with God, and He is using them to do incredible things amongst the inmates. Genuine interest in the gospel message is increasing, as are numbers of people attending across the six weekly protestant worship services that are held in different parts of the prison. Although there were times of darkness, God is clearly working throughout the prison.

We are thankful that we were able to have some time of rest over the summer too. We spent a week in Le Pas Opton, a campsite in France that is run by Spring Harvest. This was a time of relaxation, and time with God through daily bible teaching and worship. We also enjoyed a week on the North Coast spending our days on the beach and visiting various coffee shops and ice cream shops.



Over the summer our year group met once a month to catch up and to pray together. I continue to be thankful for the support that we give one-another.



We are in a time of transition as a family. Over the past week I have been back in college for a conference, and return fully next week. I am looking forward to being back, although I am somewhat apprehensive about studying Hebrew. In September I began my assistantship at Malone Presbyterian Church where I will be serving for the next three and a half years. I am excited to get stuck in and learn from Kathryn throughout my time there.

Stella has recently started P1 at Downshire Primary School and is loving it so far! Katie has started back to school too, and has reduced her hours to four days per week.

Finally, we have been so blessed by financial support received by so many generous friends and family. Some of that has been monthly giving, and some through one-off donations at the start or throughout the year. To date all of our financial needs have been met, which is such a blessing, particularly in the current financial climate, but we are aware that the well of one-off donations will soon run dry. Please join us in praying that the Lord may move more people towards supporting in this way.

I would like to thank you for your continued prayers, encouragements and support through this journey. As ever, if you would like to catch up over coffee for more updates please get in touch through email or phone on 07877910696.

God Bless, Ashley

Contact Details

Rev Dr David Bruce
Convenor of the Vacancy

Mobile: 07736 547500
Email: davidbruce@me.com

Rev Bobby Liddle
Pastoral Assistant to the
Convenor

Mobile: 07808 879667
Email: bliddle@presbyterianireland.org

Caitlin Jones:
Co-ordinator of Youth &
Children's Ministry

Mobile: 07436 916 642
Email: caitlin@firstlisburn.org

Rebecca Chambers & Jill Watton:
Downtown Co-ordinators

Downtown Office: 92 672 052
Email: info@downtowncentre.org

Gillian Methven:
Girls' Brigade Captain

Mobile: 07557 449 093
Email: gillian.methven@btinternet.com

Kathy Robinson
Church Office

Church Office: 92 660 144
Mobile: 07595 167 222
Email: info@firstlisburn.org

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