

# Magheramason Presbyterian Church Newsletter December 2017



Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC105376)

## **TOO BUSY TO WONDER AND WORSHIP KING JESUS?**

As Christmas approaches once again we may ask, where did 2017 go? It seems to have passed very quickly as December is upon us again. Many of us are BUSY! Busy in the ordinariness of every day life as one week flies by into another.

We can be busy in many ways. Busy with demanding work schedules. Busy raising children. Busy trying to keep fit. Busy keeping contact with friends. Especially busy in December in attending to the numerous demands of the Advent season! Yet in the midst of business God speaks!

Life was similar just over 2,000 years ago on the very first Christmas as Mary and Joseph had to return to his home town of Bethlehem. This was in accordance with the Roman Decree from Caesar Augustus that all in his Kingdom should be registered as an early Census was to be recorded. Mary was 'with child,' heavily pregnant as she and Joseph fought their way through busy Bethlehem seeking for a place to rest. We all know the familiar story well that the Lord Jesus would be born

## **Christmas Worship**

### **Sunday 17th December 2017**

11.30 a.m. : Christmas Family Service. Boys and Girls from Sunday School will be taking part in this special Christmas Service

6.30 p.m. : 'Candlelight' Community Carol Service with the Rev. Eddie Kirk. Special praise by the Choir and we will also be joined by Bready Jubilee Primary School Choir. Supper after the service.

### **Monday 25th December 2017**

10.30 a.m. : Christmas Day Service - Children are welcome to bring along toys/gifts received as we celebrate the birth of Christ together

in a stable, because ‘there was no room in the Inn.’ The question is do we take time to really wonder and worship the King that was born or are we just *too busy*?

Most of the world took little interest in the birth of God’s Son and the majority of people went about ‘business as usual.’ Only shepherds out in the hills seemed overwhelmed by the fact that God had come to the earth in the form of a little baby! As the angel chorus sang over the Bethlehem night sky “Glory to God in the Highest and on earth peace and good will toward men,” the shepherds set out from their fields in wonder to seek the Saviour. On finding the child Jesus they returned in worship, praising God for all that was revealed to them.

The incarnation is glorious! Why?  
God knows our need.  
God knows our brokenness.  
God knows our struggles.  
God knows our sin!

God knew the only way to fix everything sin had broken was to give us His very best gift, the gift of his Son!

May we make time this Christmas to wonder at this gift of God to a still sinful world. In the business of the season it is only in seeking and finding Christ as Saviour from our sin comes promised REST in life and REST for eternity. This Christmas might we all, as the hymn writer states “forget about ourselves, concentrate on Him and worship Christ the Lord!”

On behalf of the Manse Family I sincerely wish each and every family connected to Magheramason a wonder filled Christmas and hope you will take time out to join us for worship at our many special Christmas services. May the LORD be pleased to reveal more of Christ and His Way through His Word to us all as we enter 2018 together!

Your servant in the gospel

Graeme Orr

# KIRK SESSION

The past few months have been a very busy time in our Congregation, with all the organisations getting started and into their programme of activities for another year. A 'Back to School' Service was held on Sunday 10 September, Harvest Thanksgiving Services were held on Sunday 8 October, Communion Services on Sunday 29 October, and the Girls Brigade and Boys Brigade Enrolment Service on Sunday 12 November. We also had a special Mission Sunday on 15 October.

## **Boys' Brigade**

Doreen Laird and Louise Ferguson have been appointed to share the role and responsibility of Captain of the Magheramason Boys Brigade Company. The Kirk Session appreciated their continued commitment to the Boys' Brigade and would wish them well in this important position of responsibility. Also Jenny Gibson has been appointed as a helper in the Anchor Boys, Scott Montgomery as a helper in the Junior Section, and Avril McClelland and Gareth Kirk as helpers in the Company Section. We do thank these new helpers for coming along to work with the boys in the various section of the Boys' Brigade, and we wish them well and trust that they will enjoy this new challenge.

## **Organist**

We are pleased that Mrs Linda Kennedy-McNeill has agreed to play the organ/piano and work with the Church Choir. Although Linda will not be available every Sunday we appreciate her willingness to help out on a regular basis and to develop the Church worship.

## **Presbytery Consultation**

As part of the established procedures of the Presbyterian Church, Presbyteries appoint a panel to meet with and consult with individual congregations in their Presbytery every so often (approx. every 7 or 8 years). The process involves looking at the various aspect of a congregation in terms of Ministry, Worship, Mission, Discipleship and Fellowship, as well as considering property and procedures, and offering helpful advice where appropriate.

A panel from the Derry & Donegal Presbytery will be consulting with the congregation of Magheramason in the early part of 2018. The Kirk Session will be preparing for this consultation and will be providing Presbytery with the required information. The congregation will be kept informed as the process develops.

## **Prayer Times**

The Kirk Session has agreed the following prayer times and would encourage members of the congregation to come along and to seek God's blessing on His church, on their own lives and the lives of others. You do not have to feel uneasy in any way and there is no obligation to pray publicly but just in being there you will be sharing in the prayers being offered and you will be a great encouragement

to those who faithfully pray for the Church, for you and for others. Friday 8 Dec. 7.00 – 8.30 a.m., Tue 2 Jan. – Fri 5 Jan. 7.00–8.30 a.m. and then each Friday morning 7.00 – 8. 30 a.m. There is no better way to start the day than in prayer.

### **Christmas Greetings**

The Kirk Session would wish each family and member of our congregation a happy, blessed, and peaceful Christmas season, and as we look forward to another new year, let us all rededicate ourselves and commit ourselves to worshipping and serving God in our congregation through Jesus Christ and giving glory and honour to His name.

Walter Hoy (Clerk of Session)

## **CONGREGATIONAL COMMITTEE REPORT.**

As we approach Christmas the Congregational Committee would take this opportunity of wishing all members of Magheramason Church a happy and holy Christmas.

The Committee continues to ensure our property is kept in good condition and that our facilities are kept up to date and provide a safe environment.

We would like to thank the congregation for their continued support through the Weekly Freewill Offering and would encourage those who are in a position to do so, to consider increasing their contributions in the next financial year.

The committee are actively considering the provision of internet facilities in the Church and providing a ‘Defibrillator’ in case of an emergency in the Church. This will help to make the Church a safer environment for all of our members and all who use our premises.

Sam McPherson (Congregational Secretary)

### **Samaritans Purse Christmas Shoe Boxes.**

Many thanks to all members who prepared and filled Christmas Shoe Boxes this year. Thirty boxes were delivered to the centre in Strabane to be checked ready for delivery to needy children by the organization set up by Franklyn Graham .

[www.samaritans-purse.org.uk](http://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk)

# DATES TO REMEMBER

**Mon. - 4 Dec. 2017 -7.00 p.m.**

Magheramason Community Association:  
Christmas Tree Switch On and Carol Singing followed by tea in Church Hall.

**Fri. 8 Dec. - 7.00 – 8.30 am.**

Morning Prayer Time

**Sat. 9 Dec. 2017 - 10.00 a.m.**

BB Coffee Morning in Church Hall

**Sun. 10 Dec. 2017 - 6.30 pm.**

Cafe Church . – Speaker Harry Richmond (ECM)

**Fri. 15 Dec. 2017 - 7.00 – 8.30 pm.**

Children's Christmas Club. All children( P1 –P7) are invited for a night of fun.

**Sun. 17 Dec. 2017 11.30 a.m.**

Christmas Family Service.

**6.30 p.m.**

'Candlelight' Carol Service followed by supper with the  
Rev. Eddie Kirk and Bready P.S. choir.

**Sun. 24 Dec. 2017 - 11.30 a.m.**

Sunday Worship with guest speaker Rev. Daniel  
Grimwade from Dewsbury Evangelic Church.

**Mon. 25 Dec. 2017 -10.30 a.m.**

Christmas Day Service of Worship (boys and girls  
are invited to bring a gift received to Church as we  
celebrate the birth of Christ together)

**Sun. 31 Dec. 2017 - 11.30 am.**

Praise Service for 2017 and looking forward to New Year 2018

**Sun. 7 Jan. 2018 - 11.30 a.m.**

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

*N.B. There will be no Sunday School or Evening Services  
on Sun. 24 December 2017 or Sun. 31 December 2017 .*

**Wed. 27th - Fri 29th Dec.2017 7.30 pm**

Magheramason Bowling Tournament

**Tue. 2nd Jan 2018 7.30 p.m.**

Magheramason Bowling Tournament

**Tue. 2nd Jan. – Fri. 5th Jan. 2018 - 7.00 – 8.30 a.m**

Week of Morning Prayer

**Fri. 5th Jan - Sun 7th Jan 2018**

Londonderry Young Peoples Convention  
Lisneal College (Crescent Link) 8.00 p.m.  
Speaker: Bishop Ken Clarke

**Sun. 28 Jan. 2018 - 7.30 pm.**

Presbytery RIPPLE EFFECT: Youth Coffee Bar at the Exodus Centre,  
Strand Road. Music led by Rev. Stuart McCrea and Band from Donemana.  
All young people of Secondary age Welcome!

**Sun. 25th Feb. 2018 - 11.30 a.m.**

Presbyterian Women's Service  
Speaker: Mrs Margaret Cameron

**Sat. 10th Mar. 2018**

OMF Breakfast – White Horse Hotel 9.00 a.m.

## **FREEWILL OFFERING ENVELOPES**

It has become necessary for Freewill Offering Numbers to be re-allocated in order to fill up the gaps of unused envelopes and to cut down on the cost of printing unnecessary and unused envelopes.

As previously notified envelopes have not automatically been re-issued where there has been no return of the same in the past 3 years, but can still be issued on request by contacting Mrs Roberta Shannon (02871 841608) or Mr Colin Kennedy.

**Consequently all contributions for 2018 must be in the new envelopes (new numbers) so that they can be correctly identified.**

**Contributions and any arrears for 2017 should be in the old envelopes and clearly marked 'Arrears' and should be in by Sunday 7 January 2018.**

An alternative method of making monthly payments to the Church is through a bank standing order. Please contact the Treasurer or FWO Secretary for more details.

# CHURCH NEWS

## **ASIA Link Soup Lunch**

Members of the congregation enjoyed a soup lunch following the service on Sunday 25 September with the proceeds, which amounted to £475, going to support the work of Asia Link Mission. Mr Gordon Stewart from Asia Link spoke at the Church service highlighting the work of Asia Link in North Korea, a difficult place to share the Gospel at the present time.

## **Mission Sunday**

The focus of the congregation on Sunday 15 October was on the theme of Mission. At the morning service Amy Gardiner and Elaine Davis shared with the congregation their uplifting experience of being part of the PCI Outreach Team to Donegal Town for a week in the summer, and helping with Bible Clubs and enjoying fun, games and fellowship with the young people.

Megan Dougherty also shared with the congregation of her trip to Hungary for 10 days with a team from Exodus led by Andy Lamberton. Megan found the experience of talking and sharing with the people they met there to be very encouraging. Megan also shared her plans to join Exodus full-time as an 'intern' for the coming year.

Mr Stephen Cowan a PCI Missionary in Kenya for over 30 years was present at the morning service and gave an update on the work in Tuum in the Northern part of the country and on the slow but steady progress of helping and showing the people there how to make use of the limited resources to improve their living conditions. Also with financial support from various congregations a Girls' Secondary School had been provided.

The team from Magheramason who went to Kenya in the summer (Paul & Elizabeth Davis, Megan Dougherty, David & Sally Thompson, Keith & Fiona McCrossan, and Betty Dolan) also shared with the congregation their experience of helping with the Bible Camps when approx. 300 children attended the junior camp and 150 young people attended the senior camp and the encouragement it had been to see so many children and young people eager to hear of the love of the Lord Jesus Christ. The offering raised £330 for the Stephen Cowan ministries in Kenya.

Mr Philip Dunne and Mr Steven Bowers the Mission Director of EMF (European Missionary Fellowship) were the guest speakers at the evening Cafe Church and gave a very interesting and informative talk/presentation on the work of EMF in various countries across Europe. The offering raised £330 for the work of EMF.

## **Harvest Services**

Harvest Thanksgiving services were held on Sunday 8 October when the Church was beautifully and tastefully decorated for the occasion. There was a good attendance at the morning service which was conducted by the Rev Graeme Orr who based his address on Jeremiah Chapter 8 verse 20 'A Harvest Opportunity Missed'. The Magheramason Church Choir led the harvest praise and rendered the special anthem 'Bringing in the Sheaves'.

There was also a good attendance at the evening service with the Church Choir again leading the harvest praise and rendering the anthem 'Sing to the Lord of the Harvest'. The Rev Graeme Orr led the service and the guest speaker was the Rev. Jonathan Campbell who based his address on the well known passage from Habakkuk 3:17-19 which gives encouragement to wait patiently on God's justice even in the most difficult circumstances. We thank all who provided gifts of flowers, fruit, vegetables and other produce, and to the ladies who applied their artistic skills in decorating the Church, and various Church organisations for their contributions to the Harvest Displays. Thanks also to Elizabeth Davis and the Choir for leading the praise and rendering special anthems, and for all the extra work which they put in, in preparing for these services. The congregation enjoyed supper and fellowship following the evening service.

## **Moderator's Visit**

Members of the Wednesday Afternoon Cafe/Club were delighted and honoured when the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church the Rt. Rev. Dr. Noble McNeely and his wife Florence called in to say hello and share fellowship with them over a cup of tea on Wednesday 8 November. Mrs Ethel McClintock was also present and gave members a very interesting and informative demonstration of how to perform the life-saving procedure of CPR. The Moderator said that he and his wife enjoyed meeting people on their tour of the Derry & Donegal Presbytery and expressed good wishes to the Wednesday Afternoon club.

## **Remembrance Service**

The Remembrance Day Service was on Sunday 12 November at 11.30 a.m. when the service was conducted by the Rev Graeme Orr. The Congregation observed a two-minute silence in memory of those who had made the supreme sacrifice in World Wars and other conflicts. Mr Colin Kennedy laid the wreath at the War Memorial in the Vestibule of the Church, the Rev Graeme Orr gave the remembrance citation, the Last Post was sounded, followed by the silence, and ending with Reveille. The Rev Graeme Orr then led the congregation in prayer. Mr John Kincaid read a passage of scripture from Ephesians Chapter 1. The offering which was in aid of the Earl Haig fund was taken up by John Kincaid, Jack Campbell, Harry Spence, Cyril Sommerville, Ivan Rutherford, Colin Kennedy, Judi Crumley and Liz Kennedy.



## **GB/BB Enrolment Service**

The annual Girls Brigade and Boys Brigade enrolment service was held on Sunday 12 November at 6.30 p.m., when there was a large turnout of officers and members of both companies, and also of parents and friends as well. The service was conducted by the Rev. Graeme Orr who enrolled the Captains and Officers and helpers of the Brigades and the members of the Companies and thanked the Leaders for their dedication to the work of these important organisations. The Rev Orr also paid tribute to Mr Richard McNeely who had retired as captain of the Boys' Brigade after many years of faithful service and Mrs Allison Faulkner who had also retired as a helper in the Anchor Boys. The Rev Graeme Orr gave the address to the congregation, and Scripture passages were read by Nikita Woods and Kezzi Mulholland from the GB Company and Cameron Kennedy and Ben Galbraith from the BB Company.

## **NEW YEAR WEEK OF PRAYER / PRAYER TIMES**

Prayer meetings will be held from **Tue. 2<sup>nd</sup> – Fri. 5<sup>th</sup> Jan.2018** meeting each morning at **7.00 a.m. – 8.30 a.m.** and then weekly **every Friday morning 7.00 -8.30 a.m.**

If you are available and desire to seek God's blessing, for His Church and in your own life and the life of others, please do join with us in these special times of prayer.

### **BAPTISMS**

**“Suffer the little children to come unto me”.**

26 November 2017 - Jack Wilson infant son of Derek & Karen McNeely

### **DEATHS**

**‘Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted.’**

3 October 2017 - Mr James Lowry, Dunalong Road, Bready.

### **MARRIAGES**

**‘To have and to hold from this day forth’**

14 October 2017 - Kim Hamilton to Richard Craig

## CHILDREN'S CHURCH

We are currently looking for new leaders/helpers to work with the children in our congregation. Currently the rota for Children's Church is for two weeks every three months. If you would like to get involved in this lively part of Church life please contact Pamela (078 7762 1157) or Elaine.

We thank most sincerely all our current Children's Church leaders for all their dedicated help, support and hard work which they put in each week.

Thank You.

Pamela Davis

## CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS CLUB

**Friday 15 December 2017 7.00 – 8.30 pm**

**All children invited for a night of fun as we are reminded about the First Christmas.**

## C H R I S T M A S

Celebrate Jesus' birthday with  
Hearts that are all aglow,  
Remembering that first Christmas many years ago.  
In a Bethlehem stable bare  
Sent from Heaven above  
That special Christmas gift to us, God's eternal love.  
May we keep on during Christmas,  
And New Year Twenty Eighteen,  
Seeking and serving daily, our Saviour, Friend 'Supreme'.

*May Doherty*

# REMINDER/APPEAL

## Weekly Freewill Offering Contributions

The Church Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank all members for their regular weekly contributions and for their support in the past, especially when responding to appeals for an increase in contributions, to ensure that the congregation was able to meet its financial commitments. This has indeed been very much appreciated. The Weekly Freewill Offering is the means by which the regular ongoing work of the congregation is financed.

However the Church's financial needs will just be as great in the year 2018, and so we would again appeal for each and every member **to endeavour to maintain (and increase if possible) their Weekly Freewill Offering contributions, and to remember that your contributions are important and vital to the work of the Church.** It is only through the weekly offerings that the work of the Church can continue, unhindered by lack of finance.

We also appeal to all non-contributing members that the Church needs your support and to seriously consider making a weekly contribution to your Church.

### **FWO Envelope Review**

The cost of printing FWO envelopes for Church members is increasing every year and in order to cut back on this expense, the Committee as previously indicated, will no longer automatically issue envelopes for anyone who has not returned envelopes in the previous three years. If you have not made any contributions for three years but still wish to receive envelopes as usual, please let the FWO Secretary Mrs Roberta Shannon (02871 841608) know as soon as possible.

An alternative method of making monthly payments to the Church is through a bank standing order. Please contact the Treasurer or FWO Secretary for more details.

## **IN LIEU OF FLOWERS**

### **In Memory of Mr Samuel (Sam) Connor**

Witherow & Roberta Shannon, Dunalong, Bready.  
Mike, Jean, Roger & Rachel McCorry. 3 Highgrove Drive, Ballyclare.

## **IN MEMORY**

### **In Loving Memory of late Mr Billy Johnston, Died 1st December 2016.**

Sadly missed by his wife Bette and Family.  
Always in our thoughts, forever in our hearts

### **Mr Jim Charles Robb – Died 17th December 2012**

In Loving Memory of Mr Jim Robb  
Always remembered by his wife Margaret, daughters Heather, Jennifer, Joanne,  
Lynda and their families.

In Loving Memory of Jim Robb, a dearly Loved Brother,  
Brother in Law and Uncle  
Remembered always by Catherine, John & family.

In Loving Memory of Jim Robb, a dearly Loved Brother,  
Brother in Law and Uncle  
Remembered always by Sharon, Mark & family.

## **SNIF - SATURDAY NIGHT IN FELLOWSHIP**

Continues fortnightly in the Upper Room of Church Hall for all young people of secondary school age. 7.30 – 9.00 pm

Megan, Amy and Elaine would really love to see more young people coming along for good fun, good food and good fellowship and some Biblical reflections.

## SPECIAL OFFERINGS

Recent special offerings in the congregation of Magheramason realised the following amounts:

Easter Offering	£ 2,299.00
ASIA Link (soup lunch)	£ 475.00
CAP (Christians Against Poverty)	£ 180.00
Harvest Offering	£ 2,633.11
Kenya Mission (Stephen Cowan)	£ 330.00
EMF (European Missionary Fellowship)	£ 330.50
RBL Poppy Appeal (Remembrance Day)	£ 245.00
GMSA (Gospel Mission to South America)	£ 238.00

We express our sincere thanks to everyone for their support and generous contributions.

## MAGHERAMASON WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON CLUB

Invites you to drop in **from 1.30 - 3.30pm** at the Church Hall.

**“Drop in and Chat”** over a cup of Tea / Coffee & Eats.

Come & get involved, good fun & fellowship.

If you are free why not come and join us!

Board games, bowls, table tennis, dominoes  
and hopefully something to suit everyone

It is hoped to have speakers along  
to give short informative talks and demonstrations.

To date we have had talks on 1st Aid, flower arranging,  
bird watching, bulb planting and mission to Kenya.

**We welcome you along from the  
community and to be involved.**

Meet friends / Bring a friend / Welcome new friends

## IF I COULD ONLY BECOME A BIRD.

Paul Harvey an American broadcaster tells the story about a family on Christmas Eve. This family had a tradition where the Mother and children would go to the Christmas Eve service, and the Father would stay home and read the paper. When the family returns home from church, they would all gather to open up their presents.

The Father was not an evil man, but he just couldn't believe in the childhood stories anymore of God coming as a baby in a manger. As the family left for church, he opened up the evening paper and began to read by the fireplace.

Suddenly, he heard tapping on the window. It was a bird flying against the glass of his window trying to get out of the snow into the warmth of his home. The man had compassion on the bird, and he went outside, hoping to bring it in.

As he approached the bird, the bird just flew against the window even harder. Pretty soon, the bird flew into the bushes below the window, half frozen, yet too afraid to be caught by this huge man. The more the man tried to reach for the bird, the more the bird flew frantically into the snow and thorns of the bushes.

After a few minutes in the cold and seeing the bird continue to injure itself, the man yelled out in frustration, "Stupid bird, can't you understand that I'm trying to help?" The man paused and thought, **"If only you understood you wouldn't fly away ... if only ... if only I could become a bird, and get you to understand."**

Just then, the church bells rang, as they always have on the hour. But when the man heard the bells this time, he fell to his knees and began to cry, saying, "Oh, God, I didn't understand. Oh, God, I didn't understand."

**God's Son came in human form that we might understand from where we have come, for what reason we were separated from God, and how we could be reconciled to Him.**

## MISSION BOXES



Thanks to all who took and filled the PW Mission Boxes; the amount collected this year was £1,825.00, a very commendable amount. Spare Mission Boxes are available and anyone who would like one, please contact Pamela Davis or Helen Walker

**P.W. Service on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at 11.30 a.m.**

Guest Speaker - Mrs Margaret Cameron  
Helen Walker (Secretary)

### *The Prophecy of the Birth of Jesus*

*For to us a child is born,  
To us a son is given,  
And the government will be on his shoulders.  
And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
Of the increase of his government and peace  
There will be no end.  
He will reign on David's throne  
and over his kingdom,  
establishing and upholding it  
with justice and righteousness  
from that time on and for ever.  
The zeal of the Lord Almighty  
will accomplish this.*

*Isaiah 9:6-7*

## **THE BIRTH OF JESUS ANNOUNCED TO THE SHEPHERDS**

*And there were shepherds living out in the fields near by, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find the baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests."*

*Luke 2: 8-14*

### **LONDONDERRY YOUNG PEOPLES CONVENTION**

**on**

**Fri. 5 Jan. - Sun. 7 Jan. 2018**

**at**

**8.00 p.m. each evening (Prayer meeting 7.30 p.m.)**

**in**

**Lisneal College - Crescent Link**

**Speaker: Bishop Ken Clarke**

**Fri. - Sun. 9.20 -10.30 p.m. :**

**The Source (12 years of age +) - Lisneal**

**Ladies Coffee Morning : Sat. 6 Jan. 10.30 a.m.**

**White Horse Hotel**