

# First Larne Presbyterian Church The Bridge News

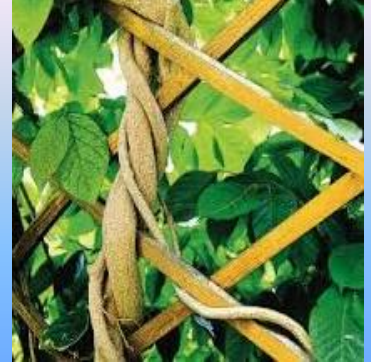
*"We are here to worship God, build up His church and share His love."*



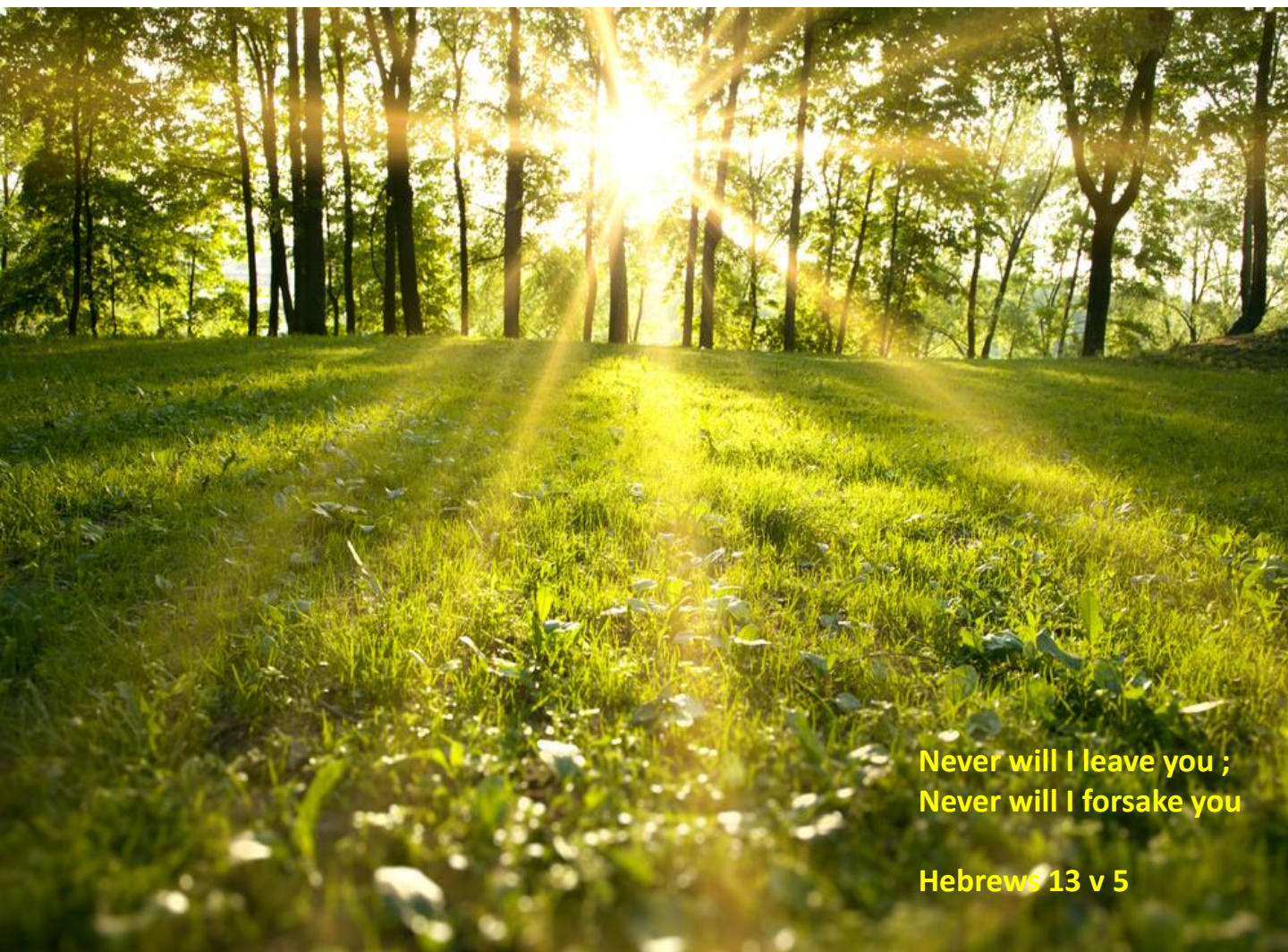
**Teddy Bears' Picnic**



**Cheerio from  
Natalie and Andrew**



**The Trellis and the Vine**



**Never will I leave you ;  
Never will I forsake you**

**Hebrews 13 v 5**

## Spring Edition 2017

**No. 396**

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# COLIN'S COLUMN

## WHERE ARE YOU GOING THIS SUMMER?

From the playground to the boardroom, the work canteen to the House of Commons tea room, the chance encounter on Main Street to the family gathering in the front room, the question as the summer holidays approach is - Where are you going?



Is anyone getting to ride on the London Eye? Since opening in 2000 it has welcomed nearly 80 million visitors in its 32 capsules, each one representing a London borough. The Eye can carry 800 passengers per rotation, the equivalent of packing 11 London double-decker buses. Each rotation takes about 30 minutes, at a leisurely 0.6 miles per hour, thus allowing passengers to board and disembark without the wheel stopping. In a world addicted to speed this may seem very slow, but because it faithfully and dependably keeps turning, in one year the Eye rotates 2,300 miles, the distance from London to Cairo. Although having the appearance and feel of moving slowly the London Eye can cover some ground and travel some distance!

In First Larne we have celebrated our 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary and are about to mark 40 years in our “new” complex. This is a good time to ask **“Where are we going this summer and beyond?”** This question has dominated the Session agenda in the last year or so as we seek to give leadership facing into the 2017/18 church year. At services in May and June you can hear some of the priorities and plans the Session have prayerfully identified and assessed, bringing encouragement that, like the London Eye, may seem at times uneventful and very slow whilst actually covering quite a distance. (I know the analogy cannot be pressed too far as, rather inconveniently, the Eye actually stays on the one spot!)

In June’s services we have set ourselves the goal of providing more detail, after prayerful consideration, of 5 priority areas for embedding and nurturing the fruitfulness of our congregation:

- ❖ Children, youth and family ministry
- ❖ Missing generations
- ❖ Beyond the walls/into new fields ministry/outreach/service in the local community
- ❖ Worship
- ❖ Prayer – individual and corporate

Whilst these priorities might seem rather obvious and certainly require more detail, there are some key convictions underlying them which have emerged from our discussions and from the experience of others in PCI we have consulted and shared with (see Bev Moore’s article “The trellis and the vine”). For instance, in a phrase borrowed from an English minister involved in the consultation process, the church can have “no return address”. In other words, the true Church has never been static – it has always been developing, changing and moving to places it has never been before. He referenced the growth of the early church described in Acts, and Jesus’ command before His ascension to “be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1 v.8) He went on to cite the particular example of Peter and Cornelius. Was it not significant that Peter did what was previously unthinkable when he stepped into Cornelius’ house, thereby making himself ritually and religiously unclean? And yet, it was stepping into this new place in a new way that gloriously advanced the Gospel!

Another key conviction is captured in the sequence “LOVE – RELATE – CREATE”. It describes a way of doing church in our society whereby, in a very intentional way, the way we love and the life we share with others helps us to relate to them in such a way that they are intrigued by what motivates us. They then ask the questions that allow us to spontaneously and naturally share what Jesus means to us.

For me, some characteristics of a fruitful church emerged from an article I read about “Messy Church”. This is the model of church that so many churches of different denominations and traditions, in rural and urban settings, in multicultural communities or more monochrome ones, are finding helpful in their mission to families and others who have rarely or never set foot across the threshold of a church. This particular style of being church would not suit everyone – but the “Messy Church” people have identified 5 key principles that I believe are vital for a fruitful congregation of whatever style and wherever it is.

Firstly, they insist that **church is for people of all ages** or, as Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury described it, “Not church for children, but church for ..... church.” A few years ago his Church of England published a report entitled, with delightful ambiguity “Children in the Way”. Some people might see children

as getting in the way of the real business of doing church, but children and every other type of person, should know that they are welcome on the Way with us and among us. Who was it said, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these”?

A growing church will have **hospitality** oozing out of its pores. What is said and done will model welcome, acceptance and equality. Not just in sermons but in many deeply significant actions, God’s love and how He values you will be communicated. The youngest child and the oldest great-grandparent matter – and they should know this by how they are welcomed.

One obvious feature of the “Messy Church” approach is the expression of Biblical truth using crafts and **creativity** in general. The Bible is about the God who creates something from nothing, whose power brought Jesus from death to life and who continues to transform thoughts, attitudes, hearts, actions and lives. However we do it, with guitar-led worship songs or cathedral anthems, in formal robes or jeans & jumpers, we need to have the creative space that allows God to speak to us, in the questions and conversations we can have, surrounded by friendship, wonder and awe.

“Messy Church” is celebrated for its propensity for **celebration!** That should be true of any church. We live in a world with more than enough pain and sorrow – but with the promises of God upholding us. This is the source of our inner joy whatever the external circumstance. Unfortunately we can confuse joy with triviality or superficial entertainment. Whatever type of church we are, whatever age and stage we are at in our Christian journey, there should always be a place for a gospel of celebration of who God is, what He’s done for us, of our identity as His people, of the significance of our own lives in the light of His love for us. A gospel of marking & celebrating the things that matter in our lives and in our world, both the joyful and the tragic ones, as our God is a God who cares about everything we are going through. Such a gospel is welcome news which broken people in a broken world are welcoming.

The fifth core value of “Messy Church” provides the spring-board for the others and should hardly need mentioned i.e. Church is Christ-centred. Church exists so that people of all shapes and sizes can **encounter** Christ and move closer to Him each day of their week, not just on Sunday. Sometimes from the tone of our services you could be forgiven for thinking that what we are celebrating is an encounter that took place a large number of years back! Instead, we should be walking into a service expecting an encounter for today and we should be preparing our church as a place for tomorrow’s encounters.

By the summer we shall be talking about plans that may seem to be contemplating new things. However, in this year of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation, we should keep remembering the “no return address” truth for the Church. As we do what the Church has always done and move forward into new things we are not leaving the tradition but getting to the heart of it!

As we move forward this summer and share plans towards claiming the future let me leave you with a prayer attributed to Sir Francis Drake as he circumnavigated the globe. This Elizabethan explorer was a hero to some and a pirate villain to others. Whatever history’s verdict on him, in this prayer, written as he set sail from the west coast of South America not quite knowing where the journey would take him, there is an invitation to faithful adventure and an admonition to faithless complacency. Wherever else we may be going this summer may we keep going with resolve to fulfil our greater purpose! May Drake’s prayer reflect our praying and our priorities.

Disturb us, Lord, when  
We are too pleased with ourselves,  
When our dreams have come true  
Because we dreamed too little,  
When we arrived safely  
Because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us, Lord, when  
With the abundance of things we possess  
We have lost our thirst  
For the waters of life;  
Having fallen in love with life,  
We have ceased to dream of eternity  
And in our efforts to build a new earth,  
We have allowed our vision  
Of the new Heaven to dim.

Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly,  
To venture on wilder seas  
Where storms will show Your mastery;  
Where losing sight of land,  
We shall find the stars.

We ask you to push back  
The horizons of our hopes;  
And to push back the future  
In strength, courage, hope, and love.

This we ask in the name of our Captain,  
Who is Jesus Christ.

*Sir Francis Drake (1540-1596)*

**Rev. Colin McClure**

# The Trellis and the Vine

It is my privilege to be part of the First Larne team attending a series of conferences on disciple making. Teams of about 6 people from Presbyterian churches throughout the province will continue to gather over the next several months. Our aim is develop disciple making networks in each of our congregations, yes right here in First Larne!

One of the first handouts we received was a copy of chapter one of Col Marshall's brilliant book "The Trellis and the Vine".



In it he describes two trellises in his garden. One is a thing of great craftsmanship, even beauty. Its precise lattice-work is well maintained in a coat of rich green paint. It is strong and made of best materials, made to stand the test of time. It is complete in every respect but one; there is no vine.

The other trellis is leaning against his shed, almost invisible under the masses of jasmine vine growing up and over it. A little fertilizer, a little water, occasional pruning and weeding around the base and every spring there are new shoots and beautiful flowers. It was probably painted at one time but it is hard to tell. The jasmine vine has taken over. Where the trellis is beginning to give way it has been tied up to the fence here and there, but will someday give way under the weight of the vine.

Most churches are a combination of trellis and vine. Sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ, seeing people converted, changed and growing to faith filled maturity in that gospel is the vine work of Christian ministry.

The trellis is the necessary structure and support to that ministry and discipleship. It may begin with somewhere to meet, bibles and leadership at the

very least, but as the ministry grows the trellis also needs attention: management, finances, infrastructure, governance. These become increasingly complex and good trellis workers are invaluable and needed in every church, but who is tending the vine?

Here in First Larne we are blessed with a number of very worthwhile organizations and activities, led by a hardworking ministerial team, support staff and dedicated volunteers, but do we not often see the same faces in several places? In most churches vine work falls to the efforts of a very few.

Vine work isn't easy. It is up front and personal. It requires a lot of prayer and dependence on God, but it also requires us to open our mouths and speak God's word in some way to another person. More than that, discipleship and disciple making is about being, not just speaking - it has to caught not just taught.

Now honestly, which would you rather do: pitch in on a work party to spruce up our car park or share the gospel with your boss, your co-workers or even your next door neighbour? Both activities are services to our church family and God, but do we want to be a church so focused on the ABC – the attendance, the buildings and the cash – that the D of Discipleship gets left off the agenda?

How can we make **Discipleship** the key thing, not an extra thing in all the things we are already doing as a church?

As Christians we know the great commission calls on disciples to make more disciples, who make more disciples, who make more disciples..... This is OUR calling, OUR vine work. It was the first invitation (Matthew 4 v 19) and the final command (Matthew 28 v 19-20) of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Bev Moore**

# Divine healing today

We are all familiar with the many reports of miraculous healing in the Bible. But for us, as hard headed, practical Presbyterians, divine healing can seem, well, a bit strange. Maybe it's associated a bit too much with American TV preachers, some of whom seem a bit "dodgy". Yes, Jesus did that sort of thing way back then, but he was God. But what is divine healing now?

Brother David Jardine is a Church of Ireland clergyman and also a member of the Society of St. Francis, a religious community in the Anglican Church. He was a chaplain in Crumlin Road Prison at the height of the Troubles between 1975 and 1985. In 1992 he founded Divine Healing Ministries and describes divine healing as "an endeavour, through prayer, counselling, the laying-on of hands, and anointing with oil, to bring to someone in need of wholeness, the healing love of Jesus Christ."

Jesus said something about this (Matthew 18 v 19-20). "... if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them".

Prayer for healing is offered in five different locations across Belfast every week, from the Cregagh Road in the east, to the Shankill and the Falls in the west, with St George's and St Anne's in the city centre. So what happens at a Divine Healing Service?

We all know Robert Alexander lost his wife Kate last year after a long battle with illness, but, when Kate was still with us, Robert, Kate and daughter Catherine attended services at St. Anne's. Robert explains

"When we arrived there was a time of worship, singing that helped everyone focus on God and His power and authority. This was followed by a time of prayer and a talk, often someone giving testimony to the healing they had received. The prayer again helped to focus on God and invite the power of the Holy Spirit to do amazing things. The talks focused on what God had done in the lives of real people and of the difficult journeys often faced. After this short service the prayer team dispersed in pairs ready to offer prayer for those



attending. Those seeking prayer went to one of the pairs and simply said what they wanted prayer for. The pair sat with us and offered sensitive and appropriate prayer, sometimes following the biblical pattern of laying hands on our shoulders. **The sense of peace and the knowledge of God's love was very evident and helped us get through a very difficult time."**

Prayer is open to everyone. Prayer can be about anything not just illness - loneliness, past hurts, anxiety, stress, recovery from sickness, physical healing, a broken relationship, your relationship with God, someone you are concerned about, temptation, guidance over a decision.

The answer to prayer has often been compared to traffic lights. Sometimes the light is green and prayer is answered as we expected. Sometimes the light is amber and the answer is wait. The red light of course means no. This can be difficult to accept but perhaps when prayer is not answered the way we expect or hope, we need to look inside ourselves for the reason for our prayers. Sometimes it is better that someone whom we love and want to be with us forever, passes on to a better place where their pain and suffering is over. Sometimes God may be trying to teach us important lessons on patience and humility and so makes us wait. Whatever the outcome we must be aware that the Lord is in charge and knows best what we need.

Robert's experience led him to organise divine healing services here in Larne so that those needing prayer do not have to travel to Belfast. The first of these was held in Craigyhill Methodist Church on 11<sup>th</sup> December last year and those interested in being part of a prayer team are now doing the training. It is planned to have further services of divine healing here in Larne in the coming months. If you or anyone you care for requires prayer to help them through a difficult time please look out for the next service and come along to experience God's Healing power and His sense of peace. Meanwhile if you ring Divine Healing Ministries On 028 90311532 you can request prayer for yourself or someone else and prayer will be given for a month.

If you would like to know more about Divine Healing Ministries visit their website at [www.divinehealingministries.org](http://www.divinehealingministries.org).



# “It is better to die in a camp than to die in a war.”



That's what Nejebar thinks. It's better to travel for months, in rain and snow, with young children. To walk until you injure your feet. To risk your children's lives in a plastic dinghy and to leave everything you know behind. When the alternative is fear and terror, bombs and bullets, almost anything is better.

Nejebar's husband Noor was a teacher in Afghanistan. Imagine the horror the family felt when the Taliban announced they would kill anyone, like Noor, who worked for the government. Imagine how they felt when the Taliban carried out that threat on another family member, taking out his eyes before killing him. Almost anything has to be better than that.

But now they've arrived in Greece, all they have is a tent. They have no other protection against wind and rain. There's no school for their five children. And they have no certainty or clear idea of what will happen to them now. They thought they would stay here for 10 days, but it's already been six months and there's no end in sight.

Noor describes their initial reaction to arriving in the camp in Greece: 'It was like suicide for us. But we took the decision that it is better to die here than to die there from war.'

Throughout it all, Nejebar has desperately wanted what is best for her children. But her circumstances make it very difficult. Her youngest, Sudai, is five years old but looks much younger. He hasn't been growing as he should. His tummy is swollen and they don't know what is wrong with him. And because

the only on-site doctor is Greek, they haven't been able to find out. They don't have the language to explain that Sudai is much older than he looks.

Nejebar's strength and steadiness make her the rock at the centre of her family, holding them together in this difficult and uncertain situation. But she hasn't stopped there. Despite her circumstances, she has welcomed two brothers, Faraidoon and Farzad, into her home. Faraidoon and Farzad don't know where their parents are, or if they're even alive. Nejebar has welcomed them into her family, giving them refuge as they wait for news.

Nejebar says: 'We still have some hope that one day we will get out of here and we have hope for our children's future. Our wish is to get out from this situation and to be able to go further. We only want a peaceful life. We want our children to have an education, to go to school. The most important thing is for our children.'



## Have you ever thought about doing something for Christian Aid?

- First Larne will be holding a lunch for Christian Aid after the morning service on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May.
- If you are a tax payer and make a donation make sure you tick the box for Gift Aid – this allows Christian Aid to reclaim an extra 20%, so £5 becomes £6!
- The Larne Christian Aid Committee are always looking for collectors – It might not be as daunting as you thought (see one collector's thoughts opposite). If you want to give it a go speak to Rev McClure or local organiser, Jackie Tennant.

# Confessions of a Christian Aid collector

The first time I did a collection was in Craigyhill estate and I was a bit nervous. I went out early on Sunday morning, slipped the envelopes through the doors in the couple of streets I had been asked to cover and went back home feeling glad that was over. I'm still not sure why I volunteered, but there was no going back now.

I left it for a couple of days and then, on a nice sunny evening later in the week, plucked up the courage to go and ask for the envelopes back. I was half expecting people to laugh in my face, but they didn't. The people were very nice and one person sticks in my mind. A little old lady greeted me with a big smile and chatted away whilst she slipped a couple of pound coins into the red envelope. I couldn't help but think of the bible story of the widow putting two coins into the temple treasury.

Some of the reactions you get might surprise you or, depending on how you take them, make you laugh.....or maybe depress you. Some people will just not come to the door, even though you both know they are in, because the TV is on and you can smell the cooking. And it's amazing how many teenagers will answer "my mum (or granny) isn't in" as if somehow they couldn't possibly have any money themselves!

One man, who had a Mercedes and two other newish cars sitting in the driveway of his large house, told me that "the wife deals with that and she's at the hairdressers" – I came back again at the end of

the evening and did get a small donation. The persistence paid off as in subsequent years the man of the house did contribute.

You do very occasionally get a bad reaction – one young woman laughed scornfully as she shut the door, and one told me that she had actually been in Africa and all aid was a waste of time. But the majority will give quite willingly because Christian Aid does have a good reputation. So why not give it a go at being a Christian Aid collector?

Christian Aid tell you to put the envelopes out early in the week and go back after a couple of days to collect them. This is good advice because it gives people time to find money (or even write a cheque!) A couple of other tips. Always take spare envelopes with you when you go back to collect – you will always get some people who have lost the envelope. Make a list of the house numbers and tick them off (or write Y or N) beside each number as you go, because it's easy to lose track. Sometimes you will see a filled envelope sitting on a table in the hall, but the person is not there. So be prepared to go back again to round up any stragglers. And one very obvious thing – smile and say thank you. The people you are collecting for will be smiling when the money you have collected gives them something we take for granted, like a safe place to live, clean water, a primary school or access to health care.

**Anon.**

## PRESBYTERIAN CHILDREN'S SOCIETY ANNUAL COLLECTION

The annual collection from First Larne around last Christmas exceeded the 2015 collection by over £100 and totalled £1647.98. We were also very grateful for the number of voluntary donations placed in the collection plates at Sunday services.

The usual loyal band of collectors made sure the job was done and the money in on time. We received cheques from Women's Circle, Toddler Group, Olderfleet School and Promiseland.

The collectors this year were: Nance Baillie, Nora Bell, Ann Brown, Michelle Cameron, Betty Carmichael, Marell Carmichael, Yvonne Curran, Vera Frew, Grace

Henry, Mary Magill, Alison McFerran, Agnes McKinley, Elizabeth Nelson and Ella Whiteside.

A very sincere thank you is due to those who collected and to those who gave to this very worthy cause.

**Sheila Doran**  
**(Co-ordinator)**





# Teddy Bears' Picnic!



If you went down to First Larne Presbyterian, you were in for a big surprise!

On Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> January, Promiseland held a Teddy Bears' Picnic fundraiser in aid of Spud Bear Ministries. Children and adults were invited to come along with their teddy bear and to also bring a teddy bear to donate to Spud Bear to send overseas. The children enjoyed some teddy bear buns, crisps and juice in the Memorial Hall, whilst the adults could relax in the coffee bar with tea/coffee and a scone.

A big thank you to everyone who supported the fundraiser as we collected 3 large bin bags full of teddies (there were too many to count!) and we also raised a whopping £170 to send along with the teddies for their "passport" to their destination. Along with this, Promiseland also donated money for a talking bear, which tells stories of the Gospel to the children Spud Bear support.

## Toddler's Group 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday

On Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> February, Toddler Group celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday! I think a lot of the leaders were caught off guard that we were celebrating 10 years, however we still managed to celebrate in style. Gillian and Jo Jingles came to celebrate with us, we had a lovely birthday cake, and the ladies in the kitchen provided the children and adults with some yummy treats! Lots of fun was had by all as usual, and we were treated to a well-deserved day off the following week.







## Cheerio..... with fond memories !

It is with a heavy heart that I am writing my final ever Bridge News article, as by the time you are reading this, my time as Children and Family Worker will have come to an end. It has been both a blessing and privilege to have served in First Larne over the past 22 months, and in the months before that when I was visiting Andrew here.

During my time here, I have met some wonderful people, with incredible talents and servant hearts, who have a real passion for their faith, the church, but also for children's ministry within the congregation. As I look back on time here, there are a lot of fond memories that I will take with me such as Holiday Bible Club madness, Promiseland trips and memories with the children, special church services and times serving the church in schools taking assemblies and Scripture Union.

I could take time to thank each and every one of you who have been involved in any of the children's ministries with me, however I could fill the entire Bridge News with thanks and I fear that I will end up leaving somebody out – however you all know who you are.

As I sign off for the last time, I don't yet know where my next step in life is, so by the time you're reading this I could still be around the church (in which case do still come and say hello!) or the Lord may have called Andrew and I to serve somewhere else. I want to leave you all with a final message of encouragement before I officially finish my role here. It has been great to see the amazing work that goes on in children's and youth ministry at First Larne, between children, parents and leaders, and my

prayer and hope for the ministries moving forward is to remember that anyone is capable of helping in these ministries, but also, in all that you do, the Lord will be with you.

I ended my first Bridge News article with my favourite verse, I think it's only fitting to end my last article with it too, as it is an important reminder to us all, that no matter what we do in life, work, faith, we do it all because of the strength that the Lord gives us.

***"I can do all this through him who gives me strength." Philippians 4:13***

Thank you all for a wonderful two years of learning, growing and memories,

God Bless,



**Natalie Norris.**

# Ladies – The Girl Guides need your help

## The Bra Challenge

Research has shown that women in Africa are in less danger of sexual assault if they are wearing a bra. First Larne Senior Section decided to help by working alongside the charity “Bras Against Breast Cancer” to collect unwanted and unloved bras.

A “Bra Bin” has been put in the link corridor. These bras go to women in Togo, Ghana and Kenya where bras are too expensive to buy or produce locally. We would love you to help. The original challenge to our Senior Section was to collect 100 bras – as of 17<sup>th</sup> March we have 612 to be sent to the charity! Thank you so much to everyone who has donated so far. It is wonderful to think that women here in Larne can help others in Africa. We intend to

keep this as an ongoing challenge so keep bringing in your unwanted bras!

## Meet Maisie

You might be wondering who the majestic figure is standing beside the “Bra Bin”. As part of our Centenary finale, Senior Section were to make a “junk couture” outfit – basically an outfit made of everyday rubbish! Our girls came up with the stylish evening dress pictured made mainly from newspaper and lolly pop sticks. We had great fun both creating and making Maisie’s outfit - and came second in the challenge.



3<sup>rd</sup> Larne Girl Guides Senior Section

## In stitches

The In Stitches group continues to meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> (and 5<sup>th</sup>) Tuesday mornings in Room 4. We have been busy creating beautiful outfits and helping in appeals.

Please do come and join us on Tuesday mornings. Bring your own craft, knitting, crochet, or whatever it is. There are plenty more chairs to fill and there is always a guarantee of a cuppa and plenty of laughs.



For Christmas we knitted little snowmen to sell at the Christmas Fayre, raising money for the Abaana charity. We also knitted toys for under the Christmas tree.

Our latest project was to knit baby hats for the neonatal units in the Royal Victoria and Antrim hospitals. With the help of some friends, we managed to hand over more than 300 hats in total, split between the two hospitals.

## The threads in my hand

One thread is a strange thread,  
It is a steady thread

When I am lost,  
I pull it hard and find my way.

When I am saddened, I tighten my grip  
And gladness glides along its quivering path;

When the waste places of my spirit appear in arid confusion  
The thread becomes a channel of newness of life.

One thread is a strange thread,  
It is my steady thread.

God's hand holds the other end

**Howard Thurman**



## Garlic and herb flatbreads

Unleavened bread plays a big part in the story of the Passover, when the Israelites had to leave Egypt in a hurry. Have a go at these homemade flatbreads which are quick to make and taste amazing. They are a great idea for a snack lunch and also make a great starter. I like to serve them with a garlic and herb butter melted over the top or with mozzarella, slow roasted tomatoes and a drizzle of basil oil.

Serves 12

### For the flatbread

350g self-raising flour, plus extra for dusting

Sea salt

1 teaspoon baking powder

350g Greek style yoghurt

### For the garlic and herb butter

2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped

A small bunch of chopped fresh herbs, such as coriander or rosemary

40g unsalted butter, melted



1. Add all the flatbread ingredients to a mixing bowl and mix together with a spoon, then use clean hands to bring everything together.
2. Dust a clean work surface with flour, then tip out the dough. Knead for no longer than a minute or so to bring it all together
3. Put the dough into a floured-dusted bowl and cover with a plate, then leave aside.
4. Meanwhile make the garlic and herb butter: Melt the butter in a small pan over a medium heat, then stir through the garlic and chopped herbs, then set aside.
5. Dust a clean work surface and rolling pin with flour, then divide the dough in half, then divide each half into 6 equal-sized pieces (roughly the size of a golf ball).
6. Flatten the balls of dough with your hands, then use a rolling pin, roll each piece into 12cm diameter thin rounds, roughly 2mm to 3mm thick. (you will need to sprinkle them with extra flour to stop them sticking as you roll them out)
7. Place the griddle pan on a high heat, then once hot, cook each one for 1 to 2 minutes on each side, or until bar-marked and puffed up, turning with tongs.
8. Brush the flatbreads all over with herby garlic butter as they come off the griddle, then pile onto a serving board so everyone can help themselves.

**Editor's Note :** As always we are indebted to Arlene Thompson for providing the Bridge News with another tasty recipe. Some First Larne members and the Toddler Group (at their AGM) have sampled Arlene's cooking at her new venture, Bellahill Cookery, and the reports are very good. Have a look at the website [www.bellahillcc.co.uk](http://www.bellahillcc.co.uk) for more recipes and bookings!

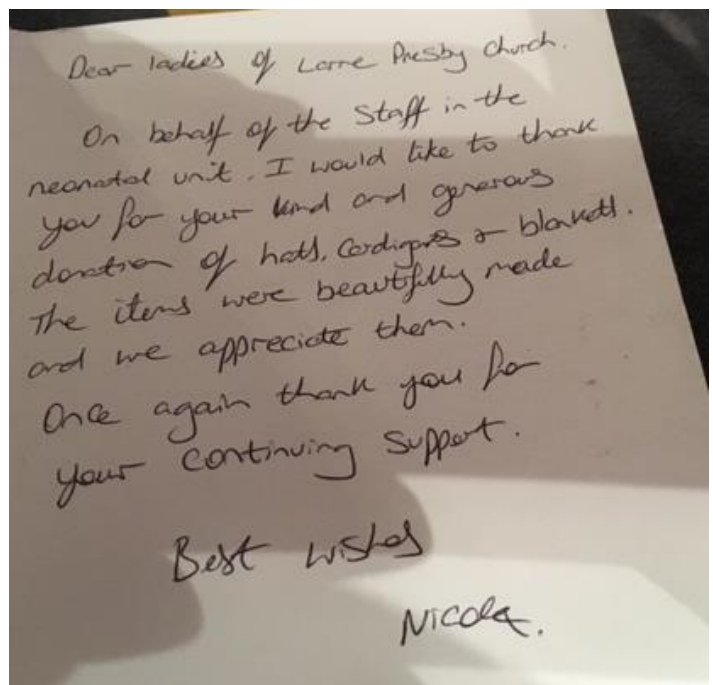
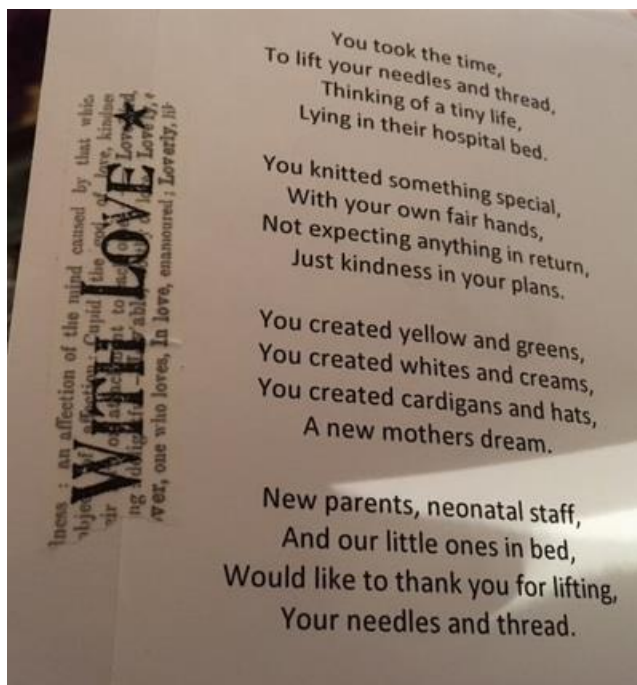
# 7 tips for reading the Bible

- 1. Understand the historical context in which the Bible is written :** Even the newest bits are about 2,000 years old. So ask yourself what it might have been like when the books were written and Google the answers. It will take you on a journey into the world of the biblical writers and open your eyes to new and fascinating insights.
- 2. Don't read passages entirely on their own, look at what comes before and after them :** It's easy to take verses or whole stories, out of context, by reading them by themselves. Try to work out where they fit in the bigger story or argument of the book. You'll get a much better sense of what's going on and what it all has to say to you.
- 3. Read what's actually there, not what you think might be there :** This is particularly true for famous verses; we can think we know what it says and not actually read it. So slow down and chew it over. You'll often find you understand it in a new way.
- 4. Read the Bible with other people :** We all bring our own experiences to the Bible so it's really helpful to read the Bible with other people, for example, a home group or a prayer triplet. You'll gain other people's perspective on what they think the Bible says. To get some really different ideas, read it with someone from a different culture.
- 5. Don't read the Bible from start to finish like a novel :** It isn't one. Start with the bits that you can get on with. You might find Mark might be more interesting than Hebrews, Genesis more than Leviticus, because stories are often easier to read than sermons or laws. Once you have read the stories you might like to turn to some poetry (Psalms) or some letters.
- 6. Use different translations :** There are lots and lots of different translations. Look for the one you like best. It's often a good idea to have a very literal translation and one that's in easy-to-read modern English.
- 7. And finally, don't beat yourself up if you're struggling :** The Bible can be a difficult book to read when you begin, but the more you read it, the more you'll get to grips with it. If you keep going you'll learn to love it and understand it better, and soon you won't be able to remember how you got by without it.

By Paula Gooder. Follow Paula on Twitter [@paulargooder](https://twitter.com/paulargooder)

## Thanks to .....

Margaret Boyle for sending us a photo of this lovely thankyou card from the nurses at the neo-natal unit at Antrim Hospital







# Four First Larne Weddings.....



Ian Richard Thomson and Patricia Anne Kirby were married on 3rd August 2016  
(photo courtesy of Bernie McAllister)



Andrew James Toogood and Aisling Ann Forsythe married on 19th August 2016



Natalie Margaret Goodall and Stephen Robert Carnwath married on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016



And Helen Agnes Bell and John William McKnight were married on 7th January 2017.

## And a baptism

Not forgetting .....congratulations to our assistant minister, David Kelly, and fiancée Lauren Bittles who had their big day at Stormont Presbyterian Church in Belfast on 3<sup>rd</sup> March.



Daisy May Robinson, with mum and dad, Mark and Patricia, was baptised on 19<sup>th</sup> February.



ERSKINE CHRYSTAL PHOTOGRAPHY

# LIVE GROW KNOW

In May 2017 we are launching a new short course for women to come and explore faith and fellowship. What is this course about? Becky Manley Pippert, author of the LIVE course, writes:

*My spiritual journey was a process. Becoming a follower of Jesus, however didn't instantly eliminate all of my questions. This is the reason that I have written LIVE. You may be someone who is still investigating Christianity. You may be a new believer. Or you may have been a Christian for longer, but you have recently felt the need to really get to the grips with the Christian life and what that looks like for you.*

Why have we chosen to run this? Because in the busyness of our schedules we women find it hard to stop, spend time with each other and encourage

**COMING SOON.....**

## **Abaana New Life Children's Choir First Larne 28<sup>th</sup> May @ 7pm**

Through this tour, Abaana hope to be able to sponsor the education of another 200–300 children and rescue more children from the streets of Uganda's capital Kampala.

Further details of the tour and the work of Abaana can be found on the website [www.abaana.org](http://www.abaana.org)

## **SUMMER OF 2017**

### **Holiday Bible Club**

*(Plus Special Service on the 6<sup>th</sup> August 2017)*



Guardians of Ancora: Treasure Seekers.

31<sup>st</sup> July – 4<sup>th</sup> August 2017

### **SPARK**



**SPARK**

An opportunity for young people from different churches to meet and serve in the local and wider community - more information to follow soon.

14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> August 2017

For more information please contact Jacqueline McCallum

each other. We believe that what Becky writes is true for many of us women and, therefore, we want to make a stand and address this situation.

How will this happen? We will meet once a week, for just over a month, in the evening to share a wee cuppa, watch Becky's DVD's, explore through the material and Bible and talk.

When? It all starts on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2017, more details of times and dates will follow soon.

But? If you have any questions or would like to register to participate please speak to Jax or Jacqui. We look forward to this new opportunity and would love to share it with you!

**Jacqueline McCallum and Jacqueline McKinley**



## **Congratulations !**

To our BB footballers who won the East Antrim Battalion Under-14 5-side football tournament (with a bit of help from 3<sup>rd</sup> Larne).



L to R : Tobey Carmichael, Ben Adair (3<sup>rd</sup> Larne), Matthew Hill, Johnny Russell & Adam McGarel.



# CHURCH REGISTER

## BAPTISMS

Daisy May Robinson	18 Hampton Lane	19 <sup>th</sup> February 2017
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## MARRIAGES

Natalie Margaret Goodall & Stephen Robert Carnwath	31 <sup>st</sup> December 2016
Helen Agnes Bell & John William McKnight	7 <sup>th</sup> January 2017

## DEATHS

Elizabeth Margaret ("Elsie") Boyle	37 Ballywillin Road	24 <sup>th</sup> November 2016
Arthur McDowell	25 Mill Road	9 <sup>th</sup> December 2016
Elsie May Adair Foster	2 Churchill Road	9 <sup>th</sup> December 2016
Joan Lennon	Karingmore Residential Home	27 <sup>th</sup> December 2016
David Alexander Fulton	59 Edward Avenue	8 <sup>th</sup> January 2017
James Allen Rodgers	21 Bay Park	10 <sup>th</sup> January 2017
Heather Isobel Taggart	120 Ballycraigy Ring	16 <sup>th</sup> January 2017
Ferguson Norrell	38 Craigyhill Bungalows	22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2017
John Ephraim McDowell	42 Newington Avenue	30 <sup>th</sup> January 2017
David Robert Stewart	18 Walnut Grove	1 <sup>st</sup> February 2017
Annie Moore	62 Magee Park	28 <sup>th</sup> February 2017
Jeannie Stewart Kitson	Broadways Nursing Home	18 <sup>th</sup> March 2017

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### April Services

Sun 2<sup>nd</sup> Presbytery Rally in Downshire  
No evening service in First Larne

Sun 9<sup>th</sup> Palm Sunday (sacrament of infant baptism)  
pm God's Mission Our Mission "God's Witnesses"

### **Holy Week Lunchtime Reflections:**

#### **"The Final Day that Transforms our Every Day"**

(12.30 followed by a snack lunch at 1.00pm)

Mon 10<sup>th</sup> – "The Cup"  
Tue 11<sup>th</sup> – "Betrayal and Denial"  
Wed 12<sup>th</sup> – "The Mockery"  
Thu 13<sup>th</sup> – "Away with this man!"

Fri 14<sup>th</sup> Good Friday Communion  
8.00pm "The Most Important Hours in History"

Sun 16<sup>th</sup> Easter Sunday  
7.00am Dawn Service at the Bankheads with Gardenmore & Craigyhill. Followed by breakfast in First Larne

11 am Easter Day Celebration "Another Day"  
7pm Easter Evening Praise

Sun 23<sup>rd</sup> A short AGM will follow immediately after morning service

Sun 30<sup>th</sup> Sacrament of Infant Baptism

### May Services

Sun 7<sup>th</sup> am Introduction to Christian Aid Week  
pm No evening service in First Larne -  
We join with St. Cedmas to hear guest speaker Maud Kells (Missionary).

Sun 14<sup>th</sup> am "Prioritising Growth" 1 Cor. 3 v 1-9  
Introducing the "28 Day Prayer Journey"

Sun 21<sup>st</sup> am Fruitful Congregations – beginning a series based on John 15  
Christian Aid Lunch after the morning service

Sun 28<sup>th</sup> am "Remain" John 15 v 3-4  
pm **New Life Choir from Uganda**

### June Services

Sun 4<sup>th</sup> am&pm Pentecost Sunday - Communion  
Mission lunch for Ukraine after the morning service.

Sun 11<sup>th</sup> am Trinity Sunday "Love" John 15 v 12-14  
pm Fruitful Chats 1 in Room 4  
"Fruitfulness"

Sun 18<sup>th</sup> Fathers Day "Learn" John 15 v 15  
pm Fruitful Chats 2 – "Unfruitfulness"

Sun 25<sup>th</sup> Promiseland - "Go" John 15 v16-17  
pm Fruitful Chats 3 "Towards Harvest"

### OTHER EVENTS

Sun 2<sup>nd</sup> April Divine Healing Service at Craigyhill  
3pm Methodist

5<sup>th</sup> June General Assembly

# Jim's Bar - a financial parable

Jim owned a bar in a big city. Most of his customers were unemployed alcoholics who couldn't really afford to pay for their drink. So Jim came up with a marketing plan that allowed his customers to drink now, pay later. He kept track of the drinks served on a ledger, effectively giving loans. Word soon got around about Jim's "drink now, pay later" strategy and customers flocked to the bar. By providing free credit Jim, got no resistance when he raised prices for wines and beers. Business boomed and everyone cried "Cheers Jim".



Johnny, an ambitious, but very naïve young "executive" at the local bank, reckoning that these customer debts constituted valuable future assets, increased Jim's borrowing limit and was rewarded with a bonus for the sale of the loan. He saw no reason for any undue concern, believing the bar was a thriving business.

At the bank's corporate HQ, Anne, a financial trader, figured out a way to make large commission by transforming these loans into "Boozebonds". These bonds were then bundled together with similar loans and traded on international bond markets. Naive investors, not really understanding that the securities sold to them as AAA secured bonds were really the debts of unemployed alcoholics, snapped them up. The bond prices continuously climbed, and soon became the hottest-selling items for some of the leading brokerage houses.

Then Joe became the new manager at the local bank. He was an old hand and decided that the time had come to demand payment on Jim's debts. Jim had no option but to demand payment from his patrons, who of course could not pay. Jim could not repay the debts and was made bankrupt. The bar

closed and 11 employees lost their jobs.

Overnight, Boozebonds dropped in price by 90%. The collapsed bond asset value destroyed the bank's balance sheet preventing it from issuing new loans, thus freezing credit and economic activity in the community.

The suppliers of Jim's bar had granted generous payment extensions and invested the company pension funds in Boozebonds. They had to write off the bad debt losing over 90% of the presumed value of the bonds. 5000 existing OAP's had their pensions cut by half. Jim's wine supplier also went bankrupt, closing the doors on a family business that had lasted for over 150 years. The beer supplier was taken over by a competitor, who six months later closed the local brewery laying off 170 workers.

The bank and the brokerage houses were bailed out by a multi-billion pound cash injection from the government. The funds required for this bailout were obtained by austerity measures such as cutting welfare payments, funding to schools, roads and hospitals and from new taxes levied on employed, non-drinkers who had never been in Jim's Bar.....

(Any resemblance to events prior to and during the financial crash of 2008 is not entirely coincidental)

So what can we learn from this parable. The answer as usual is in the Bible :

**"People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction..."**

Read more in 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy v 6-10

## AND FINALLY.....

It was Palm Sunday, but because of a sore throat, 5-year-old Jimmy stayed home from church with his mum. When the rest of the family returned home, they were carrying several palm fronds so Jimmy asked them what they were for.

"People held them over Jesus' head as He walked by," his father told him.

"Wouldn't you know it," Jimmy fumed, "the one Sunday I don't go and He shows up."

