



Donaghadee Methodist Church Magazine



Spring 2026



“Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away
the sin of the world!” John 1:29

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The Minister and the Pastoral Coordinator are always grateful to be kept informed about members suffering illness or bereavement.

website: www.donaghadeemethodist.com
*for up-to-date information about church activities
and to watch church services online*

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Editorial

As we approach Easter, it seems like just a few days since Christmas. Is it just me? Or does anybody else have the impression that the world is spinning faster? Where did all those years go?

After a surprisingly mild winter, let's hope that summer will be equally as good.

Ministers letter

I have just returned from a wee drive to Lurgan. As today a few people from Donaghadee Methodist went over to the Container Ministry Warehouse which is on the grounds of High Street Methodist Church in the middle of Lurgan.

James and Christine brought their trailer with all of the items that had been donated by the congregation. These ranged from colouring books and toiletries to a knitting machine and sewing machines and many rollators and even a couple of wheelchairs. All of which will be gratefully received when each of the containers reaches its final destination.

Willie Carson who heads up the ministry and all of the men who gather to volunteer in the warehouse were very thankful for everything that was donated. And you

could see a look of surprise as something else was unearthed as the trailer emptied. At one point it was remarked to me, 'This ALL came from Donaghadee?' For a small church we are making a big impact on not just our community but the world through the various ministries of the Methodist Church in Ireland, which is a powerful thing to be able to say and the glory goes only to God.

It was interesting to listen to Willie sharing some of his many stories and experiences throughout the years he has been involved in this ministry. Of how some of the most difficult situations have just fallen into place and unique items that were requested have been found in the most random of places. Even on Sunday morning past he was sharing in a church the list of current items which are needed. After the service a lady approached him and said she had a 30-40 person marquee sitting in her loft having only been used once for a family wedding anniversary celebration. Not something everyone has just lying about gathering dust!

While talking James made the connection with his Uncle James Kennedy, who had donated a plough a number of years back and Willie was able to show him a picture of that same plough, which James Kennedy had restored and painted, being used in Togo.

Good relationships and a love for God and our neighbour can bring about amazing things and people's lives can be changed for the better because of it.

This is a very fitting reminder on Holy Week, as Jesus gave his life and rose again triumphant again on Easter Sunday morning. The most amazing act in human history. An act of hatred and spite on behalf of the Romans and unknowing Jewish leaders that ended in the most amazing miracle and an outpouring of love, grace and power that has never stopped moving. In Donaghadee, in the container ministry and all across the world.

May we never forget that Jesus did all that for us, he first loved that we may love one another.

By the time you are reading this I will be on Sabbatical and want to say thanks to all those who have stepped up meaning that I could take this time off. Particularly to Rev Aian Ferguson, Rev Colin Duncan and all those who are leading worship in my absence. Also, Helen Johnston and all of the church council who take on various roles. I'm looking forward to time away for rest, reflection, and restoration along with Andrew, Benson & Ozzie. But I equally look forward to being back with you in the summer and all that will bring, including the return of Pup Idol!!!

Rev Louise McKee

Some of the congregation have asked me if I know the following poem, so I'm going to explain why it means so much to me.

Editor

"Crabbit Old Woman" by Phylis McCormack

What do you see, nurse, what do you see?
What are you thinking, when you're looking at me-
A crabbit old woman, not very wise,
uncertain of habit, with far-away eyes,
who dribbles her food and makes no reply
when you say in a loud voice, I do wish you'd try.
Who seems not to notice the things that you do
and forever is losing a stocking or shoe.
Who, unresisting or not; lets you do as you will
with bathing and feeding the long day is fill.
Is that what you're thinking, is that what you see?
Then open your eyes, nurse, you're not looking at me.

I'll tell you who I am as I sit here so still!
As I rise at your bidding, as I eat at your will.

I'm a small child of 10 with a father and mother,
brothers and sisters, who loved one another.
A young girl of 16 with wings on her feet,
dreaming that soon now a lover she'll meet.
A bride soon at 20 - my heart gives a leap,
recalling the vows that I promised to keep.

At 25 now I have young of my own
who need me to build a secure happy home.
A woman of 30, my young now grow fast,
bound to each other with ties that should last.
At 40, my young sons have grown and are gone.
But my man is beside me to see I don't mourn.
At 50 once more babies play around my knee,
again, we know children, my loved one and me.

Dark days are upon me, my husband is dead,
I look at the future, I shudder with dread,
for my young are all rearing young of their own.
And I think of the years and the love that I've known.
I'm an old woman now and nature is cruel-
tis her jest to make old age look like a fool.

The body is crumbled, grace and vigour depart,
There is now a stone where I once had a heart,
But inside this old carcass, a young girl still dwells,
and now and again my battered heart swells,
I remember the joy, I remember the pain,
and I'm loving and living life over again.

I think of the years all too few- gone too fast.
And accept the stark fact that nothing can last.
So open your eyes, nurse, open and see,
not a crabbit old woman, look closer-
See Me.

I used to work in a nursing home, my job involved interviewing new staff and inducting them into the way the home was run. Most of the staff were young and led busy lives outside of work. For many it was their first job, and most of them were kind and compassionate, fitting in well with our ethos. But I had a copy of this poem framed and hung conspicuously in the hall. Beside the second poem below.

We do not know for sure who wrote this, we don't need to, but we think it was an elderly lady, called Phylis McCormack the words speak for themselves. It emerged in the 1980's and soon became very popular in care of the elderly units.

At the time there were many science fiction programs on TV, and "Beam me up, Scottie" from one of them, was a familiar phrase. My job was to make the young people who joined our staff realise that the patients had not been transported to earth to give them a job, and had never been young!

I think it worked mostly, we tried to have staff who enjoyed the work. Nowhere was this more evident than when we organised days out, many of those who were off duty turned up to help, and there was a lot of laughter and pleasure to watch the young interact with the elderly. There was no sitting around waiting to die, rather we tried to help people enjoy their lives, living life to the full as best they could.

This poem was probably the best tool I had to enlighten the young staff, and the older ones learnt from it too.

The next poem was written by a staff nurse as a reply to the first one.

A Nurse's reply "To the 'Crabbit Old Woman"

What do we see, you ask, what do we see?
Yes, we are thinking when looking at thee!
We may seem to be hard when we hurry and fuss,
but there's many of you, and too few of us.

We would like far more time to sit by you and talk,
to bath you and feed you and help you to walk.
To hear of your lives and the things you have done;
Your childhood, your husband, your daughter, your son.

But time is against us, there's too much to do -
Patients too many, and nurses too few.
We grieve when we see you so sad and alone,
With nobody near you, no friends of your own.

We feel all your pain, and know of your fear
That nobody cares now your end is so near.
But nurses are people with feelings as well,
and when we're together you'll often hear tell

Of the dearest old Gran in the very end bed,
and the lovely old Dad, and the things that he said,
we speak with compassion and love, and feel sad
When we think of your lives and the joy that you've had.

When the time has arrived for you to depart,
you leave us behind with an ache in our heart.
When you sleep the long sleep, no more worry or care,
there are other old people, and we must be there.

So please understand if we hurry and fuss -
there are many of you,
and so few of us.

METHODIST WOMEN IN IRELAND - DONAGHADEE

In September, the District Officers of MWI North Eastern District (of which Donaghadee is a member) organised a full day event in Parliament Buildings, Stormont. The speakers on the day were Lindsay Robinson (wife of DUP Leader, Gavin Robinson) and Caroline Bradley, Care for the Family. The two ladies spoke about the pressures facing women of all ages as we live in times that are continually busy due to increasing family and career responsibilities. The audience ranged from young working mothers to grandparents helping with

grandchildren whilst also looking after their own elderly parents and everyone in between in the various circumstances in which they find themselves. Feedback from the event suggested that all those who attended left the day thankful for the opportunity to share and experience mutual respect and feel God's blessing on their lives.

MWI in Donaghadee resumed in October 2025. Since then we have had talks from Pastor David Gordon on the life of Amy Carmichael, one of the world's most respected missionaries who was born in Millisle. In November, The Simon Community talked to us about the issues of being homeless and, following this talk, MWI Donaghadee supported The Simon Community by way of donations for their Christmas Hamper appeal.

In December MWI made Christmas arrangements to decorate the Church for the Christmas Season and, following this activity, we had warm drinks and Christmas shortbread.

In February we had an informative session about the Charity, Children in Crossfire.

On 22 March 2026 we held our Annual MWI Service. The guest speaker was Mrs Elaine Barnett, Lay Leader of the Methodist Church in Ireland whose sermon centred on the Wedding in Cana.

If any ladies in the congregation are free on the first Monday of the month at 1.30 pm, we would love to welcome you to MWI, when we start again in October.

Our Mission Statement is “To know Christ and to make Him known.”

Amanda Stewart

Member of MWI Donaghadee and Secretary, MWI
North Eastern District

Brother Jardine,

PRAYER

When I saw Brother Jardine was coming to Christ Church, Primacy, I very much wanted to go (his theme was prayer). As I needed a lift to get there. I thought I wouldn't be able to make it. But my friend Sareen managed to arrange a lift for us with Robert McCready from our church in Donaghadee. I think the Lord had a hand in this.

Brother Jardine was ordained in the Church of Ireland, later he became a member of the society of Saint Francis, to which he had a clear calling. Then he

became involved in the ministry of divine healing. He held regular weekly healing services in Saint Anne's Cathedral in Belfast. He still holds the services in a Belfast Church.

Brother Jardine appeared in a brown habit, he laughingly said this was his uniform. His sermon was all about prayer, and how we should go about it. As he guided us through the steps, we should try to follow, he reminded us we must remember we are speaking to a much-loved friend who is also our Lord. It's important to give thanks, then make our prayer. When we finish, we should be quiet and thoughtful for a short time before saying "Amen". He stressed how important it was to have quiet times in our prayer lives and also to listen to hear if the Lord speaks to us. He has heard the Lord speak to him after praying and fasting. After a very enlightening talk on all aspects of prayer the service ended.

Now came the time of blessing, Bro Jardine invited anyone to come forward for laying on of hands, no words to be spoken. It would finish with a blessing to the person. Then he said he wanted the congregation to each say 3 prayers.

1, for persons in need, 2, for ourselves and 3, for the Holy Spirit to take our prayers to God.

The church was packed, and everyone queued up to where the brother and his team (all able also to give laying on of hands) were waiting.

I was blessed because when it was my turn, it was actually Bro David who laid his hands on my head.

He is a kind and gentle man and though there were long queues of people all was quiet, respectful and peaceful.

Then supper was served.

I thank God for Brother Jardine, his message and blessing and for being able to go to the meeting.

It was a truly holy experience for all.

Margaret Connell

Never give up

Northern Ireland is a very small country with a population of just under 2 million people. Down the years it has produced some great sports personalities. The wee golfer from Holywood County Down, is one that comes to mind, Rory McIlroy. It was only last March 2025, that Rory completed a career set of all 4 golf majors. Only six golfers in history have ever completed them, a very remarkable feat.

During Rory's victory speech, he made a glorious statement to his little daughter, Poppy, "Never give up on your dreams"

Thinking about those four words that Rory spoke to his little daughter, could we apply them to our prayer life?

After all prayer was important in New Testament Christianity. Jesus frequently went away to a private place to be alone with his father. Jesus taught his followers to do something similar to withdraw and be alone with the Father.

Jesus also stressed the importance of prayer, "You need to pray always and never lose heart" he said. Underlying this was Jesus' awareness that people might give up and stop praying. Jesus urged them "Even though you might appear to be making no headway, keep on praying and never ever give up".

Sometimes during prayer we ask for things that seem impossible, but with God all things are possible. His wonders never cease. The Lord will supply all our needs, even before we ask.

So keep praying and never ever give up. After all the Lord is sitting on the right hand of God. He will intercede for each of us.

George Bolton.

CHILDREN IN CROSSFIRE

Like many, I'd never heard of Children in Crossfire, until 2019, when my friend Rachel, held an awareness/fundraising evening, after completing her first Camino trip, organised by the charity.

Children in Crossfire was founded by Richard Moore in 1996. He was blinded, aged 10, in 1972, as he walked home from school in Derry/Londonderry, when a soldier fired a rubber bullet, intended to deter him and friends from crossing an area where they shouldn't have been walking. But unfortunately, it hit Richard in his temple.

However, he went on to lead a full, happy life: attending university: getting married and having a family. Plus eventually, meeting, and forgiving, the soldier who shot him, leading to them maintaining contact, and becoming friends. He also met the Dalai Lama, who, after hearing of Richard's remarkable forgiveness, is now Children in Crossfire's patron.

Richard has never felt any bitterness over what happened to him, which he credits to the support and love, shown to him by his family, friends, and the wider community.

It was that solidarity and support that motivated him to establish Children in Crossfire, and show some

of the World's most vulnerable children, the same compassion, care, and love, that he had experienced in his early years.

Today, Children in Crossfire deliver lifesaving healthcare and life-shaping education programmes in communities experiencing extreme poverty, in Tanzania and Ethiopia, alongside local agencies. Examples are: training teachers, building classrooms and wells (providing safe, clean, water): supporting nutritious feeding programmes: delivering income generation schemes that help parents provide for their children.

I am pleased, and proud to now be a supporter of Children in Crossfire, and since 2022, have completed 4 Camino trips organised (very efficiently, I might add) by the charity. Meeting many new friends from all walks of life, all ages, resulting in feeling very much, a part of the ever increasing Children in Crossfire supporter family. To date, the Camino trips alone, have raised appropriately £450,000.

My Camino journeys are for another day!

Maud

Open air meeting early 1960s.

