

‘Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.’ James 4:8



I recently came across this picture of a little girl at prayer and what an inspiring picture it is! Her head bowed, leaning on her Bible, drawing close, near, to God in prayer....

The Apostle James was a leader in the Early Church and within our Bibles we have a letter he wrote to the believers in the first century, and what is one of the things he wrote in that letter? "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." This is one of the conditional promises within our Bibles; a promise that encourages us to do something...

So, as we move into a new season in our church calendar, in what ways might we 'draw near to God'? What about on a Sunday morning, before leaving the house for church, setting aside some extra time to pray and ask God to speak to you during the service? And on returning home, looking up the readings and taking time to think about and pray over the text?

It's always good following a worship service to ask yourself things like, 'What might God have been saying to me/teaching me today? Is there something God wants me to do because of all I heard today?'

In Café Church this autumn and new year we plan to look together at the whole idea of the worship service, focusing our thoughts on how we might, through that worship, draw nearer to God. This is an extract from the booklet we plan to use: 'We gather together as the people of God at His invitation; we confess our sin before Him and receive His assurance of forgiveness; we set our hearts and minds to receive light from His Word; we respond to God with our lives; we are blessed and sent back into our everyday lives to live for Him. Becoming more aware of these movements in worship and entering into them with heart, soul, mind and strength helps us to focus and participate more fully in meeting with God'.



Why not come along to Café Church this year as we explore these things together, you will be made most welcome.

This autumn you will find no shortage of opportunities to 'draw near to God', through our morning services and Café Church, through the 'Word For Today' Bible reading notes (available free of charge, just ask for a copy), through the invitation to join the Wednesday morning prayer time, through the morning and evening Thursday Bible Studies, through the opportunity to pray in church every Thursday morning, through PW and PW Fellowship and of course through your own devotional time with God. (Over)

How do we, how can we, get close to God? Not by leaving it to others. There are twenty-four hours in a day and seven days in a week, God has given us more than enough time and more than enough opportunities to draw near to Him. Take your example from the little girl in the picture above and her clear desire to get close to God....

"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." A promise that encourages us to do something...Let us, as a fellowship of God's people, commit in this new church season, by His power



at work in us, to draw nearer to God and to Him be all the praise and glory. *Rev. Janice*

In Appreciation

As we embark on a new Church year, refreshed by a lovely summer, Session would give thanks for the contribution made to First Donaghadee by two Elders who have decided to step down from their respective roles. Mrs Ann Wright, from leadership of Sunday School, and John McClure from the onerous task of Church Treasurer. Whilst they will continue as valued Elders, Session acknowledges the huge contribution they have made to the life and work of First Donaghadee, and are now actively seeking to find replacements.

At the same time we are beginning the process of electing new Elders and over the coming weeks Session would urge the Congregation to prayerfully consider those whom they would wish to elect to the Session. Ordination to the Eldership is a calling from Almighty God, and whilst none of us feel worthy of such a calling, Session would urge those voted for to answer the call and play their part in the Spiritual oversight of the Congregation. To Ann and John we would again give thanks for jobs well done and would ask that anyone asked to take up Leadership, in whatever capacity, would answer the call and help prosper the work of First Presbyterian Church Donaghadee. *Sandy Dalzell*

Election of new elders

As Sandy has referred to above the procedures for the election of new elders has started with the relevant pulpit announcements having been made and the voters' list being on display in the church vestibule.

Voting papers are being issued to all voting members with this copy of the Newsletter and must be returned to the Clerk of Session or posted in the ballot box in the vestibule by Sunday, 21st October.

The entitlement to vote is an important Christian privilege and all voting members are encouraged to pray and give careful consideration in its use. Each voting member is entitled to vote for up to 6 people but even if you wish to vote for only one or two people please complete and return your voting paper.

On Sunday 30th September Rev Janice will explain the voting procedure and preach from 1 Timothy 3 focusing on the Apostle Paul's advice on these very important matters. *Tom Johnston*

Thank You

The family of Marie McMurray would like to thank the PW and PW Fellowship for the flowers she received after their annual service: 'They were lovely' and very much appreciated.

We would also take the opportunity to thank all who visit Marie in the nursing home and all who remember her in their prayers, not forgetting the Rev Janice for her prayers and visits. It is comforting to know that Marie is still remembered by the congregation and it is our prayer that the Lord will bless the work of both PW Groups in this new session.

James, Julie and Ivan.

Congratulations!

Warm congratulations are extended to our Clerk of Session, Sandy and his wife, Elizabeth, as they celebrate their Golden Wedding anniversary. Their marriage on 9th September 50 years ago was in Helen's Bay church and they returned there on that date to attend morning service and offer their own thanks for their years together.

In offering our good wishes for the future we also take the opportunity to thank both Sandy and Elizabeth for all their work in our congregation. *Kirk Session*

PW afternoon group

The time has come round once again for the return of the mission boxes. Please give your box to Mary Bell or any PW committee member.

Love in a Box is always well supported by all the congregation and we thank you for this. Boxes to fill, for anyone wishing to take part, are now available in the church and should be returned on or before Sunday 14th October, our designated 'Love in a Box' Sunday'. The boxes, clothes, blankets, etc bring much joy to so many at Christmas in Romania.

Thank you for your support.

Church Life

The outing to the Golf Club on Friday 31st August was enjoyed by all present. A total of 14 putters took to the green with Tim winning the 'Professionals' event and Roger taking the honours in the 'Non-golfers' section.



A further 14 joined us for an excellent meal provided by the recently appointed caterers. All in all, a very successful occasion of fun and fellowship.

Up-coming events are a Beetle Drive on Friday 2nd November at 7pm and the annual Christmas Fair on Friday 7th December again at 7pm.

UCB Bible Notes

As you may be aware this group supplies 'Word for Today' Bible Notes to anyone who would like to have them, free of charge and they have been enjoyed by many in our congregation on a daily basis. In support of this work Rosemary McCartney and Elizabeth Dalzell are planning to do a sponsored trek up Slieve Donard on 13th October in aid of UCB.

Anyone in the congregation who would like to sponsor this event is asked to put their name on the sponsor sheet in the welcome area of the church and put their donation, no matter how small, in one of the little brown envelopes and place it in the box provided. Many thanks.
Rosemary and Elizabeth

PW Fellowship



Although a few of our regular members were unable to attend, we had a good turn out for our September meeting and were pleased to welcome two new members.

At the October meeting our speaker will be Deborah Neill with her Ballyvester soaps.

We welcome men to our November meeting when Jim McClure will join us for a talk on his walk on the Camino and in December Hannah will help each of us to make a Christmas arrangement for our homes.

The Fellowship meets on the third Monday of the month in the Curragh Room at 8pm. New members are always welcome to join us.

Traid Craft catalogues will be available from the end of September when you can order cards and hand-crafted gifts for Christmas, thus supporting craftsfolk in developing countries and supporting Tear Fund. Please have a look - no order too small!

Ladies Crafts Class has just started, meeting on Fridays in the Curragh Room 2pm - 4pm. £2 includes a cup of coffee/tea and a biscuit with a lot of chat. New members welcome; please bring a piece of work with you.

A Special Birthday

Mrs Martha Mynott, pictured here with her friends in the Imperial at her 90th birthday party.



A lovely time was had by everyone with a delicious buffet supper provided and, of course, a piece of the beautiful birthday cake (supplied by Martha's family) was enjoyed by everyone. So, well done Martha. Warm congratulations and many happy returns.

The Scout Group



The Scout Group has now returned after the summer break. It is good to welcome our young people and leaders back and to those who have just joined us for the first time in each of the sections they are very welcome. Those who have moved on we wish them well.

Beavers had a very busy term from Easter through to the summer. They had the opportunity to go on summer camp at Ganaway where they did a raft of activities including archery, zip line and caving. For some this was the first time they were away from home in this context and everyone had a great time. Beavers visited the fire station, had a farm visit, the library and had an evening at Orlock. Rally Day in Crawfordsburn was also a fun day when the 'Gathering Drum' and toasting marshmallows were the highlight of the day and they cheered the leaders in the 'dance off'. Their end of term party was a bounce and slide night and team games. 11 Beavers received their Chief Scout Bronze awards. This term they will be working towards their disability awareness, builder activity and air activity badges, have a beaver sleepover and if there is time a Christmas outing...

Cubs were busy too, doing a beach clean-up at Orlock Head, planting sunflowers at Mount Stewart, backwoods cooking, and elite archery. They were putting into practice their outdoor skills and very involved in their community impact badge work. A summer camp at Newry was a great success and the visit to Funtasia at Drogheda by train was the highlight of the weekend. They finished their session with fun at the Hydro at Newtownbreda Reservoir. 9 Cubs were awarded their Chief Scout Silver Awards.

Scouts enjoy the outdoors in the summer term having attended the District Camp, they took part in the District Tag Rugby competition and won and were also placed 1st in the County Hike in the Mourne. Up and coming is the Mud Run and October camp.

A musical evening is planned for Saturday 3rd November 2018 at 7.30pm at Glenmachan Church of God, Belfast featuring the Police Male Voice Choir, The Northern Ireland Concert Band, Harry McGarrity & Father Martin O'Hagan. Compere Gary Myles. Tickets £15. Proceeds in aid of the World Scout Jamboree, West Virginia, USA 2019. Tickets are available from: worldscoutjamboree@countydownscouts.org.uk or community.impact@countydownscouts.org.uk or collected in person from the Scout Shop NI, College Square, Belfast or you can contact one of our leaders.

Christine Rankin Group Scout Leader.

Jam and Dee-ciples

As mentioned earlier, Mrs Ann Wright has stood down from the leadership of our Sunday School groups. In thanking Ann for her faithful and lengthy service we take the opportunity to thank Hannah Donaldson and Carole Brown who have agreed to act as joint Co-ordinators for Jam and Dee-ciples and also to the team of helpers who have agreed to assist them Sunday by Sunday.

We would love to have more young children attending on a regular basis so we appeal to all young parents (and not so young grand parents) to encourage their children/grandchildren to attend as regularly as possible.

The Girls' Brigade

GB started again on 6th September and it was great to see the girls back with us. A special welcome to the girls who have just joined our Company and I hope you enjoy your time with us.



Thanks to Susan, Shannon, Janice, Sharon, Sharron and Ann who are back again as Officer, Sub Officer, Chaplain and Associates to provide a varied programme for the girls throughout the year.

If any other girls would like to join us you will be made very welcome. We meet on a Thursday evening at 6.30pm for Under Fives and Explorers (3 -7 year olds) and 7.30pm for Juniors, Seniors and Brigaders (8 years and above).

Jennifer MacDougall

Hon. Treasurer

At the Committee meeting on Tuesday, 18th September we were pleased to co-opt Mr Ivan Currie as a member. Ivan has kindly agreed to undertake the position of Church Treasurer following the expressed wish of John McClure to relinquish this onerous office.

In thanking John for all his efforts over the past years we extend our good wishes and thanks to Ivan as he settles in to this new role.

Harvest Thanksgiving Services

Sunday 7th October, 2018
11am & 7.00pm

Rev. Janice Browne

'Come and give thanks'