



## New Elders Ordained and Installed



Front Row (l. to r.) Rev. Janice Browne; Rev. Wm. Cameron, Acting Moderator; Ivan Currie; Dessie Lemon; Albert Small; Sharron Watts; Rev. John Flaherty, Clerk of Presbytery; and Sandy Dalzell.  
Back Row: Members of Presbytery Commission.

Sunday, 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2019 marked another important milestone in the history of our congregation as on that evening we had the ordination and installation of four new elders.

The special service was held under the auspices of the Ards Presbytery and led by the Acting Moderator, Rev. Bill Cameron assisted by the Clerk of Presbytery, Rev. John Flaherty. The Statement on the Eldership was

delivered by the Rev. Paul Dalzell and the Charge to new elders and congregation was given by the Rev. Bobby Stevenson. The service was a very sincere and moving one for all in attendance but especially for the four new elders and their families and friends who came to support them. As a congregation, we wish Sharron, Albert, Dessie and Ivan every blessing as they take up their responsibilities as elders in our church.

**"I don't believe it!"**



If you're around my age you may remember a character on our TV screens in the 1990s, Victor Meldrew, and his well-known catch-phrase, 'I don't believe it!' Poor Victor went from one crisis to another, shouting his catch-phrase ever louder!

Within our Bible we also have an, 'I don't believe it!' character - his name is Thomas - and you'll find his story in the Gospel of John, Chapter 20. In that chapter we read of how the Risen Christ appeared to the disciples in a locked room, but Thomas was not there, and on being told Jesus was alive he struggled to take it in:

*'I don't believe it!' said Thomas.*

*'But Jesus was there!' replied the disciples, 'We saw him, he spoke to us, he showed us his hands and side. We're sorry you weren't there and you missed him, but what more can we say?'*

*'It doesn't matter what you say, I don't believe it! But if Jesus comes back and lets me see him and touch him just like you did, then maybe, just maybe, I'll change my mind.'*

*One week later, same house, same locked room, Jesus came to them again but this time Thomas was there and Jesus spoke directly to him, 'Put your finger here; see my side and hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. It's time to stop doubting; it's time to believe!'*

*So Thomas touched the nail prints in Jesus' hands and the wound in his side and fell on his knees, 'My Lord and my God!' (John 20:24-28):*

For Thomas, seeing really was believing!

Today, 2019, when it comes to the things of the gospel, there are still plenty of Victor Meldrew, 'I don't believe it!' people around. But the call of Jesus remains unchanged, 'It's time to stop doubting; it's time to believe!' In response many just don't want to know, they refuse to step out in faith and believe and that's the challenge we face when it comes to sharing our faith. But WE know - WE believe - and what is it we know? As God's people, as followers of Jesus today, we know, we believe that Jesus Christ is God's Son, the One who came to die for you and me but who is now gloriously risen. We know, that true belief means committing our life to Jesus as our Lord (John 20:28), continuing in His Word (John 8:31), loving Him and obeying His commands (John 14:15).

At the conclusion of the account of Thomas' encounter with the Risen Christ, Jesus Himself adds wonderful words of encouragement for us all as He says this: *'Thomas, you have faith because you have seen Me. Blessed are all those who have never seen Me and yet they still believe.'* John 20:29

What words of encouragement for us this Easter Season. May the Lord bless you as you live your life of faith for Him and as you share the message of the good news in this challenging and at times unbelieving world.

Happy Easter!

Rev Janice



### **Congratulations**

Warm congratulations are extended to the Rev. Janice and Tim on the birth of their first grand child. Their daughter, Jenny, had a baby girl, Rowan Mabel, on 16<sup>th</sup> April. Mother and baby are doing well.

### **Thanks**

I would like to say thank you for the beautiful gift I received from Sunday School at the AGM. There was absolutely no need but it is very much appreciated. Thank you.

**Ann Wright**

## Annual General Meeting

The Church AGM was held following the service on Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> March, in association with the annual lunch in support of PW Missions.

Some 70 members enjoyed an excellent lunch prior to the AGM and some £367 was donated to the Missionary cause.

Having welcomed all present, the Rev Janice convened the Annual Meeting with prayer and in her opening remarks expressed thanks to all who had provided and served the lunch, those who had assisted in the preparation of the Annual Report and the many leaders and office bearers who work for the church throughout the year.

In her 'Moderator's comments' the Rev Janice gave a succinct review of the past year's work and witness and expressed confidence in looking to the future.

Reports from Kirk Session and Congregational Committee, together with statements of accounts were presented in the Annual Report and, following comments by Finance Committee Convenor, Tom Johnston, the reports were formally adopted by the meeting.

The meeting concluded with presentations to John McClure and Ann Wright in recognition of their outstanding service as FWO and Church Treasurer and Sunday School leader respectively. **Tom J.**

## The Girls' Brigade

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to our GB week collection which to date has raised the sum of £593.30. This will pay for our assessment to GB HQ with the remainder going to Company funds. Your support is very much appreciated.



The girls have been busy finishing all their Badgework for the Session and we have also started practicing for our Annual Parents Night. This will be held on Friday 26th April and we would love you to come along and support the girls.

**Jennifer MacDougall, Officer in Charge**

## Annual Reports

The Church Annual Report for 2018 has been compiled and printed in the last few weeks. Members who were unable to attend the Annual General Meeting on Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> March should receive their copy with this issue of the Newsletter.

## A Word from Session

The process of finding and training new Elders for First Donaghadee culminated in the service of Ordination and Installation of Sharron Watts, Albert Small, Ivan Currie and Desmond Lemon on Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2019. Session would congratulate and welcome each of them in joining the spiritual oversight of our congregation. It is good to have new people with fresh ideas to strengthen our team as we grapple with how best to take our message of Salvation out into the Community in which we live.

It is intended that we will revisit and update our Mission plan over the coming months, something in which every Member of Session and of the Congregation has a part to play.

We are also conscious of the heavy burden which has been placed on our Minister, Rev Janice Browne, with her many responsibilities over the past months and would urge all to assist and pray for her as she leads us so faithfully Sunday by Sunday.

**Sandy Dalzell**

## Defibrillator

As members may have noticed, a defibrillator has been installed in the church forecourt. This will be available for use in the event of emergencies either on the church premises or on the street. The code for the box relates to the date the church was founded and we are considering ways in which this number can be available for urgent access without being too accessible for would-be vandals.

We acknowledge with gratitude the generous donation by Ian Kinnaird that has covered the cost of this item of potentially life-saving equipment.

**Tom J.**

## Easter

As this Newsletter is being issued on Easter Sunday, the Easter celebrations will be largely over.

During Holy Week, evening services have been held in all four main churches in Donaghadee on a rotational basis. On Easter Sunday morning we held the Dawn service at the shore front with refreshments in the church hall afterwards and followed up with our Easter Day service at 11am.

## PW Fellowship

We've had an interesting and successful year since January covering health and well being with Debbie Morton and Deborah Neill; local history with Dr Robert Neill; and music with Elma and Alison. We end with our May outing on Monday 20<sup>th</sup>.



Our Countries of the World Quiz winners were Sarah Malcolm, Bangor; Jean Lock, Belfast; Barbara Kane, Newtownards; Neil Stacey, Donaghadee; and Jill Irwin, Bangor.

The answers were: Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, United States, Pakistan, Switzerland, Zambia, Monaco, Kenya, Bahamas, Croatia, France, Mexico, Canada, Australia, Ghana, Argentina, Hungary, Luxembourg and South Africa. The quiz raised £245 for Tear Fund. Thanks to all who took part.

Our new session of PWF begins on 16<sup>th</sup> September with Marie Adams highlighting her recent 'Trip of a Lifetime' to South Africa. **Anne Johnston**

## Crafts Group



A group of 'Trauma Teddies' produced by the Ladies Crafts Group for Newtownards police station where they are used as gifts for young children who are found to be in traumatic situations. Another smaller group went to the Air Ambulance Service. Our Crafts Group has just finished for the summer, meeting again in mid-September. **Anne J.**

## Finance

At the Church AGM on 31<sup>st</sup> March the attention of members was drawn to the fact that the 2018 FWO income had dropped by about £1,000 against the figure for the previous year. And unfortunately the trend has continued into the current year as the following figures indicate:

January/March 2019 - £12,195.

January/March 2018 - £13,253.

This is a worrying trend and, whilst your Committee is very grateful for the continuing support of many church members, it would ask all members to seriously consider their weekly or monthly contributions to church funds.

With the modern trend of a 'cashless' society it may be worth considering paying by monthly standing order. A number of members use this method already and find it a convenient way of ensuring regular giving. If you would like to follow up on this suggestion please speak to Ivan, Tom, or any member of the finance team.

The Property Fund is showing a slightly more positive result as this year's 1<sup>st</sup> quarter envelope receipts are up by just under £100. Thanks are recorded to all who support this important aspect of our church life. **Tom J.**

## United Appeal

With this issue of the Newsletter members will receive the first United Appeal envelope for 2019. You will also receive a leaflet about the

A sample of a 'United Appeal for Mission' envelope. The envelope is white with a black header area containing the text 'united appeal FOR mission' and the website 'www.presbyterianland.org/unitedappeal'. To the right of the header is a form with fields for 'Name', 'Address', 'Date', and 'FWO No'. Below these fields is a section for 'My contribution to supporting Presbyterian mission is £' with a line for writing the amount. The Presbyterian logo is visible in the top right corner.

Appeal and how the funds raised are used. You are encouraged to consult the leaflet and respond by placing your donation in the enclosed envelope for return to the church.

Our contributions last year actually exceeded our target figure but that figure has now risen to above £7,000 so, whilst the Committee realize the heavy demands on private incomes in recent times and very much appreciate the generosity shown by so many in the congregation, we will need your prayerful support again this year. **Tom Johnston**