

TheLight

Issue 202: September 2013

Cameras
on the
ready at
Broomhedge!

Castlewellan Holiday Week 2013

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Impressions of Conference

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The Message of Conference 2013

Rev Brian Anderson

Focus on Africa

Tanzania - Kenya - Uganda - Nigeria

The editor talks to Laura Nelson

On the staff of Biblica Europe



THE MAGAZINE OF THE LISBURN AND DROMORE METHODIST CIRCUIT

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Front cover: Rev David Turtle heading downhill fast at Castlewellan

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If you have material or photos for the next edition of The Light please send them to the address above or give them to your church representative by Sunday 3rd November 2013

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Lost lamb bleats at Magheragall!

Sunday 18 May was a special day for Magheragall Methodist. It was the occasion of the Sunday School anniversary service, with guest speaker Mrs Shirley Carrington from Seymour Street. Shirley is well known in the district for her enthusiastic and novel approaches to services, but she excelled herself on this occasion when, as an example for her theme 'The Lord is my Shepherd', she brought a lamb (Martha) into the church. It was a great sight to see Shirley running up and down the aisle, feed-bottle in hand, being actively pursued by the lamb, illustrating the psalm perfectly. The children, of course, were delighted with Martha and had a great time petting and stroking her.

The small Sunday School also contributed with a well-thought-out sketch on the Feeding of the Five Thousand, with each member of the congregation being presented with a shortbread fish. The service concluded with a bread and soup lunch for about 80 in the church hall. It was a service that will long be remembered. ■



Shirley and the lost sheep

Broomhedge Photography Club

Broomhedge Methodist Church recently started a Photography Club to try to encourage those who have digital cameras, but have not really come to terms with all the features available to them, both at the time of taking a picture and in the editing afterwards. The initial session, which was also attended by members from other churches on the

Circuit, looked at the basics of operating a digital camera and the principles of editing. Andrew Boyes explained such things as depth of field, apertures, composition and how to carry out simple editing. Peter Mercer showed a series of photographs from a recent photographic competition in the Methodist Newsletter and asked the audience to score them, in an attempt to illustrate what made a good picture. The next session was a practical one, an afternoon outing to Hillsborough, where members took photographs to be brought back for the next session some weeks later, when they were examined and edited. There has been considerable interest in the subject and it is hoped to recommence in the autumn. ■



Cameras at the ready



The professional in action



Getting the perfect photo

Impressions of the Methodist Conference

Lindsay Easson & Paul Good
Lisburn & Dromore representatives

It was obvious the 2013 Methodist Conference was going to be different. It was not just that it was going to be led for the first time by a woman President, but even before Conference the delegates across the country were called to meet in Districts and think and pray about how the Methodist Church in Ireland should be 'A people invited to follow', the Conference was extended by one day so that there would be sufficient time to listen for God's voice as well as conduct the official business of the Church, and additional youth and adult representatives were invited.

If your only experience of Conference has been to browse a copy of the 'Conference Minutes' you, like us, would have been expecting Conference to be a rather dry gathering when the great and good of the Methodist Church make pronoun- cements and decisions based on lengthy reports prepared and submitted by a wide range of committees. After all, decisions do have to be taken about money the stationing of ministers

Carrickfergus Methodist Church



Photo: Rev Bert Montgomery

and the administration of the Church, and views expressed as to how the church responds to the ills of society.

However from the start of the 2013 Conference things were done differently. There was a clear call from the President for Conference to listen, pray, reflect, discuss and humbly search our God's leading - to be prepared 'to get our feet wet' as we step out in faith.

Things were done differently this year!

Three keynote speakers led our thoughts at Conference, Dr Phil Meadows from Cliff College, Pete Greig, one

of the founders of the 24/7 prayer movement, and Kate Marshall, Executive Coach in the Arrow Christian Leadership Programme. They took us through a progression from our Methodist roots and heritage challenging our passion, spirituality, discipleship and mission, through to how we listen to God's voice today and how we respond to change as we listen and follow God's leading to new areas of mission and life.

In each session there were opportunities to discuss in smaller groups and respond in various ways, and as the Conference progressed we were called to focus in on the situations in our Districts, Circuits and Societies. Having thought about what we felt were the issues holding back our spiritual life and mission we were asked to suggest what are the key questions that each Church needs to address. These sessions, together with the praise led by Ross Harte and the Soul Purpose Band, really set the tone of Conference, that it was not so much about administrative business, but about doing 'Business with God'. Delegates got the message loud and clear from the President and the leadership of the church - this is the time to step out in faith, to seek a new direction under God



The President in action

Photo: Rev Bert Montgomery

for the Methodist Church in Ireland, and like Joshua and the People of Israel, to step out in faith across the River Jordan.

The Business

In this year's Conference the Conversation on the Work of God' came first - and not last - another break with tradition! As the reports of the various church bodies, the Methodist Missionary Society(Ireland), Church Development Board, Home Mission Department and the General Committee unfolded it was clear that while many challenges face the Church there are also many encouraging developments. For example, in Dublin the presence of foreign nationals is leading to new links with the Methodist Church in Korea, and the Rev Wesley Campbell is to go to Uganda to serve as a mission partner and the Church Development Board is supporting a new Surf Project with a ministry to the surfing community in the West of Ireland. Following her year as President Rev Heather Morris is to be appointed Secretary of the Home Missions Department.

Perhaps the most heated debate of Conference was whether the Methodist Missions should be allowed to receive Lottery Funding for some of their Social Care programmes as agreed by the Conference 2012. That decision was reversed. While time was given to key reports, much of the Business of Conference in receiving the reports and agreeing the recommendations from many

'Soul Purpose' leading the praise



Photo: Rev Bert Montgomery

There was an openness to God's leading

of the church bodies was taken 'en bloc' and agreed without discussion. This included IMAYC the Methodist City Missions, Inter Church Relations, Communications, MWI, Ministry of Healing and a number of others. For the first time this year these and all the Reports to

Conference can be found on the Methodist website www.irishmethodist.org.

During the meal times and coffee breaks delegates could browse through the stalls set up by various charities and support organisations and make new acquaintances amongst the delegates from across Ireland.

Getting our Feet Wet

In contrast with previous conferences this year there was a real feeling of expectancy, and an openness to God's leading. While at the end of Conference you could not claim there was a clear vision of a new way forward, there was a feeling that the Methodist Church in Ireland is finding a new confidence that it has a message that the world needs to hear today and that it is starting to step out in faith, following in Jesus footsteps and ready to 'get its feet wet' like the children of Israel.

Throughout conference people had time for each other - to listen to, debate with, empathise with, encourage and pray together. If we could take this simple premise back to each of our societies, circuits and districts, we could be a powerful force for good, a wonderful source of encouragement and a superb example of people getting our feet wet - right where we are! ■

Discussion session



Photo: Rev Bert Montgomery

Space Academy at Trinity



**10... 9... 8...
God is great,
7... 6... 5...
He's alive,
4... 3... 2... 1...
He's the King of everyone,
He's the mighty, mighty Lord of all.....
BLAST OFF!!**

... and so began each night of the Trinity Space Academy Holiday Bible Club.

From 17th to 21st June, around 50 children came from Trinity church, from our youth organisations and from the local area, attracted by the colourful Space Academy leaflet which they received through their letterbox or were given at school.

In the Space Academy we heard some 'space facts' from Elmo and his astronaut friend each night such as 'astronauts wash in space with a wet wipe.' Parachute games were a firm favourite with the younger children, while the older ones particularly enjoyed throwing newspaper balls at the opposition at a furious rate!

Each night the 'blast-off' opening was followed by lots of lively praise songs with some seriously aerobic actions, which left most of the

leaders languishing hopelessly behind the beat! The Bible stories related the exciting exploits of Daniel and his three friends in Babylon; and through these the children learned that God loves them, is with them and wants them to trust Him and follow Him.

We had several very keenly contested team quizzes based on the Bible talks. All the children really enjoyed the craft each night based on the Bible story, from jewelled crowns to fiery furnaces.

The memory verse for the week was unfurled from a 20 foot long scroll, a little each night, until the children knew it off by heart:

'Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways submit to the Lord and he will make your paths straight.' Proverbs 3: 5-6.

The Space Academy ended with the parents coming along to hear the songs, memory verse and final Bible talk, followed by a family barbeque to round off the night.

It is our prayer that each child who came to the Space Academy will have gained something which takes them further along, or even begins, their journey with God. ■



Prospects Lisburn Ministry Group leads at Trinity

On Sunday morning 21st April the praise in Trinity reached new heights as the congregation was swelled by members of the Lisburn Prospects Ministry Group (previously known as the Causeway Group). The group is affiliated to Prospects, a Christian charity enabling adults with learning disabilities, and meets every Monday evening in Trinity's buildings for worship and Bible teaching. On this particular Sunday the group was leading morning worship in Trinity.



There was lively praise with musicians and soloists from the group. The Bible reading on the healing of the lame man by Peter and John (Acts 3: 1-10) came from the Easy to Read Bible which the group uses. This translation is especially for use by people with learning disabilities. The speaker, Dr Paul Coulter, illustrated his talk with a storyboard and pots of paint to reveal words and messages as his talk progressed. Two of the group members spoke, both of whom clearly enjoy their Monday evening meetings, followed by one of the volunteers who described the meetings as the highlight of his week.

It was good for everyone to be reminded, through this service, that our churches should be welcoming to all and that everyone has a part to play and gifts to bring to its life and witness.

Prospects & Trinity

Prospects is a UK Christian charitable group, founded in the mid-1970s, whose aim is to support adults with learning disabilities and to

enable them to 'live life to the full.' It seeks to provide distinct Christian support within the context of good and regulatory practice.

Prospects is one of several organisations working to support people with learning disabilities which uses the facilities at Trinity through our TCI (Trinity Community Initiatives) organisation. The local office is based in Trinity and the Ministry group (one of thirteen in Northern Ireland) meets weekly in Trinity. It is our ethos that the resources we have in our church buildings should be available for use by groups skilled to meet specific needs in the community.

The Lisburn Group started in 1992 and now in 2013 around 50 people meet together weekly for vital Christian fellowship. Some group members have been part of the group since the very beginning, while some have only joined this year. The Monday evening meetings take place from the end of September until the end of May and are full of lively worship, Bible teaching, praying for each other's needs and plenty of friendship and support. The meetings end, of course, with a cuppa at the coffee dock. At Christmas the Lisburn Group hosts a special Celebration for family and friends and this is a very special time of fellowship.

Lisburn Prospects Ministry Group is led by a faithful team of volunteer leaders and helpers from various churches including Trinity and Seymour St. The team is always keen to welcome new members and volunteers. If you would like to find out more information you can get in touch with Debbie Davidson on 028 92602026 or visit the Prospects website, www.prospects.org.uk. ■



My Experience in Uganda

Joanne McConnell of Magheragall

When the opportunity to go to Uganda came about during my gap year, it was something that I couldn't turn down. Along with three friends I headed out to Uganda for 10 weeks and it was an experience that has changed me forever. We went to **Dwelling Places**, a Christian charity that is situated outside Kampala. They work with street children and high risk slum families by rescuing, rehabilitating and resettling the children. During our time there they had around 25 kids at the home, but they work with over 400 children and families.

My work in Uganda

My typical day would consist of walking to work from our guest house and hearing 'Muzungu' shouted at us from the all local children which means white person. We started every day off with staff devotions in which we had worship, testimonies and we all took our turns at giving a sermon. During my time at Dwelling Places I was placed in the school where I worked every morning. They have a small school at the transitional rehabilitation home (TRH) where they can teach the children who are coming from the streets, basic maths and English to get them up to the level of the main schools. I was in the class where the children were straight from the streets and due to their little amount of English, it was tough to get them to listen, concentrate and do their work as this was so far from what they had grown up with and been used to previously. We would teach the children maths and English, play games and sing songs. After lunch we would take the children for devotions where it was so encouraging to see the spirit of God living through them as the children loved serving such an amazing Lord. All of the kids have had such hard and difficult pasts, as they have been abused or abandoned by their families yet they all worship God with such love and adoration and are so thankful for all that they have. After devotions we would play games with the children and just spend time with them and remind them that they are loved.

An answer to prayer

Before going to Dwelling Places I held a coffee morning in which everyone at Magheragall Methodist was so supportive and I raised a brilliant £2,300 for Dwelling Places. The day before we arrived some of the children who were resettled back in the community had been told by their schools not to come back after the holidays, as Dwelling Places were so in debt with their fees. Everyone at Dwelling Places was praying hard that they would be able to clear these debts, so when we arrived the next day and surprised them with this money, we really did come as an answered prayer! Everyone was



so overjoyed and thankful that they could continue to send the children to school. It made all the effort of the coffee morning so worthwhile!

The story of Bashir

All of these incredible children have had a huge impact on me and their testimonies are heart breaking, but for me one of these children stands out from the rest. Bashir who is 6 years old is now my sponsor child. Bashir's mother left their family, so his father remarried. Bashir's step mother started to abuse him so he had enough and took to the streets to try and find his mother. He heard that Kampala, the main city, was the place that he needed to be. So Bashir begged for enough money to pay for a lift on the back of a carrot truck for the 150 mile journey from his home town of Mbale to Kampala. When Bashir reached Kampala he had nowhere to go, so he ended up living on the streets of Kampala for 5 months, aged just 6! During my time there, Bashir got rescued and brought to Dwelling Places. Bashir was exactly what you imagine a street child to look like, he was wearing dirty torn clothes, he was filthy and he smelled. But none of that mattered because we all knew that he was the Lord's child and he was welcomed in as the newest member to the Dwelling Place's family. The change in this terrified little boy in only a matter of hours was incredible; all he needed was some love and attention. When we arrived at work the next day, Bashir was running round with the other children, so happy with the most beautiful big smile.

A life changing experience

The experiences I had during my time in Uganda were amazing and I have learnt so much and grown with the Lord. Everyone at Dwelling Places was so welcoming and really appreciative of the work we did. These children have stolen my heart and I cannot wait to go back to Uganda and work with them again. ■

Claire Jones

hears the call to the mission field



The story so far...

Hi, my name's Claire...for those of you who don't know me, I've been going to Seymour Street since 1993 when my family moved to Lisburn. After finishing my pharmacy degree at Queen's University, I moved to Glasgow for a training year. While there, I started to hear God's call on my life to the overseas mission field. I applied to do a gap year with Mission Africa (Qua Iboe Fellowship) and worked for a year in Nigeria. I ventured out in 2009 with my friend Lynda, who is a nurse, and together we worked in Holley Memorial Hospital in Nigeria's Kogi State. During this year we did staff training, outreach clinics, school work and children's clubs. It was quite a culture shock to get used to living and working in Nigeria...on my first day I found a chicken hiding under my desk in my office! One great difference is that the gospel can be brought into everything and it was a common sight to see staff, patients and relatives praying together on the wards.

Looking for the right College

The year away was a fantastic experience and I felt strongly that God was calling me back to serve Him in Nigeria. When I came home I went to work on the Isle of Man for two years and during this time, God began preparing me for the

next step...Bible College! I knew that further training in Bible school was required in order to be accepted by a mission organisation, but every college I looked into didn't work out. I heard about Capernwray Hall from a friend who was a past student and it didn't take long before I knew it was the school for me. In September 2012, I said goodbye to the Isle of Man, packed up my car and headed across the Irish Sea to Lancashire. When I arrived at Capernwray, it was nearly as big a culture shock as going to Nigeria. Not only were most of the students much younger, but also British students were definitely in the minority! Over two-thirds of the students were from North America, with the rest being from countries all over the world. During the past year I received excellent teaching, made lifelong friends from around the world and saw my relationship with God grow and deepen.

New opportunity and future plans

At the end of the year I was given an exciting opportunity to come back to Capernwray to work as part of the pastoral care team, disciplining and mentoring the female students. I am very excited about how God will use this year as He prepares me for the future. At the same time, I am still making plans to head back to Nigeria when my year at Capernwray is finished. I would really appreciate prayer for the coming year working at the Bible School, and for my preparations to eventually go back to Nigeria. ■



A Reflection on Tanzania

**Gillian Colligan, Christina Colligan
and Michaela Johnston**



On 27th July we travelled to Dodoma in Tanzania as part of a work and witness team with the charity Kids4school. We worked in 6 schools teaching about creation and engaging with the children through a variety of activities. We also spent some time sorting through and distributing clothes, stationary and toiletries which had previously been sent to Tanzania in a container by people from Northern Ireland.

Michaela

From spending time in Tanzania I feel I have brought back many of what I hope will be life changing lessons. Life in Tanzania is much more basic and it reminded me we take much of what we have for granted. We saw children who had

are so thankful for all they do have. I feel there are certain aspects of their lives particularly that simplicity that we need to adopt into our lives. My time in Tanzania has ultimately left me feeling very blessed and thankful for all I have and all the blessing God has given me.

Christina

Having been in Africa before, I knew a little of what to expect. I knew I would see real poverty and yet it still shocked me. I don't think I could ever become used to seeing people with no food, dirty torn clothes, small one-roomed houses and certainly ever be able to see it as "normal". On one occasion we gave out clothes at a Church we visited. What struck me was that the clothes we were giving out were discarded by those at home, things they no longer wanted to wear. However, the Tanzanians had so little, and were so grateful for anything they received. The main lesson I have learned is to be more appreciative of everything. The people in Tanzania live in such poverty yet are full of joy. They find contentment in every situation and I never heard one person complain which really humbled me. I will try to adopt this attitude, finding joy in life and every situation.



to walk to water holes to get the family water for washing. Each time I turn on my water tap which has clean safe water these images come back to me. It is hard to see children in these situations when they don't have running water or food. These people are always so full of joy no matter how hard things are they still smile and

adopt this attitude, finding joy in life and every situation.

Gillian

After visiting Tanzania last year I wanted to return and spend more time in this beautiful country with its lovely people. On my first trip I had been



playing football, playing skipping games, hopscotch and german jumps, blowing bubbles, giving out clothes, balloons and sweets. To see these children just being children and having fun was priceless. It is easy to feel disheartened at times by the enormity of all the things we wish we could change. We didn't move mountains but we spent time with them and came away believing we had done what we could and felt content with that. ■



shocked by the simplicity of peoples' lives and yet incredibly humbled by their contentment. A memory that I have from this trip is arriving at the schools and finding the children working in overcrowded classrooms with few desks and even fewer resources. With the help of an interpreter our team arrived each day and the atmosphere was transformed. We told the story of creation in school assemblies, sang songs and performed dramas. These are activities the children are not used to and they became so animated and happy. We stayed all day painting nails, painting wall murals, making bracelets,

Damask Community Outreach in Association
with David Hull Promotions



Hugo Duncan's COUNTRY SHOW with supporting artists



24th October 2013

Seymour Street Methodist Church Hall, Lisburn 8:00pm

Tickets: £13.00 Available from Damask Office

Tues/Wed 10:00am to 12:00 noon or by Telephone -

**Harold Baird 077 7811 9231 / Shirley Carrington 077 4666 6860 / Jane Dawson
077 7869 0694**

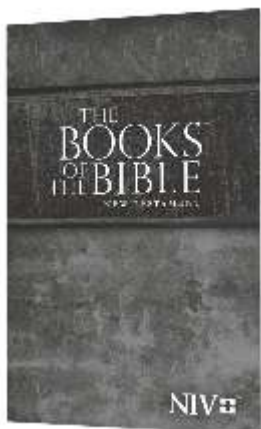
The editor talks to ... Laura Nelson

Laura is Executive Secretary to the Director of BIBLICA Europe, Stephen Cave

Laura was brought up in East Belfast where her parents were members of Bloomfield Presbyterian Church, and attended Ashfield Girls School. Although she made a Christian commitment in her teens her faith went through ups and downs for some years. It was through the faithfulness of Christian friends and colleagues that she developed a real assurance in her faith that shines through today in all she does. Laura joined Seymour Street after she married James Nelson in September 2011 - and is a leader in the BB Anchor Boys.

During a gap year after school she worked briefly for Christians in Sport and enjoyed the experience. Following this she took up a post as Personal Secretary and administrator in the Evangelical Alliance working for Steve Caves. Having now discovered a role she really enjoyed, Laura decided to study Public Relations at the University of Ulster and continued working part time for the Evangelical Alliance.

In the meantime Biblica, formerly the International Bible Society, was looking for a Director for its new European Division and 'head-hunted' Steve Caves, Laura's boss. When Steve took on that role he asked Laura to move with him and continue her work as his executive assistant (and general factotum!). Laura accepted the challenge and after 4 ½ years with the Evangelical Alliance she has been working for 2 ½ years for Biblica (Europe) based in Belfast.



Biblica



Biblica's core role is Bible translating and publishing, and its mission is to see lives transformed through God's Word. Biblica holds the rights to the New International Version (NIV) which is

the world's most trusted and most read English version, and similar translations in the world's major languages. Biblica operates across the world in seven regions and its European Division is based in Belfast where there is a staff of 6. Supplementing its core role Biblica also promotes Bible Engagement through promoting electronic access to the Bible - mobile phone and tablet apps, speech versions, special editions of the Scriptures - through leadership training, community Bible experiences and youth projects.

With such a small staff based in Belfast Laura has to turn her hand to many roles, from taking Minutes and booking flights, to organising the printing of special editions of the Scriptures. One of the most exciting was the printing of 600,000 copies of the New Testament Queen's Jubilee Edition. Biblica was able to make contact with the Royal Household, and the Queen not only endorsed it, but had an 8 page section included about herself, her faith, and why she would like people to have access to God's Word! More recently another special edition was prepared for

the World Police and Fire Games in Belfast.



Community Bible Experience

In today's society many people know practically nothing about the Bible and have never read it. An recent exciting Biblica project is the Community Bible Experience for which a specially edited version of the Bible has been prepared which reads more like a novel that a traditional Bible. The verse numbers and chapters have been removed and the passages

of Scripture combined in a simple narrative so that it can be read in context.

With Laura's enthusiasm a Community Bible Experience group has been meeting in Seymour Street since Christmas and has completed reading through the New Testament. The group meets on a Sunday morning at the same time as Sunday School so that parents leaving children off for Sunday School can attend. Members read about 10 pages per day of the narrative version of the Bible and then when they meet they discuss the answers to a series of straightforward questions such as, 'What have I learned about Jesus?', 'What have I learned about myself?'. This is very different from a traditional Bible Study, it is more like a book club! Typical comments from members are - 'I didn't think the Bible could be that easy to read!', 'It makes the Bible really come alive', 'I really enjoyed it'.

The Seymour Street group will be restarting in October when it will be reading through the next Bible section, the Books of the Covenant. ■

DAMASK youth programme is Activated

Activate The Damask youth programme is developing rapidly under the leadership of Pete Waugh who was appointed as Damask Youth Worker in June with grant aid from Tear Fund. During 6 weeks over the summer there has been a sports skills programme in the evenings which has attracted up to 30 young people from the locality. Seymour Street young people have helped lead this programme and ensure its success. The assistance of Lisburn City Council sports coaches and Salt Ministries was appreciated and there was also a partnership with the Lisburn Fellowship Church.



Drop-in Plans are now in place to run an 'After Schools' programme every Wednesday and Thursday from 3.30 – 5.30 in Seymour Street Methodist Halls. The after schools drop-in is for anyone in years 8 – 14. The first day of the drop-in will be Wednesday 11th September and we will be running during term time. There will be a variety of things to do such as play computer games, sports, craft workshops, a coffee bar and a homework area. We would love to see you come to the drop-in!

Engage Youth Nights Launching on Friday October 4th, Engage Youth Nights are interactive creative arts and sports based nights for young people. All young people in years 8-11 are welcome to come along and get involved. We will be running different workshops every Friday night involving DJ's, graffiti artists, Hip-Hop Dancers, professional sports coaches and loads more. There will also be occasional trips and time to hang out in the coffee bar at Seymour Street Methodist Halls. ■

Don't miss the opportunity to hear to story of..

Marimanti School for the deaf

Helen Moorehead who recently return from Kenya after eight years serving with the Methodist Missionary Society will tell the story of how she started and developed the Marimanti School for the Deaf.

Sunday 15th September 7pm. Ballynahinch Methodist Church



The first pupils and the first classroom

Helen Moorehead, from Portadown, Northern Ireland, went to Kenya in 2006 to teach at the Meru School for the Deaf which is funded by the Methodist Church in America. After a year she felt that there were other areas where there were no facilities for the deaf and so she moved to Marimanti, in the Tharaka district, which has a very high incidence of deafness amongst children.

Over the last seven years Helen has developed a new School for the Deaf which now has eight classrooms, dormitories, an administration block and a Church along with other facilities. Starting with only 4 pupils and the building of one classroom in 2007 Helen received financial support from Christians in Northern Ireland who knew of, and were praying for, her work. It is an amazing story of faith in action, and determination to give the deaf children of the area opportunities in life which up to now have been denied them.

The children in Helen's school range in age from six to 13. Tharaka is a very traditional area where deafness is seen as a bad omen, and deaf children are usually either hidden away or sent out to take goats grazing. Thanks to Helen's

school, these children now have other options open to them.

"My biggest hope is that the children will come to know and love Christ," says Helen. Helen has seen the first generation of children grow up through the school and the numbers attending the school steadily increase. The Kenya government has recognised the high standard which have been set at the Marimanti School for the Deaf by Helen and have agreed to fund the posts of Head Teacher and the other staff.

Nevertheless the School will need ongoing support from Northern Ireland and so, now that Helen has returned to Northern Ireland she is setting up a Trust Fund which will support the school.

There is so much more to Helen story - so make sure you are there on 15th September to hear her for yourself! ■



A recent picture of Helen with senior pupils

Seymour Street was pleased to be able to welcome mission partner Pat Jamison when she was home on furlough in the summer from Bangladesh.



The Rev Brian Anderson reflects on the message of the Methodist Conference 2013

Picture the scene with me, or rather let's live it together. You are a Priest, one of the main religious persons in the nation and you are carrying the Ark of the Covenant, it feels good to have such a position. You, with others, are leading a crowd of excited yet uncertain people. Joshua has told you to lead and for the people to fall in behind. It is time to leave Egypt behind with its slavery and oppression, but ahead is the Great River



Brian leading a Session

Jordan, flowing at its greatest height and beyond that is the land you have been promised. You begin to think you are going to be between a rock and a hard place? No way back, the way ahead blocked. But Joshua said "Consecrate yourselves tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things through you." Through me!!!

You lead, the river comes closer and closer, the torrent of water flows, the noise is deafening, but you walk on like a pirate about to reach the end of the plank. Then, just as you reach the water, as your toes get wet, the water upstream stops flowing, as does the downstream flow. You cannot believe what is happening. The wet under your toe is replaced by dry, liquid is replaced by stones Your faith in God has been wonderfully rewarded, the courage of believing God can do

it amazing things through you, has been rewarded as you and your people have been saved. What a God.

This is the theme and challenge of President Heather Morris to all Methodists and their churches this year, Will we have the courage and faith to step out into some unknown for the sake of extending the Kingdom.

Conference 2013 was a "Getting our Feet Wet Experience"

Conference 2013 was a "Getting our Feet Wet Experience". Very different to any that had gone before. How was it?

The main differences were in emphasis and expectations. It remained the place of decision making for the Methodist Church e.g. the permission to apply for Lottery monies in particular circumstances was overturned- but we structured it in such a way that inspiration,



listening and teaching could be included. Under the title "A PEOPLE INVITED TO FOLLOW" it looked something like this:

A PEOPLE-

What in our Methodist heritage that is relevant to today? Phil Meadows, a lecturer of on Wesley, lead us to think about what were the Spiritual passions that fuelled the revival that gave birth to Methodism. He revisited John Wesley's thoughts on moving from a Form of Religion to a power of Godliness. He pointed to the Wesleyan view on growth through "rejoicing always, praying without ceasing and in all things giving thanks. That we can be a people who are "everyday disciples." How do we move from Doing Church to re-igniting the "Power of Religious Faith?"



Dr Phil Meadows

Discipleship among us- I will come back to this in a moment.

FOLLOW -

If we are going to be real about following Jesus, how do we move to take what is great about Methodism in areas of Leadership and Discipleship, how do we make that Change. Kate Marshall - a trained church consultant among other things- looked at the 'c' word CHANGE. If we are hearing a new thing how is it implemented?

Overall it was amazing what God did at this Conference. I was so privileged to help shape the

"Following" day, and being at the front directing people for prayer, watching 2s and 3s breaking into their prayers were they sat, it was clear God was moving in people and that was humbling and inspiring.

We then held discussions in Districts to tease

The Down District Representatives



INVITED -

God is an inviting God- sometimes it is to come and at other times to go, but do we give him time to speak. Pete Grieg from 24.7 prayer movement, helped prepares us to listen to GOD. He spoke about Samuel learning to hear God rather than thinking it was a human voice. He drew our attention to God speaking to the young person and not the Priest; that His voice was heard as a normal voice- not the big booming noise; and that God kept on calling.

We then spent a significant time listening to God, and many many Methodist people wrote up, painted, and drew what they heard God saying. Many words and pictures were produced but two major themes emerged- God was calling us to a new form of Leadership and seeking to re-ignite

these themes out more, and you will hear more in due course.

Leadership and Discipleship

But I would like to share a few thoughts on Leadership and Discipleship from the example of Moses.

In Numbers 11, during the national saga of Israel during the wilderness years - as they wandered huge demands were on Moses. Although his shoulders were broad he found it too much, so he complained to God for help. God responded and said "get the 70 registered elders together at the tent of meeting and I will come down and talk with you there." And God did what he said he would do, came down in a pillar, and lifted some the spirit off Moses and gave it to the 70, and they prophesied.



Some things change, but not the imposing Platform organisation!

Problem solved - Moses was helped- the 70 were involved and all was neat and tidy. The help came from the right people, at the proper place, in the proper way, great order- perfect.

Would that all the LORD'S People were prophets

However, that is not the whole story- Joshua, noticed that two of the 70 elders. Eldad and Medad, were prophesying even although they not gone with the others to the Tent of Meeting. "Well", thought Joshua " Moses must tell them to stop - get some order back!" But Moses responded "Nonsense, are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the LORD'S People were prophets and that the LORD would put his spirit on them!"

Moses laid propriety aside. He set the order in its place and gave the Spirit right of way. The Bible confirms that God's Spirit is available to all his people, as the Prophet Joel said – "sons and daughters - male and female - free and slave" shall all prophecy and see visions, affirmed by Peter in New Testament in Acts 2"

How does your Church make decisions?

How does your Church make its decisions, how are you guided. Does it largely come from the top and we look to the minister to have the ideas- which can be the latest religious fad based on a programme devised by some mega church in America- or does it come from serious leadership listening to God, searching for his direction through prayer and fasting.

A Discipleship that Renews the Church.

What if we took time as the local congregation to Listen to God? Really listen, not saying "here's my idea God, now you bless it!". What if we included our young people in the listening, with all their naivety and idealism. Then having listened, record the stirring in a church programme that is built, based on listening, sifting and progressing!

Linked to a collective spiritual form of leadership is an encouragement for Methodists to recapture what Rev Heather Morris says is being "on Fire with the Love for God, each other and the world".

In our tradition a part of Methodist Genius is the class system, a group of Christians coming

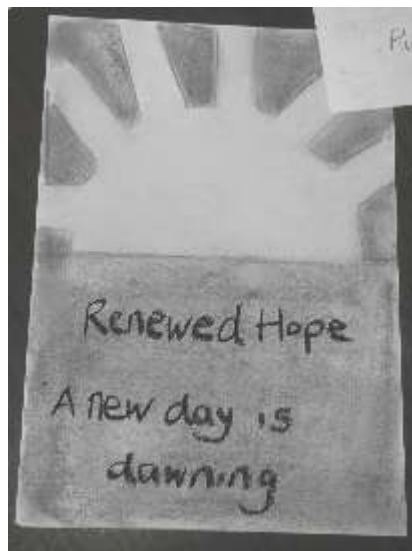
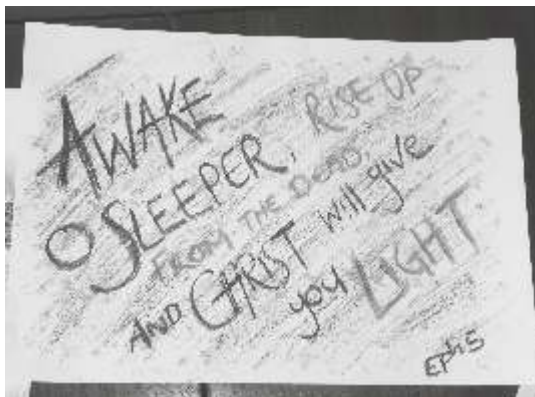
Delegates write and draw on the 'walls' with their vision of what the Lord is saying to Conference



together for Prayer, Bible Study and a place for safe sharing, and not what we know it as today.

I play golf about 4 times in the summer with Bryan, Jim and Ian. We go way back to my teenage years in Cregagh; we have shared many moments in life together, church and family ones in particular. We are good friends; it is that type of relationship that as soon as we meet it is as if we were with each other the day before. At 16th Tee at Carnalea, a conversation began on how our Friendship needed to return to a deeper spiritual level, so now we are going to meet once a month to read the bible, prayer and share together. It is what Mr Wesley would call a band. Yes of course I could do other things with the Friday night, but the 4th October is in my diary and I will be the stronger for the time. Yes I will

attend the bible study, have my quiet times but the real difference is the place of honesty. When asked how it is going, I can speak knowing my friends will be there, have my permission to challenge what I say and be prayerful. I suspect that some of our House groups lack that place of honesty? For me it has been important enough



Reflections on Conference.

to leave some good things to do what I believe is the **God** Thing.

Could we gather together a mixture of house groups and/ or bands to keep the flames of faith burning?

Could we arrange that in our churches small bands of Christians would come together, weekly, fortnightly to share Christian experience together to aid our warmed hearts? Folks we need to get off this merry-go-round of running the church and start seeking the power of God into our daily lives and to fuel our souls by spending time with Jesus and our Christian friends.

The constant message from Conference said "we can't go back" I have taken that to mean that

actually we do need to go back as we move forward. That God has spoken and we have a sense that he is calling us back to be passionate about him, and think again about the model of leadership we use. ***I lay a challenge to each Methodist on CIRCUIT to put your copy of "The Light" down, stop and begin to pray. "Lord renew in me the joy of my Salvation, create in me a clean heart, and show to rejoice always, pray without ceasing and to give thanks in all things," then stay there and Listen for God***

There are many **Good** things to be done, but the wisdom of the disciple is to find the **God** thing and to do that. ■

From the registers..

Seymour Street

BAPTISMS

Harry Leonard, son of John and Donna Twinem

Cody Phillip John, son of Phillip and Mandy Carswell

WEDDINGS

David Campbell and Becky Irwin

Daniel Anderson and Lynsey Anderson

Emmanuel Branney and Nadine Anderson

Andrew Wilson and Caroline Gilmore

Stephen Pierce and Holly Anderson

DEATHS

Mrs Ruby Huddleson, 7 Harmony Fold

Trinity

DEATH

Mr George Leatham, 12 Beechdene Gardens

Dromore

DEATH

Mrs Rhoda Ringland, August 8th

Castlewellan Holiday Week 2013

The thoughts of David Turtle & Ivan Bar



week and many activities including the legendary Castlewellan waterslide were present this year. In the absence of any other participating clergy from the Lisburn and Dromore circuit, I took an early lead in this prestigious competition of speed, skill and strategy, but sadly watched the trophy be snatched away only a few minutes later. Maybe next year!

Castlewellan Holiday Week has become one of the events which have become 'unmissable' in our family's annual calendar. The children and youth programmes, and the opportunity to meet and spend time with friends old and new, create an enthusiasm for the week which means there is no danger of us passing the early-bird booking discount deadline – we have plenty of reminders! This year's 'Castlewellan' had the added benefit of great weather which all added up to a fantastic week.



As has been the case over the past number of years, our family have returned from Castlewellan once again looking forward to next year. It is a week of friendship, fellowship and fun with a culture and atmosphere all its own – a week we would recommend to anyone.
David Turtle

The adult programme had as the main speaker Andy McCourt who, under the theme of 'Unstoppable', shared some foundational principles of how the church should move forward. I was only there for a few mornings as I travelled back and forth to Lisburn, but found that those I was present for were really challenging and inspiring. Other speakers and seminars also brought helpful insights on the various evenings during the week. While the adult sessions were taking place, the amazing youth and children's team taught and entertained the young people each morning and evening.



Some thoughts about Castlewellan...

This was our fifth year at the Castlewellan Holiday Week. Every time we've been it's been a different experience. This year the theme was titled "Unstoppable". The teaching was all about the church and the "fantastic four" from Acts 2v42. These are the apostles teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread and prayer. It was good to be reminded about these fundamentals and that the purpose of the church is to reach out as an unstoppable force working with God in the world. We were challenged as we compared our own experience and practise to that of the early Christians. Every day in all age worship we were encouraged to put on the

However, Castlewellan is not just about programmes, teaching and wonderful worship; there is also a culture of relaxation and fun which permeates the wide range of ages who attend. While each afternoon is free time, the open day on Wednesday is one of the highlights of the

Castlewellan Holiday Week 2013 continued.....



armour of God. In different fun ways we learned the serious point that God equips us when he calls us.

"open day" and lots of fun activities were laid on, not least the famous Castlewellan Water Slide. Here we had the annual curious display of many of our Methodist Ministers (including our own David Turtle) competing for the distance cup. This year even the President Heather Morris gave it a go and raised some money for MMSI in the process.

The kids

We keep going back to Castlewellan because we enjoy meeting and sharing with other

Christians (not all Methodists!) from all over Ireland. The times of teaching and worship are challenging and inspirational. Fellowship groups and seminars give an opportunity to

programme was themed "Junior Heroes". Our boys enjoyed meeting up with friends from previous years and making some new friends too. The Youth and Children's team were great with the kids. The boys really looked up to their leaders and loved going to their club time. They learned about children in the bible such as Samuel and David.



discuss real issues with others. The kids love their programme and are already talking about next year! All this set against the beautiful backdrop of Castlewellan with its lake, castle and forest. We stayed in the castle and were very well fed! The kids also enjoyed the Maud's Ice Cream parlour in the Castle cellar.

Afternoons were free for relaxation or taking part in some of the planned activities. This year the weather was fantastic. Highlights for our family were canoeing and archery. A (plastic) duck hunt and a walk with Forestry Service Rangers looking for bugs and butterflies. Wednesday was

Castlewellan Holiday Week is truly something unique and special. We're very glad we found it and hope many more can come and experience it for themselves. We know you would enjoy it too!

Ivan Barr