

The **Methodist** Church 

*Donaghadee Methodist  
Church*



*Magazine - Autumn 2021*

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**website: [www.donaghadeemethodist.com](http://www.donaghadeemethodist.com)**  
*for up-to-date information about church activities  
and to watch church services online*

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## Cover

General Secretary of the Methodist Church in Ireland,  
Rev Dr Heather Morris, commissioned Rev Louise McKee as  
Minister of Donaghadee Methodist on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2021

## *Editorial*

Welcome to the Autumn edition of the Church magazine. I do hope you enjoy it. You can read another episode in Bert's autobiography. This should cover quite a number of issues in view of his advanced age! I am grateful to John Magowan for yet another article and please pay heed to Robert Watson and smile at everyone you meet. You don't know what it might mean to them.

Robert Pue's contribution reminds me of Romans 12: 26 "We do not know what we ought to pray, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express". Kit and Geraldine are keeping us up to date with what is happening **in** the Church and **to** the Church. We hope that this year will be better than last and we will be able to get together and talk to one another.

Thanks to Margaret Connell for her account of Louise's induction. It was a wonderful service with a reminder from Heather Morris that we are to have a strong, daily awareness of the presence of Jesus and live as 'sent ones' to receive the Holy Spirit. We have welcomed Louise so many times before that I just want to say that we are all looking forward to her ministry among us and we wish her and Andrew every blessing and hope that they will enjoy Donaghadee – at least they have the Commons for the dogs!

We have been very fortunate to welcome a number of new members joining the Congregation. We hope that they will

feel welcomed and happy among us. The next sentence is specially for them. If you wish to contribute an article or articles they will be welcomed with open arms!

With every blessing as we move into a still unknown future.

The Editor

### *Minister's letter*

This past year and a half during the pandemic have been particularly difficult. Many people have been isolated, causing a lot of loneliness. Others have been confined to a home where there are difficult relationships, causing heightened levels of frustration, anger and even abuse. Relationships can be tricky, whether that be in the not being able to see people or feeling claustrophobic by being in constant close quarters.

Yet we have been built for relationship by a God who lives in relationship – Father, Son and Holy Spirit

21 Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, 22 set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. 2Corinthians 21-22

We are built to live in community, with our families, in our local communities and our church communities. For that reason, we struggle when we are alone or in difficult relationships. For that reason, we look forward to being able

to meet socially once more outside of our church services. Meeting together over coffee at coffee and chat, also getting back to craft and chat and of course our mid-week bible study and prayer meeting. These are important times of fellowship and friendship within our church community. We are looking forward to joining together for our Harvest Thanksgiving Service and BBQ at James and Christine Kennedy's farm, a lovely opportunity to worship and share together.

We are also continuing to consider how as a Church Fellowship we can make an impact on the community around us as we support our local foodbank. We are also pleased to be able to provide space for Sure Start in our halls as they begin a programme for the Donaghadee area. Our Church is also registered as a safe space through ONUS who offer specialist training & consultancy services to help support victims of domestic violence or abuse. That means that we can sign post anyone, male or female, who find themselves in a difficult situation or relationship as it can be very difficult to know where to find help.

As we navigate our way through the easing of restrictions we continue to take precautions under the current covid guidelines but we look forward to times when we are able to join together more fully as a church community. May the grace of God, Father, Son & Holy Spirit be upon you all this Autumn time.

Louise

(Rev Louise McKee)

## *Louise's welcoming service*

On 25<sup>th</sup> July we were blessed with a welcoming service for our new Minister, Rev Louise, and her commissioning by the Rev Dr Heather Morris, General Secretary of the Methodist Church in Ireland. Our worship began with the hymn "Jesus, the name high over all", chosen by Louise, who told us that she had selected all the hymns, which were her favourites. This was followed by Bible readings from Numbers 6 and John 20, read by Rev Dr Morris. Then we had another hymn, "10,000 reasons".

Rev Dr Morris then preached the sermon, before leading everyone into the promises before God which the congregation and Rev Louise would make at this point. First, she presented Rev Louise to us as our Minister appointed to serve in this Circuit. She asked Louise would she hold before us the story of God's love and mercy and the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and be among us preaching the word, administering baptism, presiding at the Lord's supper, teaching the faith and caring for the flock. Louise responded "I will. I ask God to help me, and I invite you all to join with me in proclaiming the Gospel of light and hope."

The congregation responded "Through Christ we have good news to share." Then Louise was asked "Will you hold before us God's call to holy living and be among us as one who awakens the careless and strengthens the faithless?" Louise responded "I will. I ask God to help me and I invite you all to join with me in commitment to the way of Christ.

Thirdly, she was asked “Will you hold before us God’s commitment to the human community, our neighbourhoods and all who live in them, and to the world that God has made?” Louise replied “I will, and I invite you all to join with me in sharing God’s all-embracing love. The congregation answered “May we respond to Christ in all we meet.”

Finally, the Circuit Steward asked the people “Sisters and brothers, will you welcome Louise and will you offer her your friendship, support and prayers as we join together in the work to which God has called us?” They responded “With God’s help, we will.” We then sang “And can it be?”, followed by prayers of intercession and the benediction, and left church to the strains of the hymn “Cornerstone”, wearing our masks and keeping our distance.

But there was more! The congregation was invited to the carpark, already set out with chairs to sit on, to enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and have a chat and the fellowship we all miss so much. And we all got a chance to meet and greet Louise. Thank you to the ladies and men who did all the preparations for this. It was much appreciated.

Thank you, Lord, for this wonderful service, the fellowship and the beautiful sunny day. I’m sure all our hearts were touched.

Margaret Connell



## *Circuit Steward's message*

It is hard to believe that summer 2021 has gone, the harvest is being gathered and soon it will be Christmas and then another new Year. We hope COVID-19 infections will reduce significantly as a result of vaccinations and social distancing so that we can remove masks, but until then we will be vigilant and follow the rules.

Rev Louise McKee and her husband Andrew have become part of the church family, though the dogs have not been to church yet. Louise has been visiting those who are ill in hospital or at home when this has been possible between catching up with the church administration and finding her way around Donaghadee. If you have moved house, you know the stress and work involved and there might still be some unopened boxes and furniture waiting for Andrew and Louise to sort. We hope they feel warmly welcomed without the usual formal welcoming event which could not take place in June. We welcome her enthusiasm and new ideas, and we will all try to support her as we start a new era in the life of our church. We also welcome those families who have joined our church during the past 18 months. We have not been able to chat together after service, unfortunately, but we still welcome you.

We will see more activity in the church as COVID restrictions are lifted, and we shall begin by having our Harvest Praise Service at the farm of Christine and James

Kennedy on the Craigboy Road. As we thank God for his goodness to us, we will give our Gift envelopes to the Methodist World Development and Relief Fund to help those in need at this time. After the service we will be able to mingle together outside or in the well-ventilated barn and car port. **BRING YOUR COAT.** There will be 1 metre distancing, and the wearing of masks will be optional in the barn. With maintenance work commencing on the Church roof as soon as the workers come out of the latest session of isolation it is difficult to anticipate how this will affect our meeting together. We will commence a weekly bible study on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> October in the Wesley Hall at 7.30 pm because there is no restrictions to the number of families who can meet together unlike house groups meeting in a family home. We can now serve tea & Coffee with pre-wrapped food items and extra precautions. Coffee and Craft will start in October and we will hold Coffee and Chat as soon as we can safely deliver a friendly gathering together, but our next back to normality is the Bible Study. Come and join us when you can.

We are aware that when we are not out and about chatting to people it is easy to miss hearing that someone is ill, bereaved or moved house so please pass on any such information to Louise or Robert, don't assume they would have heard.

Looking forward to a new year in the life of Donaghadee.

Geraldine

## *Reflections*

Many of the COVID 19 restrictions have now been eased, but we are still left with the wearing of masks. I hate masks! It is very difficult to recognise someone wearing a mask, and I have pet hate: I have a small face and a small nose so the mask slips up my face so that not only do I have difficulty breathing, but I can't see!

Masks were worn at balls so that you had no idea who you were dancing with until unmasking time, which might have brought surprises, pleasant or unpleasant. When we were in Venice we saw some beautiful ones in an antique shop, and certainly very little of your face was visible.

In ancient Greece the actors wore masks and were known as hypocrites, from where we get the word hypocrisy: pretending to be what we are not.

We can wear masks which aren't visible – a smile hiding a seething cauldron of dislikes and resentments. The difficulty comes when we are under stress and the mask slips and we say things that appal us afterwards. It is only when our hearts and minds are under the influence of the Holy Spirit that we react to circumstances in a Christ-like way.

I remember a member of an American lay-witness scheme telling us how she slipped on a short flight of marble steps and every time she struck a step she said "Praise the Lord". I felt at the time that it was a very extreme reaction but on

looking back I can see her point. Christ said that what was in the heart of a person was what showed in their thought, word and deed.

Do we need to look more closely at our hidden emotions and bring these out into the open and review them before God? We do not need to be afraid to do this, as He knows all about us, but can help us only when we recognise our need and ask.

Love, Maeve

*Robert writes ...*

I came across this story in the UCB ‘Word for Today’.

A pastor tells of being in a church for twelve years, He had a custom during Sunday morning service of calling the children forward just before his sermon so that they could go to a ‘children’s church’ specially for them.

The children would file past the pulpit, and he would make a point of smiling at each of them. In return he received smiles.

One day he apparently missed smiling at a child. A curly-headed four-year-old ran out of the line and threw herself into the arms of her mother sobbing as if her heart was broken.

After the service he went to find out what happened. The mother explained that the child had said, ‘I smiled at God but

he didn't smile back at me!' The pastor reflected, 'To that child I stood for God. I had failed with my smile and the world went dark.'

At times we may feel we haven't got much to smile about. Job experienced more troubles in a year than most of us will experience in a lifetime. He was able to write these words in chapter 29 verse 24:

'When they were discouraged, I smiled at them. My look of approval was precious to them.'

Let's adopt the 'smile strategy'. It doesn't cost anything to smile, and you may just bring a little cheer into someone's day. Smile Please!

Robert Watson

### *Church finance*

What an interesting time this is for your Treasurer! Though I have to say I prefer less interesting times.

We are spending a lot of money this year. It is all sensible and well-considered, but someone has to make sure the money is ready to pay out when the bills arrive. And that someone is your Treasurer.

We are spending nearly £7,000 installing a new audio-visual system that will assist our worship and make it easier to

broadcast our services on the internet with high quality pictures and sound. That is what churches have to do these days.

Our major building works on the roof are just starting. By the time you read this, the scaffolding will probably have been put up behind the church and work will have begun. That will be a big expense, and although we have an estimate, we won't know exactly how much it will cost until the builders start to remove the slates. The first thing our architect recommended was a new ventilation system to make sure that the air circulating in the church was dry, and we have installed that at a cost of £5,000.

This is all good work, and we need to put the church in order before we can start work on the Wesley Hall, but it means our accounts for this year will be heavily in the red. In other words, if anyone was thinking of giving a substantial sum to the Building Fund, now would be a good time!

But it is not all gloom and doom. In fact, none of it is gloom and doom. I would much rather be Treasurer of a church that was facing up to problems, and tackling them, than of one that just left the fabric of the church to deteriorate.

We have been given a very useful grant of £7,500 by the National Churches Trust, which is the main UK-wide charity helping churches keep their historic buildings in good order. It is the largest grant they are making in Northern Ireland this year, and we have to record our gratitude to our architect,

Ken Best, who put a huge effort into assisting us with our application.

The NCT has demanding criteria that have to be met. They told me that they were delighted to be making a grant to a Methodist Church, as not many Methodist churches applied to them. They have a special programme to help Northern Ireland churches at the moment, called “Treasure Ireland”, and we are beneficiaries of it.

The other very good news is that we are going to be hosting a Sure Start programme to assist families on the estate. They will be using the Wesley Hall two mornings a week, Wednesday for ‘Jiggly Tots’ and Friday for ‘Wobblers to Toddlers’ – though I have yet to learn what the difference is. They will also be using the Parish Church Hall and the Community Centre on other days. The rent is not going to earn us a lot of money, but it will cover the cost of heating, and it will be good to have the Wesley Hall in regular use again. We’ll also (hopefully) be re-starting some of the church’s other regular activities soon, such as Coffee and Chat, which I’m sure you are looking forward to.

So, in the last magazine I said I could assure you that the church was still a going concern. Well, there is the evidence for it. We are very much a going concern, and with your help we are going to grow.

Kit Chivers,  
Treasurer

## *Thought for Today: The widow's two mites*

One day as Jesus was sitting at the Temple, he observed people dropping their gifts into the treasury box. Those who were wealthy gave large coins that could easily be heard dropping into the metal box. This is something they loved to do in order to impress people and possibly intimidate those who were poor.

Along comes a widow who has only two tiny coins to her name, and she also drops the coins into the treasury box with hardly a sound made. Her giving most likely went unnoticed by everyone except Jesus.

Calling to his disciples Jesus said: “I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all that she had to live on” (Luke 21:3-4).

Jesus here was making two important points:

- 1) Poor people (like this widow) are never to be despised or looked down upon. Her situation was dire, not having her husband to help her, and the very ones who should have been supporting her (the Scribes and Pharisees—the religious leaders) were relinquishing their responsibility to the needy of the land.

- 2) Giving to God's work should be genuine, personal and generous. This widow was willing to give all that she had to live on—two mites or small Roman coins—about enough to buy her a couple of pomegranates.



Undoubtedly, she believed that God would take care of her needs somehow (Psalm 68:5; Is.1:17).

The apostle James tells us that pure and undefiled religion before God is to care for widows and orphans in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world (James 1:27). In our modern, western world, the poor and needy are supported and housed by our various governments—paid for by the taxes we pay, and no one ought to go hungry. Nevertheless, many still find it hard to make ends meet and feed their families, and this is where we can help if possible. Local food bank charities exist to help fill this need, and we can help by donating a few items on a regular basis.

Jesus was a champion of the widow and needy during his ministry on earth, and he encourages us to follow in his footsteps. Let's endeavour to be his eyes, hands and feet in our Christian walk!

John Magowan

### *Bert's birthdays (continued)*

Hallowe'en 1948. Fireworks were going off around me as I was carried into an ambulance parked at our front door. The events preceding and following that moment I now realise were the real reason that I had my first birthday party the following May. Home-made butter and preserved eggs certainly helped on the day but for most of November I was

on the Northern Ireland Fever Hospital's Danger List. The Belfast Telegraph published the hospital numbers of patients in the Fever Hospital, ranked according to the severity of their illness. Far, far too long for my parents my number, 385, remained in the most serious section. Initially they were not allowed to visit, we didn't have a phone in the house and public phones were too public. The daily link with the hospital was the Belfast Telegraph's Danger List. I was never aware of being so seriously ill, which will be borne out in the story that follows. It was some time after I got home that my mother began to tell me.

Surprisingly and mercifully, I don't remember being sick once I was in the hospital. I remember very little of the time at home except waking up screaming because of terrifying dreams. Huge millstones were rolling down on top of me. In normal circumstances, 'hallucination' would have been such a nice tongue rolling word for a know-it-all seven-year-old to know. All I knew then was terror.

If my recollection of my time at home is almost blank, my time in hospital is full of vivid memories. From the moment I was in the ambulance chatting to the nurse and telling her what a clever man my Daddy was and how he helped me with my schoolwork, to the school coat my mother had

bought me before I was ill, which didn't fit me when she brought it to take me home.

The ward I was placed in was long and high and my bed was about two thirds the way from the nurses' office. It was totally open, with none of the individual screening seen today. Nurse Temple was my nurse, but to a cheeky seven-year-old she became Nurse Pimple. Nurse May was always nice to me but very bossy to the other nurses. On one occasion when I had called and called for a potty she raged at the other staff for not coming sooner when I completely filled it. I could have peed for Ireland.

When we were bathed at home my father would say. "Let's get you dried before you get rheumatism." When Nurse Temple bathed me, but didn't dry my hair, I told her I would get rheumatism of the head.

It seems odd now, but I was in a ward with adults. On one occasion I couldn't understand why the doctors were asking a man if he knew 'Bill Harris' when he was a soldier. However, they seemed happy that he knew him. I supposed he was their friend. Many years later my pathology lecturer, in an anecdote about patients not getting their tongues around medical conditions, told of soldiers in Egypt saying they had Bill Harris, slang for Bilharzia, a water-borne parasitic

disease. My memory of other children on the ward was frightening because soon after some of them came in, the doctors and nurses did something to them that made them scream and scream. For days I dreaded that they would do it to me and didn't dare ask anyone in case they said 'Yes'. A nurse noticed me crying during one of these episodes and assured me that I didn't have a sore head and didn't need a 'lumbar puncture'. It is still an extremely painful procedure which has to be done without anaesthetic.

While on the big ward I was allowed new books from my family. I remember one was 'The Water Babies' by Charles Kingsley. 'Mrs Be-done-by-as-you-did' and 'Mrs Do-as-you-would-be-done-by' would encourage me to follow a life of moral rectitude. Confined to bed, I read and re read until I didn't need to read them any more. I could recite them cover to cover. I later learnt that all my books, toys, bedding and some of my clothes at home had been taken away to be burnt.

Suddenly, one day, the books I had were taken from me and I was rushed to a side ward amid great fuss. To this day I don't understand why I was kept on the open ward if I was so infectious. For a time, I was left without amusement. The move, however, had advantages. My isolation room was overlooked by the nurses' office and my parents were able to 'visit' me through the glass. I couldn't hear them nor could

they hear me but sign language was better than what had gone before. Certainly, for my mother, just seeing me was more than just relief.

Instead of books I was allowed little puzzles. One of them was a tiny bagatelle but it got broken very quickly. The other was a picture of three owls with holes where the eyes should be and six tiny ball bearings to roll into the holes. The nurses had a competition with me each morning to see if I could get all the eyes in place before they opened all the blinds in the big ward.

My new room was on the outside of the building, like a little tower, with windows on three sides. I wasn't allowed out of bed, but from one window I could see along the wall of the hospital to another tower like mine. My bed faced the nurses, office so it had its back to the middle window, however I could hear the occasional car, lorry or tractor passing. From the remaining window I could see trees from which emanated all sorts of strange noises, especially at night. At first, I was apprehensive as to what might arrive on my windowsill but as time passed, I became convinced that they would be owls, like the ones in my puzzle. My curiosity was never satisfied. No owls appeared at my window during the day, but one never knew what was outside when the blinds were drawn at night!

During the day I could tell the approach of breakfast, lunch and tea time from one or two sirens which sounded regularly. However on one day they started in the night, one after another. I had heard my father talking about how serious things were with the Russians. Not that I knew it, but the Berlin Airlift would have been in full swing. I was terrified that another war had started. However, all the noise was because the Queen had had a baby!

Well, after all that, what got me into hospital? To this day it remains a mystery! My parents were told I had dysentery the main symptom of which also begins with a 'D'. I won't spell it - I never know where to put the 'H'. At home I was dehydrating so badly that our family Doctor couldn't control it. In the hospital I have no recollection of being on a drip, the medicines I remember were pills, liquid and being told what I had to eat. I came to like sago and tapioca, which I had refused because it was frog spawn! The doctors questioned me as to whether there were mice in our house. I don't think there was a house in the street that didn't have mice.

Dysentery is caused by infected water, not mice. If our water was infected, or if it was from mice, why was I the only one who was sick? I have asked to see my records but they can no longer be accessed. There are no medical records of me

before 1970. In one way that is good news. It means I am considerably younger than I thought.

Bert Montgomery (Rev.)

### *Coffee and craft*

For several years prior to the Covid pandemic, a number of ladies from the Church met together in the Campbell Room on alternate Monday mornings. We all had an interest in crafts including crochet, knitting, embroidery, jewellery making and patchwork. We each brought along whatever we were working on and everyone was very happy to ‘show and tell’.

Sometimes we all worked together to prepare items to send to the Container Ministry in Lurgan. A few years ago, we made knitted and crocheted pencil cases before filling them with pencils, rulers, rubbers, etc., to be sent out to Africa in a container for use in schools.

We hope that we may be able to meet again in the very near future and would extend a warm welcome to anyone from the town wishing to drop in, even for coffee and to see what we get up to! Anyone in the Church building when we are there is also included and that includes the men.

For further information, please speak to Jenny Watson (Tel. 02891463772 or 07845007744). Jenny will post a starting date either on the Church announcements or in the window of the Wesley Hall as soon as we get permission to meet again.

### *Methodist Women in Ireland (MWI)*

As our church is trying to restart a few of our activities we are looking at what lies ahead for the MWI.

Our first meeting should have been scheduled for the first Monday in October, the 4th at 7.30pm. However, this is not looking good: we are a vulnerable group, and we don't want to put any of you at risk.

As soon as possible we will get together. But there will be changes:

- We will meet in the Wesley Hall to ensure social distancing.
- Our first meeting will be getting to know you, again.
- We will try to find local speakers.

Now we are aiming for Monday, November 1st, at 7.30 pm.

We will keep you updated as soon as we know ourselves. If you have any suggestions, please feel free to contact us at

Helen 07751 795044 or Mary 07740374442



## *Prayer*

A grandfather was walking around his garden when he heard his young granddaughter repeating the alphabet in a tone of voice that sounded like a prayer. He asked her what she was doing. The little girl explained: I'm praying, but I can't think of exactly the right words, so I'm just saying all the letters and God will put them together for me because He knows what I'm thinking.'

Robert Pue

*(Bob has now moved away from Donaghadee. We wish him much happiness in his new home and hope to see him again one day.)*

## *Friendship*

People come into your life for a reason, a season or a lifetime. When you know which one it is, you will know what to do for that person.

When someone is in your life for a REASON, it is usually to meet a need you have expressed. They have come to assist you through a difficulty, to provide you with guidance and support, to aid you physically, emotionally or spiritually. They may seem like a godsend, and they are. They are there for the reason you need them to be. Then, without any

wrongdoing on your part, or at an inconvenient time, this person will say or do something to bring the relationship to an end. Sometimes they die. Sometimes they walk away. Sometimes they act up and force you to take a stand. What we must realise is that our need has been met, our desire fulfilled, their work is done. The prayer you sent up has been answered and now it is time to move on.

Some people come into your life for a SEASON, because your turn has come to share, grow or learn. They bring you an experience of peace, or make you laugh. They may teach you something you have never done. They usually give you an unbelievable amount of joy. Believe it, it is real. But only for a season.

LIFETIME relationships teach you lifetime lessons, things you must build upon in order to have a solid emotional foundation. Your job is to accept the lesson, love the person and put what you have learned to use in all other relationships and areas of your life. It is said that love is blind, but friendship is clairvoyant.

Thank someone for being a part of your life, whether it is for a reason, a season or a lifetime.

(contributed by Maeve)





***Repairs to the church roof are being assisted by a grant from the National Churches Trust, the leading independent UK charity concerned with conserving historic church buildings***



***For people who love church buildings***