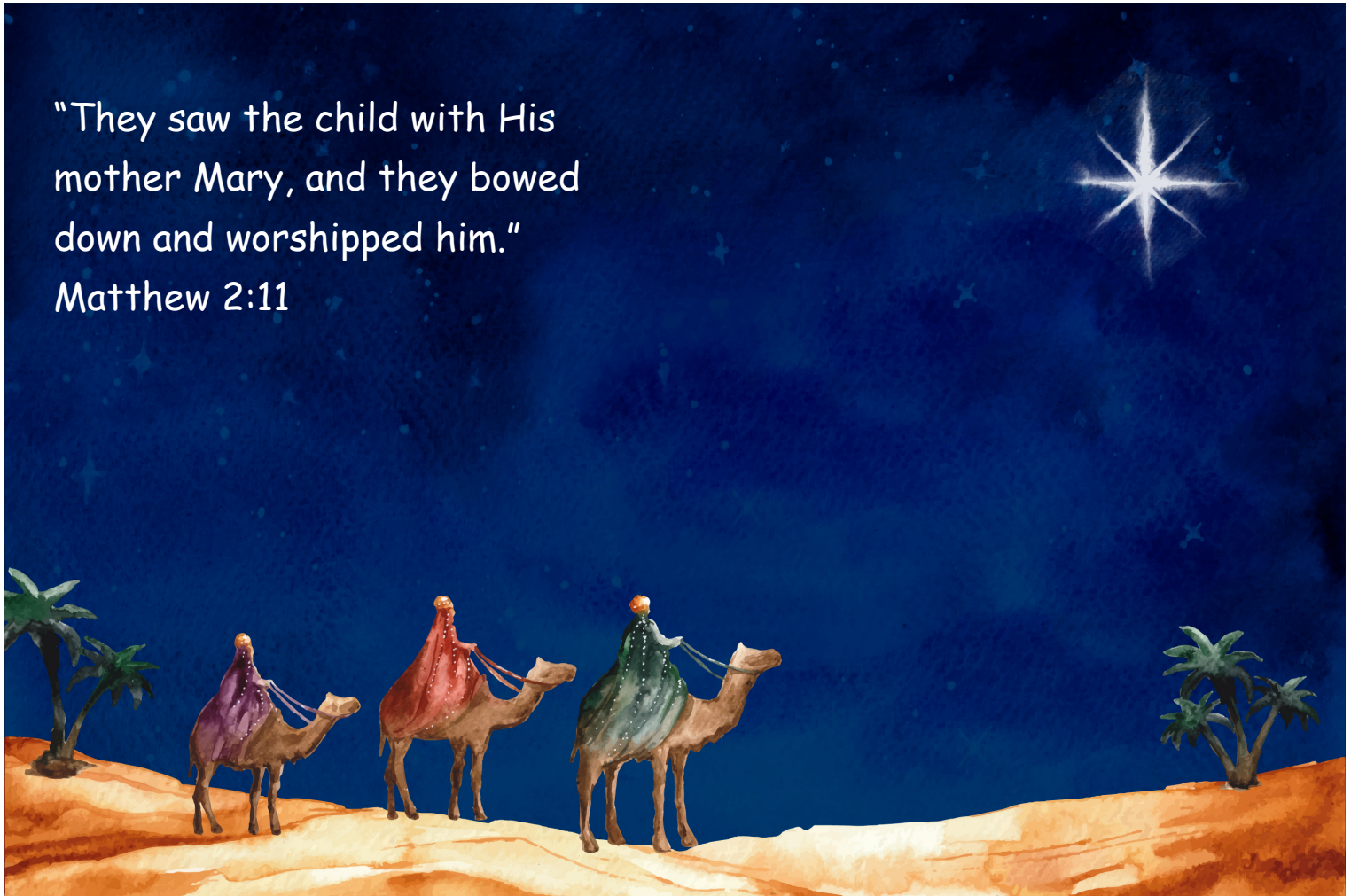


“LET HIS LIGHT SHINE”

“They saw the child with His
mother Mary, and they bowed
down and worshipped him.”
Matthew 2:11



SPECIAL CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Sunday 1 December – 11am Christmas Tree Service –

(gifts for the Belfast City Mission details on Pg2)

Sunday 15 December – 11am All-age Christmas Nativity Service

Sunday 22 December 6.30 pm “Candlelit” Carol Service

Wednesday 25 December 10.30am – Christmas Day Service



**BELFAST CITY MISSION
CHRISTMAS GIFT APPEAL 2024**

Dear Friends

It is hard to believe that the Christmas Season is almost upon us once again. Since the end of August shops have been placing tins of sweets, toys and cards in strategic locations around their premises in the hope of getting us into the mood for Christmas.

Through our Annual Christmas Appeal, we are able to help many needy families who struggle to buy even the basics by providing food, toys, chocolates and gift cards. Of course, this can only be done with the help of donations from churches and individuals across the province.

Gift Suggestions (unwrapped please)

Selection Boxes

Tins of sweets (Roses, Quality Street, Haribo etc.)

Boxes of biscuits.

Monetary gifts

Gift Cards (£5, 10, 15, 20)

Supermarket Vouchers (Tesco, Asda, Sainsburys, M&S)

Toy Stores (Smyths, Argos Etc.)

Groceries (non-perishable)



May I wish you and your Congregation God's richest blessings as we approach the Christmas season.

Yours in Christ

William Logan (Executive Secretary)



USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

Minister: Rev. Jeff McWatters 077 9955 2804 or 9181 3374

E-mail: jmcwatters@presbyterianireland.org

Clerk of Session: Mr Wallace McKee 07985 085527

Church Co-ordinator: Barbara McCartney office@streaan.org

Church Office: Tel No 9181 6225 9.15am - 12.45pm Monday - Friday

Website: www.streaan.org

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland NIC105064

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This magazine is published to let you know what is happening in our Church. Not every member of the Church can attend on a regular basis, so it is important that those at home should be kept informed. If you have articles or news of a special anniversary or birthday, including photographs, please give them to Barbara McCartney in the office or alternatively email them to Rosemary Black (Editor) rosemaryblack@gmail.com

Christmas is often a time filled with traditions.

These traditions can range from when decorations are put up, or who puts the star or angel on top of the tree, to it being the only time of the year that you will eat brussel sprouts or cook turkey. Each person and household will have its own traditions. I wonder if one of those traditions for you is going out and choosing a Christmas tree. Do you spend an hour or two looking at the different trees, their sizes and shapes, until you find the one that is just right. Or do you have an artificial tree, nicely boxed away in the attic, just waiting for you to unfold and assemble.

Some say that only a real tree will do. Why would you want a fake tree? It will ruin Christmas if it's not real.



If that was true, then why do so many people with real trees not celebrate the real Christmas?

For some, Christmas is just a holiday. A time to give presents but more importantly see what presents others give in return. A time to eat far too much food and not feel guilty. This is the fake Christmas.

A real Christmas is remembering and celebrating the first Christmas. It wasn't a time of excess and overspending. It was a time when a baby was born without even a cradle for him to be put into. A time when shepherds, who were the outcasts of society, were told by an angel of the birth of this baby. They were the honoured guests that day. Yes gifts were brought to the baby, a gift that showed he was a king, a gift that showed he was to be honoured, and a gift that showed he would die.

That baby was Jesus, born to be our king, the Messiah, the one who would die in our place on the cross. That baby was Jesus, and He really was and is the reason for the season of Christmas.

So will this Christmas still be a fake one for you, or is Christmas alive and real in your life because Jesus is your Saviour?

I pray that this Christmas will be a blessed one for you and those whom you love.
Merry Christmas.

Luke 2:10-11 *"Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."*

Jeff

CHURCH MEMBER RECORDS September - November 2024

DEATHS

12 September 2024 - Mrs Nora Lennon

12 November 2024 - Mrs Pat (Patricia) Burgess

UPCOMING SUNDAY EVENTS & SERVICES

Sunday - 5 Jan - Communion Service

Sunday - 19 Jan - PW Afternoon Tea (after the service)

Sunday - 30 Mar - PW Service

“If anyone needs a lift to any service or church events, please speak to your elder or contact the church office.”

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday 30 November

Christmas Sale 10am-12noon

Thursday 5 December

Men's Christmas Dinner at Clandeboye Golf Club at 7pm

Thursday 5 December

PW “A little bit of Christmas” at 7.30pm

Saturday 14 December

Seniors Christmas Lunch 12.30pm to eat at 1pm (needs to be pre-booked by 29 November with the church office)

2025

Thursday 9 January

Ladies Dinner in 'The Stables' Groomsport

Saturday 29 March

Lyndsay Choral Concert (see pg12 for more detail)

2025 COFFEE MORNINGS - Saturday mornings 10am - 12noon

1 February - Home Start

15 February - Football & Fellowship

1 March - G.B. (Pancake Party)

15 March - Tots & Toddlers (supporting Gean in Brazil through Compassion)

5 April - Marie Curie Cancer Care

MISSION COMMITTEE

Streas has a long history of supporting Mission and we were delighted, this year, to be able to increase the amount of financial support we give, and the number of organisations we support. In total 15 mission projects / societies, as well as, the Presbyterian Church (PCI) United appeal, World Development appeal and PCI Children's Society were all recipients. This is all due to the contributions that you, the congregation, generously give to the Mission Account. It is our plan to provide you with detailed articles of the groups we support - starting in this issue of the magazine with The Bible Society.....

BIBLE SOCIETY NORTHERN IRELAND. [BSNI]

Next time you pick up your Bible or read an online version be thankful you are one of the **7.23 billion people** who have access to some Scripture in their heart language - the language you think and dream in!

Total languages **7,306**

How many have the full Bible? **743**

How many have some Scripture? **3,686**

How many have no Bible? - **3710** - **50%** languages - **188 million people**

How many translations were completed in 2023? - **106** languages **1.25 billion people** .

How many still do not have full Bible in their language? **1.46 billion people**

What does it mean to people to receive a Bible in their own language for the first time?

See the photo below of a new translation being received by people in Kenya



(Photo provided by BSNI)

BSNI is part of the global fellowship of United Bible Societies and today carries on the work started on this island in 1806 of providing Scripture to everyone.

BSNI's mission is "To reach everyone with God's Word in a language and format that they can access and afford, so that each person might experience God's purpose for their life." This mission is carried out abroad and at home.

The Bible 'lifecycle' starts with translation and moves through production distribution, literacy and advocacy to engagement. Jesus while He was on earth taught, but He also addressed the practical needs of those He met. BSNI projects combine providing the Bible through many means and address also practical needs in doing so.

BSNI supports work in many locations e.g.

🇦🇱 Albania - sports ministry - children given Bibles and parents offered one too.

🇦🇷 Argentina - translation for the indigenous Toba people

🇨🇳 China - providing paper to print Bibles at an affordable price

🇨🇺 Cuba - 1million + Bibles already distributed and plans for Bible engagement

🇵🇪 Peru - distribution and breakfast club to feed hungry children

🇵🇰 Pakistan - Bible teaching materials and literacy for Christian children

🇱🇰 Sri Lanka - sign language translation of the Bible

🇸🇮 Slovenia - encouraging Bible engagement and training for lay people

🇦🇹 Austria & 🇵🇱 Poland - Bible distribution to Ukrainian and other refugees

Home ministry includes **Bibles for Babies** - by the end of last year 4,200 Bibles had been distributed to babies born since 2021 on their first birthday. When children reach five years of age they receive a second age appropriate Bible. A further 850 are already in the pipeline for this year.

Each year a free Daily Bible Reading Guide is available to churches.

Other materials include:-

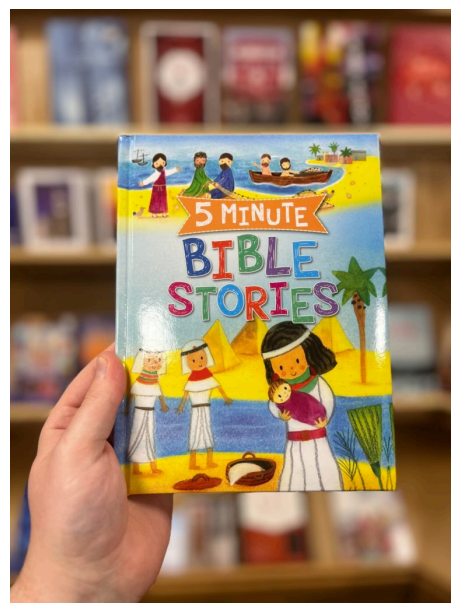
"On the Road - A Journey through the Bible for Migrants"

"52" - a Bible Engagement resource,

"Bible Course" - an interactive 8-week course that helps readers understand the bigger picture of the Bible.

"Daring to Hope" - Experiencing the Grace of Lament

<https://biblesocietytni.co.uk/>



Joy Scott

TOTS & TODDLERS AT STREAM

2023/24 has been a great year with up to 42 children each week.

As I look back on the year, I think about how I should assess the impact of these Tuesdays mornings.

I could look at the numbers.

We had 29 mornings of tots and toddlers. That's 29 times the wheels on the bus went round and round in song time. 29 different crafts were made which means there were almost 600 artistic masterpieces going home to grace the kitchen cupboards. Over the year those in our kitchen were very busy with around 700 snack bowls prepared, and wait for it, over 900 cups of tea or coffee served.

Or I could look at the visitors we had.

Mr Manogue, the headteacher from West Winds Primary School came to visit in November and read a book called "The hundred decker bus".

At Christmas, Santa came to visit and gave out some presents. He sat in the Welcome Area and the children could approach him if they were happy to.

And in March we had a visit from a little lamb, with Henry the farmer. As you can imagine, this was very exciting. The children and their carers went in groups to see it, and yes, there was some mopping up to be done on behalf of the lamb!

Then there was our coffee morning.

In April we had our annual coffee morning which was really well supported by both our tots and toddler members and our own congregation. We raised a fantastic £430 which went to support a girl called Heidi, whom we sponsored through Compassion UK.

But what else?

I've seen the children grow in confidence and independence. Through the year children have started to sit with the other children at snack time rather than with their mummy. Or those that had been sitting on the sidelines during song time were getting into the middle of it all and doing the actions. Seeing friendships develop between the children so that they'd be looking out for each other every week.

And also seeing how important the tots and toddlers' group is for our carers. Being asked by a carer if we would pray for a family member, another carer saying she was just enjoying having a cup of tea and drinking it while it was still hot!

These are the things that I'll remember, these are the things that make my heart glad.

As you can imagine none of this could happen without a great team, so I want to thank all the tots and toddler leaders for their joy, faithfulness and willingness every week. And a heartfelt thank you to those that help set up beforehand and tidy up afterwards. We couldn't do it without you. Special mention to Phill Baron who is "retiring" from this role which means we are looking for someone to help in this role. It takes about 1 hour on a Monday evening after GB ends at 8.30, and again about 1 hour on Tuesdays from 11.45 am.

If you think you could help, please contact Barbara in the church office.

Who knows what God has in store for us this year.

Heather Faloon

FOOTBALL & FELLOWSHIP



We are so thankful for God's blessings and faithfulness to our Football and Fellowship group over the last 15 years. The group that meet presently are mainly guys who are not members of Streaton but enjoy football, fun and the fellowship. We have one member who comes all the way from Waringstown, others from Belfast, Bangor, Donagadee, Ballywalter, Portavogie as well as Newtownards. Unfortunately our first female footballer Sofia can't make a Wednesday night as she trains with the Rosario ladies team in Belfast.

Football and Fellowship was formed as an outreach to the local community and the missing generation. Like many organisations we will never fully know what influence or impact we have on our members' lives. Each night starts with prayer and after fellowship in the welcome area we close in prayer. We are thankful to Session for allowing us to have our annual afternoon service each November.

We need your help. We could do with a few more members, have you a family member or know someone who used to play football who could be encouraged to join? We are thankful to the Wednesday study group who pray for us each week.

God Bless.

John, Phil and Dessie



PW

We have now had three meetings which have been well-attended. Our October meeting was about the charity Hope 365 which works in Ethiopia with street children. It was most interesting and thought provoking about just how privileged we all are. Our November meeting welcomed Phil Baron and a colleague who told us about the Talking Newspaper.

The rest of our meetings are:

5 December : A little bit of Christmas



2025

9 January: Ladies Dinner in The Stables, Groomsport



6 February: Scammers with PSNI to which all members of the congregation are welcome



6 March: Invisible Traffick

3 April: Easter Floral Art which will be open to all ladies

Special Dates: Sunday 19 January – Afternoon Tea

Sunday 30 March – PW Service

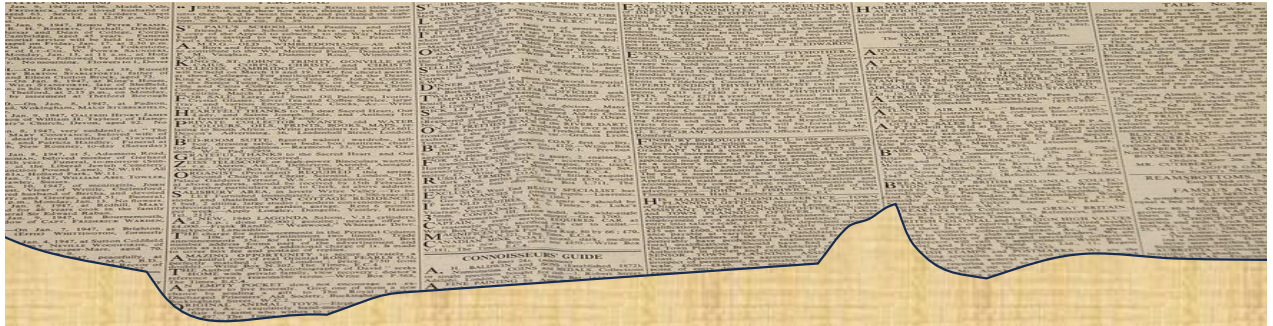
Saturday 10 May – PW outing to Banbridge Outlet with lunch



Our meetings are open to all ladies, of all ages and you would find us friendly and welcoming. We would love more ladies to come and join with us.

Jennifer Wallace

Interesting reading from the archives, minutes of Church Committee meetings:-



Church Committee 100 years ago

Church Committee oversees the practical running of the church. Here are some extracts taken directly from the 1916 – 1925 Committee minutes. Do the topics sound familiar? And others which were of their time in history. It continues to highlight the invaluable work carried out by Church Committee.

21st August 1916 – It was resolved to re-varnish the church doors.

2nd October 1916 – Messrs Holmes and Simms were asked to arrange for members to be in the vestibule at the morning and evening services.

25th October 1916 – A letter was read from Mr George Dickson, Milecross, asking the Committee to accept on behalf of the congregation the individual communion service from him and his family in memory of their late father.

25th August 1919 – It was decided to have an entertainment for the young men of the congregation, who had served in His Majesty's Forces during the war.

September 1919 – Messrs Sloan and Hanna were asked to arrange for a display board for the music at the church service.

2nd May 1921 – Twenty-five shillings for hire of a motor car to Hollywood was passed for payment.

20th March 1924 – Mr Hanna was asked to carry out a few minor repairs to church and the lecture hall, particularly an effort was to be made to keep the pigeons out of the tower.

21st September 1925 – It was agreed to install gas in the manse.

Fiona Boyle





CHRISTMAS SALE



**SATURDAY 30 November 2024
10 AM - 12 NOON**

Stalls will include:

Crafts

Cakes & Traybakes

Food Hampers & Food /Gift Sets

Toys/Sweets

Books

Toiletries

Bric-a-brac

Fruit & Veg

Plants

Avon

Tropic Skincare

Local Photography

Tea/Coffee/Scones/Traybakes



Admission: Free

SAVE THE DATE: Fundraising Event

The Lindsay Chorale choir will be performing a concert:

In Strain on Saturday 29th March 2025



The choir is named after a man called Tom Lindsay, who formed the choir from a Presbyterian Church in Saintfield. They are a mixed voice choir of about 34 voices and they perform a wide repertoire consisting of popular music, songs from musicals, sacred songs and a wee bit of pop. Something for everyone!

More details to follow.

Lynn Cairns