

RELOCATION OF SUNDAY SERVICE to Harding Memorial Primary

Due to the ongoing work at the church, our next few Sunday services will be held at Harding Memorial Primary School, Cregagh Road (just across the road, opposite Iceland).

Kidzone and crèche will still be available and the coffee bar will continue to run.

All are welcome to join us at 11am at Harding Memorial. Many thanks to the principal and staff of Harding Memorial for accommodating us.

BPP Update (2017)

Good Morning everyone. On behalf of the Building Project Panel, I would like to take this opportunity to update you and give you some important information regarding our Church Building Project.

Let's just say there is good news and there is bad news. The good news is that things are motoring ahead as you can see for yourselves. The work to the exterior brickwork is almost finished and it is hoped that the work to the Bell Tower will be completed soon too. The Bell Tower work has taken longer than expected because of the delay caused in removing the asbestos but they hope to catch up on this lost time by the end of the project.

The new fire alarm and emergency lighting has been installed in our halls, and the rewiring of the Youth Centre is complete. One major job over the Summer has been to install the new gas heating system to the church, halls and Youth Centre. This is now ready for connection, however Phoenix Gas has said that they have a large back log and that they cannot connect us to their gas until the end of September, which means that it will be mid October before our heating is up and running again.

Well that was all the good news, and now for the bad! You may have noticed that there has been a lot of rain recently. Apart from the noticeable leaks in the back corridor and in the skylights outside of the Session Room, there has also been damage caused by the ingress of water through the Allen Hall roof, which has been dripping down onto the new

electrical control points in the vestibule, with the potential of causing a lot more damage. Some of the beams have also rotted in the ceiling void and need replaced. The Allen Hall was not costed into our initial Building project but we have been aware for a few years that there were leaks in the roof but hoped that patching these up would suffice for now.

Sadly this is not the case and a lot more potential damage could be caused if this is not rectified soon. In order to do all the necessary work, the builders will need complete access to the Allen Hall for up to six weeks and so we would not be able to meet in it on a Sunday for our services.

The BPP met last Sunday along with Stephen Moore our Vacancy Convenor to discuss the various options available to us and when this work should take place. It was agreed that there should be no unnecessary delay as the weather could cause even further damage and so we would need to relocate our Sunday Services in order to let the repairs commence.

So when and where will this all happen. Well the when is actually tonight. As soon as the evening service is over we will start to clear things from this hall so that the builders can start tomorrow morning.

And as for the where, I'm afraid it's back to school for all of us, as Harding Memorial Primary School across the road has agreed to let us use their facilities on a Sunday.

So this time next week, the 24th September, you are all invited to join us for our normal Sunday Service at 11.00am, only this time it will be on the opposite side of the road.

We hope you will bear with us during this transitional period as not everything will be exactly the same as it is now, but we will still have all the things that we normally have on a Sunday. There will still be KidZone and Creche, in fact the facilities will probably be a lot better that we have for the children at present. We will still have our Choir and Praise Group leading the worship, but we may have to make do with a piano for the next few weeks, and we even hope to have our Coffee Bar after the service too. I'm sure that Maureen and our dedicated band of flower arrangers will be able to use their talents in coming up with something special to decorate the school for our Harvest Services too.

The organisations during the week will not be affected by this as they can still meet in the Barbour and Stewart Halls as planned, although again some flexibility will still be required as the toilets and hot water in the kitchen will be out of action for the next week.

We have always said that the church is the people and not the building, so now is the time to put that into action. We are very grateful to the Principal of Harding for working his way through all the bureaucratic red tape to allow this to happen, and we have promised to leave the school as we find it ready for classes on the Monday morning. It

will be a lot of work setting out the chairs and clearing them away each week, but what other alternative do we have?

We always knew that there was a chance that problems would arise during our refurbishment, but if we move out now, it allows the builders to get all the work done that is required to the Allen Hall including knocking through the doors, stripping back the plaster on the walls, etc, so that we don't have to move out again next year. Our aim would be to move back into the Allen Hall for our services on Sunday 29th October if not sooner.

I'm sure you're all aware that Dennison and John are still away on their American Adventure , so can you image the look on their faces when they return at the end of the month to find out we've all moved out while they were away? I think it's only fair to let them enjoy the remainder of their holiday in peace and not burden them with this news yet as there's not a lot they can do about it from where they are. So if any of you are friends with them on Facebook, I suggest that you don't mention our big move until after they touch down again on Northern Irish soil.

It only remains for me to say that I look forward to seeing you all back in school next week for if not, detention may be handed out.