

Robin Hood

It's almost that time of year again.
Oh no it's not! Oh yes it is!

Prepare to find yourself in the middle
of Sherwood Forest from the 16th –
19th January 2008 as Robin Hood
makes his way to Cregagh for
another fun-filled Pantomime.

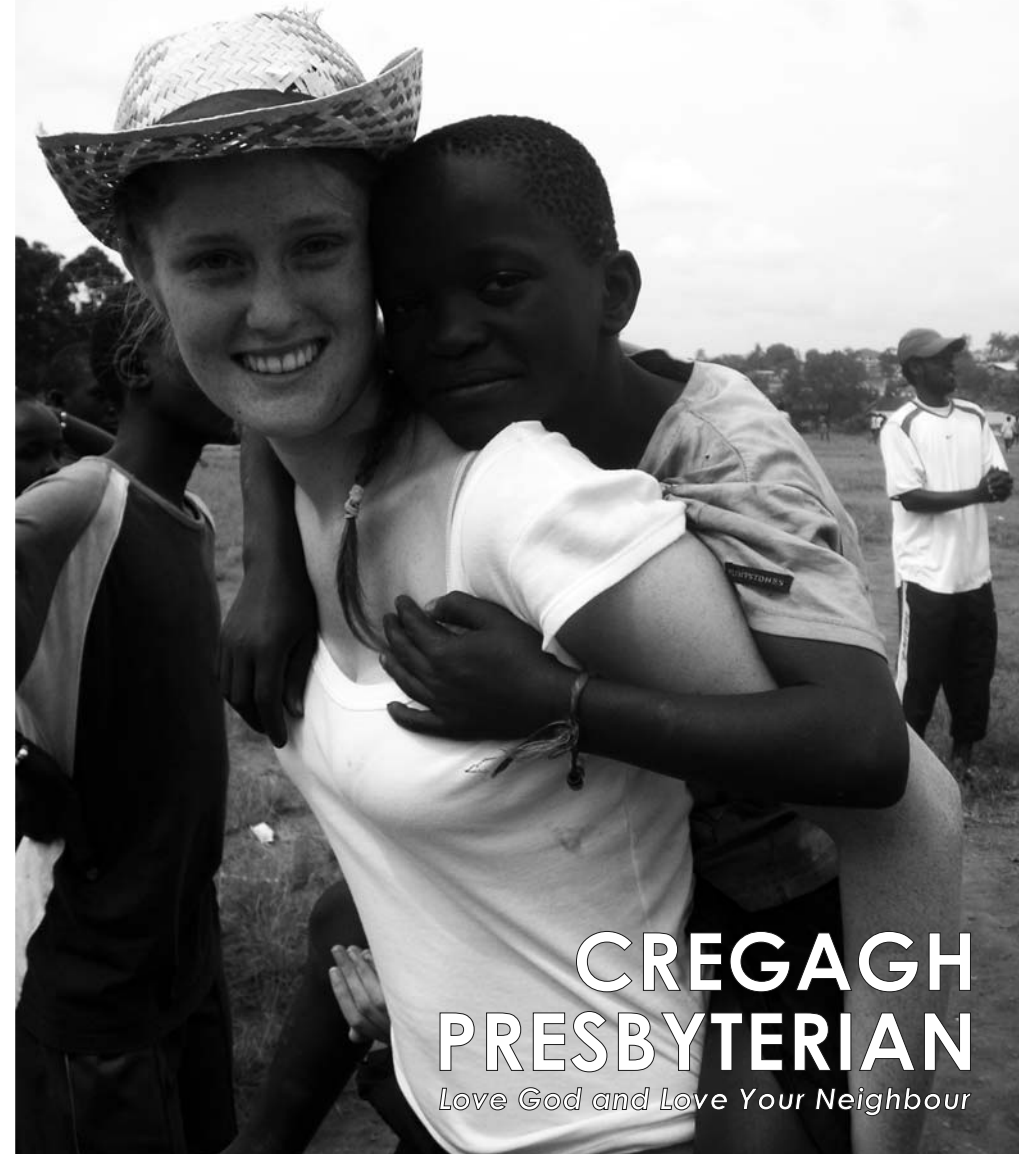
Tickets don't go on sale until
December, but be sure to book
early as they often sell out.



CHURCHNEWS

Issue 2 - September 2007

Cregagh Presbyterian Church Magazine



FUND RAISING COMMITTEE

The Committee would very much welcome any
ideas/suggestions you may wish to put forward
regarding our two main events of the year.

Antiques & Collectables Fair: Saturday 23rd February 2008

Garden Fete: Saturday 31st May 2008

Fresh Ideas (especially from non-committee members) are
encouraged and can be passed on through:

Peter Davey Tel: 9079 5595

Carol Ferguson Tel: 9070 2297

John Millen Tel: 9064 3980 or Email: john.millen@tiscali.co.uk

**CREGAGH
PRESBYTERIAN**
Love God and Love Your Neighbour

Dates for your Diary

Advent Carol Service

Sunday 2nd December at 11.00 am

Bible Sunday Services

Sunday 9th December at 11.00 am and 7.00 pm

Children's Christmas Tree Gift Service

Sunday 16th December at 11.00 am

Youth Fellowship Christmas Service

Sunday 16th December at 7.00 pm

Candlelight Service

Sunday 23rd December at 7.00 pm

Christmas Eve in Cregagh

Monday 24th December at 11.30 pm

Christmas Day Family Service

Tuesday 25th December at 9.00 am

Old Year Service

Sunday 30th December at 11.00 am

New Year Communion

Sunday 6th January 2008 at 11.00 am

Tea/coffee is served in the Allen hall after the Morning Service on the first Sunday of each month from September – December and January – May.

We would welcome your comments, photographs and stories for future editions.

Information for the December issue should be sent to any member of the Communications Group by Friday 16 November, or by e-mail to churchnews@cregaghpresbyterian.org.

This edition has been compiled and edited by the Communications Group – Stephen Michael, Trevor Hanna, Derrick Cartlidge, Leslie Ferguson, Sandra McCormick, Robert McNair and David Gillespie.

Dates for your Diary

All Age Service

Sunday 30th September at 11.00am

Connect Service, Allen Hall

Sunday 30th September at 7.00pm

PWA Harvest Fair, Allen Hall

Saturday 6th October at 2.00pm

Autumn Communion

Sunday 7th October at 11.00am

Harvest Thanksgiving and Gift Day Services

Sunday 14th October at 11.00am and 7.00pm

Congregational Dinner Dance, Stormont Hotel

Friday 19th October at 7.45pm

Ladies' Bowling Club Coffee Morning, Allen Hall

Friday 25th October from 10.00 am - 12 noon

Cradle Roll/All Age Service

Sunday 28th October at 11.00am

Connect Service, Allen Hall

Sunday 28th October at 7.00pm

Remembrance Day Service

Sunday 11th November at 10.45am

Mandate - The Odyssey Arena, Belfast

Saturday 17th November

Annual P.W.A. Service

Sunday 18th November at 11.00am

Welcome

Dear Friends,

As you open another packet of cereal or grab a loaf to make a sandwich, think for a minute about the farmers who work to make sure the good food we depend on gets to our tables.

And think too about the sun and the rain that turn tiny seeds into glorious golden grain. They tell us that prices will rise this year because of the wet summer, but still there has been a harvest as we can see in the countryside here in Northern Ireland.

Come and join us this harvest to thank God for all those who work the land for our benefit, and praise Him for his constant provision of those essential ingredients that go into our daily bread.

The Harvest Thanksgiving Services will be at 11.00am and 7.00pm on Sunday 14th October. The church choir will sing at both services and the Junior Choir will sing at the morning service.

You will receive a special Harvest Thanksgiving Gift Day envelope and we ask that you consider how you can express your gratitude to God for his provision by supporting the work of his church here in Cregagh.

Don't forget that, if you pay tax, you can increase the value of your giving by Gift Aiding it at no further cost to you. Speak to your Committee member or to Peter Davey on 9079 5595 if you have any questions about this.

'Give thanks to the Lord for He is good.'

Yours sincerely

Hastings McIntyre

www.cregaghpresbyterian.org

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Church Records

Marriages

24th May 2007

Paul Quinn, 11 Berkeley Hall Green, Lisburn to
Alison Mary Mackenzie, 6 Casaedona Rise

27th July 2007

James Andrew McCormick, 77 Tildarg Street to
Catherine Anne McIlmoyle, 77 Tildarg Street

Deaths

11th June 2007

Mrs Helen Gordon

41 Rochester Avenue

23rd July 2007

Mrs Elizabeth Hamilton

Clarawood House

24th July 2007

Mr John Young

9 Ardenlee Parade

13th August 2007

Miss Mildred Smyth

32 Drumkeen Court

Your Generosity Impresses!

It's not often we give ourselves a pat on the back but our payments to charities and worthy causes from May to August 2007 were impressive!

Christian Aid	£1,420
Ekwendeni Hospital, Malawi	£525
Moderator's Darfur Appeal	£1,600
Overseas travel by our young people	£818 collected at Ann and Michael Graham's BBQ
Pristina, Kosova	£1,127.50 collected by the Junior Choir at their special concert
PWA to Presbyterian Church in Ireland	£1,050
'Through the Roof'	£320 collected by PWA and Morning Watch
Nightlight	£100 collected by PWA
Sponsor of a school girl's education at Bandawa Girl's Secondary School, Malawi	£110

Keep up the good work!

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Cregagh Presbyterian... a Congregation for the Future!

The story continues. . .



Elsewhere in this magazine there are photographs of the church tower before and after the finials were removed. The removal of the finials was the minimum work that could be carried out to make the tower safe and yet not prejudice what will happen in the main scheme of works for the church buildings. At the moment, the internal safety aspects are catered for because access is not being allowed to the tower or choral gallery. However, as indicated by our architects, R Robinson and Sons, the finials (one in particular) gave cause for most concern from a health and safety point of view.

With regard to the future of the church buildings, an outline specification was provided to our architects on 1st April. This specification was based on what facilities you, the Congregation, said you would like to see in any rebuilt or refurbished church. Since then progress has been slower than we would have liked. Although we received drawings in early July these have needed amendment and at the time of writing a small group plan to meet with Robinsons to discuss progress, receive revised plans and costings, and determine any further information that we need to provide.

We want to keep to a timetable for the presentation of proposals to Committee/Session and the Congregation. At this stage, assuming the architects keep to their schedule, we are hopeful that a decision can be made at the Annual General Meeting which will be held in February 2008.

Uncle Hugo Loves our Troy!

The Rev. Troy Morgan meets Hugo Duncan while watching the 'Twelfth'.



While watching the 'Twelfth' Procession in Bedford Street, our Assistant Minister, Rev. Troy Morgan, was introduced by the Session Clerk, Dennison Mahood, to BBC's Hugo Duncan who was also watching the Orange March.

Nothing would do but the two of them had to be photographed. They did, they did, they did!!

In fact on the same day Troy got a mention on BBC Radio Ulster's live coverage of the procession by commentator, Dr. Joe McKee - reference was made to Troy's fine singing voice in Cregagh Church and of the pride he has for his home state of Wisconsin!

Finials Removed

Necessary work is carried out on the Church tower as the Finials are removed as a safety precaution



When the church tower was surveyed earlier in the year it was found that one of the finials was leaning outwards slightly and it was recommended that it, and the others, should be removed for safety reasons. This was done safely in early June. The photographs show the whole process of erecting scaffolding, removal of the finials and the final result.

Not to everyone's taste, but necessary.



Claire Taylor - Drumbo Abaana Team to Uganda

Claire returned to Uganda this summer for one month to help build two homes for Street Children and to work in an Internal Displacement Camp in Northern Uganda



Have you ever held a dying baby in your arms? Have you ever seen a mother in tears because she cannot look after her children? Have you ever seen a person so deformed that you cannot bear to look into their eyes? Have you ever met children who don't know how to play? That are strangers to affection? Have you ever watched as people beg for the very things that we throw out? Have you ever been moved by the fact that 19,000 children die each day in Africa? These are just a few of the things I have been confronted with this summer...

Given the opportunity to return to Uganda, the country I love so dearly, for a second time was a privilege to be jumped at. I have a love for the children and the people

there that God has placed on my heart and which I cannot deny. So on the 19th July, 15 people of all ages spent 24 hours travelling to Uganda.

The first two weeks were to be spent 'roughing it' at Christ the King Primary school. No electricity, no running water, no beds or any of the luxuries we take for granted at home, we spent the time getting back to basics, loving the outdoors and embracing the dirt! Every day we would travel at 8am to the building site at Kiwumu to get covered in cement and build two homes for street children. These New Life homes will bring a new start for some of Kampala's most neglected and forgotten street children. Each house will become the home for 18 young boys with no home and no hope, but with sponsorship, a mother figure, love and a primary school education Abaana aims to give these children hope for the future.



The building work went amazingly well, the scheduled two homes being built in just over two days. But thanks to the fundraising of folks in Northern Ireland enough money had been raised to build another two homes and keep us busy for a few more days! So, after five days, with the power of God and some hard work, enthusiasm and a lot of sweat, four homes were built, but beyond that 72 young boys will be given new lives; for them life will be about living not just survival.

During the two building weeks, the team also ran a school's programme at FOLA primary school for half the day. The theme was Joseph and we worked with the Nursery, P1 and P2 classes (150 children) for the first week and the rest of the school the following week (400 children). It was incredible to hear so many excited voices singing choruses, learning memory verses, making craft and playing games. The warmth and trust which the children showed to us was so different from anything we had experienced before.

Sadly some of our team left after two weeks of hard work but we were joined by some new team members for the second leg of our Ugandan adventure. The third week we travelled to Northern Ugandan to Gulu district. For twenty years the vast region of Northern Uganda has been devastated by a war which seeks its fuel in the form of

Feature

Walking for War on Want

Harry Stewart, Bobby Irvine, Sheena Stewart and David Gillespie rest their weary legs at the Island Centre in Lisburn after completing the walk



The intrepid walking group met again on Saturday 9th September to complete the 10 miles from Belfast to Lisburn along the Lagan towpath in aid of War on Want. Money raised will go towards funds for the Mehayo Centre in Tanzania for children with special needs. There are few facilities in Tanzania that provide dedicated support for these children, leaving them amongst the most vulnerable within their communities.

The Mehayo Centre looks after 50 children, providing regular meals, health care, specialised education and occupational skills training such as making craft goods and farming. Funds raised by the sponsored walk will make an enormous difference to the lives of children needing support.

A great time was had by all in excellent weather and wonderful countryside...and all so close to the city!

Rainbow Guides

Claire Taylor (Rainbow Leader) invites all girls aged between 4 and 7 to come and join in the fun on Thursday nights



Rainbow guides are going from strength to strength. Last year Emma Platt and I were joined by six great girls every Thursday night; we had lots of fun and did lots of badge work. The photograph above is of a few of us playing outside, which we all enjoyed in the summer months.

This year we have started back with 11 girls and a new young, leader Lauren Gillespie. We are all looking forward to another great year together of learning and challenges. If there are any girls aged between 4 and 7, they are more than welcome to join us!

abducted children who are forced to join the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), becoming either child soldiers or sex slaves. Millions have been displaced, hundreds of thousands maimed and cut, while countless masses have lost their lives.

In the mornings we worked in Awer IDC (Internal Displacement Camp). Here 22,000 men, women and children sought refuge together in relative safety from the LRA. There are over 40 of these camps surrounding Gulu town. Conditions were claustrophobic and disease high on the agenda. We set out to play and share the love of Jesus with the hundreds of children, naked and dirty, sick and hurt, but these children didn't know how to play; they didn't understand love. I still think about these children and cry.

In the afternoons we spent time with a group of formerly abducted young women in Unyama IDC. Taken as children, the LRA used them to fight, kill, carry and become soldiers' 'wives'. These girls meet together with their children to support each other in a society that has rejected them due to the horrific pasts which have been forced upon them. Their children are disregarded as they are the children of rebels, the product of rape. I was broken once again by a situation that my mind could not possibly begin to grasp. 'Mercy Me' have a song entitled 'I can only imagine', which depicts what we might see when we reach heaven. It struck me that these girls have surely developed a fathomable perception, and not only an imagination, of what it might be like in hell. But amidst the sorrow they have found hope in God; these women of faith made me feel not worthy to call myself a Christian. It was a privilege to have fellowship with them, for them to share their stories with us as we tried to hide our tears.

Our final week was spent working with the street children that will eventually live in the homes that we built. For the past year Abaana has worked in the centre of Kampala with 300 young boys who live on the street and have unfathomable and horrific pasts of abuse and neglect. We played with them, bought them food and clothing, gave them medical care and shared our love of Jesus with them. Once again we were overwhelmed by the love and affection they showed to us. Many of them were Christians, attending church and praying together; God was their hope and strength. These children had a faith so pure and inspiring to each of us.

My month away was challenging, painful, inspiring, joyful, spirit-led, God-filled but also exhausting-physically, emotionally and spiritually. I have seen things that I still cannot comprehend, my heart breaks daily and my dreams are haunted by scenes of extreme poverty and oppression. But with God there is always hope. My God is bigger than all the sadness and pain. He is working in Uganda; He is working in the hearts of those who are in most need of Him and the support, power and strength that He can give. When the women of Gulu cry, He is there wiping away their tears; when the street children lay their heads down in the alleys of Kampala, God is their warmth and security; when the children cry with hunger, He is their food and above all God is their hope for a future and future glory in heaven with Him.

God is using Abaana to impact Uganda bit by bit, person by person; we were just doing small things with great love. Our hope comes that God can take these small things and make them great.

Nicola Armstrong - the Second World Jiingijamborii in Sweden

Nicola Armstrong gives us an insight into the Second World Jiingijamborii for Scouts and Guides in Sweden



It started at 5am on Saturday the 14th of July. 'Right girls the bus is here!' We were all so excited. It was the second World Jiingijamborii in Sweden and we were about to leave for it - thirteen girls and four leaders. We travelled to Dublin Airport by bus and caught our plane to Copenhagen Airport. We travelled on to our campsite by bus. Nineteen thousand Scouts and Guides from all over the world were to descend on Rinkaby Fields in Kristianstad in Sweden. All these people were split into groups of forty people made up with one Swedish host group and another group. In this group you were responsible for cooking together, making friends, attending activities together and having lots of fun, which we did.

We didn't arrive at the camp site until around four o'clock that afternoon, and our Swedish host group had already set loads of things up. They hadn't finished the tents or the tables so we had to help. The Swedish tents are so different to ours, and the table, which we made ourselves, was made from wooden logs. By half 10 we were all really tired, and bed was a great option.

Over 150 children came along each day to hear the stories of Jesus and Peter, the great 'rocks' of the Bible.

They had bucket loads of fun playing in sand pits, paddling pools and plenty of watery team games, as well as a bit of lifeguard training thrown in.

They enjoyed making crafts such as stained glass windows, seagulls, 'Under the Sea' mobiles, and not to forget the very popular lighthouses.

The week was rounded off with a lively and colourful Family Service on the Sunday, followed by a picnic in the Church grounds, with over 200 staying to enjoy the summer atmosphere (all but the weather that is!).

Thanks to all the hard work that went into the week by the leaders and to the children as well, whose good behaviour helped make it all a great success.

If you can't wait until next year's, then put these dates in your diary and make sure you don't book your holidays the same week!

11th – 17th August 2008 See you there!



Seaside Rock

This year's Holiday Bible Club was called 'Seaside Rock' and Cregagh had it's very own seaside for a fun-packed week of games, songs, crafts and drama



Imagine the scene!

'Golden sand between your toes, the gentle lapping of water and the soft flapping of seagull wings above your head, the sweet smell of ice cream in the air while the joyful sound of children's laughter is heard as they build sandcastles or fish in rock pools'.

Sounds idyllic, doesn't it?

Well, this is what Cregagh was transformed into for one week in August as we ran the 'Seaside Rock' Holiday Bible Club.

The next day (Sunday) we were up at half 7 so we could finish our table, and make a shower. We got the table done, but our shower wasn't deep enough so it didn't get finished before the Opening Ceremony. Everyone met together for this. We all really enjoyed the opening ceremony and understood every word, NOT. It was completely in Swedish.

On the Monday we were up at 6am. We made porridge for breakfast which was yummy. During the night we had the first of three thunder storms; it was madness. It lasted for three and a half hours, and some people slept through it. I didn't - I found it scary. I have never seen lightning or heard thunder quite like it.

Today was the first day of the themes. We did Crossroads of Culture and it was great. We had to learn two different Swedish folk dances and perform them. It was brilliant. We then learnt about a Swedish wedding ceremony and about scouts in a different country.



Ulster Guides were on dinner duty tonight for our group and it took from 4 o'clock until half 6 to make it, but it was great fun to make and everyone enjoyed it.

Tomorrow we are going on an over night hike. After dinner we had to prepare for it so unfortunately we couldn't go on any of the evening activities. This included every night a climbing wall, ice wall, disco, bands playing, trampoline, swimming pool and a Jacuzzi. These were available to everyone during the evening. We will be leaving camp at half one and not coming back until half five on Wednesday.

At half seven this morning (Tuesday) we were told to stay in our tents as thunder storm two was coming. It wasn't as bad as the first one, but meant we had to stay in bed for an extra hour and miss our activity.

We left for our over night hike which turned out to be a disaster, but we survived. First we got on the wrong buses. Then we got sent to the younger group only to find we had no food. The camp leaders got us food, but there was only enough food for ten people yet we had to feed 22. We didn't get our dinner until half 10 that night. We

had a bonfire with the other groups. It was one of the good bits. We all sang songs and eventually went to bed. It was a long cold night in the windbreaker that was meant for four people, while we had eight in it, no sleeping bags or anything made it worse. Luckily there was no rain or thunderstorms that night. Sandra, our group leader, had been given the wrong information but we got through.

For breakfast we each had one slice of bread with a bit of jam, and for lunch it was the same only we got a bit of green pepper, although our new Irish friends gave us marshmallows to keep us going. We had to walk for three hours and canoe a bit. The canoeing was brilliant. Anna and I had no problem doing it, whilst Una and Jenny got stuck behind some rocks. It was funny to watch. They eventually got to the shore with a good bit of struggling. We got back to where the bus was meant to pick us up early so we got to go to the beach; unfortunately we didn't have our swim wear with us. Thankfully the bus came early which meant we could all have a shower and freshen up before our dinner and 'The Compass.' Again, it was all in Swedish.

It was Nikki Charles birthday. She was another Ulster Guide. Our Swedish Host Group made a birthday cake for her. It tasted great. After the party for Nikki we went to the 'free hugs' bench. This was a brilliant place to go as you met new people and sat and talked to them.

We did Global Development Village today (Thursday) and did this game about disabled sports. This was to enable us to see how people with disabilities play sports. We had to cook dinner again tonight. Una and I stood and whipped cream and then fried 80 eggs between us as it was potato and ham hash with two fried eggs each and muffins with cream for dessert. We went to the free hugs bench again. It was quite a night; we had Swedish Scouts and Scottish scouts asking for hugs.

We did Respect today (Friday). This was to discover our individuality and discover how to respect people we don't know. It was our campfire tonight, and the Scottish guys came. I had to get up on my own and do some Irish dancing. It was an amazing night.

Our last full day at camp was Saturday. We had to start and take everything apart. We decided to paint on each others arms, then go trampolining. It was awesome. We had dinner (Reindeer, gross) and then went down to the main stage and had a big birthday party to celebrate 100 years of scouting. We had a big cake and a disco. It was really good; we didn't leave until half two, and it was just heating up then. We went to sleep, but for three hours. We had to be up at five, but everyone slept in until six. Whoops!

It was the final day and we had a lot of work to do. We got everything down by half eight and Jenny, Sarah and I went and waited with the Scottish guys for their bus, which was an hour late. It was sad having to say goodbye. We left camp at noon and arrived back at Lorne at 10.30 pm very tired. I really enjoyed myself, made lots of new friends from across the world and learnt things about myself.

I plan to return again in 2011 to the 3rd Swedish World Jijingjamborii as a leader so I can let other girls experience what I did. I would like to thank everyone in the church for their generous support towards me and my trip and also like to thank Gillian Simons for everything she did to help me towards the trip.

we headed for the alley ways! We spent a whole day cleaning the alley ways picking up litter and glass and brushing up. While we were doing this, two people from our group went on a bus tour of Belfast with the elderly from the Holy Lands. This was a chance for the StreetReachers to talk to people from the area and also learn about the history of Belfast! At the evening Barbeque that night we saw a bigger turn out of people than the night before which was very encouraging.

The penultimate day of StreetReach was the street party in which we invited everyone in the community, especially the children, to City Church. We spent most of the morning setting up for the party, organising the games, bouncy castle and face painting. We had team time in which we prayed asking God to give us the words to be able to tell everyone about him as this was a really good opportunity for us to share a little more about our faith and we all thought this was really important. Before the street party our group went to visit with Betty and Eddie again and this time we sang to her. She was very surprised and thankful to us all. The sun came out just in time as people were arriving for the street party. There were a lot of children there and they all had lots of fun on the bouncy castle, playing games and getting their faces painted. It was a very good day overall and we all got the chance to talk to lots of people which we believe was the most important thing.

On Saturday morning we delivered flower pots to the people in the community. However we had one left and we were not sure who to give it to when we met a lady walking her dog in the street; we thought it would be nice to give her the flower pot. However when we got to her house, we noticed she had a beautiful garden but beside this was an alley with very over-grown grass, covered in weeds and with lots of rubbish and glass dumped there. All the StreetReachers were supposed to head into the city centre in the afternoon but our team felt bad about leaving the small alley way in such a mess so we volunteered to stay behind and tidy it up. It took the six of us about over 2hrs until we had to head into town to walk from the City Hall to the King's Hall. It was difficult but by working as a team we got the alley way finished and the lady we helped was so pleased.

On Saturday afternoon, all the StreetReachers from all the different areas met in the centre of Belfast. Although we arrived a little later than most, people did a variety of things during this time, from walking around town talking to people, offering free hugs, face painting and giving out juice and sweets to skateboarders. Late in the afternoon we all congregated in the grounds of the Belfast City Hall. After a group prayer, over 2,000 StreetReachers set off on a walk from the city centre to the King's Hall. We had banners, drums and fog horns! The aim of StreetReach was to reach out to the people in different communities and 2000 people all wearing the same T-shirts and being there for the same reason certainly had a great impact on the city and caught people's attention.

The main body is not organising StreetReach again next year but is leaving it up to us in our Churches to do things in our own areas now that we have gained some experience. We all hope that we will be able to be involved in something similar in the Cregagh area next year. The challenge we were given before we began was 'Will you stand by, or will you stand up?' We chose to stand up for a week this July and hope to continue doing so the whole year through!

StreetReach

The organisers of StreetReach describe it as the following –

StreetReach goes into the toughest parts of the city to work alongside local community groups and Churches. StreetReach seeks to make people who are in various ways are “on the edge” of our communities feel valued and included. We believe that actions speak louder than words.

So, after the five days of Summer Madness, our group from Cregagh all stayed on to get involved in this StreetReach scheme. The teams were made up of ten people. For some it was the first time doing StreetReach so the eight of us stayed in one team joined by two guys from Bangor and a group leader. We were based in the City Church in the Holy Lands for the next four days. Some of us found it challenging as we had not been there before and knew very little about the area.



On the first day, we got into our groups and had team time when we got to know our team and pray for what we hoped would happen that day. Then we went out into the streets and handed out leaflets to tell people that StreetReach had come to their community and what it was about. We met a couple called Betty and Eddie; unfortunately Betty is ill with cancer so she asked us to pray for her. This was a big step for all of us as this was a big opportunity to show God's love. Every evening at the City Church we held a barbeque for everyone in the community. After the barbeque our team and the other teams there went out to pick up litter and to clean the streets and we didn't let the rain bring us down!

The next day we had team time to discuss what had happened the previous day and what would be happening that day. After lunch we got our equipment and this time

Feature

Lynsey Watson - PCI Youth Team to Ukraine

This summer Lynsey Watson travelled to the Ukraine and spent two weeks at a children's camp run by Scripture Union



This summer I travelled with 12 other team members, from various Presbyterian churches throughout Northern Ireland, to Ukraine. Here, we worked for two weeks at a children's camp in a small village called Vorzel, close by to the capital city of Kyiv. The camp was run by Scripture Union, called Open Bible. It has been running for many years, and is one of very few Christian camps that have been allowed to remain open by the Ukrainian government.

After a day meeting the Ukrainian leaders at the camp and getting to know our surroundings, we all went to meet the children at the train station not knowing what children or how many would be coming. It was pretty amazing to then watch about



100 kids step off the train and into our care for the next two weeks and try to introduce ourselves using as little English as possible! The children were from various backgrounds, some very wealthy and some not at all but this was not an issue for any of the children as they all shared, played and learned together equally.

All the children were aged from six to thirteen and the boys and girls were placed in age groups, with around 10-15 in each group with 4 leaders and I was working with the eldest girls, aged 11-13 which was challenging at times but a lot of fun!

The camp followed a structured daily routine which, for the children, started at 8am with morning exercises right through to 9pm (and a little later for the leaders!) A typical day at camp consisted of firstly everyone joining together to raise the Ukrainian flag, the Scripture Union flag and the Ulster flag for us PCI lot whilst attempting to sing their national anthem.

After breakfast, each group met for their Bible Study which followed the theme of 'big changes', looking at characters in the Bible who changed their lives for God and how we can do the same. During the camp each of the PCI team was given the opportunity to lead the Bible Study. Kelly and I took the morning session which talked about prayer and was translated by one of our girls, Nastya.

Bible study was followed by workshops in our groups which changed each day from crafts, football, learning English or simply brushing up all the leaves for the campfire. After the children had their well-deserved siesta, we all joined together for a camp game. Due to the lack of Ukrainian leaders, we were able to lead a lot of the games which all the kids (and leaders) greatly enjoyed.

Feature

Summer Madness & StreetReach

This year eight girls from the church enjoyed the fellowship of Summer Madness and the challenge of StreetReach



On 29th June 2007 Cherith Collins, Karen Collins, Susan Forsythe, Priscilla McCullough, Emma Platt, Louise Michael, Claire Taylor and Laura Watson headed to the Kings Hall for Summer Madness. Summer Madness is the largest Christian festival in Ireland with over 5,000 people coming together for a mixture of worship, teaching, bands, coffee and sports. Needless to say the coffee was a bit more popular with us than the sports!

We had the very luxurious accommodation of tents (which were kindly lent to us by the Guides) and top cuisine of Louise's cooking over a gas burner! There were worship sessions every morning and evening with some amazing praise time and inspirational speakers such as Bart Campolo and Tre Sheppard. We all really enjoyed our time at Summer Madness and we not only had time to get to know each other better but to learn more about our Christian journey too.

Friday night we played games. After this we were having a time of praise and we invited the teenagers to join us which they all did. After praise time we went back into the hall and talked with the teenagers and played games till around 11pm.

The last two days

Two members of the team would be leaving us to go to another team in LetterKenny. We all found it hard to say our goodbyes as we had been a team for a week. There were a few tears. We had a football match against the teenagers that had attended the events. We then went into Bangor Town Centre where it gave us a chance to chill out and go shopping. When we got back to the church after the day out we all sat and had a chat as this would be the last before we all headed home on the Sunday.

We took the service on the Sunday morning where it gave us a chance to tell the congregation how the events went and we also got the children involved singing the song they had learnt all week. 2 o'clock came and it was time for our goodbyes.

I had a fantastic week and made lots of new friends.

GOD worked in amazing ways.

Feature

Welcome to the Evergreens

The Evergreens have resumed after the summer break and invite you to join with them on the first Wednesday afternoon in the month

The Evergreens resumed on Wednesday 5th September and have a varied programme organised for this session, including Christmas craft, RSPB and trips to the Opera House and Tudor Cinema in Comber.

Over the summer we had two outings. The first was in May when we had lunch in Hilltown Presbyterian Church and then went on to Newcastle. The second, at the beginning of July, was a visit to The Greenmount Garden, followed by afternoon tea at Donegore Garden Centre.

Why not join with us - the first Wednesday afternoon in the month. Everyone is most welcome.

In the evening, time was spent together as the children listened to some of the leaders' stories of where they came from and how they came to Christ, and then had a short time of prayer. An evening show followed this which varied from campfires to talent shows and even an Irish night.

This was then followed by bedtime for the children at which time we put our groups to bed or used the time to chat with the kids and pray with them. As I was with the eldest girls, their English was more advanced than the younger children and so I was able to talk with them about Jesus and about my faith and their own walk with God.

During the day there was also plenty of free time, which was mostly spent playing with the children and generally building up relationships showing God's love for them through us, whilst having lots of fun in the slightly dangerous playground!

During the second week I was lucky enough to be given the opportunity, to visit the nearby orphanage with Mike and Gwen from my team to donate clothes and materials which we had brought with us.

Gregori, who runs the Open Bible camps in Ukraine, took us there and although we were there for only a brief period of time, we were allowed to play with some of the toddlers who were sitting outside, many of whom had downs syndrome but all craved attention and affection.

Although we were not allowed inside the buildings, leading us to wonder about the conditions in which they lived, we were able to watch and help Gregori deliver Christmas Child shoeboxes to the orphanage. These boxes were also handed out to each child at camp when they left which they all loved and took home with great care.

I had an amazing experience on this trip; God blessed us with a great team and awesome children. I ask you all to pray that God will continue to work in Ukraine, that the Open Bible camp will remain open and that those children will remember their time at camp and open their hearts to Jesus.

Susan Forsythe - Ballyholme PCI Team

Susan gives us an insight into her week in Ballyholme working with teenagers for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland



The team was made up of 21 young people; four of them were from the States. Everyone was friendly and lots of friendships were made that week that will last. God was amazing and answered prayer.

The week's events

When we arrived on the Saturday some of us got all the leaflets prepared to go out on to the streets and beach to distribute them to the teenagers and adults with young children telling them about the events that were going to be happening during the week, while the others got banners made and put up on the walls.

After lunch we all went out to deliver the leaflets. When we came back we got in our teams (I was in the teenage section) and we were given the plan and the events that

were taking part in our section. In my section, there were Chris, Sarah, Rebecca and Calvin. We went to the minister's house for dinner and this gave us the chance to do some team bonding and get to know the minister. That night we got to know all of the team by doing a game called 'speed friending'.

On the Sunday we all went to church and got to know some of the young children in the congregation that would be coming along. The people in the church were all friendly. After lunch we got into our sections and got the last of the planning done as Monday would be fast approaching. On the Sunday evening we went to the Church of Ireland as they share churches. In the service we all took part in taking communion.

Monday morning saw the start of God's work. In the children's group we had 80 children on the first morning which would be split into two groups, the 4 - 7 section and the 7 - 11 section. On this morning some of the 11 - 14 year olds came so they decided to run this section both morning and night. While these events were taking place my section went down to the beach and talked to some of the teenagers and told them about the events taking place and that they were more than welcome to come along. We also did some door to door work. We were only able to do this that day as the week ahead we were going to be put into the younger sections to help as there were lots of children. The number of children attending each morning grew and grew.

In the morning we had altogether time where the children would play games, learn songs, get to know the leaders, puppet time (Bert and Lucy), and a visit from the clown. Then they would split up into the groups and learn memory verses and a story done through a play. They then split up into discussion groups and talked to the leaders and the leaders asked questions about the story. They had a quiz relating to the day before's story and points were awarded using different methods each day.

The Teenage Section

On the Monday night we did not know how many teenagers we would have but we prayed that God would be with us and bring in the teenagers. God answered our prayers and we had 21 teenagers on the first night which grew in numbers each night. On the first night we split up into groups and went out on a photo scavenger hunt which they all really enjoyed and everyone got involved. When it came to 9.30 pm and the events were finished. The teenagers stayed back to talk with the leaders and take part in limbo and other games. They had a great night and said they would be back. God was amazing.

Tuesday night was a messy games night which every teenager took part in and did not complain. They showed great team spirit to their team members involved in each event.

Wednesday night was a night of champions which involved being split into groups and playing football, table tennis, badminton etc.

On Thursday we were split up into groups and took part in the Kryptic Maze where one teenager would win an I-pod shuffle. Everyone took part and did not complain about not being in the winning team to go into the dome and collect the silver tickets to win the I-pod.