

DROMORE METHODIST CHURCH



CONGREGATIONAL REPORT 2019

FOREWORD

While this report has been published in March 2020, it refers to financial accounts for the 2018 calendar year, and the life of our congregation during the 2018-19 academic year. Although the material is now somewhat dated, we felt it was important to publish it nonetheless, as it reflects your generosity and God's goodness in many ways.

Dromore Methodist Church Council, March 2020.

SOCIETY STEWARD'S REPORT (June 2019)

Looking back to this time last year it's hard to believe that we had just begun to get to know the Rev. Ross, Kathryn and the family. We had completed a year without a resident Minister in our Society and were saying farewell to the Rev. Tom Deacon and Edna, Rev. Tom Clarke and Daphne Hanna, all who guided and supported us in so many ways. We were very much looking forward to welcoming the Harte family and having the stability of a leader, who due to a part time appointment would be able to focus on us, the Dromore Society.

However, we had to wait longer than expected for Ross to take up his duties due to Timothy's illness and subsequent treatment over the summer months. As a Church family we walked that journey with the family supporting them with prayer and in many practical ways. There were a variety of speakers over the summer, but as we headed into the busy time in September and the restarting of all church activities, we had to be patient. As Timothy slowly and thankfully journeyed back to health we were able to welcome Ross into the pulpit in October and into full ministerial duties the following month on Remembrance Day. Now nearly a year later we have been getting to know each other and have settled into a worship routine.

As a church community over the last ten years we had a huge focus on fund raising in order to pay back the money borrowed to build our new hall and with a final big push this year we hope to be able to clear most of our debt. The fund-raising events over the years have brought the church

together socially as we have sung together, had quizzes, beetle drives and concerts, enjoyed sweet treats and suppers, gone cycling, been for walks, completed fun runs and had numerous Christmas and Spring fairs. We have been **inward looking** as we have shared this financial burden together.

In January we joined together after Sunday Worship for 'Food for Thought'. Over a soup lunch we discussed the Commitments of the Methodist Church in Ireland. It was clear from the responses that as a church family we want to grow in our faith, through prayer and Bible Study. Also, to connect with our young people and Youth organisations and to encourage friendship and engage in our community. This is our time to become more **outward looking**. The members of the church council have met on two occasions to prayerfully consider the next steps forward. With God's guidance we want to move forward with the Commitments to include our own personal growth and that of our young people and to engage with our community.

God is already at work and we can see the involvement of our young people not only in the youth organisations, but leading praise at morning worship through the new songs and music which Ross has introduced. This of course is open to all age groups, so if you have a musical/singing talent you are most welcome to join in.

We are also supporting our congregation through the prayer Whatsapp group, especially those who are experiencing poor health and for our young people sitting exams and I know this support is really appreciated.

As we move forward with the Rev. Ross's leadership, let us remember what God says in his word from Lamentations 3 v 25-26:

“The Lord is good to those who seek him; it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.”

Linda Dougan, Society Steward

WHO WE ARE:

PURPOSE

To glorify God and enjoy Him for ever

MISSION STATEMENT

Our heads knowing God
Our hands serving God
Our hearts loving God

OUR VISION

To be a growing, vibrant and relevant fellowship of Christ

CHURCH FAMILY LIFE (June 2019)

SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Sunday School has an important role to play in the building of God's Church and it is important to the teachers to provide an environment where the next generation is helped to grow and journey throughout life knowing God.

The Sunday School currently has 20 enrolled this year amongst the 3 classes taught by Betty, Allison and Fiona. The Sunday School was saddened to lose their valuable and much-loved teacher, Gloria, in December and our thoughts and prayers continue to be with her family.

Every Sunday before breaking into their classes the members join and praise God with the rest of the congregation.

The Sunday School would like to thank the Church family for their continuing support and prayers throughout the year. They ended the first half of the year with their special service on the 23rd June based on the theme of 'God's Word' – a service enjoyed by everyone.

YOUTH CLUB

The junior and senior youth clubs ran from September last year to April this year with 99 enrolled members.

The youth club provides a programme of spiritual, social, recreational and arts and crafts activities, in a supportive environment, for the members which is enjoyed by all!

It is brilliant and encouraging that there are several young people from within our Church family who are growing and developing as helpers and leaders within the clubs.

The youth club team would like to thank the Church family for its ongoing prayers and support throughout the year.

LITTLE ACORNS

The Little Acorns Parent and Toddler Group is growing from strength to strength! Led by Lee Clarke, from October 2018, the group feels blessed to now have 20 mothers and 28 children registered.

It operates every Wednesday morning from 9 to 11 am, where children, parents and carers come together for play, games, art, chat and snacks.

Finishing for the summer in June the children that are moving onto pre-school are given Bible-based books and activities to help grow and nurture their relationship with God and the team and Lee are already planning for September's enrolment!

WESLEYAN CRAFT CLUB

The Wesleyan Craft Club has 10-12 members from our own congregation but also includes members from our sister church, Priesthill, and other folks from our local community.

They normally meet twice a month for craft, tea and chat. Their efforts help support the annual Christmas and Spring fairs, as well as ongoing church activities throughout the year.

New members are always welcome!

FINANCIAL REPORT (2018)

SOCIETY STEWARD'S ACCOUNT

Opening Balance **-£3066.39**

- FWO £25078.00 (down 1%)
- Harvest £2166.00 (down 10%)
- Gift Aid £7181.00 (up 21%)
- Total Income £47624.00 (up 3%)
- Total Expenditure £48676.00 (up 14%)

Closing Balance **-£4118.24**

The FWO is slightly down, but is more than we expected to receive, however, the harvest offering had a bigger drop of 10%. The increase in Gift Aid receipts is mainly due to an increase in the amount we could claim under the small donations scheme. This is a scheme whereby we can claim for small donations made by people not signed up to Gift Aid. HMRC raised the total amount from £5000 to £8000. As a result, our total income increased by 3% on the previous year.

Expenditure increased by 14%, there was a quite a big rise in oil prices during the year with a knock-on effect on electricity tariffs. We also had some unexpected repairs and maintenance issues. The halls and link corridor were repainted, and we purchased two portable disabled ramps so all areas could be accessed.

The audio-visual system was updated and new screens provided. A budget of £4000 had been set aside, however, due to generous donations only £2700 of this was used.

The deficit increased slightly on this account.

BUILDING & PROPERTY FUND

Opening Balance @ 01/01/2018 £19649.95

- Direct giving £7099.00 (down 10%)
- Fund Raising £4743.00 (up 11%)
- Gift Aid £1315.00 (down 4%)
- Total Income £17737.00 (up 5%)
- Capital repayment to Danske Bank £5000.00

Closing Balance @ 31/12/2018 £17450.93

As you can see the direct giving, that is your envelopes and standing orders is 10% down on the previous year, a bit disappointing. However, fund raising is up 11% which goes some way to compensate for that. Gift Aid is also down but this correspondence to the drop in direct giving.

Thanks to generous donations throughout the year our overall income was up 5%.

We also made a part repayment of £5000 to the Danske Bank, which has given us an annual saving of £1400.

We still have a healthy balance in this account.

LOANS

Danske Bank Loan @ 31/12/2017	£17997.98
Danske Bank Loan @ 31/12/2018	£8427.15
Property Board Loan @ 31/12/2017	£42995.99
<u>Property Board Loan @ 31/12/2018</u>	<u>£30208.43</u>
Total Loan Outstanding @ 31/12/2017	£60993.97
Total Loan Outstanding @ 31/12/2018	£38635.58

- The balances as at the end of last year are in red.
- The part repayment of £5000 to the Danske Bank loan substantially reduced it from just under £18000 to just under £8500
- The Property Board loan has been reduced by just over £12500

LOOKING AHEAD

The main priority for this year is an attempt to clear the loans.

The balance in the Building & Property Fund at the start of the year was £17450.93.

The projected outstanding balance of the Property Board loan at the end of this year is £17032.90.

If we maintain or increase the balance in this account, we would be able to clear this loan 15 months early.

The yearly loan repayments are £13936.00, so we need to raise at least this amount in the coming year to maintain the balance. This equates to approximately £1200.00 per month. So far this year we only achieved this in 2 of the past 5 months, which is a bit concerning.

The projected outstanding balance on the Danske Bank loan is £5652.67

So how do we achieve this?

1. Maintain or increase our direct giving.
2. Support the fund-raising events coming up.
3. A successful Christmas Tree Festival

FREEWILL OFFERINGS (2018)

No	FWO	Harvest	Property/ Building	Gift Day
1	305.00		150.00	
2	275.00			
3	55.00	50.00	950.00	100.00
4	406.00	55.00	125.00	55.00
5	1,030.00		240.00	
6	180.00	20.00		
7	475.00	100.00	65.00	
8	290.00	10.00	15.00	
9	140.00		20.00	
10	910.00	25.00	245.00	100.00
11	170.00	10.00		
12	520.00	10.00	20.00	
13	145.00			
14	210.00			
15				
16	205.00			
17	155.00			
18	369.00	50.00	120.00	30.00
19	225.00	10.00		
20				
21	500.00	30.00	240.00	
22	278.00	5.00	30.00	
23				
24	520.00	50.00	200.00	
25	352.00	10.00		
26	307.00	15.00		
27	337.00	20.00		
28	430.00	30.00	1,310.00	20.00
29			240.00	
30	260.00	20.00	44.00	20.00

No	FWO	Harvest	Property/ Building	Gift Day
31	240.00		50.00	20.00
32	490.00	50.00	190.00	20.00
33	420.00	200.00		10.00
34	1,040.00	40.00		
35	266.00	20.00	175.00	
36	180.00	40.00	240.00	
37	2,035.00		480.00	100.00
38	530.00	100.00	530.00	60.00
39	1,520.00	50.00	300.00	50.00
40	210.00	5.00		
41	520.00	50.00	300.00	50.00
42	650.00		120.00	
43				
44				
45	520.00	10.00	130.00	
46	1,000.00	250.00	180.00	
47	290.00	20.00		
48	300.00	20.00	140.00	
49				
50	460.00	10.00	100.00	
51	3,160.00	400.00	150.00	
52	133.50	10.00		
53	110.00	20.00		500.00
54	165.00		240.00	
55	625.00	20.00	240.00	
56	300.00	50.00	160.00	
57	235.00			
58	70.00			
59	1,560.00	40.00	360.00	100.00
60	1,500.00			

UPCOMING FUND-RAISING EVENTS

1. Autumn Walk: 14th September 11.00am, Hillsborough Forest.
2. PSNI ladies' choir: 30th November 2019
3. Christmas tree festival: 13th-15th December 2019

All these events go a long way to help and a big thank you to all who organize and help them be a success.

Of course, they are fund raising events but also great social events, enjoyed by all who attend. If you haven't been to one, please come along and invite family and friends.

One event, the Christmas Tree Festival, will require a lot of organizing and help so please have a look at the rotas and sign up to where you can help.

Finally, just a big thank you for all your contributions over the last year which has helped so much to keep us in a relatively healthy situation.

"Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" 2 Corinthians 9:7

Desmond Graham, Society Treasurer

GOALS AND VISION (June 2019)

Kathryn and I would like to thank you all so much for your support this past year, and your inclusion of us into the church family. Linda and Des have already reviewed the year that's past, and celebrated some of our milestones together. So I just want to highlight a few areas that Kathryn and I, and the leaders of the church, are keen to develop.

First, we want to clear the remaining debt on the hall, recognising the huge effort that has gone into fundraising already. This is the year of the 'big push'!

Secondly, the Commitments conversation (Food for Thought in January) has continued with the Church Council meeting extra times for breakfast, prayer and discussion. The themes that are standing out for us are an emphasis on developing our prayer life, both as individuals and together, and a commitment to children and young people that makes hard choices when necessary. Putting those themes into action:

- we've already started a prayer group that is alerted to prayer needs through whatsapp and text messages, and we're hoping to run a 24-7 prayer weekend at the end of September. Kathryn and I have thought about doing regular prayer walks.
- we want to encourage our youth and children's volunteers as much as possible, and several of you have already been

helping out at Little Acorns recently. In a sense, all adults are youth and children's workers, as you can all have a positive influence in friendship and wisdom

- and we already love having children in worship on a Sunday, including having you here for communion; we're going to keep trying to make the first half of our Sunday morning services more engaging for children and young people, and I'd really value your help in making that happen!
- as time goes on we'd like to grow better connections with the families connected to Little Acorns and the Youth Club and keep on supporting our volunteers involved in Y&C work
- if you'd like to know more about the Methodist Church - our history, our present and our future - and what it means to be a member of the church, please let me know: we can either just have a chat, or we can gather a few people together for a class

The Methodist Church in Ireland is on a continuing journey of exploring missional discipleship as a calling for all of us, so you'll keep hearing phrases from me like, "Warm hearts, tough hands and wet feet", which could also be described as "loving God, loving one another and loving our neighbour", or "worship, discipleship and mission". These are values that we'll try to incorporate into everything we do:

- so for instance, when we run the Christmas Tree Festival we'll be hoping that it will raise lots of money - but more than that, we want it to involve all of us and more than us in making the joy of Christmas known to lots of people in Dromore and beyond. The festival will include times of worship as well as a prayer space, and the descriptions of the trees themselves will point people towards Jesus. The joy of Christmas is that God is with us in our mess, and the proof is Jesus, a person and a message that we want to share!
- we're looking at exploring monthly rhythms of worship, discipleship and mission - gathering in spread-out ways that don't over-burden us, but help us to naturally spend time together in ways that are encouraging, that help us to grow deeper in our relationship with God and with one another, and that give us the courage to embrace new people and engage in mission. For example, it was good to be part of the Bible Study we followed before Easter for five sessions, and you might like to be part of our informal book club over the summer as we read 'how to pray'. Lots of us play musical instruments or love music and singing, so we might try having monthly informal worship nights. And we'd like to provide more opportunities to build deeper relationships within the church, like the craft group, going for walks, starting a facebook group so we can stay in touch through the week, and eating together whenever we can.

The leaders of the church are always open to hearing your wisdom on the life and direction of our family as we engage in God's mission together. May you know God's peace, hope, love and joy in the year that lies ahead.

Rev. Ross Harte, Minister

Contact details:

2 Maypole Hill
DROMORE
BT25 1BQ

Phone: 028 92693929

Email: ross.harte@irishmethodist.org

Web: www.dromoremethodist.org



The Methodist Church
In Ireland