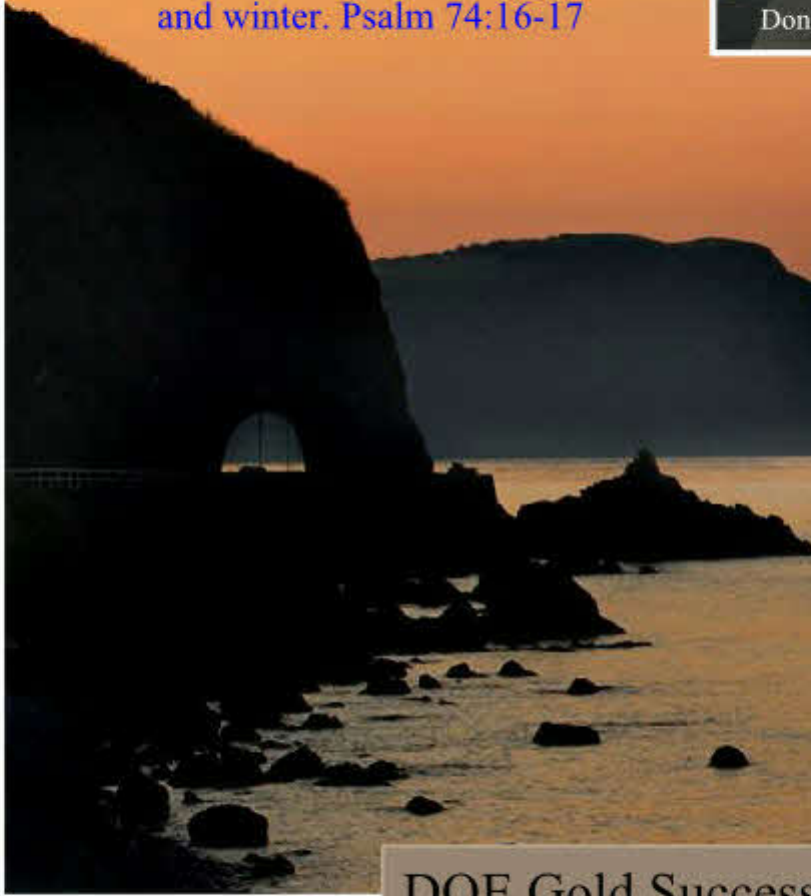


Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Echo

Winter 2015/2016 Edition

Yours is the day, Yours also is the night; You have prepared the light and the sun. You have established all the boundaries of the earth; You have made summer and winter. Psalm 74:16-17



Donation To Local Charity



Church Organist Nance retires



Sandy Hunter is 50 ...

DOE Gold Success



John 1:14 Amplified Bible (AMP)

The Word Made Flesh

And the Word (Christ) became flesh, and lived among us; and we [actually] saw His glory, glory as belongs to the [One and] only begotten Son of the Father, [the Son who is truly unique, the only One of His kind, who is] full of grace and truth (absolutely free of deception).



Foreword



Welcome to the latest edition of the Crosshill Echo. It is at this time of the year when we find the life of the congregation is picking up pace with organisations commencing their activities. I would like to take this opportunity to offer a word of thanks to all who are involved in the life of the church. As a congregation it is difficult to meet the spiritual needs of such a wide and diverse group of people.

While we endeavour to meet the immediate needs of the congregation we must always think about our future. As we seek the expansion of our halls complex we need to make sure we are focused on why we intend to extend our facilities. The purpose of everything that the church does is to bring glory to God and an extension of our facilities will enable us to do this better.

This autumn we have been working our way through Acts 2:42-47 in our morning sermons. The title for the sermon series is "What is God's picture for the church?" This question is one we need to apply to ourselves. What is God's picture for each of us as Christians? We know that the starting point is faith in Jesus as our saviour and after that happens the picture God has for us is one of total devotion. Total devotion is observed in personal prayer, daily bible study, and church attendance. Yet as we plan for the future concerning our property we need also to consider spiritual service as part of our planning for the future.

Spiritual service is where each of us use our spiritual gifts in order to serve God and also one another. God's vision for the Christian is that we identify and use all of our abilities and talents to serve Him. As we continue to see our potential grow our hope is that with the expansion of property we will also see an expansion of opportunities. However, if we are to fulfil that potential we need to address those aspects of the church which we could do better. The greatest difficulty we have in relation to our potential is our lack of vision. What would our congregation and our community look like if each of us were using our spiritual gifts for the glory of God?

Surely the essential vision God has for us is one where our service to Him is where our spiritual gifts are being used. The challenge that we face as a congregation is to develop how we serve each other in order that we bring glory to God.

With this in mind we have a questionnaire which will identify each individual's spiritual gifts. This questionnaire is available at church on Sunday mornings and also on our web page. I would ask you to fill this questionnaire out and tell me the results so we can see where individuals are suited to serve God.

Philippians 2:1-4 **If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, 2 then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. 3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. 4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.**

I also want to thank all of our contributors to this edition of the magazine and hopefully you will be inspired to contribute something yourself next time.

May each of us continue to bless each other as we seek to serve God here in Raloo.

Revelation 1:7 King (KJV)

Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.



Raloo Presbyterian Church
Sunday Morning Worship at 11.30am
Evening Worship by announcement

Thursday Club

In April this year the **Thursday Club** visited Castle Gardens and Museum in Bangor followed by lunch at a nearby cafe.

Castle Gardens Bangor



The **Thursday Club** meets
on the third Thursday of
every month at 10.30

although this can vary so
check the bulletin for updates.



The Thursday Club's recent visit in October to the Gobbin Visitor Centre



Indoor Bowls - The Snoddy Singles Final Night - Summer 2015



Chris Snoddy presenting Orla Clarke of Northern Ireland Chest Heart and Stroke with a cheque for €931.23



Alan McLean receiving The Snoddy Singles Trophy from John McMurtry (left) & Chris Snoddy (right)



Snoddy Singles Finalists

Rev Neil Bingham, Sandy Hunter & Rev McNie



... years an Elder in the Presbyterian Church

(from front page)

Sandy Hunter of Raloo Presbyterian Church was recently paid a special visit by the Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Ian McNie, in recognition for over 50 years service as an elder. Prior to this, Sandy was elected as a committee member at the age of 17.



Gold Award

Aaron Bell, Jordan Bell, Serin Campbell & Adam McIleer receiving their D of E Gold Badge at this year's BB Display



Jordan Bell, Jonny Barry, Andrew Gingles, Adam McIleer, Callum McRoberts, Serin Campbell & Andrew Cromie receiving their Queen's Badge at this year's BB Display



The official BB Queens Certificate presented by the Deputy Chief Constable to Jordan Bell & Andrew Gingles



BB Enrolment 2015





The Gold D of E Qualifying Expedition during July in the Lake District. The entire Gold team including leaders on the final day at the finish point just before they reloaded the minibuses and set off for home.



The Gold groups nearing the end of day 2 as they crossed over from Little Langdale valley into Great Langdale.



Duke of Edinburgh Award Expeditions

GOLD
EXPEDITIONS



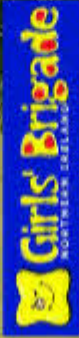
The Gold D of E Qualifying Expedition during July in the Lake District. A group meeting the leaders half way through day 2 in Little Langdale valley.



The Bronze D of E Qualifying Expedition during May in the Antrim Hills. The group as they walked across the Antrim Hills Way just after Scawt Hill.



The Gold D of E Qualifying Expedition during July in the Lake District. Photo of the entire group as they celebrated their half way point in the 4 day expedition as they relaxed in Camp 2 (and the 12th of July!).



The Gold expedition involved 22 young people from GB and BB along with 6 leaders. The practice expedition was in June with 3 days in the Mourne's with the 4 day qualifying expedition in the Lake District over the July holidays. Weather for the gold qualifying was mixed with sun and some rain and day 3 saw the worst of the weather with the groups having to adjust their route cutting out the planned walk to the top of "High Raise" which was completely lost in the low cloud. Despite this small adjustment the group successfully completed the 4 day expedition completing almost 70km in total.



BB Senior Section boys and leaders on an end of season day out abseiling off Torr Head. The day involved two abseiling sites with a walk inbetween. This was a first time for most and all overcame their nerves and completed the two abseils.



The Gold D of E Qualifying Expedition during July in the Lake District. This photo was taken as this group was about to leave camp on the start of day 2 of the 4 day expedition.



The Bronze D of E Qualifying Expedition during May in the Antrim Hills. This is the group from GB and BB at the end of the 2 day qualifying



GB Display 2015



Girls' Brigade

Girl's Brigade
We are a uniformed Christian youth organisation for girls between the age of 3 & 18. We meet from September until April at Raloo PC



9 Brigaders who received their Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award



Tiny Tots - Aged 3 to P1 - Mon 7pm-8pm
Explorers - P2 to P4 - Mon 7pm-8pm
Juniors - P5 to P7 - Mon 7pm-9pm
Seniors - Yr8 to P10 - Mon 7pm-9pm
Brigaders - Yr11 to P14 - Mon 7pm-9pm





Gold Award

Recipients of the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award with their proud mums, from left: Stephanie McIlroy, Emily Lyle, Melanie Hamilton & Erin Robinson.



Recent wedding of Lynsey McDowell (GB Officer) to David Crawford with a guard of honour from Raloo Presbyterian Church Girl's Brigade.



G B Enrolment Nov 2015





Fund Raising Committee – Update

The Fund Raising Committee had a quiet summer, with the Auction being cancelled in May due to a clash of dates (rescheduled for Saturday 21st May 2016). We have now had a chance to recharge our batteries and are now ready to start into more Fund Raising Events over the next few months into 2016.

By the time the Echo will have been published, we will have been to Mounthill Fair with a Cake Stall and the Christmas Fair will have taken place. This took the same format as previous years with Santa's Grotto, Craft Stalls and Afternoon Tea. There was a great atmosphere and everyone got into the swing for Christmas.

This Christmas, with the help and suggestion of Neil who recently gave a sermon on Matthew Chapter 25 Verses 14-30 the 'Parable of the Talent,' part of our Fund Raising efforts entails members of the congregation receiving a sum of money from Brian Apsley, Church Treasurer (sorry not that much!) to buy materials or ingredients to make something or provide a service to sell eg a scarf, child's cardigan, fudge, jams, biscuits and these are just suggestions for the men, just think what the ladies can do! These items are then sold for a profit and the money raised goes towards more materials and so more items are made and sold and all money received through the selling of gifts (and of course the return of the amount of money on loan) goes towards the Hall Building Fund. We had a stall at our recent Christmas Fair.

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

- ***The Parable of the Talents teaches that God always gives us everything we need to do what he has called us to do.***
- *We are to work, using our talents to glorify God, serve the common good, and further God's kingdom. Biblical success is working diligently in the here and now using all the talents God has given us to produce the return expected by the Master.*

The big Fund Raiser for 2016 is our Church Auction on Saturday, 21st May. We are very fortunate that when it comes to providing for the Auction and all other Fund Raising events, our congregation pulls out all the stops. So remember, don't throw anything out, we will accept all items (except suites of furniture), we even accept livestock and at the last auction we had a chicken coup (without the chickens) or maybe it was a rabbit hutch!

At present the plans are going through local council planning and we have been advised by our architect that everything seems to be in order, maybe just a few minor details, here and there. Once the plans are passed it will be 'full steam ahead' for the new hall, going out to tender and gathering the funds to pay for the new build. Although we have around £170,000.00 gathered at present, it will take at least another £130,000.00 to complete the build (an awful lot of money).

Here in Raloo we are blessed with a problem – we have no room – our organisations have outgrown our present hall – some of the GB sections have to cross the road to the church, which is a problem as the evenings close in – the BB have to meet on a Tuesday and a Friday evening due to the numbers of Anchor, Junior, Senior and Company Sections. Some of the other organisations have to wait until rooms become free for their meetings and the present church hall is used every night for various other activities.

The Fund Raising Committee would encourage everyone in the congregation in their daily prayers, pray for our Heavenly Father to be with us all each step of the way, guiding and helping us as we go forward in this 'mighty' commitment together.

We depend on the contributions of the congregation to help with the up-keep of the Church building, the Manse and the current Church Hall. The new hall build will of course be an extra expense on top of our present expenses. - continued



- cont.

There are a number of ways that you can help the church by your giving:

- Fill in the Direct Debit Bank Form – this form can be found in your Annual Report (or speak to Brian Apsley) – this gives the church a steady income each month, it also means that a monthly direct debit comes out of your bank account and your contributions to the church are on a regular basis and of great importance to the up-keep of the church properties.
- If you pay Income Tax – you can Gift Aid - this is 'FREE' money claimed from HMRC for our church. All you have to do is fill in the form in your Annual Report and give it to Caroline McIlroy.
- There are also quarterly Fund Raising Envelopes which come along with the Annual Report
- 'Build a Brick' boxes – these are available in the Vestibule to fill with loose change
- Glass Jar in the vestibule for all your loose change
- June Rainey's Clothes Collection
- Gift Day Envelopes
- Harvest Envelopes

Finally, a big thank you from the Fund Raising Committee to our Congregation, Family and Friends who have helped us along the way these past few years with their generosity and prayers, we really appreciate it and could not do without your help and support. *Valerie Hanna, Fundraising Committee*

'Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God' Philippians Chapter 4: Verse 6



Be Not Afraid



I don't know about you but as a Christian, and as the festive period approaches, I am sometimes challenged with how society views the birth of Christ in the midst of all the tinsel and glitter. Our response is we often go with the flow. Probably spending too much on things we could easily do without and gaining a few pounds in the process!

Perhaps this year, as we ponder in merry thoughts and partake in cheerful festivities, we can more than ever demonstrate to others the true eternal hope that God showed to us through the coming of His Son into this world 2000 years ago. With Christ as our Saviour, there can be no better time than the present to share the hope He gives to all who will receive Him. I know sharing the gospel message to others is not always easy. Even amongst those who celebrate Christmas, there are many who have little or no time for Christ as Saviour and Lord of their life. Christ is not always welcomed, even at Christmas!

When the angel came to Zechariah to tell about Elizabeth giving birth to John The Baptist, the angel said "Do not be afraid." Again to Mary about the birth of her Son, "Do not be afraid." Again to the shepherds in the fields, "Do not be afraid."

If you are a Christian, then you can also take this message to heart - do not be afraid!

When we are not afraid, it is easier to share to others the hope Christ gives.

With the right attitude, prayer, reading God's word and faith, we can overcome fear.

The next time Christ comes into the world will not be to a lowly stable. He will come as the King of Kings.

He will establish His Kingdom and those who love Him will be with Him for ever more.

More than ever we owe it to ourselves and others to share the greatest gift of all this Christmas. God's gift of eternal life. God's gift of Jesus Christ.

Therefore "Do not be afraid."

Raloo Harvest & Gift Day 2015



This year's Harvest/GIFT day Service raised over £7,000 towards the Building Fund, mission and good causes.



The Harvest to end all Harvests

"What is the parable of the wheat and the tares?"

The parable of the wheat and the tares (weeds), is filled with spiritual significance and truth. In the agricultural society of Christ's time, many farmers depended on the quality of their crops. An enemy sowing weeds would have sabotaged a business. The weeds in the parable were likely darnel because that weed, until mature, appears as wheat. Without modern weed killers, what would a wise farmer do in such a dilemma? Instead of tearing out the wheat with the tares, the landowner in this parable wisely waited until the harvest. After harvesting the whole field, the tares could be separated and burned. The wheat would be saved in the barn. - cont.



Raloo Harvest & Gift Day 2015



The Harvest of all Harvests - cont.

In the explanation of the parable below, Christ declares that He Himself is the sower. He spreads His redeemed seed, true believers, in the field of the world. Through His grace, these Christians bear the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5: 22-24). Their presence on earth is the reason the "kingdom of heaven" is like the field of the world. When Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17; Mark 3:2), He meant the spiritual realm which exists on earth side by side with the realm of the evil one (1 John 5:19). When the kingdom of heaven comes to its fruition, heaven will be a reality and there will be no "weeds" among the "wheat." But for now, both good and bad seeds mature in the world.

The enemy in the parable is Satan. In opposition to Jesus Christ, Satan tries to destroy Christ's work by placing false believers and teachers in the world who lead many astray. Many bring reproach on the name of Christ by not following God's Word. Despite this, Christ allows them to remain until His return. At that time, angels will separate the true from false believers.

Tares, especially in the early stages of growth, resemble wheat. Likewise, a false believer may resemble a true believer. In Matthew 7:22, Jesus warned that many profess faith but do not know Him. Thus, each person should examine his own relationship with Christ (2 Corinthians 13:5). 1st John is an excellent test of salvation.

Jesus Christ will one day establish true righteousness. He will take His true Church to be with Him forever. Right now He is drawing others to a saving faith. Muslims, Jews, Atheists, Church People, Protestants, Roman Catholics, Black, White - people from every walk of life and nation. At the end of this age all the unsaved will be judged for their sin and unbelief but followers of Christ will reign with Him. What a glorious hope for the "wheat"!



Matthew 13:36-43 Amplified Bible (AMP)

36 Then He left the crowds and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him saying, "Explain [clearly] to us the parable of the weeds in the field." 37 He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, 38 and the field is the world; and [as for] the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the weeds are the sons of the evil one; 39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. 40 So just as the weeds are gathered up and burned in the fire, so will it be at the end of the age. 41 The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend [those things by which people are led into sin], and all who practice evil [leading others into sin], 42 and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping [over sorrow and pain] and grinding of teeth [over distress and anger]. 43 Then the righteous [those who seek the will of God] will shine forth [radiating the new life] like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears [to hear], let him hear and heed My words.

Isaiah 55:11(KJV)

So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

2015 Holiday Bible Club

This summer's Holiday Bible Club featured the theme of New Testament Parables. These teachings of Jesus were portrayed through scripture, craft, games, dance, puppet ministry, memory verses, song & drama. The children all enjoyed themselves and we know that God's Word will "accomplish that which" He pleases. A big thanks to our leaders for their support.



Nance retires as Church Organist



Nance addressing the congregation

The Reverent Jack Sloan was the Minister at Raloo Presbyterian Church back in 1967 when Nance Wallace started playing the Church organ. Nance has continued doing so until recently when she retired this Autumn. When referring to her length of time as organist at a recent service, Nance said "I am not sure of the number of years, maybe 45 or more, but I thank God and the Raloo congregation for the privilege of playing the organ...and assisting the Ministers to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ..." Neil Bingham, Minister of Raloo Presbyterian Church, thanked Nance on behalf of the congregation for her long service and dedication, and presented Nance with flowers. Nance continues at Raloo in her role as P W President and is a member of the Church Choir.

Picture of Nance with flowers and on her left - Chris Barron, Assistant Minister, right - Neil Bingham, Minister, and some of the members of the Church Choir behind..



A big thanks to Nance!



Nance with her sons Blair & Uel



2015 Christmas Fair

This year's Christmas
Fair raised over £1,500
towards the Building Fund



Philippians 2:8-10 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth

Raloo Christmas Fair



Matthew 2:10

When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy



Raloo Christmas Fair

Isaiah 9:6
For a child
will be born
to us, a son
will be given
to us



Youth Fellowship

Raloo & Magheramorne Youth Fellowship Update:-
This year at Youth Fellowship we have been blessed with over 20 young people each night coming together to learn and understand more about God's word through our bible studies each month.

We vary our programme joining together with both congregations on a Sunday morning and having very informal meetings on Sunday nights. Youth Fellowship is a great opportunity to come and meet new friends and get to know other young people from the joint charge and other churches in our local area.

Each year we have various outings and in April we have a weekend away together. This year we went to Murlough House, Dundrum, Co Down. This was a great time of fun and fellowship for the leaders and young people attending.

Youth Fellowship has now commenced and anyone from Secondary School age are very welcome to join us.

1 Timothy 4:12 "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity."

For more information contact: Neil Bingham, William Hollinger or Lynsey Hanna

Head Chef Neil supervising the Great British Bake Off



Group picture at Murlough

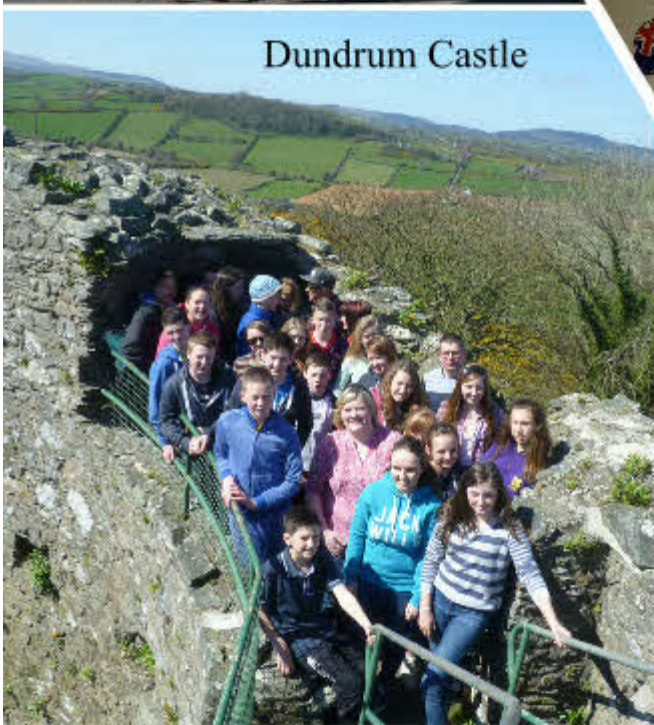


Youth Fellowship

Murlough Bay



Dundrum Castle



Swans in Newcastle



Upcoming events

- Sunday 6th December 2015 - 11.30 am - Toreagh Primary School Carol Service
- Sunday 20th December 2015 - 11.30 am - Christmas Family Service in Church Hall
- Sunday 20th December 2015 - 7.00 pm - Carol Service with Tea/Coffee Afterwards
- Friday 25th December 2015 - 10.00 am - Joint Christmas Morning Service in Raloo
- Sunday 3rd January 2016 - 7.00 pm - New Year Communion Service

Congregational Prayer Times

Church Prayer Times are every Wednesday at 7.00 pm (Church Hall), Sunday at 11.00 am (Minister's Room), and the second Saturday of the month at 8.00 am (Church Hall). Check Church Bulletin for more prayer times & any changes

Matthew 18:20
For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them

A Raloo Presbyterian Church Publication

Ephesians 6:18 - Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the believers



If you would like to contribute to our next edition of the Bulletin, please contact Gareth