SANDOWN HERALD

Free Presbyterian Church

60th ANNIVERSARY EDITION

MOTTO TEXT 2024

2nd Thessalonians 3:3

"But the Lord is **Faithful…**"

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Sep – Dec 2024

A MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

The summer months gave another opportunity for further outreach amongst the young people, with our annual Sandown Summer Camp. We are thankful for the Lord's hand of blessing and protection on summer camp once again this year. Also, what a joy it was to hear the good reports of the meetings and to hear of young people being saved. To God be all the glory.

We continue to give thanks to God for the past 60 years of Gospel witness on the Sandown Road and please do remember the various meetings that are planned for the coming months as we lift our Ebenezer to the Lord and say "**Hitherto hath the Lord helps us**."

There are many challenges ahead in God's work, but I trust that as a congregation we will continue to labour and commit to the work of God and together that we might see God moving in even greater ways, than in the past.

As we press forward and onward in the work of God we do so with the wonderful promise of God "**For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring**:"

BUT THE LORD IS FAITHFUL

Your friend in Christ,

Garth

If you require a Pastoral visit please contact me on:
02890 487423
email:
garth@sandownfpc.org

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

In the early 1960's the witness of the Free Presbyterian church was continuing to grow through the faithful preaching of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and the continuing stand against apostasy in the land. Sandown FPC was officially opened for the preaching of the Word of God in November 1964. A godly lady by the name of Mrs Campbell had heard the preaching of Dr Paisley and her heart was so blessed that the Lord burdened her heart that a ministry would be commenced in Ballyhackamore. Owning a piece of ground situated at the corner of Hewitt Parade and the Sandown Road she kindly made the practical gift of the ground to the work of God. Plans were drawn up and soon the little church was erected. Of course hopes and expectations for the work were high, yet no one could have anticipated what great things the Lord would do for this faithful witness in East Belfast.

Commencing with a Gospel Campaign conducted by the late Pastor Willie Mullen, the Rev James McClelland was then appointed as a student minister of the congregation. Other student ministers followed with Rev Ivan Foster and Rev William McCrea used of the Lord to strengthen the work followed by the ministry for 40 years in the work by Rev David McIlveen.

We now celebrate our 60th Anniversary of the work of God here in Sandown under the faithful ministry of the Rev Garth Wilson who has been our Pastor for the past 11 years.

Our Motto text for this year is 2nd Thessalonians 3:3 "But the Lord is Faithful…" Truly over these 60 years the Lord has been faithful to His work here, and we are looking to Him in the future days for continued blessing. Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase.' Job 8:7

LADIES DEVOTIONAL

Trials & Triumphs – Mary Gawley

'Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase.' Job 8:7
From the time when Mrs Campbell donated the ground to build the church here on the Sandown Road in 1964 we as a congregation have experienced times of great blessings yet times of great trials.

Rev McIlveen being ordained as the first minister in 1973 the small congregation enjoyed times of refreshing when souls were saved during missions in those early days, especially under the ministry of Dr Alan Cairns. From the missions other churches were formed and the Sandown congregation continued to grow until a rebuild was undertaken in 1976.

Yet in the blessings, trials have come our way, as it was in February 1988 when we all got the terrible news of the murder of Frederick Starrett and his UDR colleague by the IRA on Royal Avenue, yet during this time Fred's father got saved, which brought great comfort in a time of despair. Over these many years the Lord has taken home many dear saints of our church family and again we were saddened by the sudden death of one of our young men, Samuel Crawford, which brought again tears and sorrow to us all in Sandown and indeed further afield. And yet again as a fellowship we surrounded this dear family with our love and prayers as we continue to uphold one another before the Lord, knowing the promise of God is; 'Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.' 1st Peter 5:7

Over the years the church has been involved in protests and witnesses, ecumenical and moral. Gay Pride parades had commenced in Belfast and the Kirk Session felt led of the Lord to put a full page advertisement in the Belfast Newsletter under the title 'The Word of God against sodomy.' Soon after this, a letter was received from the Advertising Standards Authority, with the outcome being that the Session and A.S.A. would end up in the courts. After a lengthy legal battle and much prayer, March 2011 will be forever etched into the history of Sandown Free Presbyterian church when the Judges conclusion was that, 'The adjudication constituted a disproportionate interference with the applicant's rights under Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights and must, on that basis, be quashed.' To God be the glory.

After the retirement of Rev McIlveen in 2011 after 43 years of faithful ministry, yet again the Lord answered prayer when in November 2013 we were very pleased to welcome Rev Garth Wilson, his wife Rachel and family to take up the ministry here in Sandown. We have been greatly blessed over these past 10 years under Rev Wilson's ministry; souls have been saved, new people have come into the church and it's a great blessing to see so many young children in our midst. Family & Friends services have brought a great thrill to our hearts as we listen to the tremendous testimonies of God's saving grace in many lives. The annual BBQ has also been a great success, with the Seniors Outing always being a grand day out. The addition recently of the Parents night for the Explorers Bible Club has brought great encouragement to the children's workers, with all of these uniting the church family together.

Having been part of this fellowship for 51 years I am so glad that Sandown Free Presbyterian church continues to be a beacon of Gospel truth in the community and continues to be a welcoming, united church family, looking forward to what the Lord is going to do in future days.

'The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.' Psalm 126:3

ENCOURAGEMENTS FROM THE ELDERS

BE STRONG AND DO EXPLOITS

In the book of Daniel there are many blessed and challenging verses, one of which I would like to leave a few thoughts. In Daniel chapter 11:32 the latter part states, *'…the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.'*

When we consider what it means to know God, it does not refer to a mere head knowledge but a deep, personal getting to know Him through His word. The Lord must come first in our lives. While it is a great privilege to be involved in God's work, Gods word and worship must come before the work and the Saviour must come before service. It is important to spend time with God in private worship and in public worship. The more time we spend with someone the better we get to know them, and so it is with our God.

There are many verses that help our growth and knowledge of God. 2nd Peter 3:18 *'But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.'*
Jeremiah 9:23-24 states '*Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.'*
It also states that those who know God will be strong, when the devil comes and attacks or accuses us. There are times when the devil is relentless, at times like this we need the strength that only comes from the Lord to withstand the evil one. James 4:7 *'Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.'*

There are many verses in the scriptures which speaks of being strong in the Lord. Psalm 27:14 states. *'Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.'*
Nahum 1:7 *'The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him.'* I could certainly quote many more.

What a privilege to be a child of God in this uncertain generation, no matter what is happening around us, our confidence is in the one and only true and living God. Our God is the Lord. In the English dictionary the definition of exploits is a notable, heroic accomplishment. Thinking of these three explanations there is nothing more notable, heroic, or greater accomplishment for the child of God than to strive daily to glorify and exalt the Lord's name.

Article written by: Derek Graham

ULSTER & SCOTS

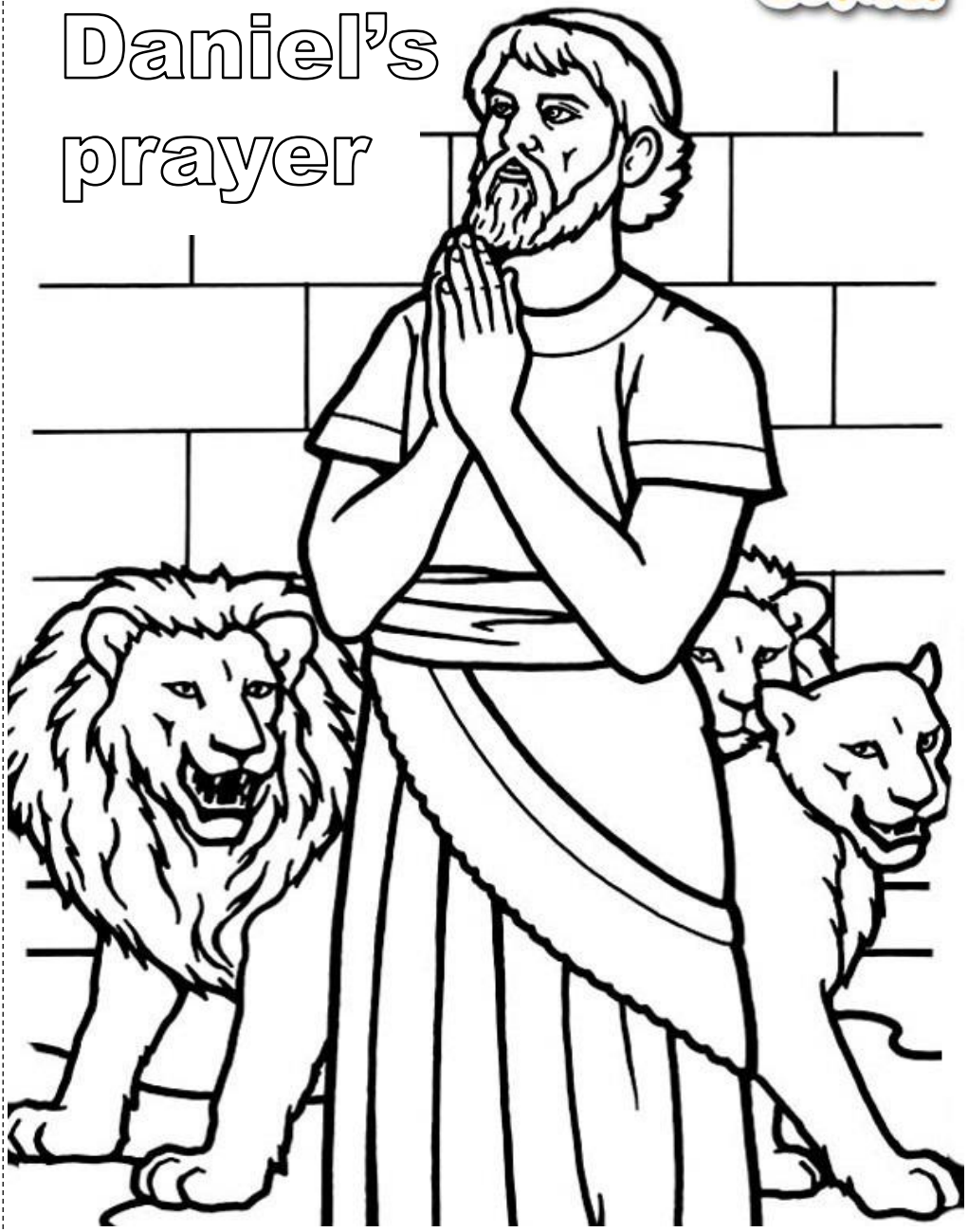
ULSTER – THOMAS SINCLAIR
Ulster's Covenant Writer

Thomas Sinclair was born on 23rd September 1838 in Belfast, To a strongly Presbyterian family which had funded a number of church projects around the city. At the age of 28 he was elected and ordained an elder in the Duncairn Church in north Belfast; and a year later he was appointed its clerk of Kirk Session, before taking over the family business, which was in Toome Street where the Postal Depot now is. Thomas was a supporter of the Kingan Mission to the Deaf and Dumb in Belfast, and the family where establishers of the Sinclair Seaman's Presbyterian Church close to their premises. Disagreeing with Liberal leader William Gladstone's espousal of Home Rule for Ireland, he also aired his views in the church's General Assembly, with it being commented on that he supported, and sometimes led, the Assembly in its opposition to Home Rule. He is quoted as saying: 'We shall show the world that come what may Ulster will never consent to yield up her citizenship, or be expelled from the imperial parliament to be degraded to a junior partnership in a subordinate colony. Upon writing the Ulster Covenant, it was sent to Sir Edward Carson who read it from the steps of Craigavon House, and which would be signed by thousands of Ulster men and women. Thomas died on February 14, 1914.

SCOTLAND – GEORGE WISHART
Knox's Forerunner

George Wishart was born in Scotland in 1513. Upon returning to Scotland having had to flee to Switzerland and Germany he began preaching throughout the land especially in Dundee, caring also for the sick when the plague broke out in 1545. He told them how there was a worse disease than the plague - sin - which could only be healed by the Lord Jesus Christ. Surviving two attacks on his life he was finally arrested by Cardinal Beaton near Edinburgh in 1546. By this time, a man called John Knox was following Wishart, however Wishart wouldn't let Knox come with him to his trial and execution. 'One is sufficient for one sacrifice', he said. At his trial he refused to accept that confession was a sacrament, he declared the priesthood of all believing Christians, and proclaimed that the true Church was where the Word of God was faithfully preached. George Wishart was then taken outside Edinburgh Castle on 1st March 1546. hanged and burnt at the stake. Uniting believers across Scotland, his death furthered the spread of the gospel. Wishart church, built in Dundee in 1841 was where the missionary Mary Slessor was a member of when she lived in Dundee. Revelation 14:13 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.'

God hears Daniel's prayer



Colour in and give to auntie Rachel for prizes

YOUTH FOCUS

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 3:18

LOOKING BACK GOING FORWARD

The very first Sandown Youth fellowship was held in December 1975. Ronnie and Anne Whiteside were the first leaders, later followed by Paul Kyle and in 1984 by Derek & Gillian Graham. Anne and Alma Hannah invited me to join the youth fellowship when I was 11 years old, and in the meetings we enjoyed Bible sword drills, quizzes and testimonies. We also travelled province wide to other Youth Fellowships in the faithful (well maybe not) green mini-bus.
Ronnie, Anne and Mr & Mrs Kyle Snr readily opened their homes to us for fellowship, fun and supper, and a great highlight for us all was time spent at the Sandown Youth Weekends.
As a fellowship we have also known sadness with the sudden deaths of Miss Rosemary McClelland, Fred Starrett and recently Samuel Crawford, have left the fellowship bereft of three much loved young people.
I want this 60th anniversary year to encourage our young people to 'Go Forward' using the example of three young men in the scriptures.

■ **Go Forward in Prayer –** Daniels habit was to pray three times daily, prayer was central to his life. His relationship with God was more important than anything else. Make prayer a priority in your life, become a prayer warrior for God.

■ **Go Forward in God's Word –** Timothy knew the scriptures from a child. He was encouraged to read and memorise God's Word as a youth to make him wise. A recent survey concluded that this generation of Christians are the most illiterate when it comes to reading and memorising the scriptures. I implore you to be young people who know their God. Daniel 11:32 *'…the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.'*

■ **Go Forward in Service –** Samuel's life was devoted to serving God. From a young boy to an old man he faithfully served God and did His will. You may be young, but you can serve God too. Get involved in the children's work, summer camps and outreach. Some day you may even hear the call of God to full-time service.

My prayer is that you would go forward in this anniversary year and that the Lord would bless you and keep you. Numbers 6:24-26 *'The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.'*

Jennifer Uprichard

Message of the Flowers

Rose of Sharon

The Rose of Sharon is a perennial plant grown from a bulb we would call a Narcissus, a type of daffodil, is native to Israel. It flowers during the Autumn months in the Holy land and Middle Eastern countries. The stem grows to about 30cm tall with multiple heads of white petals and a central golden cup.

In the dry barren landscape of the Middle East the flower gives a bright splash of colour and throws a beautiful fragrant perfume into the air.

We are familiar with reference to the Rose of Sharon in the book of the Song of Solomon where it is the bride who acknowledges God's mercy bestowed on her. Comparing herself with the Narcissus was not an expression of vanity. The bride would not boast in her beauty but in the sovereign grace of God.

The Narcissus has six pure white petals. In the scriptures the number speaks of the weakness of man and the purity of Christ. The central golden crown like cup of the flower reminds us of Christ the King crowned in glory and majesty.

Just as the Narcissus flower would be nothing without the golden crown at the centre, we too would be nothing without Christ at the centre of our lives.

'For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.' Ephesians 2:8

Article written by: Laura Gilpin

SENIORS OUTING

Many thanks to Colin & Hazel for organising a tremendous Day for everyone.

On Wednesday 29th May a group of 35 people set of early on the Sandown Seniors outing. As we travelled along the motorway on our coach many were guessing where the journey was taking us. The first stop of the day was at the Dunsilly Hotel where tea/scones and coffee were enjoyed and of course plenty of chat. Getting back onto the coach to travel to our next stop time was spent completing quiz sheets, more chatter and of course sweets galore being handed around. Then we arrived at our main stop of the day; Gracehill Moravian Village, were our guides for the day met the group. Having watched a video of the Village in the Old School Room we were shown around the Museum before heading out to the village square were the guides told us stories about the area and the different houses in the village and especially the church. Some of the group then visited a place named 'God's Acre' (the burial ground) while others went to see and hear more about the Village Shop and Post Office.

Leaving Gracehill we travelled on to Ballymena were time was spent for some shopping, before travelling to Cullybackey were we enjoyed a lovely dinner and fellowship in 'Toast.'

Finally, it was time to get back on the coach for the homeward journey with Billy Henderson and Irene Coates entertaining us with some singing and arriving safely back at Sandown thanks to our driver Stacey

We would like to thank everyone who supported us on this Seniors outing and pray God's richest blessings for all.

Article written by: Colin & Hazel

SUMMER CAMP 2024

Rather than hearing from us, we asked some of our new leaders about a CHALLENGE, a BLESSING and a PRAYER POINT following on from Sandown Summer Camp 2024.

- **Leah:**

Challenge: One challenge that I experienced was the weeks coming up to camp in the preparation of my devotional. I had never written or even spoken in front of people in that manner before and I have to say I was very nervous. The night that it was my turn to speak I was filled with nerves but the Lord was right there with me, helping me to say the right words. I truly felt the Lord's presence with me that night and I felt that everyone listened so well.

Blessing: Camp was filled with many blessings, but the most significant blessing to me was witnessing two young boys come to Christ. Seeing God work in their lives was truly inspiring. The theme of our camp song aligned perfectly with Auntie Joyce's missionary story about Helen Roseveare, emphasizing that God is all we need.

- **Rebekah:**

Challenge: Not to be a Martha. I caught myself being too busy trying to help get things ready for the next activity, meeting, or meal. I was challenged, at many times throughout the week, when I saw some of the young campers playing catch one-on-one with Aaron. Those kids could have played like that endlessly and it made me realise what an important part of camp that was. Worry less about what's ahead and serve the children the best we can.

Blessing: By far the greatest blessing was to see children trust in the Lord and know their sins were forgiven. Lessons challenged the hearts of children, especially the life of Helen Roseveare. It was a blessing to know God was speaking to their hearts as I saw children wipe tears from their eyes as they listened to what she endured for the sake of Christ. I would challenge everyone to read about her life.

SUMMER CAMP 2024

- **Faith:**

Challenge: The main challenge that I faced as a new leader was overcoming nerves when leading the quiz and devotions, but as the week went on I started to really enjoy both aspects of camp.
Blessing: There were lots of blessings at camp from the good weather to friendly and helpful staff at Delamont but the blessing that stands out to me is the two boys who came to know Jesus as their Saviour during camp.

- **Aaron:**

Challenge: A challenge that I faced during camp was getting to know the campers and connect with them. I can find it hard to talk to people in general and by Tuesday lunch I still hadn't felt like I had gotten to know any of the campers. However, God answered prayer and by the end of camp I got to know a lot of the campers.
Blessing: A blessing I experienced was getting to hear the boys pray at the end of the Thursday night.

To conclude, we cannot praise our leaders enough. Practically, there was a real sense of teamwork which we greatly appreciated and spiritually, it was clear that we all had the common desire to see God work amongst the campers. Now looking to the future, please pray for God to continue working in the lives of this year's campers and that those who made professions would be built up in their faith through our children's ministries such as Sunday School and Explorer's Bible Club. Finally, please pray for Camp 2025 that we would have campers return and even more new faces to bring under the sound of the gospel.

Article compiled by: Kyle & Anna

BBQ & FUN DAY 2024

Peter & Philip who sang
at the end of the evening

Roy Walker who was
Our Guest Speaker

Micah helping out conducting
Harmonic Sounds

A great day of fun
& fellowship

A special thankyou to all who contributed to a fantastic day
at Crawfordsburn Country Park

SANDOWN
FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
60th ANNIVERSARY

60th ANNIVERSARY **DINNER**
Friday 27th September in La Mon House Hotel

60th ANNIVERSARY
MEETINGS
Sunday 29th September
Morning – Rev Philip Knowles
Evening – Mr Ian McVeigh
Sunday 6th October
Morning – Mr Adam Kennedy
Evening – Rev Garth Wilson

60th ANNIVERSARY
BIBLE STUDIES
Tuesday 1st October – Mr Colin Maxwell
Tuesday 8th October – Mr Dynes Uprichard

HARVEST WEEKEND
Sunday 13th October - Morning – Rev Samuel Murray (Moderator)
Sunday 13th October - Evening – Rev John Morrow
Monday 14th October – Rev Roger Higginson

60th ANNIVERSARY
EVENING OF CHRISTMAS PRAISE
Saturday 30th November
The Great Hall,
Parliament Buildings, Stormont
Guest singers:
Charlotte Caughey, John Porter, Judith Beattie,
Peter Mander, Crown Hymn Quintet & others

dates for your diary

SEPTEMBER

Family & Friends
Sunday 8th September @ 6.30pm
Testimony – Rev John Armstrong. Singers – The Walker Sisters

Farewell Service in Sandown FPC for the McAuley Family
Sunday 22nd September @ 6.30pm

60th Anniversary Dinner
Friday 27th September in La Mon House Hotel

60th Anniversary Meetings
Sunday 29th September
11.30am Speaker - Rev Philip Knowles
6.30pm Speaker - Mr Ian McVeigh

OCTOBER

60th Anniversary Meetings
Sunday 6th October
11.30am Speaker - Mr Adam Kennedy
6.30pm Speaker - Rev Garth Wilson

60th Anniversary Bible Studies
Tuesday 1st October @ 8pm - Mr Colin Maxwell
Tuesday 8th October @ 8pm - Mr Dynes Uprichard

Harvest Weekend
Sunday 13th October
11.30am - Rev Samuel Murray (Moderator)
6.30pm - Rev John Morrow
Monday 14th October @ 8pm - Rev Roger Higginson

NOVEMBER

Sunday 10th November @ 6:30pm
Annual Remembrance & Wreath Laying Ceremony

60th Anniversary Evening of Christmas Praise
Saturday 30th November @ 7pm
The Great Hall, Parliament Buildings, Stormont
Taking part: Charlotte Caughey, John Porter, Judith Beattie, Peter Mander, Crown Hymn Quintet & others

DECEMBER

December Christmas Praise
Sunday 1st December @ 6.30pm
Ethan & Anna and the Hoey Sisters

Christmas Family Service
Sunday 8th December @ 6.30pm
Hannah Armstrong & George Edgar

Christmas Carol Service
Sunday 15th December @ 6.30pm
Peter Mander & Alan Craig

Church Carol Service
Sunday 22nd December @ 6.30pm
Members of the congregation taking part