

# KIRCUBBIN COMMUNITY CHURCH

## DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORTS



Garden Church: One of the three ways we have been meeting since the first Lockdown.

### IN THIS ISSUE

**The Changing face of Sunday Services**

**The Doors the Pandemic opened**

**Financial Blessings in hard times**

**Ministries on pause, but God keeps working**

**This past year** has certainly been different to the norm, and that is clearly reflected in the content of these reports. With many of our usual activities forced to go on hold, others have found themselves constantly changing to fit the needs of the church and the requirements of the country. As leaders we are grateful for your patience and commitment throughout this time.

In spite of the difficulties and frustrations it is clear from the following pages that God has continued to work in our lives, challenging our complacency and opening up new opportunities for ministry. There is still much to get excited about, so let's not be too despondent about that which we have lost, but also celebrate that which we have gained, as we continue to find our Security, our Hope, and our Joy in Jesus alone.

As we look towards the rest of 2021, it is still difficult to know for sure how things are going to play out. The extent to which Covid 19 has left a permanent mark on our societies and ways of living is yet to be determined, but we don't put our faith in mankind's ability to shape our destiny. We will determine to fix our eyes on Jesus and look forward to the day of his return, whilst also celebrating the gift of every single day we have on this earth. There are times when that is far from easy, and the weight of life is heavy, but the Lord has given us the Holy Spirit and he has given us Church. So with the help of the Spirit let us be his Church. Learning from the book of Acts lets love one another, open ourselves to God's power and see God work.

Mat Kerr

### ITS ALWAYS GOOD TO PRAY

**Monday Evenings: 7-8pm -**  
An opportunity to discuss Sunday's sermon and **pray** it into our lives.

**Wednesday Evenings: 7:15pm-8pm**  
A weekly time devoted to **prayer**.

**Roundchurtexts:**  
Such a useful way of sharing **prayer** requests and praises.

## SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

### Zoom Church

In March, when we first heard that churches were prohibited from meeting together in person, we were unsure how long it would last or what the best course of action for us would be. Churches across the world began to implement various strategies with many pre-recording services or broadcasting live on the internet. With our conviction that one of the primary purposes of church is to fellowship and interact together, we chose to use Zoom for our Sunday morning meetings. The size of our church enabled us to do this quite comfortably, and after a few initial teething problems the benefits of seeing and talking to one another were greatly appreciated. Of course it is not the same as being together in the same place, particularly for singing and taking communion, but Zoom Church has provided a vital, uplifting time on a Sunday morning where we have been able to worship the Lord together and connect with one another. It also enabled us to do new things such as hear from Erin whilst on board the Logos Hope in the Bahamas and have Alan share God's word with us live from Dubai.



### Garden Church

The nicer weather in the summer allowed us to meet together in person as we enjoyed church outdoors in Mat and Claire's garden. This was a refreshing few weeks, which has given us a taste for something different and opened up new possibilities of what we can do even when not under Covid restrictions.



### Community Centre Church

In November and December it was wonderful to get back together in person. While there are challenges and restrictions when meeting in the Community Centre it ultimately means that everyone from our church who is willing and able can come together on Sunday mornings to worship, pray, hear from God and fellowship with our Christian family. Maxwell's Courtyard would have been too small with social distancing. We are very thankful to the Council staff for facilitating our services on Sunday mornings. (We gave the caretaker a Christmas gift to say thank you.)



### Covid-19 Response

There have been many things which we haven't been able to do since the first Lockdown started in March 2020 but there have been some new ways in which our church has been able to minister to others outside our church and to each other within. Here's a few of the things which we have been able to do:

**Online Quizzes** – We have had a series of Zoom Team Quizzes which have been very successful in making us humbly realise how much we don't know. More than that – they have been times of fun and fellowship together. The most recent online quiz also raised money for TearFund to invest in the lives of families in a different country with very different problems.

**Scones for Keyworkers and Frontline staff** – the church asked people to give additional money, if they felt led to, towards buying scones for ICU staff, local pharmacy workers, Loughview Surgery

Staff, Social Workers and shop workers from our three local shops. These were all delivered with a KCC card offering our thanks, encouragement and prayers for all that they were doing to keep our local population safe and provided for. These were met with surprise that a small church down the peninsula took the time, effort and investment in them as people. This was a very positive witness. We have just started a new round of this in Lockdown 3.

**Help for local people** – we were able to purchase a washing machine for a needy local health worker who had just moved into a new house at the beginning of the pandemic. We provided furniture for a local vulnerable person moving into a flat in Kircubbin. We provided food for a local family and offered advice to contact Christians Against Poverty to provide long-term support. Mat had a number of local people who he collected prescriptions and shopping for during the first lockdown. FoodBank has continued to operate out of Room2 weekly throughout the pandemic.

**Phil Derrick**

## TEACHING



### The Trumpet Call

At the start of 2020, the Lord gave us a prophetic message through what we refer to as “The Trumpet Call.” It was a challenge to consider our priorities, motivation and behaviour regarding church. Were we bringing the Lord delight in the ways we were conducting ourselves? Were we truly loving one another? We spent the first part of the year considering such questions and repenting of wrong attitudes. It was a valuable time in many of our lives and continues to be a pertinent word as we live together as church.

### Introduce me to your Jesus

Through the Summer term our teaching fell under the title “Introduce me to your Jesus” as we invited testimony and got more personal about what it looks like for each of us to have a working relationship with Jesus. We considered various aspects of how we relate to our Lord acknowledging disappointment and celebration.

### The Church and the Spirit

In the Autumn we turned our attention to the book of Acts focusing specifically on the relationship between the Church and the Holy Spirit. Luke’s account of the early church reminds us of our roots and where we came from. It shows us a relationship between God’s Spirit and his people which we can aspire to today.

### Discussion Nights

The purpose of our preaching is not simply to increase our knowledge and understanding of God and the Bible, but to inspire and equip us to live close to our Saviour. For over a year now we have been meeting on Monday evenings to examine our Sunday sermons in more detail. This has been a really valuable time to ask questions, work through the difficult subjects and explore practical applications. For most of 2020 we have been doing this via Zoom, which has actually enabled this time to be more accessible to many of us. These times together have proved to be very effective and positive in people’s lives, bringing refreshment and spiritual re-creation. Why not join us, if you haven’t already.

As always we give a huge thank you to everyone who spends time, seeking the Lord, preparing sermons and sharing God’s Word with us. It is nourishment to our souls and the foundation of our faith.

**Mat Kerr**

## FACEBOOK

FaceBook Live Church – with very few technical experts in our church this has been a learning process to get our services from the Community Centre live and online for our own church and for further afield. Lawrence, one of the Portavogie fishermen who used to come to our services joined us a few weeks ago with his family from Ghana! We hope to improve the technical aspect of this, particularly the sound once we start meeting together again in the Community Centre.



### Ladies

Whilst we haven't had any formal 'ladies' events' over the past year, there is no doubt that our little Church Ladies' WhatsApp group has proved a great wee source of encouragement and has been important for just keeping in touch eg... seeing all the wonderful photos of baby Ivy from March 2020 has been very special and it's been good to share prayer requests and answers. If you're not part of this group and would like be added please speak to Claire or myself. God is good, always good!

**Sharon Derrick**

### Samaritans Purse Shoe Boxes

Thanks to all who contributed towards Samaritans Purse Operation Christmas Child again in the Autumn term. Although we were down on the number of physical boxes that were donated a couple of people did them online which worked well. This is such a practical way to support overseas mission and is always a very tangible way for the children and young people especially to be involved with mission. It's never too early to put aside a few things for OCC '21! Thanks so much...every little helps.



**Sharon Derrick**

## FOODBANK



Foodbank continues to be used regularly on a Thursday evening. Although it can't be a place where people can come in and have a cuppa and maybe offload a bit, it is still a beacon where physical needs can be met and we are so thankful that Room 2 can still be used in this way. Most Thursdays will see at least one 'client' and there is a lovely team from across the community that work together to facilitate this. Please continue to pray for this work and the longer term ministry. **Sharon**



## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

By Blair Bailie

We can't reach the children of Kircubbin as we have in the past.

The after-school SUs, Summer WhizzKidz, 5-Day Clubs and special outreach events throughout the year weren't possible in 2020, and it's too soon to say if 2021 will be any better. Christ appeals to us to be harvesters, but now the fields are behind locked doors.

But sometimes when God closes a door, He opens a letterbox.

So instead of calling children out to hear the gospel as we normally do, in 2020 we folded up the good news of the Lord Jesus Christ and slipped it right into their homes through the convenient rectangular slots in their front doors.

Since March we've had three tract outreaches.

Just before the first lockdown we delivered a tract telling the story of Patrick with a gospel emphasis and an appeal to salvation, as well as a leaflet offering help to the community.

During the summer we substituted Summer WhizzKidz with Letterbox WhizzKidz, which included a Bible lesson, memory verse, crossword quiz, Mrs Numa Numa jokes, a colouring section and even a song, again, with a gospel emphasis. These were distributed along with coronavirus-themed tracts for the adults. Last year's WhizzKidz also got age-appropriate books delivered to them as a reminder that even though we couldn't meet them this year, we haven't forgotten about them.

At Christmas the tracts were made to look like Christmas cards; we even packed them in coloured envelopes, wrote 'Merry Christmas' in metallic markers, used snowflake stickers to seal them and decorated them with potato stamps (you can't say I don't know how to treat Iona to a romantic evening). The North East Down CEF committee generously provided 500 insect-themed calendars to give out alongside the tracts, containing a new bug-fact and Bible verse for every month of the coming year. Books were also delivered as early Christmas gifts to last year's WhizzKidz.

Nothing comes close to delivering the gospel face-to-face. Let us pray that the doors will open again soon and we'll be able to look Kircubbin's children in the eyes as we speak the good news. Pray for Summer WhizzKidz 2021, for SU in KIPS and for Easter and Christmas events. If it's God's will, He will give us what we pray for in faith.

But even if the doors remain closed, the letterboxes remain open.

*"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."  
Galatians 2:20*





## TEEN SPIRIT

By Caroline Wilson

It really seems like no time since I was writing last year's report. In some ways last year seems like only a few months ago and yet for some it has dragged on and on!! And what a year!! Who on earth could have predicted it?

For us at Teen Spirit it has been a challenging year. When lockdown 1 happened back in March, it took a few weeks to get organised. Our 'normal' Sunday nights involved games and pizza and banter and we would have discussed various topics from a biblical perspective. How on earth do we do all that on zoom? We needed to be as creative as possible and so at the start of our lockdown we had fun. Our nights would involve word games and scavenger hunts and bible quizzes. It's amazing how quickly we all adapted (probably because we thought that once 12 weeks had passed, we would get back to 'normal'.)

As we all know, that hasn't been the case so we needed to change things a bit. We had been meeting every week for 2 hours and I think this (along with the other zoom meetings that we were involved in) produced zoom fatigue. The last thing we wanted was that the young people would get fed up and not bother turning up so we meet now every other Sunday night for 1 ½ hours.

Over the last year we have encouraged the young people to look at some bible character who has encouraged or inspired them on their journey with God. We heard about Job and Jonah and Moses. We've discussed the pros and cons of social media and we looked briefly at some mental health issues. At Christmas time it was interesting that the church looked at a few of the characters of the nativity as in Teen Spirit we did too. We talked about Mary and Joseph and how

difficult it must have been for them both as young people, but that sometimes God asks young people to do challenging and difficult things for Him. We started the new term looking at how Jesus saw the potential in Peter and how He sees our potential, but in order for us to fulfil that potential, it's important that we remain in relationship with Him. My desire is that as leaders we would be able to develop our relationships with the young people and encourage them in their relationship with God. Obviously this happens much more naturally when we're chatting with them face to face, either one to one or in a group setting; zoom makes this much more difficult. Please, please pray for us as leaders that we become much more creative in how we do Teen Spirit over the next few months. Please, please pray for our young people. They are a great bunch and so faithfully turn up every other week. Pray that they will continue in their relationship with God and with each other. Please pray that if any of them are struggling that they will be brave enough to ask for help. I would like to take this opportunity in thanking all of them for their faithfulness to our wee group. I'm sure there are times when they would rather be doing something else, but they are great and I really do appreciate them logging on. I also want to thank Christian and Blair for their help too in bringing the fun with their quizzes and games.

### BYE TEAM

They didn't make it here in 2020 but are getting ready for 2021.

**SAVE THE DATE - 31st July - 8th August.**

WE WILL NEED HELP HOSTING THEM.



## CRECHE

When KCC met for Garden Church we opened an informal crèche and play area for our babies and preschoolers. Having them playing in the garden as Church took place around them and watching their interactions with our church family blessed us all. Once KCC was able to meet in the Community Centre it was wonderful to have a small side room and to be able to facilitate a Bible teaching program for the tiniest members of our KCC family. We've introduced our preschoolers to our God and to His Bible truths using a toddler friendly bible, animated Bible stories courtesy of Saddleback Kids ministry and sensory play activities. In the weeks we had together we've explored the Parable of the Sower, the Story of the Nativity and the boy Jesus. It's been fun for all, has blessed each of the adults volunteering in Crèche and it's been a privilege to support our young families in this way. Thank you so much to the parents who entrust their children to us, to each of our Crèche volunteers and to our KCC family for your prayerful support of this ministry.

# £ FINANCE REPORT

By Andrew Walker

This report will bring you up to date with our church family's finances, detailing the income and expenditure for 2020.

I will also ask you to think about your own giving to our church – are you able to contribute and serve God in this way?

The year started with some difficult decisions being made in terms of the church budget. We had suffered an income versus expenditure loss and accordingly we had to cut back in some controllable areas – our Pastor declined a pay increase and we reduced the funds we use to support others. Covid-19 then became the major issue, greatly restricting our ability to meet on our usual weekly pattern.

A big thank you to all who reviewed their giving, or changed their method of giving by moving to electronic transfer into the church account.

As we weren't able to use Maxwell's Courtyard, we were able to negotiate a significant reduction in rent of about 45% in annual terms.

Thankfully this meant we were able to put in place a backdated pay rise, returned our Baptist Association giving to the same level as previous years, and also sent a £2000 gift (£850 in specific additional gifts) to Sefton School in the Philippines. See giving table below:

Recipient	Monthly	Additional/ December	Annually
Baptist Association	£80	£850	£1810
Erin McAvoy	£90		£1080
Jim Patterson	£50		£600
Sefton School		£2000	£2000

### Background to our Church finances

Over recent years our activities and our giving have changed. In October 2016, we acquired Room 2, an excellent resource and cosy meeting room which is used for a wide range of purposes. In April 2018, we changed Mat's role from paid administrative elder to become our Pastor. Mat is officially employed 3 days per week plus Sundays.

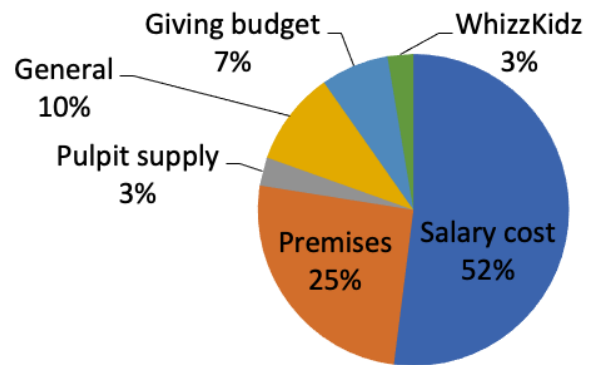
We rent the first-floor office on an ongoing basis and, in normal circumstances, rent Maxwell Court each Sunday for our services. Currently, lockdowns permitting, we rent the Kircubbin Community Centre, as it has a bigger Covid-19 related capacity.

This has seen our expenditure and our giving change over the last few years.

It may surprise you to learn that our church costs around £40000 to run on an annual basis. This pie charge shows the breakdown of where our money goes, but note that it reflects the 2020 budget, not the year end position with additional mission giving:

YEAR	EXPENDITURE
2016	£35,400
2017	£41,100
2018	£40,400
2019	£41,000
2020	£39,566

While we reduced our original giving budget to 7% in 2020, we have aimed for a 10% figure in previous years and would plan to do so again in 2021, with the following detailing who we supported this year:



We are thankful and truly blessed that the giving from our church family has covered our costs and allowed us to do all that our fellowship is involved in, especially our youth work, primarily through Whizz Kidz. However, we must recognise that the improved year-end balance is largely a result of the reduced rent payment, so next year's budget will be deliberately tight and we have to be careful about our spending. To do more in our fellowship, to support each other in times of need, to do more for mission or more in our community, will cost more money. Church running costs, like household costs rise each year. This brings a useful challenge... when did you last review your giving? And are you able to support our fellowship, if you do not currently give? - Please See

*Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*  
2 Corinthians 9 v 7

Thank you for taking the time to read this introduction to the Annual Accounts. I hope this will encourage you to consider giving to the Lord's work in our fellowship, or to review your current giving. Rest assured, I understand that it is an expensive world in which we live and that we may be in a position where it is not possible to change/increase our giving. All I ask is that you prayerfully consider the information provided in this note. Please speak to me if I can provide any further information.

Thank you  
Andrew Walker, Treasurer. Tel: 07988 721 056

For a comparison of our income and assets over the past 2 years, please see tables below.  
Also for a fuller breakdown of all income and expenses see Appendix A.

Total Income		
	2020	2019
Free Will Offering	£6769.60	£5919
Gift Aid	£21,766	£20,305
Income Tax Refunds	£5822.10	£4956.49
GAYE	£6420	£6225
<i>Benevolent / Gifts</i>	£685	£475
<i>Mission Box</i>	£16.26	£34.93
<i>Bank Interest</i>	£7.49	£4.74
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	£0	£275
<i>For Erin McAvoy</i>	£300	£331.25
<i>Covid Gifts</i>	£1530	n/a
<i>Sefton School</i>	£875	n/a
	<b>£44191.45</b>	<b>£38,526.41</b>

Current Assets		
	2020	2019
Bank Account	£7166.96	2531.52
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b>£7166.96</b>	<b>£2531.52</b>
	Fund Allocation	
General	£5925.64	£874.78
Erin McAvoy	0	£1056.74
PSALM	£600	£600
Covid	£641.32	n/a

## WAYS TO GIVE



**When did you last review your giving?**

**Are able to support our fellowship, if you do not currently give?**

There are a number of ways to do so – the following provides a number of ideas which may help.

### **Standing Order or electronic transfer –**

Regular giving from your bank account to the church's account is excellent as it helps with planning, particularly if you are able to indicate that it will be regular. If you do wish to use this method, please put your full name in the narrative when sending the payment

**The Church Sort code is 950679**

**Account number 00046736**

**Gift Aid – This is a government scheme for tax payers which is of real importance to our church finance. If you are a tax payer, and the amount of tax you pay is at least equal to the amount you give to our fellowship, then you can use the scheme and the government gives 25% of your giving back to the church as a tax rebate. We currently receive approx. £4500 per year through the Gift Aid scheme. Please speak to me if this is something you would like further information on.**

**Sunday Collection Bag** – A great way to give on a Sunday by Sunday basis or a one-off gift, and is an active part of our worship. We have seen this increase in the last couple of years – thank you! We are also able to claim a tax rebate through the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme. Small gifts of £20 or less are eligible for a government rebate of tax, again at 25%.

**Give As You Earn (GAYE)** – depending on your employer, you may have a charity giving scheme through your salary. This allows you to set aside a gift out of your salary each month. The money typically goes to a third-party organisation, such as Charities Trust, who then send the gift on to the church. The employee gives on a tax-free basis and the church doesn't need to claim tax back through Gift Aid. KCC will need to be registered as an acceptable charity with the scheme organiser for this to work. Ask your employer for more details.

## WORSHIP

Briar Kennedy



*'Turn your eyes upon Jesus  
Look full in His wonderful face  
And the things of earth will grow  
strangely dim  
In the light of His glory and  
grace'*

This is a song I listened to near enough daily this year which really comforted me in these crazy times we're living in. Our worship team was going really strong this time last year and I feel like everybody was gaining a lot of confidence in the group. We said goodbye to David on our last Sunday together before the first lockdown and we were really sad to see him leave our wee team as he was such a great addition to the group, but we are excited for him to be joining his wife at the church she was attending. Little did we know at that time it would be our last 'normal' worship session together thus far.

Our worship team did not meet until the end of June in our garden at home, but it was so very lovely to see everyone again and have a socially distanced worship session together.

We were all so excited to finally have 'Garden Church' in the summer, where we also introduced Jude to everybody.

We saw the very beautiful Megan marry James on Boxing Day and we are really going to miss our happy, kind, chirpy Megz in our worship team now she is attending James' family church.

Although we're back to lockdown now again (again) we are just so thankful that we have a church we love so much it pains us that we can't meet in person. Clover asks every Sunday if we're going to church (not "video church") so even our youngest members are missing church. The effort everybody went to (when we were able to meet together) to provide a creche for our girls has been so amazing. Clover and Poppy have loved every Sunday so much, thank you! You are all great and we are so thankful for each and every person involved in our wee church.

I would like to personally thank every member of our worship team for the amazing support, encouragement and friendship that has been shared freely during this year: thank you to Natalie, Hazel, Zachary, Chloe, Megan, David, and a super duper mega huge thank you to Phil who does so much behind the scenes for set-up, encouragement and prayers.

Before the lockdown began Blair and I wrote an Easter song together called 'Stronger' and Natalie, Chloe and Megan came round to record it for a Christian songwriting competition. The recording was done on our phones so the sound quality was not great but we are looking forward to singing it together in church. I'm going to leave you with some of the words of the chorus that I feel are particularly relevant these days:-

*'Not angels, nor rulers,  
Not height, width or depth,  
Not present, nor future,  
Not powers, nor death,  
No thing in creation  
Is mighty enough  
To pull me away from  
The strength of Your love'*

## Fishermen

The past year has been full of uncertainty for all of us and this was especially true for the immigrant fishermen at Portavogie. At the start of the pandemic they were trying to understand what it all meant for them and their families. The lockdown highlighted their precarious position as they couldn't return home due to travel restrictions whilst at the same time the work here largely dried up. It is one thing to be living on a fishing boat when most of the time is spent working but to have it as your only accommodation through an extended period whilst not working is quite another. In addition to this the facilities provided by the Fishermen's Mission were all closed so that meant a restricted access to the internet and no access to the laundry. As usual the men dealt with these hardships with much grace and perseverance but were very much looking forward to getting home. There was a great deal of relief when they were finally able to fly home to Ghana at the end of November. Thankfully none of the families of the fishermen we are in contact with had any problems with Covid so that made things more bearable but they are now having to consider whether or not to return for this year's fishing season. **Please pray for the witness to the fishermen in Portavogie, it is not clear what Brexit will bring in terms of employment rights for these migrant fishermen and the conditions they experience whilst with us.**



**Deuteronomy 10:17-19.**



## **PRAYER TIME REPORT**

Phil Derrick



You would think that not being able to meet together in a room to pray would make prayer meetings difficult if not impossible. God has proved the opposite is true. I remember back at the end of March and the beginning of April we had some very vibrant times of prayer with teens to seventies coming along on WhatsApp and then Zoom to pray for God's will to be done and his Kingdom to come. We have settled to a smaller number that represent more than a third of the adults in our church.

If I could bottle the prayer times and sell them they would be far too precious for people to buy (especially the silences...) How can I communicate this effectively to everyone just how precious and important 'together-prayer' times are to people and to God. Please don't 'pooh-pooh' or ignore the idea of praying

together as something not for you or just for other people. These times, according to God's word, are the powerhouse and the transformational activity base of God's people, the church - you DO want to be part of this! God wants you to be part of this!

Am I just off the page and not in touch with reality - too spiritual to be of earthly use? Or do you want to be involved? At the moment most of us meet on a Wednesday evening from 7.15-8.00pm and this does not suit everyone in our church. If God moves you to pray with others but an early morning would work better for you or at 11am on a Saturday just for 20 minutes or any other time then let us know and we can see if we can make it work. Please don't feel guilty or annoyed with me for pushing praying together that can really enrich and transform your life. Let's look at how we can grow together-prayer into each others' lives together. Don't give up, please keep trying with God's help!

Love, Phil.

## **PATTERSON MINISTRIES**

In 2020 the work started off as normal, going back into the local schools, clubs and planning for the summer. Then of course covid 19 became big news. This, along with my mother developing dementia and passing away late March, was a lot to face. Obviously this was going to be a very different year.

But God is not isolating. He is still in control.

By April I knew that many ministers and evangelists were making YouTube videos! I prayed, "Lord no one wants to see this face on a screen but if you want me to do it someone has to ask me!"

A week later the Rev Jordan from Bellaghy Presbyterian phoned and asked if I would do a children's address for his church website.

This was the push I needed.

From that I now have a YouTube channel for 'Patterson Ministries' with 10 churches using the videos and 61 schools using them for classroom assemblies (when the schools are open)

Summer camps were not possible, but again God made a way. In August Ruth, Caleb and I were able to go to Poland with 'Truth for Youth ministries' to help in two summer camps. This was a great experience for us as we were teaching children who had not heard any Bible stories or the good news of the Gospel. God made a way where there was no way.

Over Christmas I was able to do some door to door outreach and I continue to give out Gospel tracts and CDs to any one I can.

The family are all well. Ruth especially, as she loves being off school!

Thank you for all your encouragement prayers and financial support, I appreciate it so much.

God bless, Jim

***Isaiah 43v16 'God will make a way...'***

### **Prayer please:**

- For safety and wisdom
- For more openings into schools and churches
- For the videos
- For Ryan who took a cd/tract and is very interested in becoming a Christian.

## MV LOGOS HOPE



BY ERIN MCAVOY

So, I am home! After 23 months on board, I decided to come home a few months early, the main reason for that decision being Megan's wedding. I want to start by thanking everyone for all the financial, prayer and general support I received before, during and in these months that I've been home.

In my newsletters I always wanted to be as honest as I could about what I was feeling and thinking. I learnt a lot on board and do believe I changed because of my experiences there. I have come home knowing more of who God is, more of what He did for me and continues to do for me and seeing Him move around me. I have experienced things that I never thought I would and all the while meeting thousands of people from around the world. One major prayer I had was for God to give me just one good friend, he did that and more providing friends from all over the world. I now have left many of those friends onboard and Miqui, who I started dating a few months before coming home.



(Miqui is bottom row, second from left)

Of course, life on board wasn't always easy and I would never say that I'm someone who thrives with teaching. I love learning but, in my time, my rules, my, my, my... That, I saw first-hand, is not God's way. Reading the department report from last year and the plans for Logos Hope to sail to Europe is very strange, I was planning with mum and dad to take break in Cork and have people visit in Dublin. I was going to be in Belfast for family birthdays and the wedding would have been while we were in Wales.

I had only taken one day of my 14 days for a holiday in my first year 'knowing' Europe was coming and I would need them for then, by that point I was tired from the work and ready to visit home. Europe also became the talk of the ship. Crew members had even written, cast

and directed a new production specifically and the line-up teams had been sent out to prepare for us to come. Then March came and plans were all binned. For the first time the ship had no schedule and no information to tell us about the next steps, but despite this their offer to send as many home as possible, I couldn't leave. My time was not over, it was going to be different, the majority of ministry would not be external but I was rooted there, I had commitments and a role, relationships to continue building and I simply didn't feel that was the time for me to go. My family were amazing in that time supporting my decision, and not telling me the full extent of their concerns until I was home! The church also supported me, never once did I get questioned for my reasons to stay and I want to thank you all for that.

During those first months the ship focussed on us, we were able to get a lot of training that usually isn't available with the normal schedule. New trainings were created to equip people with tools for evangelism, presentations, public speaking and private growth. At one time while reading I had a clear image of the ship, while we were open motivation had slowed, ministry was a by-product of most, not the reason. During covid and all this training people were excited again, talking, planning, wanting to share, more aware of those outside we couldn't reach, people who were dying just next to us without knowing Jesus. I felt that when we were finally able to get out people would be rushing to do just that.

I'm sure God used all of that for His good, and I believe He was very aware of the slip in standard from us all and used our lockdown to recenter those who decided to stay. I believe He sent some home who were ready for this kind of missions and I believe He sent others home because they had learnt all they could in that environment, and He wanted them elsewhere. I thought all this while on board and felt a deep sense of gratitude and humility that I was one of the ones He wanted to stay on board.

As it is the ship's ministry continues in the Caribbean, currently being in St Vincent and the Grenadines. They have been slowly opening the book fair in various ways since August with recent developments of bringing tables to the quayside for limited visitors to see. Please continue to join me in praying for the ship as they welcome new members to the crew next month, they plan to sail and slowly open their doors to bring knowledge, help and hope.



*Thank you to everyone who contributed to these pages, it gives a wonderful picture of the life our our church. The true value of fellowship can never be underestimated. We look forward to the next year, worshipping together, ministering together, and having fun together. May it be a powerful year of God working in us and through us, and may He be glorified in it all.*