



NEWSLETTER
JANUARY

IN LOVING MEMORY

MARIANNE KNOETZE



Partly due to my personality, and partly due to my life’s journey, I have a handful of friends from my South African days. One of the longest goes back to a worship service I attended in Carletonville 34 years ago. Now, I am on the eve of returning to Carletonville with the ashes of my dear friend,

Marianne. A few days before her passing, she turned to me and said, “This is going to be very difficult for you. It is going to hurt a lot.” It reminded me of the countless phone calls I made to her from Ireland in the early years, crying with fear or sadness or longing to be back there. She would calmly hear me out and then say those dreaded words: “God is not interested in your comfort, Lorraine; He is interested in your character.”

As I stood by her bedside, I thought her words were to give me courage for her dying. But far worse has been living in our home, our family with her presence everywhere. It is learning to live in the same space after such a loss: that I find difficult. She knew me *that* well!

Marianne was keen for all to know the wonder of knowing God and His faithfulness in everything. She spoke about looking into that mirror, facing yourself and seeing the LORD’s love for YOU, even though in this life we are looking in a “mirror dimly”.

I chose three things to place with her in the coffin. A blanket made for her by Anel, her medical consultant throughout and the mother of Ella-Rose—she was nanny to Ella-Rose for a year and has a drawer in her desk filled with stuff for her and Ella-Rose to do together. A pillow that was made by her Mom, who died only a few years ago: she always treasured her Mom’s unquestioning support of her. And a Certificate from when she was a small child at the Methodist Church in Carletonville, when she committed her life to the LORD.

Thank you, again, to all who have shown such love and care to us as a family. I fly “home” with Marianne’s ashes, to take her “home” to her family.

—THE REV. LORRAINE KENNEDY-RITCHIE,
Teaching Elder.

CHURCH MESSAGES

PUBLIC READING OF SCRIPTURE



I am looking for folk of all ages and accents to read our Bible passages at Sunday Worship Services. If you want to do a spot of training or

practice when signing up, I can dust off my four years’ “treading the boards”—did you know I was an actress?

In order to facilitate this, I hope to put together a WhatsApp group. I can send out a text on Tuesdays with that weeks’ Readings and can then slot in those available. If you are wanting to read and are a younger member, ask a parent to sign you up.

Public Reading of Scripture One, Two and Three:

- **One:** Find the passage in your favourite Bible;
- **Two:** Practice reading it out loud;
- **Three:** When the Reading is announced, step up to the mic’!

—THE REV. LORRAINE KENNEDY-RITCHIE,
Teaching Elder.

KIRK SESSION MEETING OF 23RD JANUARY, 2024 A.D.

Hugh Borland has finished his one-year sabbatical leave and has resumed his duties as Elder; but not, due to pressure of work, as Clerk of Session. Hilary Fairman shall continue as Clerk of Session.

Hugh Borland shall be the Congregation’s representative at Presbytery for the year ahead.

Ashley O’Neill shall be the Congregation’s representative at General Assembly in June.

WORK PARTY

On Saturday, 3rd February, a work party, comprising of Carolyn, Ray, Alistair, Margaret and Christiaan, did some “odd jobs” in the Church and Hall. They packed

away the Christmas decorations into to the tower, moved the heavy tables from the hall to beside the organ, tidied the vestry and *re*-stacked the white tables, and put all the music group equipment beside the organ. Many thanks to this group for doing these necessary jobs, it is much appreciated.

EDUCATION SUNDAY

**JOIN US AT 11 AM SUNDAY
 25 FEBRUARY 2024
 AS WE CELEBRATE
 EDUCATION SUNDAY**

**ENJOYING LIFE-
 LONG LEARNING
 TOGETHER**



FEBRUARY DUTY ROTA

4th February

Keys	Elaine Adams
Welcome	David Adams
Free Will Offering	Gerhard van Eeden
Hospitality	—

11th February

Keys	Elaine Adams
Welcome	David Adams
Free Will Offering	Gerhard van Eeden
Hospitality	Ashley O'Neill Anel Schoombie

Note: Preacher, the Rev. Niek Wit; Childrens' Ministry

18th February

Keys	Carolyn O'Neill
Welcome	Manuel Pedro
Free Will Offering	Gerhard van Eeden
Hospitality	—

Note: Preacher, the Rev. Niek Wit

25th February

Keys	Carolyn O'Neill
Welcome	Manuel Pedro
Free Will Offering	Gerhard van Eeden
Hospitality	John Dolan

Note: Childrens' Ministry

MARCH DUTY ROTA

3rd March

Keys	Ashley O'Neill
Welcome	The Cronje Family
Free Will Offering	Christiaan Schoombee
Hospitality	—

10th March

Keys	Ashley O'Neill
Welcome	The Cronje Family
Free Will Offering	Christiaan Schoombee
Hospitality	Myrtle Bailey Sylvia Wallace

Note: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING; Childrens' Ministry

17th March

Keys	Helen Dawkins
Welcome	Millicent Gateri
Free Will Offering	Christiaan Schoombee
Hospitality	—

24th March

Keys	Helen Dawkins
Welcome	Roelien van der Molen
Free Will Offering	Christiaan Schoombee
Hospitality	Joy Dolan Noelene Brown

Note: Childrens' Ministry

31st March

Keys	Paul Collins
Welcome	Roelien van der Molen
Free Will Offering	Christiaan Schoombee
Hospitality	—

CHILDRENS' MINISTRY

We have Childrens' Ministry twice a month: the second and fourth Sunday of every month. Below, you can see the themes we have recently covered.

Trust



At the end of last year, we started working from a new curriculum. We covered Abraham, in relation to him being tested by being told to sacrifice his son, Isaac. It can be difficult to trust God at times when messages get tough and confusing.

Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding.

Seek His will in all you do, and He will show you which path to take.

—PROVERBS 3:5-6
 (N.L.T.)

Prayer



The topic we have started this year with is the story of Esau and Jacob—the disagreement they had and the subsequent prayer Jacob said, and the wrestling of Jacob with God; leading to greater faith in God and reconciliation between the brothers. This involved some brief and fun boxing with boxing gloves in the Childrens'

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all he has done.

—PHILIPPIANS 4:6
 (N.L.T.)

Ministry on one of the days!

Who did What?
 Genesis 27

Read the story of Esau and his brother, Jacob. Write the correct name from the list below in the blank spaces.

_____ told his oldest son, _____, to prepare a meal to receive his blessing.

_____ wanted _____ to receive the blessing instead.

_____ and _____ planned to trick _____ by using a disguise.

_____ wore animal fur to make his arms feel hairy like _____'s arms.

The disguise worked! Because he was blind, _____ thought he passed his blessing to _____.

_____ was upset with _____ for stealing their father's blessing.


ISAAC


RACHEL


ESAU


JACOB

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—MIRIAM VAN DER MOLEN,
 Childrens' Ministry.

COMMUNITY NOTICES

“LORRAINE, WHAT DO YOU DO DURING THE WEEK?”
 A series on some of the stuff I get up to when no one is watching!

Nursing Home Fun



Many may visit friends or family in Nursing homes. I know several of our Elders who visit Members of our Congregation. Even after years of legislative and practical improvements

of such institutions, many think of them as depressing places to be avoided. But I can still remember the particular pleasure I felt when, as a teenager, our youth leader took us to a local nursing home to visit with the elderly there. We always got such a warm response to the little time and effort we made to go each Sunday afternoon.

Now all these decades later, I still find the joy in intentionally going into nursing homes to interact with

residents, whether Members of our Congregation or not. At the moment, we have three Members of our Congregation in three separate nursing homes. At two, I get to do a quarterly Service of Worship. I prepare a Reading, some Prayers and a topic to reflect on; but I am open to responding to whatever I find. Sometimes, I get through all I have prepared and get to engage with the individuals. But there are times when, due to events happening in the space—it is after all a home to all these folk—I don't get to communicate much more than my presence.

It is very good for my *ego* to be in a space where my presence is both warmly embraced, as well as kept firmly in check. Older folk are by no means fooled by any pomp or being talked down to. They warm me with their stories, remind me that I am still young and to enjoy life as it is, rather than what it may be.

—THE REV. LORRAINE KENNEDY-RITCHIE,
Teaching Elder.

C.O.P.D. SUPPORT GROUP

On *Wednesday, 21st February, 2024 A.D.*, from 11.00 a.m. until 12.00 p.m., a community launch will be hosted at Ballybough Community Centre, 49 Ballybough Road, Ballybough, Dublin 3 for people living with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

The launch, hosted by C.O.P.D. Support Ireland, in partnership with National Clinical Programme Respiratory, will discuss their weekly exercise classes, social events and frequent expert talks; and is funded by the Health Service Executive.

To indicate an interest, you may e-mail support@copd.ie; and more information may be found on its website, www.copd.ie.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

ELECTION OF MODERATOR-DESIGNATE



The Rev. Richard Murray will become the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's Moderator, the 179TH since 1840 A.D., after he was elected Moderator-Designate.

Raised in Belfast, the 58-year-old received the most votes from the Church's 19 Presbyteries when they met in various locations across Ireland on *6th February, 2024 A.D.* The Rev. Murray has been Minister of Drumreagh Presbyterian Church, County Antrim since 2016 A.D.

Speaking about his election, the Rev. Murray said, "I feel humbled to be called to this Office, yet also

privileged; and with God's help, I will endeavour to represent the Church and the LORD to the best of my ability. My desire is to be committed to the Word of God in everything and my request is that people remember me in prayer throughout my year in office."

In 1995 A.D., he gained his Bachelor of Divinity from Union Theological College; the same year he was licensed as a Minister of the Gospel at Lowe Memorial. He then served as Assistant Minister at Terrace Row Presbyterian Church, Coleraine for three years, before moving to Hilltown and Clonduff Presbyterian Churches, County Down, where he was ordained in 1997 A.D.

In 2005 A.D., the Rev. Murray was called to Connor Presbyterian Church near Ballymena, County Antrim, where he served as Minister for 11 years. He became Minister of Drumreagh and Dromore Presbyterian Churches, a joint charge, in 2016 A.D.; with Dromore Presbyterian Church amalgamating with Drumreagh Presbyterian Church last year.

Speaking about his journey of faith, the Rev. Murray said, "Growing up, I had understood and responded to the Gospel through the work of Christian Endeavour, but during my teenage years I had moved very far from God. However, in 1986, through the preaching of Derick Bingham at the Crescent Church in Belfast, God came into my life in a life-changing way. I immediately sensed that God would call me to preach and, over time, I began to be invited to speak at different Christian meetings. The 'tipping point', if I can call it that, was one day when I heard the text, 'Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch'. I did launch out, and here I am!"

Today, he ministers to around 360 families in the County Antrim congregation, totalling around 850 people. "We are in the country and surrounded by countryside, although Drumreagh has the village of Bendooragh nearby and is only two miles from Ballymoney. We seek to make an impact through living out the Gospel in workplaces, schools, neighbourhoods and sports fields."

Describing his own ministry, the Rev. Murray said, "My heart is to reach out to people through the preaching of the whole counsel of God, much as Paul said to the Corinthians, "I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

Thinking about his forthcoming year in office, the Rev. Murray said, "As Christians we have responded to the greatest news of all: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. This Grace and love of Christ then compels us, out of a sense of gratitude, to serve God and people; for we know that faith without deeds is dead. This is a witness to the life changing power of

the Gospel, and I am looking forward to seeing what God is doing in our congregations and further afield as the Gospel message spreads,” the Rev. Murray said.

The Rev. Murray was one of five nominees, and he will be officially nominated to the General Assembly as Moderator when it gathers in June. Until then, he holds office as Moderator-Designate and will continue to serve his congregation in Drumreagh. He will succeed the incumbent Moderator, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Sam Mawhinney. Paragraph 100(2) of *The Book of the Constitution and Government of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland* provides that the Moderator, during his year of office, shall be the principal public representative of the Assembly.

FOUNDATIONS: CHILDRENS’ MINISTRY ONLINE EVENT

There will be an opportunity to gather online with Childrens’ Ministry leaders from congregations in the Republic of Ireland and encourage one another as they reflect on our role with children in two specific ways.

Join with others to be equipped to build ministry with children, young people and families in the Congregation. *Foundations* offer an opportunity to:

- come together with other volunteer leaders and helpers in childrens’, youth and family ministry for equipping, encouraging, sharing and resourcing for ministry;
- join for an evening in which you can take a step back from the business of running ministry among children and young people in the Congregation;
- enjoy space and time to listen and learn together with others about effectively engaging children and young people in small groups and how we can help them to make sense of what the Bible says in the real-life settings and situations of their lives; and
- come together as group, whether from the Congregation or on your own.

Foundations will look at how to work effectively in small groups or when the whole group is small, and how to engage children with the Bible and help them apply the stories to living out their faith in their everyday lives.

Foundations will run online from 7.30 p.m. until 8.45 p.m. on *Tuesday, 27th February, 2024 A.D.* Registrations may be made *via* Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/foundations-childrens-ministry-online-event-registration-774429207607?aff=oddtcreator>.

REFRESH: RENEWING YOUR CALLING AS AN ELDER

The *Refresh* evenings offer an opportunity for Elders to come together to be renewed and refreshed in

fulfilling the calling of eldership. Whether you have been an Elder for a long time, or have been elected recently to the role, come along to be encouraged, envisioned and equipped for leadership in the Congregation in the next season of church life.

The next *Refresh* evening will take place at Second Limavady Presbyterian Church, Irish Green Street, Limavady, County Londonderry, BT49 9AN on *Thursday, 14th March, 2024 A.D.* at 7.45 p.m. The *Refresh* evening, which is one-hour and 45-minutes in duration, is free to attend, but must be booked in advance. Bookings may be made *via* Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/refresh-renewing-your-calling-as-an-elder-second-limavady-tickets-663657215597>.

MINISTRY TASTER DAY

On *Saturday, 16th March, 2024 A.D.*, Union Theological College, Belfast will be hosting an on-campus open day from 10.30 a.m. until 1.00 p.m. At the open day, one may find out more about serving the LORD and studying for the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

The open day will include current and former students’ experience of study, an illustration of study courses and pathways, and an explanation of the ministry application process. Tea and coffee and lunch is offered.

The open day is free to attend, but booking is essential for catering purposes. Should you wish to attend, you may register *via* e-mail to admin@union.ac.uk by *Friday, 8th March, 2024 A.D.*

SUBMISSIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

Should you wish to submit an article, a personal reflection, a notice or some other update or correction to the *Clontarf & Scots Presbyterian Church Newsletter*, all submissions will be accepted by e-mail to newsletter.editor@clontarfchurch.ie.

In Volume XXI of the *Newsletter*, with the exception only of this January and February Issues, each Issue will be published on the first LORD’s Day in each month. Therefore, all submissions are requested to be received by the Editor not later than the 25th day of the month for guaranteed inclusion. The Editor will endeavour to accommodate late submissions for inclusion as best as possible.

—DARRAGH JÁUREGUI-HOGAN,
Editor.
