

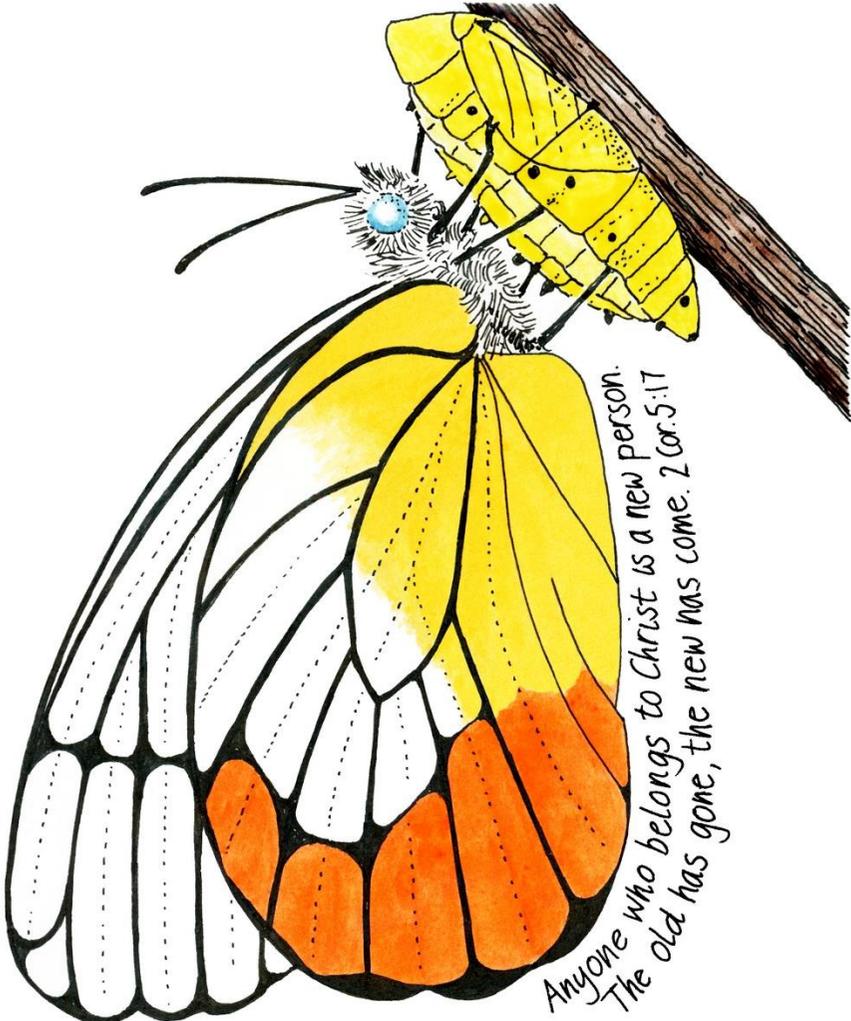
The
WAY

HAZELBANK
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

www.hazelbank-church.co.uk

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FROM THE MANSE



As a family we are slowly settling down in the Coleraine area and getting used to the windy days and nights and also to the fact that we have to leave more time for our journeys to other towns and districts (one of the disadvantages of not living in the middle of Ulster). Hazel and I have become grandparents since I last wrote. This was some nine weeks earlier than anticipated and quite a shock to everyone involved. We are glad to report however that little Lexie Kimberley Brown who weighed into this world at just less than 3lbs is progressing well and I am so grateful for all your cards, gifts and prayers. Although Kimberley has been allowed home from hospital, Lexie will not be out for a few weeks yet so please continue to remember her. We are also due to have another grandchild, as our daughter Deborah is expecting in early August, so there are big adjustments ahead for us as a family.

It is taking me longer to get around the congregation than I had thought; however I am enjoying taking my time and spending it with you in your homes. Sadly many of the homes I have been in no longer attend or have simply got out of the habit of attending church and I have received many promises of a return visit and it has been encouraging to see some people return to Hazelbank. We give thanks to God that in the first six months of my ministry we have two new families join the church but even better to see a number of people come to faith in Jesus Christ. So be encouraged and it is so pleasing to see more and more of you going into your frontlines and spreading the Gospel with new vigour. I have no doubt that if everyone did this then we would see even greater growth. As a Session we have been looking at the congregational list of people who claim to have a connection to the church and have been removing some who have moved on or moved house and highlighting others for a visit. We want to know who we have as members/nominal members and in some ways, as I said last time I wrote, we are at the stage of building up our congregation again and this is the responsibility of everyone!

Many of the organisations have finished for the summer and so I want to pay tribute to all our leaders and helpers; you are such a dedicated bunch and I trust you will have the opportunity to recharge the batteries and come back in September refreshed. I want to thank Alan and Christine Marshall and David Kerr for their dedication over the years having recently retired from caretaker/cleaner and treasurer roles. I am delighted that the Holiday Bible week is taking place again after a year's absence and it was encouraging to see the amount of people volunteering to help out. Please keep Robert in your prayers as he heads up this work. I hope you all have a lovely summer and we get some of the lovely sunny days on the beach that we were told about.



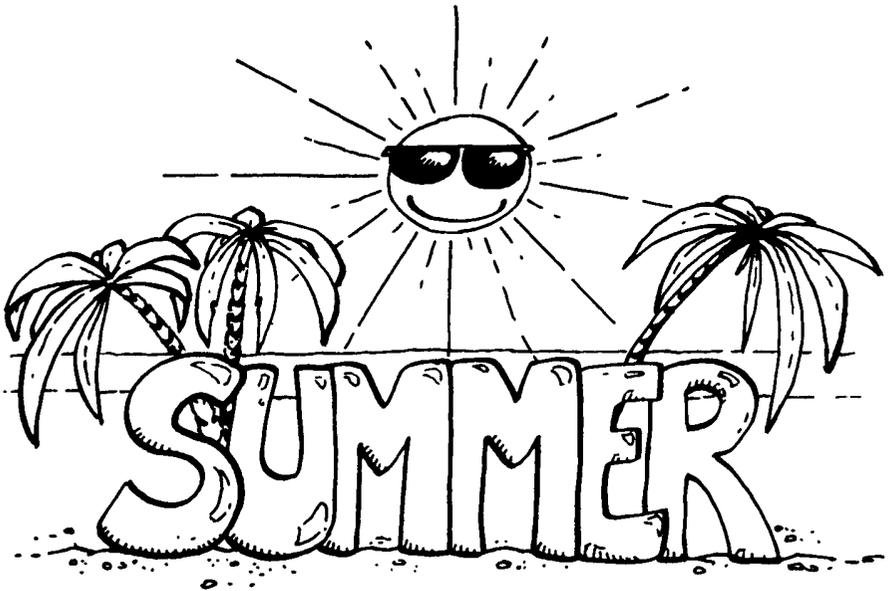
I want to leave you with a thought that came to me a couple of days ago as I thought about Lexie our new granddaughter. Because she was nine weeks premature she is in an incubator and only Stephen and Kimberley of the family are able to see and hold her. It has been such a wrench for Hazel and I not being able to hold our little granddaughter and tell her how much we love her and how

precious she is to us, and we will have to wait for six to seven weeks before that can happen. It struck me however this does not compare with how sad God the Father must be, when he '*so loved the world that he gave his only Begotten Son,*' that His love was so great for the world and he longs to hold His children and save them from a lost eternity, but many turn away and do not accept the gift of His Son Jesus Christ. I look forward to the day I will hold my granddaughter in an earthly sense but even more significantly God and the angels in heaven rejoice over one sinner who repents and comes to Christ for salvation. If you have not already responded to the call of Christ on your life then today is a good day to do just that.

Your friend and pastor

David

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



20th – 24th July 7:00 pm Holiday Bible Club

Sunday 26th July 11:00 am Family Service to celebrate the Holiday Bible Club

CHURCH REGISTER

DEATHS

*“O Death, where is your sting,
O Grave, where is your victory ?”*

Mrs Mary Leckey Friday 10th April 2015

Mr Harry McConaghie Sunday 12th April 2015

Mrs Hannah Adams Wednesday 17th June 2015

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the church was held on Wednesday 15th April, opening with the praise “*Lord for the Years*”. This was followed, after opening in prayer, by reports from Rev. David Brown, from Chris Alexander on behalf of the Kirk Session , and David Sampson from the Congregational Committee. The financial Statement of Accounts was made available, and reports were proposed and adopted. Entertainment was provided by Roberta, with Charlie, Peter, Sarah Jayne and Ross, as well as a drumming display by David. This was followed by a delicious supper in the hall.



Chris Alexander and Rosaleen Ramsey make a presentation to Alan and Christine Marshall, marking their retirement from the role of Church Officer this year.

A warm welcome to Ian Ross
who joins the Church family
as our new Church Officer!

BE UNITED

As this year comes to a close for your youth ministry our young people have been hard at work in preparation for their school exams. Our young people tend to worry about their results and stress themselves out a lot, but we continue to encourage them to trust in God and try their best, as they walk through life in relationship with Him. God is faithful and can be trusted!

In the previous edition of the way at Easter, I mentioned that our seniors were going on an overnight retreat to Bushmills. This trip was a huge success with our young people learning about the true meaning of Easter and having a lot of fun along the way. The girls thought it would be great banter to make the boys wear. They look lovely don't they...?!?



Our Juniors continue to meet every other Friday night, this term we

have followed a teaching course with an accompanying DVD (which the young people like) called "Liquid". These DVD's have been looking at the letter of St James, drawing practical wisdom for our youth to think



over. As we move into the month of July, the leadership of both Junior and Senior Be United plan to create a youth club called Survival. Last year we had a fantastic turn out as we taught the young people about the life of Jesus and visited places all around the north

coast, and also visited W5 in the Odyssey arena. This year we plan to run the same youth event from Monday the 13th of July until Friday the 17th. The event is for anyone of secondary school age, if you have some family that you want to get involved please get in touch with Robert McMullan as soon as possible.

Finally please pray for :

Leaders for our Junior & Senior Be United programme

Survival – Our summer camp for youth, Leaders have come together to plan the content of the programme

Peter Gibson and Petrina Gaile as they travel abroad to serve as helpers within summer mission teams.

All students coming home for summer from university and student who are planning to start university in September. Pray that our students will connect with University Christian Unions and be able to find another church where ever they are based.

A NOTE FROM ROB



In my last update I mentioned that my final term of first year at Belfast Bible College was coming to a close, now it has been completed. The past few months of study have been really challenging but rewarding as I have gained a greater understanding in a range of areas. My personal favourite have been “first century Judaism” and how to interpret and communicate the Bible. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has been praying for me this year. God has

helped me get through this first year of study and achieve good grades. On another note, God has given me an opportunity to serve

within the college as student president/chairperson. This exciting role will require me to lead a student committee within the college in various duties in service to the students and staff of Belfast Bible College. Already we have had various college events like BBC's talent show and the graduation ceremony at Spires (Church House). We are in planning for a start of the year orientation in Castlewellan Castle for all students, so please remember me in prayer as I lead the committee in the task and envision the team for the year to come.

As I look at the next very busy summer term with Holiday Bible Club and Survival I am very excited to lead in Hazelbank in our various missions this summer. So please continue to pray for me as I lead these teams.



Something I am really looking forward to this summer is a trip I have planned to France/Spain to cycle the “Camino De Santiago”. This trip will involve me cycling from St Jean in France to Santiago in Spain, a distance of 800 km crossing over the Pyrenees Mountains. The route, also known as “the way of St James”, is famous for attracting thousands of pilgrims. I feel excited for the obvious challenge of the cycle but also the time I can take to take a break and have time to read my Bible and pray... keep an eye in the next edition of the way for photographs.

HOLIDAY BIBLE CLUB

Holiday Bible Club, for children aged from 4 – 11 years, will meet this year from 20th – 24th July, from 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm. Each child must be individually registered, and a registration evening will be held on Monday 6th July between 6:30 pm and 8:00 pm. See you there!



UPDATE from ITALY



In their latest prayer letter, Alan and Tracey give thanks for a very successful conference, held this year in Mantova, rather than Rimini. Although numbers were down a little on last year, many people made new contacts, new friends and new discoveries about God's plans for believers.

Porto United has finished officially for the season. Probably just as well, given forecasts of 34°C in the late afternoon! A team of four from Coaching4Christ are running a camp from 15th-19th June, with a planned parents' night on the Friday.

Tracey's planned operation on her ankle has been rescheduled, but she has been told she will not be able to fly for twelve weeks.



Left: Members of the Coaching4Christ team join the church family's Agape Lunch, which is held monthly in the church at Mantova

For your prayers.....

Give thanks for a blessed conference in June and trust Him to confirm in people's hearts all that was heard and learned. Tracey's operation and her recovery afterwards. For safe travel over the summer months.

MONEY MATTERS

The financial position of the Church can be summarised as at 30th April 2015.

* The amount donated by way of Free Will Offering totals £20,463, a decrease of £2,984 compared to the same period last year. Loose offerings have increased by £493. This means there has been £2,491 less lodged to the Number 1 Account in the first four months this year compared to the same period last year.

* Contributions to our Property Fund during 2015 currently stand at £11,259 which is an increase of £2,921 on 2014.

* Donations to United Appeal for the 4 months to the end of April 2015 total £2,551, a decrease of £554 compared to the same period last year.

* Giving to the Ministry Extension Fund this year amounts to £1,985 which is an increase of £232 over the same period last year.

* Expenditure from the Number 1 Account to 30th April 2015 has increased by £16,019 compared to 2014, this equates to an 88% increase. Total expenditure for the period from this account is £34,128 compared to an income of £20,463. The increased expenditure is largely because our Congregation was vacant last year and therefore not paying a Minister's stipend or expenses.

* Expenditure through Property Account is £1,139, a decrease of £1,706 on 2014. During this review period no loan repayments to the Presbyterian Mutual Society have been paid, these are due in May and November.

* Expenditure through Ministry Extension Fund is £6,547 an increase of £842 on the same period last year. A donation of £5,000 towards flood relief in Zomba was paid in January 2015.

* The facility to make your donations to Hazelbank electronically was introduced some time ago. Thank you to those members who are using this system and I would remind all members that we can accommodate either all or some of your donations electronically.

* This is my last report as Hazelbank Treasurer. Firstly I want to thank all those who have assisted me with the financial matters during my six years in the role. I also want to commend all members of Hazelbank for their generous giving to the Church. This has helped the finances of the Church remain in order over the past years in the light of a significant decline in the number of members.

David Kerr
Treasurer

PORTSTEWART CONVENTION



Keswick at Portstewart started in 1913 and is the oldest daughter convention of the world famous Keswick held each year in the Lake District of England.

Under the theme 'All one in Christ Jesus' the Convention is organised by a group of ministers and lay people drawn from the main reformed denominations in Northern Ireland.

Situated in its own grounds, in the beautiful coastal town of Portstewart, 'Keswick at Portstewart' has over the years remained faithful to 'Bringing the bible alive for the whole family'.

This year's Convention in Portstewart will run from Saturday 11th July to Friday 17th July, with evening meetings at 7:30 pm, Saturday to Friday, and Morning Bible Study at 11:00 am, Monday to Friday.

NEW HORIZON

New Horizon has been running a refreshing, challenging and relevant ministry week at the University of Ulster in Coleraine, N Ireland every summer since 1989. It's the largest Christian event in Ireland attracting approximately 5,000 people daily over the course of the week. Major elements include Evening Celebrations, Morning Bible Readings, Seminars, and Youth and Children's programmes.

The theme for New Horizon 2015 is ‘An Unconditional love for His World’. For God so loved the world....love your neighbour...love your enemy...the world will know you follow me if you love one another...greater love has no-one than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.....God demonstrates his love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us...now these three remain: faith, hope and love, but the greatest of these is love....do everything in love....We love because He first loved us.

How are followers of Jesus Christ to live? It’s not exactly a secret, but sometimes living it can seem like rocket science!

We are loved and so we are to love. Friends, enemies, prodigals, families, neighbours, church members, those who do us good and those who do us harm. We are to love our bosses, colleagues, children and parents....those we see every day, and those we never see, in lands and cultures far from our own. In short, those loved by God are to love the world.

New Horizon 2015 is set to challenge with a cry for an Unconditional Love for God’s World..... Evening Celebration, with Harold Miller and Ben Kwashi will take place Saturday through to Friday, commencing at 7:30 pm and finishing at approximately 9:15 pm. Bible Readings, with Ian Provan, will take place each morning, Monday to Friday at 10:00 am. Full details of the programme are available on the NH website at www.newhorizon.org.uk

PROJECT EMMAUS

PCI Children’s & Youth Project for 2014-15

The aim of the project was to look at the central role of the Bible in how we learn about God and develop our faith as we walk with him day by day. However not everyone has available to them the Biblical

resources we have at hand and for many their greatest desire is to own a Bible of their own.

Two outreach areas of need were highlighted to us through the Project; one overseas in India, working in conjunction with the Bible Society, and one at home in Donegal Town, through the Presbyterian Church there. These are the reasons we chose to help fundraise for the project.

In India there are 31 million orphans. Many of these children are left to look after themselves as they have no one to care for them. The fortunate ones are taken in by orphanages. The Bible Society of India works in supplying Scripture items showing God's message of hope and comfort for these orphanages. The distribution of children's Bibles, schoolbags, books and blankets shows that someone cares for them.

In the home project in Donegal town the church set up a group called "Teens in Captivity". Young people from the community came together in the church and hoped to equip a quiet room filled with resources to help them study God's Word and grow in their faith.

Due to the fact that both projects were based around providing Bible and Biblical teaching resources we decided that the Bible should have a central role in our fundraiser.

And so we held a **6 hour Bible Read-a-thon on Saturday 9th May 2015** and encouraged the larger church family to get involved. Refreshments and a reflective worship time were provided in the hall throughout the day and the children engaged in artwork and could watch the entire Bible being read through on an animated DVD. Everyone also wrote footprints prayers for, our own church, families and community and prayers for the needs in the wider world. Visit our 'Road to Emmaus' in the church hall and read these for yourself. 38 children, youth and adult members of the congregation read in 10 minute intervals their favourite Bible passages. Many gave testimony as to why such a passage meant so much to them. Others came to listen and be ministered to and several stayed the whole six hours. It was a wonderful time of being together in a truly personal way in God's presence.

During the middle two hours, the first part of the Psalms were read, this was a quiet and blessed time as the Holy Spirit ministered to those sitting under His Word.

Through the children's sponsorship and financial gifts of support we were able to raise **£708 for Project Emmaus**. Praise God for the freedom and the blessing it was to read together from His Word and thank you to all who provided for the day; the teachers, the readers, the sponsors and supporters.

We trust that the Lord will guide this giving to the needs He intended it for and that many, many more children and young people will receive a Bible to call their own, that they might declare:

Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Psalm 119:105



Many thanks once again to everyone who has contributed to this edition of "The Way". Articles for future editions are always welcome, and can be passed to us on a Sunday, or emailed to us.

Thank you.



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NURSING HOME MINISTRY



The Nursing Home Ministry Team met recently for lunch to say a big thank you to Ken Ford for co-ordinating the team for another year. The team have been blessed over another year, ministering to the residents of Edenmore, Killowen, the Cottage, Brookmount and Ratheane and we praise God for answering our prayers. At the end of last year we were discouraged by the small number of residents attending the service in Ratheane but after much consideration and prayer we decided to continue. Over the past year we have had up to twenty residents attending.

Please pray for Ken, the team and others who speak at our services. It is a privilege to be part of the team. Should you wish to join us when we commence again in September, please speak to Ken. You would be most welcome.

Rosaleen Ramsey.

SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDIES

SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDIES: 2014-2015

Around eighty people have met regularly during this session, to share fellowship as they study God's Word together. These groups meet

informally in homes where, although they are studying the Bible, there is also good craic in a relaxed atmosphere. Each group has a slightly different 'character' but they are all the same in that everybody is made very welcome but nobody has to contribute orally to the discussions or prayer times. Not only is there an opportunity to grow in faith but a valuable element is getting to know other members of our congregation really well and developing friendships.

GROUP 1: "Freedom in Christ" (FIC) Discipleship Course

WHEN IT MEETS:

Last year there were two FIC groups meeting fortnightly; one group met on Wednesday evenings, the other on Friday evenings. This Course has 13 sessions plus a "day away" ministry component called "The Steps to Freedom in Christ".

MATERIAL:

It is delivered via DVD presentations, which include video testimonies to illustrate key points, and optional "Pause for Thought" discussion slots.

Each person has a Participant's Guide. Key themes of the course are:

- Live out your new identity in Christ
- Break through to maturity and fruitfulness
- Uncover strongholds and deceptions in your life, and learn how to renew your mind.
- Resolve issues from the past
- Understand God's goals for your life, and evaluate whether your goals are the same as His
- Understand exactly why Jesus commands us to forgive, and find how you really can do it.

FEEDBACK FROM THE GROUP:

Here are comments from a few members of past FIC groups:

"For me, FIC has been a moment of grace where God has highlighted His truths, provided a focused time to confront my concerns and to equip me with the mind of Jesus in daily life. I'm really thankful to God for it!"

"The FIC Course leads us beautifully on a journey of realising the freedom we can have as His sons and daughters."

"The teaching in FIC will have a lasting impact on my life."

GROUP 2 meets fortnightly evening meeting on Wednesdays, at 7.30pm

MATERIAL:

Members share leadership of the group. During the past session they used a booklet, published by The Good Book Company, called 'Confident Christianity' on Colossians. Members buy a booklet each, costing £3.50.

FEEDBACK FROM THE GROUP:

"The Bible text for each evening is broken up into manageable chunks, with questions that aim to help understand what the passage is about. The Leader's Guide (at the back of the booklet) contains guidance on questions and sometimes additional questions".

The group would recommend this booklet for studying and would be happy to share their booklets with another group,

GROUP 3

WHEN IT MEETS:

Weekly meeting on Tuesday mornings, 10.30am-12.00pm.

MATERIAL:

The group of 6 used one of the CWR's "Cover to Cover" series of books. They chose the title, "Names of God" by Mary Evans which explored the depths of God's character. This investigation into the names and titles given to God told them much of who God is, what God is like, what He does and how He relates to us.

FEEDBACK FROM THE GROUP:

This enabled the group to learn more about God so that they would be able to serve Him better, in day to day living.

GROUP 4

WHEN IT MEETS:

A Ladies Group meeting weekly on Tuesday mornings from 10.30am - 12.00pm.

MATERIAL:

They studied the "Book of Ruth" by Elizabeth Rundle, published in the CWR's 'Cover to Cover' series. This study showed lovingkindness in action as the story illustrates total dependence on the providence of God.

FEEDBACK FROM THE GROUP:

This study inspired us and motivated us into deeper faith as we applied it to our lives as we live for God daily.

GROUP 5: Grace Course (Published by 'Freedom In Christ Ministries')

WHEN IT MEETS:

Fortnightly, on a Friday evening at 7.30pm.

MATERIAL:

It is delivered via DVD presentations and each person has a Participant's Guide. Costing £2.95. The material is very easy to prepare. (The group got halfway through the course this past year.)

The Grace Course is a tool for churches to help Christians recover their first love for God so that they go on to love others and make a great impact on the world. Its objective is to enable Christians to experience God's grace in such a deep and real way that love for Him becomes the main motivator in their lives. It teaches the wonderful truths of grace but has an emphasis on helping people experience that grace. There are practical exercises, times of listening to God and a gentle ministry component led by Steve Goss the Co-Author.

Key themes of the course are:

1. Free, 2. Innocent, 3. Unashamed, 4. Courageous, 5. Humble, 6. Fruitful.

FEEDBACK FROM THE GROUP:

There are some very good examples, from real life experiences, of God's Grace.

It's been so refreshing to enjoy, receive and delight in the truth of God's Grace to us. The Grace Course does a marvellous job in introducing the concept of grace in a simple, engaging and, at times, even humorous way. It is short and to the point, taking an incredibly deep theological issue and making it understandable and practical.

GROUP 6

WHEN IT MEETS:

Fortnightly evening meeting on Wednesdays, from October until Easter, at 7.30pm.

MATERIAL:

The group used a booklet entitled 'Following Jesus' by Gordon Cheng, published by Matthias Media, which studied Luke chapters 9-12. Different members of the group share the leadership of studies.

The group also used a Scripture Union publication which was a booklet entitled, 'Meeting God', by J. I. Packer.

FEEDBACK FROM THE GROUP:

Found the meetings helpful, both for teaching the Christian faith and also for fellowship. They enjoyed the opportunity to get to know each other better.

GROUP 7

WHEN IT MEETS:

Weekly afternoon on Thursdays at 1.30pm, from September to May/June.

MATERIAL:

The Group studied The Shorter Catechism, Part 1, (Nos 1 - 38) – 'What we are to believe?'

In preparation the leader used, "An exposition on the Shorter Catechism" by Alexander Whyte, which was quite helpful, as well as various other commentaries on the Bible passages associated with the different topics

covered. "Christian Beliefs - 20 basics every Christian should know", by Gruden was a very relevant aid.

FEEDBACK FROM THE GROUP:

The Shorter Catechism may not be a very trendy publication today, but for a concise and comprehensive summary of basic Christian beliefs it is a remarkable little document and hard to beat. They enjoyed and benefited from these studies, which gave a renewed sense of wonder at the plan and purposes of God and of gratitude for our salvation as they looked up dozens of relevant Bible references.

The group leader made a brief summary outline of the topic headings covered, if it is of any interest or help to anyone and he would be happy to pass it on.

GROUP 8

WHEN IT MEETS:

Weekly on Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm from September to Easter.

MATERIAL:

The 'Good Book Bible Studies' series on Hebrews. Members each had a booklet for the study.

FEEDBACK FROM THE GROUP:

The members really enjoyed the studies and fellowship, getting to know each other better and growing in their Christian faith.

Please contact the Small Group Co-ordinator, Robert Blair, for further information on any of the groups or to receive contact details.



Left: Robert and David, together with Stuart Elliott, former Northern Ireland international at the June Evening Youth Service led by Be United.