

Newsletter No 7 15th September 2013

Apologies for not being able to issue this Newsletter last week but here it is. Most people will already know a lot of the information in this Newsletter but it will still be a good record to keep in your personal Journey of Faith folder. By the way, if you don't have a folder please ask one of the door stewards and one will be arranged.

The new church year has now well and truly started and as you know it started with our Community Fair in the Avenue on the last Saturday in August. Why not add the page of colour photos from last week's Antrim Guardian to your folder as a reminder of the event?

It was an amazing event seeing so many from our fellowship working and sharing together, the sense of unity and the Lord blessing us with good weather. This was preceded by the two nights before the Fair when lots of people brought all manner of bric-a-brac, cakes, tray bakes, bags and glad rags, books, toys and an excellent range of high quality crafts into the Bruce Hall. A group of volunteers then sorted and arranged all the items ready for sale on the Saturday.

The number of visitors coming down the Avenue, into the halls and church was also amazing. This was the key aim of the event, to let the people of Antrim see First and it's people close up and get to know about our organisations and plans. Please pray that the conversations with visitors that took place and the literature taken will develop into new contacts.

Events like this just don't happen – a lot of prayer and planning went into making the Fair such a success and an awful lot of people put in time and effort. As usual, there are too many to mention in this short Newsletter but the following people do really deserve a special thank you and they are Irene McMahon and her team of Lyndsey Thornton, Lesley Kirkpatrick and Greer Ferguson. Also, a special thank you to Alison and the choir for their musical contribution throughout the day. And let's not forget the brave volunteers' who put their heads in the stocks for a pelting with cold wet sponges.

There are also some people from outside the fellowship who made a significant contribution and they are Richard Fee from Eye Feel Good who supplied the climbing wall and archery equipment and Adrian Watson who supplied the bouncy castle. All this equipment was free of charge and very much appreciated. And finally, thanks to the Mayor, Roderick Swann and Councillor Neil Kelly for their support.

On the day, our Community Fair raised exactly £3,500 and gifts are still coming in. This brings the total in the project building fund to approximately £16,000 for which we thank the Lord and His people.

Please continue to support the project in whatever way you can and by giving as the Lord leads you.

We can also update you on the progress of our planning application.

On Wednesday 4th September our architect met with a senior planner in the Primary Room. Also present, was a representative from the Northern Ireland Environment Agency who had no issues with our proposals. There were also seven Councillors and one MLA representing the DUP, UUP and Sinn Fein in attendance to show their support for the project. Bill Parker and Clerk of Session were also present. The meeting was judged as being a positive one and it is likely there will be a further meeting between our architect and the planners to discuss the architectural detailing and the materials to be used. It will be October / November before the planners complete their review of the application and make their decision.

The meeting was only confirmed at short notice but we did manage to put out a specific prayer request to some people before hand and again the Lord proved that it will *"not be by might nor by power, but by My Spirit"* that this project moves forward.

Our next Newsletter will take the form of a Project Prayer Guide and will be available in October. In the meantime, have a look through your personal folder and you will see that the first Newsletter was issued in October 2010; almost three years ago! Let it remind you of how far we have travelled and how the Lord has guided us through the last three years as we continue on our Journey of Faith.