

Ballymena Congregational Church

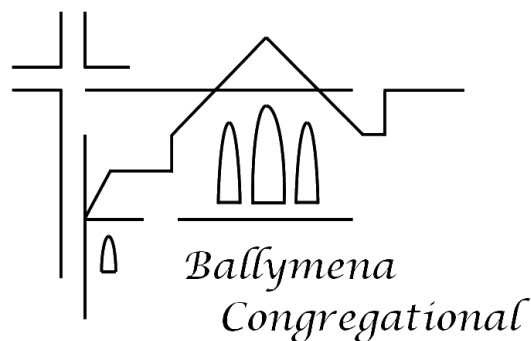
Summary Reports for the year past 2023

www.ballymenacongregational.com
(visit our Facebook page or Sermonaudio.com listings)



Reports by Minister & Secretary

££ *Financial Statement from Treasurer*



<u>Minister</u>	<u>Secretary</u>	<u>Treasurer</u>
Rev Jackie Brown 86 Grangegorm Drive Ballymena BT42 2EF 028 2565 3288 07506 165165	Mr Rodney Scott 26 Lismurn Park Ahoghill, Ballymena BT42 1JN 028 2587 1376 07704 983416	Mr Denis Scott 32 Tullymore Park Ballymena BT42 2AU 028 2564 0877 07719 671937

Sunday Services 11.30 am & 6.30 pm
(in the building and on-line)

Tuesday Midweek 8.00 pm (in the hall)

Associated families '60 **Communicant members** 39

Children's, Women's & Men's meetings as arranged

"Seeking more in 2024"

It will take prayer and action for this "catchphrase" to become reality in our church life and our own

For you this might mean ...

Seeking salvation ... or blessing
Seeking in prayer ... for guidance
Seeking to witness ... and to serve

These verses might direct you ...

Seek the Lord while He is near (Isa 55)
Seek first the Kingdom (Matt 6:33)
Seek with all your heart (Jer 29:13)
Seek so you may find Matt (7:7)
Seek diligently (Heb 11:6)

The Annual General Meeting of the church will be held on Friday 23rd February @ 7.30pm.

We trust these customary Annual Reports help keep you informed and involved regarding church matters past and pending. Please read them over and plan to be present at our AGM.

Thank you sincerely for your continued faithfulness. We pray God's continuing goodness and guidance. We need your ongoing commitment.

The Lord bless and keep you.

R Scott (Secretary)
February 2024

Message from the Manse – some key memories of church events across the months of the year past

March: The Book Club was started at the Manse with 12 people willing to meet once a month to read through "Life with Jesus" by Tim Chester. Meetings have been enjoyable with everyone taking part, either asking questions or contributing to the understanding of a passage.

April: This was Easter month. Good Friday was an open night with various people voluntarily taking part. And Easter Sunday was special with family and friends who don't normally attend church, coming to church.

May: On May 6th we witnessed the coronation of the first monarch in seventy years and now we sing God Save the King. May he too have a long and faithful reign as did his mother. Thanks to Jane, Thelma and Martina for arranging a special Friday Lunch with suitable red, white and blue bunting and cake. On the last night of the month, I was inundated with women at the Manse. Eleanor and Jane arrived with ten ladies who attended Fit for Life in the church. They were completing their activities with a walk up to the Manse finishing with refreshments.

June: We rejoiced with Josh and Samantha on the birth of Tommy. Another grandchild for Jane & Rodney.

(Continues inside after Treasurer's Statement and concludes on back page before Secretary's Comments)

January: I resumed full time ministry each week. The adage is so true, "You don't know what you've got till it's gone" I'm so glad to be back in God's harness again. My thanks go especially to the men who preached and to Rodney for co-ordinating.

Further moments: In August, with other church members, I spent an enjoyable day at the wedding of Jonathan and Hannah Logan. We wish them happiness together and pray they give place in their marriage to the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour.

Sadly, with the joy comes sadness and we remember those who have passed away inc. Maurice Waterson's sister (Nan); Thelma McBride's mother (Elsie); Martina's sister, (Ursula - over whom we prayed for months); Angela Thompson's father and brother; Ruth McCready's sister and just on the first of this month, Andy Mills' wife (Marlene) a church member. Our condolences go to all these friends & families.

Now we're into another new year not knowing what God has for us. I hope and pray for household salvation amongst our families and friends. I pray for each of you, brothers and sisters in Christ, that He strengthens our faith as we walk with Him.

Wishing you God's richest blessing according to His riches in glory
Jackie Brown (Minister)

Secretary's Comments

We must always thank God for His goodness across a year past, trusting in His continued blessing and guidance on our work, witness and wishes in this year.

Starting with simple but sincere comment on each of our regular church meetings and activities:

* **Sunday services** continue to be faithfully supported though several of our more elderly or ill members are no longer able to attend – they remain in contact online and by CD deliveries – God's Word is plain that we mustn't neglect to assemble together for worship & The Word so let's be consistent in this morning and evening – it's pleasing to see some new faces with us on Sunday mornings so keep praying & inviting others

***So too at mid-week prayer & Bible study** a faithful band regularly meet numbering in the mid-teens – it has to be said more could and should attend for the church's spiritual well-being and I confess disappointment and frustration when calls to return or come go unanswered

***Good Company** is well organised by Wilma and the ladies enjoy monthly Christian fellowship with various speakers, events and refreshments

***Ladies' Fellowship** similarly provides monthly opportunity for Christian company with a varied and interesting programme and deserves more faithful support from ladies for ladies

***Clonavon Coaching** maintains Christian witness and Bible lessons within football coaching weekly at Ballymena Academy – some of the young people have

professed faith and may this continue to encourage William and the dedicated coaching team.

***Sunday School** continues as part of morning worship for our pre and primary school children and we appreciate the teachers' endeavours – do invite and bring more children you may know

***Friday Friends** is our new name for Winter Warmers - now into a second year and well enjoyed for food and friendship fortnightly – all 60+ welcome

***Book Club** is a new activity commenced this past year which is being attended & enjoyed by a goodly number

***Missionary support** is well sustained and we have strengthened our ties with Barnabas Aid (for the persecuted church) plus Mifulera & Vispa (for African children) See Finance Report for missionary giving.

Recalling our Special Outreach Week in September - it was an earnest endeavour to share the Gospel around family, friends and neighbourhood. Please continue to pray for souls and invite others to join us.

Sharing some more appreciation & information:

*Genuine best thanks to all who "make things happen" in every role and service they fulfil here in the church.

*Appreciation & prayers too for Jackie's continued ministry – good to see him recovered from his autumn illness and undertaking earnestly again his charge to preach and pastor – thanks to our other speakers and let's all show support by regular attendance.

*Awareness and gratitude are appropriate also for the work of our Deacons in spiritual & practical oversight. Deacons have continued to pursue the potential re-location of the church building as previously discussed.

Recently there has been no positive developments regarding selling our present site, so we have asked our estate agent to canvass interest in wider circles than social housing developers. Equally, possible new sites we explored in the Carniny and Woodtown areas did not materialise, so we have made an initial enquiry about a site previously mentioned just beyond the Larne Road roundabout. We must remain patient and prayerful while Deacons seek to be pro-active.

Deacons have also spent time discussing our practice of Baptism following a request from a member about the possibility of having adult baptism by immersion when not baptised as an infant. Our established church practice, in keeping with the great majority of reformed churches, is infant baptism (or indeed adults) by sprinkling. However, Deacons recognise that some hold to believers' baptism by immersion and this is worthy of practical consideration. Each of these modes find basis in Scripture, across church history and in great church confessions – so Deacons believe they can be practiced with mutual respect and sincerity.

To conclude: *God is truly with us in all life's affairs and we do well to show gratitude and dependence.. Also let's support and serve our church in every way we can with commitment to attend and to do – always remembering "Yet not I but through Christ in me."*

Christian Regards

Rodney Scott (Church Secretary)