

Knockbracken Session Report for 2023

We are grateful to God for the blessings we have received as we review the life of the congregation of Knockbracken. We are grateful for the clear, challenging and compassionate teaching our minister Rev Peter Jemphrey has delivered from God's Word through the year. We have been led through the following series.

	AM	PM
Jan – March	Nehemiah 8-13	Jonah 1-4
April - August	Mark 16 John 14-17	John 4 Revelation 1-3
Sept – Dec	Peter Luke 2 21-38	Revelation 4-7 Romans 1

In addition to leading our own services, our minister also led the Cloughmills RP Church weekend in September and spoke at the installation of Paul Wright in Cookstown RP Church in March. Peter is also fulfilling the role of moderator of the Eastern Presbytery this year and is a member of the French Section of the Mission Committee. He is also a member of the College committee.

The evening service is preceded by the weekly prayer meeting.

The midweek meetings were held on Wednesday evenings in the book centre and we have studied the following topics through the year: -

Covenant Renewal / Nehemiah 10-13 / The Names of God

We held a public signing of the Covenant prepared for Synod 2022 at the conclusion of our morning service on 12th March 23. In addition to the weekly midweek Bible Studies, we hosted speakers from Wycliffe (Mike and Miranda Jemphrey), Philip Dunn from EMF, Asialink (our own Steven McCollum and Henry Montgomery), and an update on Rev Catalin Croitor and his work in Romania and Ukraine following a visit by (Stanley and Brian).

The Session was formally constituted 7 times to deal with matters of rule and oversight of the congregation. In addition, we were constituted 3 times for our communion services in January, May and September. Session attended the Synod meetings held in Trinity RPC and the statutory Presbytery meetings.

Our normal programme of activities carried on as usual. Before the morning service Sabbath School starts at 10.30am. We have 3 Young people's classes as well as the Bible Class. On Wednesday mornings the well-attended Happy Tots meet from 10-11.30am. The men's group and ladies fellowship continue to meet on a monthly basis. The Youth Club meet on Saturday evenings – the Juniors group starts at 6.30 and the seniors at 8. In addition, the Seniors Group meet monthly on Thursday mornings.

On Friday mornings a new venture has begun at Shaw's Bridge. Rev Peter Jemphrey and Steven McCollum go regularly and man a "Coffee Dock". Their aim is to engage with those who are out for a walk and challenge them to think about their eternal destiny.

In August we welcomed a "Go Team" to help us in a week of outreach. We held a Holiday Bible Club in the mornings for Primary School children, distribution work on some afternoons. In the evenings the team were involved in young people's work, door-to-door visitation, and outreach at Shaws Bridge. A Seniors musical afternoon was held on the Thursday afternoon and this proved very successful. This included an interesting and challenging testimony by Ernest Brown.

We were saddened by the deaths of 3 of our older members/adherents. We have 16 families in membership and 27 communicant members. In addition, we enjoy support from 16 adherents. The average attendance at worship services on the Lord's Day was 35 in the morning up from 30 last year and 26 in the evening up from 22 last year. The average attendance at communion was 27 up from 23 the previous year.

We are encouraged to have a number of older members who are strong spiritual examples for the rest of the congregation. We remain conscious of our smallness but continue to pray that our Heavenly Father would build his church both spiritually and numerically. We are encouraged that a few new people are attending and ask for wisdom in pastoring them.

Ian McCaughan
Clerk of Session