

## Glenmanus Session Report for 2022

During 2022 church life in Glenmanus reverted to a more normal pattern after the disruption caused by Covid in the previous two years.

**Worship services** were held morning and evening each Lord's Day, with the exception of the last Sabbath of the year when, in the evening, we joined with the Ballyclabber congregation for their end of year Praise Service. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was observed in January (24 communicants), April (24 communicants) and September (22 communicants). Average attendance at the morning service was 24 and in the evening 19. The main sermon series preached during the year included: Nehemiah, 2 Peter, Mark, What is a Christian?, Isaiah (ch 28 – 35), and selected Psalms. At the beginning of December our evening service took the form of a Praise Service on the theme 'The Great Rescue.' Our minister introduced the ten portions of praise which had been selected so as to take us through the Bible's message about our sin and the salvation that is available in Christ. We were pleased and encouraged to have the meeting house well filled for this service. During the year most of the services were livestreamed on Facebook, with the Bible reading and sermon from the morning service also being made available on YouTube.

**Covenant Renewal.** In the Autumn we spent four weeks at our mid-week considering the topic of Covenant Renewal and then on 11<sup>th</sup> December we had a service of Covenant Renewal. At this service our minister preached from Nehemiah 8 on "Covenant Renewal In Nehemiah's Day". The Covenant was read and signed by 21 members of the congregation and 3 Covenant children. At the evening service that day the sermon was "An Exhortation to Covenant Loyalty".

**Mid-week meetings** were held on Tuesday evenings apart from July and August. Our usual format is to have a study followed by a time of prayer. This year we worked our way through the book 'Surprised by Jesus' by Dane Ortland. In September we were pleased to join the ladies for a special meeting they had organized with Beth Montgomery representing Asia Link. At our meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> December Mary McCollum spoke about her work with George Royal Academy in South Africa. On two occasions we put off our own mid-week meeting to attend meetings organized by other local congregations: on 18<sup>th</sup> October we joined with Ballymoney as they had a speaker from the International Mission to Jewish People (formerly Christian Witness to Israel); on 28<sup>th</sup> November we joined with the Dervock congregation to get an update on the work of Tearfund from Mrs Karen Craig. We have found it helpful to be able to have our mid-week by telephone conference call at times during the winter months.

**The work of the Sabbath school** continued with our three pupils – Ross, Ellen and Katelyn Carson – being taught by Marion Wright, Scott McCollum and Anna McCollum. On Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June we had a congregational lunch at which a gift was presented to Miss Marion Wright in recognition of many years of faithful service as Sabbath-school Superintendent and teacher. Marion has now stepped down from these roles and Scott McCollum has been appointed as Sabbath-school Superintendent. We pass on our congratulations to Ross Carson for being awarded second place in a U.K. competition run by the schools Bible project with his essay An Eyewitness Account Of The Resurrection.

**Literature Distribution.** Following the passing of Queen Elizabeth II on 8<sup>th</sup> September we ordered 2000 copies of a tract which spoke of her life and faith and Saviour. These were all distributed in Portrush prior to her State Funeral on 19<sup>th</sup> September. As in previous years our minister prepared a Gospel Calendar featuring photographs taken by members of the congregation along with an appropriate text for each month. In December 500 copies of these calendars were distributed along with copies of the Evangelical Times Christmas Supplement. It is our prayer that God will use this witness to encourage believers and to draw people to himself.

**The Friendship Group** had eight meetings during the year. There were usually around twenty in attendance at these meetings, with around half from outside of our congregation. Those who attend appreciate the opportunity to meet and enjoy fellowship together and we were pleased that some from outside the congregation took up the invitation to join with us at our end of year meal. We thank the Friendship Group committee for organising these monthly meetings.

As a congregation we were greatly saddened by **the death of Rev. Bertie Johnston** which took place on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2022. Bertie and Audrey Johnston have played an important part in our congregation over the last 23

