

DIOCESE OF DOWN & DROMORE

Church Planting **News**

SEPTEMBER 2021

Bishop David writes...



Dear Friends,

The Diocese of Down and Dromore launched a new wave of Church Planting at the Bible Week in August 2013 with the aim of reaching unchurched people with the good news of Jesus Christ.

Church planting has a very long history dating back to New Testament times when Paul planted churches in the largest cities of the different regions he visited. New congregations, by needing to focus on the needs of non-members to get off the ground, are therefore generally better at reaching younger generations, residents new to an area and immigrant populations for Jesus. Church plants can benefit all the churches in the Diocese by introducing innovative approaches, developing new leaders and partnering with existing church communities in outreach ministries.

Between 2013 and 2020, seven new churches have been planted in the Diocese of Down and Dromore and you will find them listed in this newsletter. We are very thankful to God for calling new church plant leaders and generously providing the resources to enable exciting new developments in church planting in the Diocese in 2021. This issue focuses on the new developments in Newtownards, Tullycarnet and the lower Newtownards Road, Belfast.

It is our ambition to plant at least one new worshipping congregation each year over the next ten years. Please pray for our church plants as they reach out to those who don't know Christ. If you feel you are being called to participate in this work, please get in touch with Andrew Brannigan or myself. We would also really value your partnership by



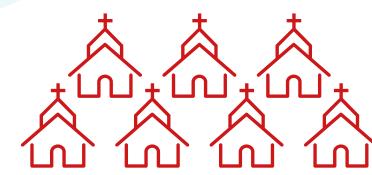
Bishop David McClay

the volunteering of your time and skills as well as through your financial giving. Please contact Keith Gardiner if you want to explore partnership opportunities – indeed, you may like to avail of the Standing Order form and Gift Aid Declaration at the back of this leaflet.

Finally, if you want to receive regular email updates on diocesan church planting, do please sign up on the diocesan website Church Planting page which you will find in the Ministries section.

Thank you for your time and interest.

Yours in Christ
+David



7 Church Plants in 7 years



A second church plant for Newtownards

West Winds Community Church was the first church plant to be launched in 2021 and the second to be planted in the Parish of Newtownards.

West Winds is supported by the Diocesan Church Planting Fund under the missional vision of St Mark's Newtownards and Glen Community Church, a church plant led by Rev Stephen Doherty.

On the last Saturday in June, after months of prayer walking, networking and planning, the new community church introduced themselves with a project to plant wellie boots in memory of loved ones. It brought together a large group of locals of all ages and created quite a buzz as well as a bright and colourful display outside the local shops.

The first outdoor church gathering took place on Sunday 1 August and was swiftly followed by two weeks of Kids Lunch Clubs in the estate. The team led by Stephen and the newly appointed



Planting wellie boots!



Paul Hawkins & Stephen Doherty

Assistant Church Plant Leader, Paul Hawkins, forged new relationships with local families whilst serving over 120 lunches, kindly prepared by a small team from St Mark's. The Club programme was delivered by leaders from Glen Community Church.

Outdoor Church continued every Sunday afternoon in August and has now moved indoors to the West Winds Primary School. Further ministries currently being planned for launch in September are youth football, bible study groups and a Hen's Shed.

PRAY



PRAY for Stephen and Paul as they balance the energy needed for West Winds and the persistence required for nurturing ministry in the Glen.

Thank God for the way he has blessed the Glen and for the excitement and warm welcome already expressed in West Winds.



New outreach begins in Tullycarnet

On 1 September Matthew Gault took up his role as Pioneer Evangelist in a new outreach project in the Tullycarnet estate in East Belfast.

Tullycarnet is situated mostly in the Parish of Stormont and the project will seek to meet the needs of people of all ages living in the estate. In time, Matthew and his wife Kirsty hope to plant a new worshipping community which will disciple those who come to know Christ as a result of the outreach.

Matthew was appointed by the bishop and will work closely with the rector of St Molua's Stormont, Rev Emma Rutherford.

Matthew, who became a Christian in his late teens, took a gap year between school and university and was involved in youth work, compassion ministry, Church planting and cross-cultural mission. This unleashed his passion for mission and led to a Theology degree followed by a Masters at Union Theological College at Queen's.

Matthew went on to work as the Operations and Missions Coordinator in Bangor Parish Church and most recently for Lowe Church in Finaghy as an Evangelism Associate involved in Alpha, CAP and Young Adults' ministries.

He says, "I have a real passion for reaching people outside the four walls of the Church with the Gospel of the Kingdom and equipping other Saints for ministry. Nothing gives me more joy than seeing people make a commitment to Jesus. I'm looking forward to serving and loving the people of Tullycarnet, to teaching and pastoring them, and to



Matthew Gault

what God will teach me through them and the experience of Church planting.

I recently got married to the wonderful Kirsty. She carries so much wisdom, compassion, and really nurtures and invests in others. As a family, we are really looking forward to rolling up our sleeves and getting involved in the local community."

PRAY



PRAY for Matthew and Kirsty as they take the first steps in this new venture. For wisdom and spiritual discernment; for open doors and divine encounters with the Tullycarnet community; for others to join them in mission.



Youth Work takes off at The Gathering

Andrew McCaw has completed his first busy summer as Youth Worker with The Gathering in Titanic Parish. Andrew (22) is a graduate from CYM and was appointed to the pioneering role in June. He is responsible for leading youth initiatives with a focus on evangelism, outreach and discipleship.

It's a broad and busy remit. Andrew will also be working alongside the Belfast MET student chaplaincy and other bodies to support students as well as making connections with charitable organisations within the parish to promote work among youth and children.

Back on the ground, the work is well underway. The church plant ran a Youth and Kids Week in August which included their first ever Holiday Bible Club.

"It was a great success," says Andrew. "We partnered with our friends in St Patrick's Ballymacarrett and had around 40 kids and young people coming each day. Alongside the Club we launched our weekly Youth Drop-in which includes some street work in the



Fun at the Holiday Bible Club



Andrew McCaw

Pitt Park community. Mostly it's about developing relationships and offering a space where the young people can chill and be themselves. In our first week we had some great conversations about life, summer, Covid and what they want to see in the Drop-in. Down the road we're looking forward to running courses like Youth Alpha where we can explore faith and life together."

Meanwhile from September, Andrew will be running Sunday morning Youth Church which will have a happy mix of breakfast and Bible study!

PRAY



PRAY for Andrew as he breaks new ground. Pray for favour with the local community and for strong relationships with local young people.

Pray for him as he juggles work with his studies to become a Diocesan Evangelist.

Down & Dromore Church Plants and Leaders



Glen Community Church, Newtownards, led by **Rev Stephen Doherty**.

Moneyreagh Community Church, led by **Rev Rory Blake-Knox**.

Braniel Community Church, led by **James Crockett**, Diocesan Evangelist.

Killough outreach to Children and Youth, led by **Sarah Irwin**, Diocesan Evangelist.

The Gathering which meets in St Martin's, Ballymacarrett, led by **Ross Munro**, Diocesan Evangelist.

I'M INTERESTED IN PLANTING OR PARTNERSHIP



CONTACT:

Andrew Brannigan
Diocesan Development Officer
andrew@downanddromore.org

Keith Gardiner
Fundraising Officer for Church Growth
generosity@downdromorediocese.org



JESUS IS ALIVE



Our church plants now reach into 9 communities but we want to do more.



Please join with us. We invite you to commit to prayerful and financial support using the standing order form below and gift aid declaration overleaf. Thank you.

Standing Order Form

To: (name and address of your bank)

.....

Sort Code: / / Account Number:

Account Name:

Please pay a regular gift of: £10 £25 £100 £ Other

to Down and Dromore Church Planting Fund each month. Please also state the amount in words:

Please start on and from then on each month until further notice.

Signature: Date: / /

Your details

Title: (Mr/Mrs/Rev/Dr etc) Full name:

Address:

Postcode:

Email:

Phone:

By completing this form, you are giving us permission to process your personal information solely for the purposes of the Church Planting Fund. We will keep your data secure and retain it only for as long as is necessary.

Bank details for Down and Dromore Church Planting Fund:

AIB, University Road, Belfast, BT7 1ND

Sort Code: 93-80-92 Account No.: 17028762



Make your gift go further with Gift Aid

Declaration

I confirm that I am a UK taxpayer and would like the Diocese of Down and Dromore (Church Planting Fund), to reclaim tax on my donation of £ and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past four years.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year, it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I understand that the Diocese of Down & Dromore will reclaim 25p on every £1 that I have given.

Title: (Mr/Mrs/Rev/Dr etc) Full name:

Address:

Postcode:

(Please insert Post Code as claim cannot be made without this)

Signature:

Date:

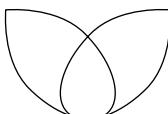
I will notify the Diocese of Down and Dromore if:

- I want to cancel this declaration;
- I change my name or home address;
- I no longer pay sufficient tax on my income and/or capital gains

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

Please send your completed form to:

Mr Brian Lavery
Diocese of Down and Dromore
Church of Ireland House
61-67 Donegall Street
Belfast
BT1 2QH



DIOCESE OF DOWN & DROMORE

**Church
Planting Fund**

