

We Are

# COOKE CHURCH

Reaching Out | Engaging | Growing

AUTUMN 2024

# Cooke Church Connect Magazine



## Blessed to be a blessing

“the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law..... Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.”

Paul's letter to the Galatian Church.... chapter 5

[www.cooke.church](http://www.cooke.church)

[hello@cooke.church](mailto:hello@cooke.church)

## The start of a new church year always brings excitement of the possibilities that lie ahead.

The summer of 2024 may not have been remarkable weather wise, but it has been a pretty epic one in the life of Cooke church. We are on our way to a renewed heating system, Roger MacNeill has worked relentlessly to co-ordinate all the work and siting of the boilers- a big job that warrants a big 'thank you' from us all.

An incredible team of 55 volunteers from our church family and beyond staged another fantastic week of Summer Mission. Our theme this year focused on **friendship with God** using a programme that creatively took us diving into the magical underwater world of fish and mammals. **Scuba** was one of my biggest summer highlights. 70 kids came in contact with the wonderful community of our church, and the greatest story ever- that of Jesus and his love. Many of our teenagers formed the heart of the team and it was fantastic to see them recruiting friends, working positively alongside older team members, growing in confidence and ability, having fun and being excited about their faith. Those of the congregation who came to the afternoon tea-party will testify to the joy of their contribution.

Summer mission has significantly added to the number, sense of belonging and connectedness of our kids and young people and this is so in evidence as Genesis youth fellowship has relaunched, along with Junior Bible Class, Senior Bible Class and Epic. It is a unique and special thing to watch an ease of confidence in the way our teens chat and get involved with the whole church family, from the youngest to the oldest. It reflects and blesses the heart of our Father God to see his people growing in love and unity..... it is the foundation of his kingdom coming. This is indeed the title for our autumn series of sermons (**kingdom come**) taking a journey into the world changing teaching of Jesus in his sermon on the mount.



We have reintroduced the pew bibles into church alongside highlighters in order to assist us all to engage with and consider what Jesus really says in this sermon. I'm excited as we delve into this and would love to hear about your experiences as we integrate his words into our attitudes and actions.

Life groups relaunch again this month also- we had so many wonderful evenings together last year and I would really encourage you to come and try one out if you haven't already done so. Its the ideal place to grow and grapple with your faith and to explore how it lands in our lives.

I am delighted also to share news that we will have the Rev Corrina Herron coming to join us for one day of pastoral and discipleship work every week. Corrina is known by many of you as a former assistant at Cooke, and in this year of retraining for chaplaincy ministry, she is able to spend her Thursdays in serving at her old stomping ground.

There are so many wonderful possibilities in view this autumn at Cooke and I'm excited as we share them together.

*Dave*

## Life Groups @ Cooke

Wednesday night and Sunday night groups  
meeting every other week

**For everybody**

**Relaunching September 2024**

.....

**sign up in the foyer or online**

a place to grow in friendships & understanding  
a place to deepen in faith and love for God  
a place where life is shared

# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

ARTISAN FAIR

8TH NOV

MODEL RAILWAY

16TH NOV

CLOTHING APPEAL

16/17TH NOV

ADVENT AFTERNOON TEA

1ST DEC

CHRISTMAS MARKET

6TH DEC

As the darker nights start to creep in it's hard to believe we've reached this time of year again. I hope you all had a restful summer and enjoyed the two sunny days we experienced in July and August!

Our church activities are starting to ramp up again and we're looking ahead to our fundraising calendar for the next few months. It would be great to have your support at all the events below as we seek to raise funds for all the exciting programmes we are aiming to launch and support this year.

Friday 8th November 6.30pm – 9pm - Artisan Fair a variety of crafts created by local artists, this is your opportunity to start thinking about Christmas and shopping local industries.

Saturday 16th November 10-3 pm & Sunday 17th November 12pm-2pm – Clothing Appeal, donations of gently used or new clothing would be greatly appreciated.

Saturday 16th November 10am-3pm – Railway & Model Vehicle Fair with lunch and light refreshments served throughout the day.

Sunday 1st December 1pm – 4pm – Advent Afternoon Tea, step into the Christmas spirit with a festive afternoon tea

Friday 6th December 6.30pm – 8.30pm – Christmas Market with a variety of nearly new gifts, refreshments, home baked goods, books and a visit from a special guest in a red suit...



See how many points you can guess our mystery members in. Or if you are new to Cooke just get to know some familiar faces better- they would love to chat to you. Names and photos are revealed later in the magazine- good luck! (ans page 10)

### Person 1

**LIKES...** the colour blue and watching thrillers on TV! Also enjoys the odd soap, especially Emmerdale. Loves dogs especially their own Staffi. Enjoys swimming (indoors not outdoors) and walks (with the dog and sometimes the husband). Likes crafting and makes their own cards. Enjoys a good burger and really likes the band Snow Patrol. **20 points**

**IS...** a mum of 2 grown up sons. Currently working in Arlington Nursing home just behind Cooke and has supported some of the residents in coming to Cooke. **15 points**

**IN COOKE....** Grew up in Cooke, was baptised and married here. Has helped in various organisations through the years including Sunday School. Is currently on the Church Committee and helps with the distribution of the flowers after the service. Also helps with The Food Store and Tots Café. Is a valuable member of Cooke Clean Team. **10 points**

**FAVOURITE BIBLE STORY...** The Easter Story. Easter is their favourite time of year. They love everything about Easter and like to get the place all decorated to celebrate Easter. **5 Points**

**FAVOURITE SONGS...** 'Cornerstone, in Christ alone...' as they like the words. **2 points**

**ABOUT COOKE...** 'The people, it's just like a big family'. **1 point**

### Person 2

**LIKES...** the colour red. Enjoys watching documentaries and real-life drama including gorey stuff like operations and medical procedures and things like 24hr in police custody. Also enjoys watching football. Played Netball in their youth but now likes long walks. Loves regular trips to England to see her son & daughter and grandchildren. Back in the day they were a Bay City Roller fan but now it's more country rock. Enjoys Indian and Chinese food. **20 points**

**IS...** a mum of three- including one famous footballing son. Retired after 38 years in the Housing Executive but kept busy with her 5 beloved (and soon to be 6) grandchildren! Has been in Cooke since she was about 2 years old and her family moved into Rabbi Street behind the old Curzon Cinema on the Ormeau Road. **15 points**

**IN COOKE....** Grew up here, was married attended all the organisations and helped out at a few including Sunday School for many years. Is currently a Church Elder and the Church Secretary. Also helps at Tots Café and is another valuable member of Cooke Clean Team. **10 points**

**FAVOURITE BIBLE VERSE ...** . Matthew 19 v14 'Suffer the little children to come onto me..,' **5 points**

**FAVOURITES SONGS...** 'How Great Thou Art' (reminds her of her mum) and 'Not I, but through Christ in me' as she likes the words. **2 points**

**LIKE ABOUT COOKE...** 'The people, it is like a family. I enjoy after church catching up with everyone in the reception area. **1 point**

# SUMMER HIGHLIGHTS

Scuba summer mission at Cooke involved almost 60 members of an incredible team. We had over 70 kids registered and averaged around 50 every day. It was an amazing week of fun, creativity, experiments, deep sea snacks, equally deep bible stories, games, songs, and prayer. The team was fantastic and the kids had a wonderful week learning about the friendship that God gives into their lives. Highlights were the senior's tea party, hunt the leader and our family barbecue.



# AN OLYMPIC ADVENTURE WITH THE CARSONS

I Love Paris in the Spring Time.....

Summer holidays can often be long in the waiting, short in the happening and quickly a memory of the past. However, as the autumn term gets underway, I hope it is the case that you are able to look back on some happy (albeit not necessarily warm!!) memories from the change of routine that summer brings.

This summer our family had the joy of spending a week camping on the outskirts of Paris and to share the majority of that time with our very own minister Dave Gray and his lovely family. (Pastoral care is taken very seriously at Cooke PC!!). The focus of our trip was the opportunity to attend the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. Having been successful in the ticket ballot some 18 months before. By the time our trip finally came, the excitement levels where almost as high as the pole vault world record which was later to be broken during the Games.

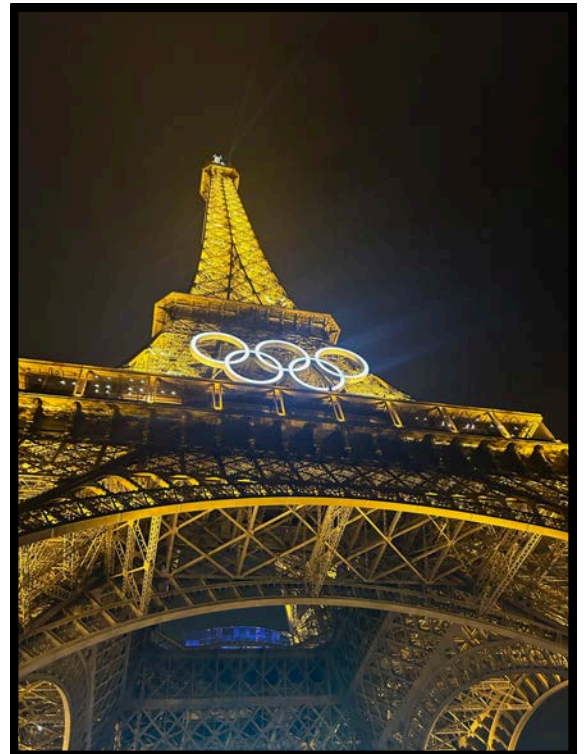
Our tickets were for one of the afternoon sessions of the men's Rugby Sevens tournament which was taking place in the main Olympic Stadium – Stade de France, the day before the opening ceremony of the Games.

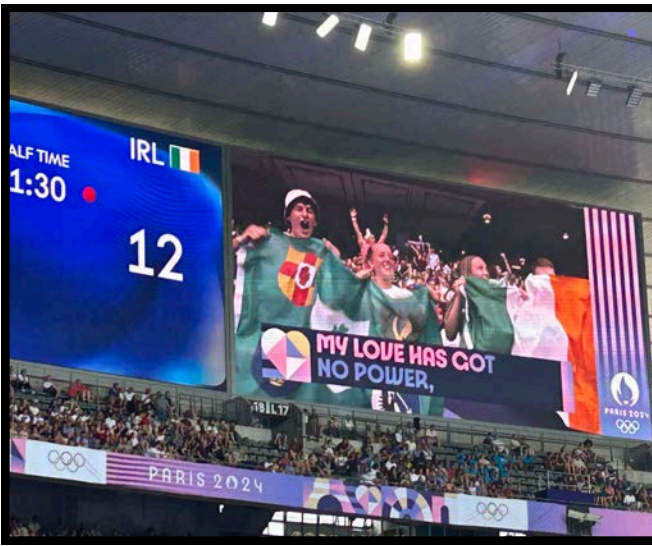
Our day began with an early morning departure from our adjoining tents for a car trip (remembering that they drive on the other side of the road there!) to the train station. After Sheryl and my very own 100 metre Olympic sprint from the ticket office, we all just about made it safely onto the train for central Paris. Once we arrived Jane, drawing on her time living in Paris for a year as a student, joined Sheryl on the leadership team, while I continued to follow the guidance, and the kids began spending all the money!!

We took the Metro and joined with the thousands of other excited fans making our way to the Olympic Stadium. There is always something exhilarating about converging with the crowd to a big event, whether sporting or otherwise. The shared endeavour, the excited anticipation, the buzz of conversation and the noise as a group of people, many unknown to each other, bind together in a shared goal. Heading to my first Olympic Games this was especially so, with so many different nationalities evident and our wonderful Parisian hosts pointing the way with their large sponge fingers. It will come as no surprise to any of you that in the middle of thousands of people from across the world Dave and Jane managed to bump into close family friends from back home!!



Arriving at the Olympic Stadium did not disappoint!! It's multi-tiered stands rising high into the sky, its street vendors selling their wares, every food and drink taste satisfied and the many costume clad French supporters in joyful form. Once inside the rugby action was equally breathtaking as 6 matches were played out back-to-back before us between 12 strong international teams.





Highlights included becoming French for 14 minutes and chanting ‘Allez Les Bleus’ as France took on Fiji, seeing Australia and South Africa dispatch their opposition with that usual southern hemisphere swagger and Ireland running New Zealand very close before the All Blacks do what they do best and eked out their customary win at the death! In between matches the Gray kids kept us and the entire crowd entertained by popping up on the big screen in the stadium, with Amelie in particular spotted on TV back home. A possible star for the future?!

With the rugby over we joined the many others pouring out of the stadium still chanting ‘Allez Les Bleus’ (I promise not to do it again once the Six Nations rugby resumes). Jane now became chief tour guide and Sheryl and I happily followed her lead while the young people finished spending all the money!! We were treated to a wonderful tour of all the Paris sites from the Pompidou Centre to Notre-Dame, from dinner on the banks of the River Seine to desserts at the iconic Café de Flore, before finishing on level 2 of Olympic Rings clad Eiffel Tower at 11.30pm, surveying Paris beneath us. Another Olympic sprint followed to catch the last train out of Paris back to our cars and a return journey to our campsite by 3.00am!

To be able to attend the Olympic Games in Paris in 2024 was particularly special for us all as it marked 100 years since Eric Liddell’s attendance in the same city for the 1924 Olympic Games. In a story made famous by the film Chariots of Fire, Eric Liddell, the world’s best sprinter from Scotland, withdrew from the 100 metres race, in the face of strong opposition from the public, officials and teammates alike. This was because the race heats took place on a Sunday when his own convictions didn't allow him to run on a Sunday. Ultimately Liddell entered the 400 metres instead, a race he was not expected to win, transforming how it was run and winning it in a new Olympic record. I would thoroughly recommend watching Chariots of Fire (again!!). But it tells only part of his remarkable Christian life story, and I would also highly recommend any of his biographies.

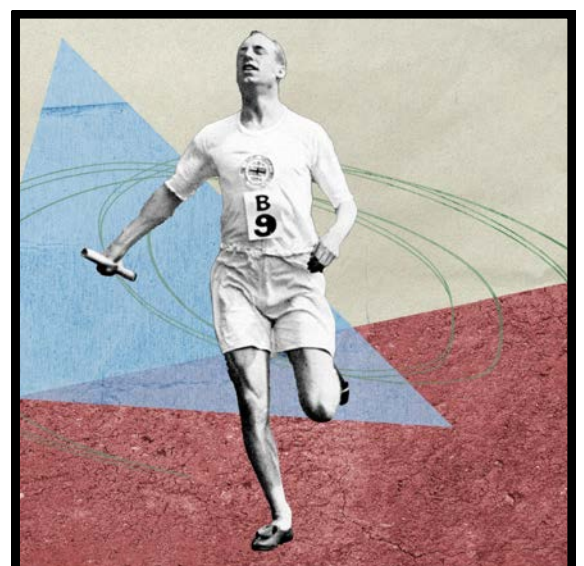
What I love most about Eric Liddell’s story however is the moment he explains his motivation for running as follows:

‘God made me fast and when I run, I feel His pleasure’

Not many of us can be as fast Eric Liddell or as good at sports as the Olympic athletes we see, but one thing that I am certain of and that every one of us can have in common with Eric Liddell is to feel God’s pleasure each and every day when we seek to follow Him, wherever He has placed us. His Word promises:

‘The Lord your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing’ (Zephaniah 3:17)

Brian Carson

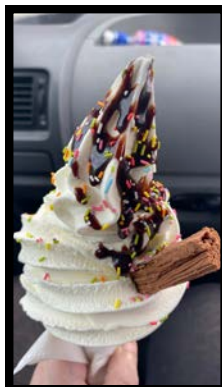


# ORMEAU GREEN FINGERS ON TOUR

## COOKE TRIP TO BALLYEDMOND CASTLE AND GARDENS



On a lovely August morning, a keen group of Cooke's finest garden devotees left the Ormeau and headed for the Mourne, to the incredible Ballyedmond Estate. The garden tour was organised by Janice and Harvey Glenn and was a highlight of the summer. The guided walk through the beautiful planting took us on a world tour of biomes. We moved from alpiners to temperate forrest, to sub-tropical- all that was missing was desert! A team of 4 full time gardeners not only maintain the plants, but every year devise new projects and elaborate structures and water features that amaze and impress. Our tour ended in style at the magnificent Orangery with scones and tea. We headed home inspired and satisfied - but happily we'd left room for a '99' at Brennans- a joyous end to a fantastic day!





# AUTUMN EVENTS @ COOKE

## Artisan Fair

8th November  
7- 9pm  
Cooke Church Halls

## CLOTHING APPEAL



Donate gently used or new clothing

DROP OFF POINT OPEN

SAT 16TH NOV 10 - 3

SUN 17TH NOV 12 - 2

DOWNSTAIRS IN THE MCWILLIAMS HALLS



## RAILWAY & MODEL VEHICLE FAIR

Sat 16th Nov  
10am - 3pm



Dining cart open 10-2  
Lunch served from 12

To book a table or for more information contact  
roger.macneill@cooke.church

COOKE  
CHURCH

216 Ormeau Road  
Belfast  
BT7 2FY



## Presbyterian Women

Living for Jesus

5th October: Special speaker from  
L'Arche  
hosting Kirkpatrick PW 2.30pm in the  
church welcome area

12th Nov: Talk on aprons  
2.30 in Coffee@Cooke

10th Dec: Christmas Lunch at the  
Ivanhoe



## THE FLOWER ROTA

SEPT 22: ELEANOR BRENNAN

SEPT 29: THE HETHERINGTON FAMILY

OCT 6: JENNIFER HENDERSON (IMO W. BILLY HENDERSON)

OCT 13: JOAN CLARKE (IMO STEWART CLARKE)

OCT 20: **HARVEST**

OCT 27: ELAINE & ROGER MACNEILL

**FLOWER TEAM E. BRENNAN**

NOV 3: JANICE GLENN

NOV 10: J WILSON (IMO T&J MCMEEKIN, R MCHENRY, J WILSON)

NOV 17: IMO RAY MCWILLIAMS

NOV 24: JANICE GLENN

**FLOWER TEAM JEAN WILSON**

## NEW HEATING SYSTEM UPDATE

# COOKE, WE HAVE IGNITION!

Over the summer there has been a significant move forward in the replacement of the heating system for the church building and hall complex. We have fully working gas boilers now operational in the main halls and MacMillan Halls. The church building has had to have assessments on where best to locate the significant connections of boilers, pumps and pipework, but this is now decided and the engineers are poised to start installation. Meanwhile the money to fund this vital work has wonderfully been invested by members of the congregation. Thank you! We have raised enough to meet the £82K bill so far with the final unit to be paid for once installed and operational. Already the efficiency of the new systems is transforming the level, speed and cost of heating in the halls, and we look forward to this being extended to our church building before winter sets in. Our fund raising target only has £20K to go- lets work together to complete the miracle!

**If you would still like to contribute  
 all donations will be gratefully received**

Please use the special giving envelopes in the church  
 or make bank transfer using ref 'church heating fund'  
 Cooke Centenary Church  
 Sort Code: 98-00-83      Account No: 18021009



Person 1: Debbie Herd  
 Person 2: Hilary Brunt



# 100 YEARS OF GUIDES AT COOKE

Our guide company is back in action and growing!!  
Wednesday evening is Guiding night at Cooke:

Rainbows for girls aged 4 to 7

Brownies for girls aged 7 to 10

Guides for girls aged 10 to 14

All girls are most welcome to join for fun and adventures

Times 7.00 - 8.30pm

Guides past, present and future are invited to our special Guide service on Sunday 3rd November, celebrating 100 years of Guides at Cooke and giving thanks for all the girls (young and old) who have been blessed by being part of it.



**girl power**

**girlguiding @ cooke**  
Wednesdays 7-8.30  
Contact Jennifer at [hello@cooke.church](mailto:hello@cooke.church)



## BIG BLESSINGS TUESDAY FREE FOOD TABLE

Jennifer and Paul are to be found out on the Ormeau Road at the front of the church every Tuesday morning from 10am. They are the welcoming faces of the BIG BLESSINGS TABLE. It is wonderful to see how they bless people of all circumstances and backgrounds through their warm and welcoming greetings and invitations to take what they and their families can use. Call by or give them a friendly beep when you're passing!

## COME AND JOIN THE 'CRAFTY LADIES!!'

Joan and the girls meet every Tuesday morning to create, chat and share life and skills. The group meet in the Church Welcome Area from 10 - 12pm getting crafty and having a well supplied tea break. All new members of every level of skill are most welcome to join.

## Knitting Club



# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

| Date  | Services & events   |
|---|---|
| Sunday 22nd Sept<br>Sunday 29th Sept  | Service @ 11 with Little Cookes (LC) & JBC. Life Group @ 7<br>Service @ 11 with Rev Moore Casement (LC)   |
| Sunday 6th Oct<br>Sunday 13th Oct   | <b>Service @ 11 with communion</b> (LC) Life Group @ 7<br>Prayer breakfast @ 10 in welcome area, Service @ 11 (LC & JBC)  |
| Sunday 20th Oct<br>Sunday 27th Oct  | Harvest Sunday @ 11 (LC & JBC) Life group @ 7<br>Service @ 11   |
| Sunday 3rd Nov<br>Tuesday 5th Nov<br>Sunday 10th Nov<br>Sunday 17th Nov<br>Sunday 24th Nov                | Service celebrating 100years of Guides @ 11 Life group @ 7<br>Cosy Hub Launches @ 12.45<br>Remembrance Sunday @ 11 (LC & JBC)<br>Mission Sunday @ 11 (LC & JBC)<br>Church gathers @ 11 (LC)             |
| Sunday 1st Dec<br>Sunday 8th Dec<br>Sunday 15th Dec<br>Sunday 22nd Dec<br>Wed 25th Dec<br>Sunday 29th Dec | 1st Sunday of Advent- Service @ 11 (LC)<br>Service @ 11 (LC & JBC)<br>Service @ 11 (LC & JBC) <b>Carols by candlelight@ 7</b><br>All age service @ 11<br>Christmas day celebration @ 10<br>Service @ 11 |

**COOKE  
FOOD  
STORE**

Foodstore continues its work over the autumn. The team will provide weekly hampers for people needing assistance. Please continue to remember to show your support by bringing tinned food, toiletries and other goods to leave in the church welcome area or in the Halls on Tuesday mornings.

## POINTS OF CONTACT



**Dave Gray**  
Minister

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dave.gray@cooke.church



**Elaine MacNeill**  
Clerk of Session

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