

# McCracken Update

January Newsletter 2017

*"Many are the plans in a man's heart but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails"—*

*Proverbs 19 v 21.*

At the beginning of a new year, here in Claremorris, we are glad and excited to be considering how we can reach people for Christ and encourage them on their journey of faith. We are thankful that **Jeff & Ann Urich** are settling in well following their arrival in early October. They are looking for more opportunities to get involved in the community so that they can share their faith. They are also going to be more involved in church, with Jeff beginning soon to help with the Sunday morning meetings. **Margaret Smith**, however, has been unwell in recent weeks following, it seems, a reaction to medication received before Christmas. She has been hospitalised in Castlebar and Galway and is slowly recovering now at home. We are grateful for this, but realise too that she is facing into her husband's anniversary in mid February, another trying time indeed. We value prayer for her.



2016 ended with real encouragement as several children came along to our **Christmas Club**. It was a truly international group with Indian, Lithuanian, African and Chinese children! We thank God too for the encouragement it was to hear one of the Indian women ask about a regular club and to have an Irish lady, home from America, come into the hall and ask if the club

was on every day!! We were already thinking about the start of a regular ministry amongst local children and this has strengthened our praying towards this ministry.

We hope to have a **St. Patrick's Day** table on March 17th with literature and a kids' craft available to the many people who will be enjoying the carnival atmosphere around the town square. At **Easter**, we are also planning a **Good Friday service and Easter Kids Club** on the Saturday afternoon. Please pray that we will know guidance and help, both leading up to and during these times. It would be great to build up relationships with more children and families over the coming months. Please remember too our Thursday outreach starting up again in February. **Larry Dunne and Jonathan** spend these days either talking to people on their doorsteps or distributing outreach literature, including invitations to our church services. Again, it would be so encouraging to see someone respond positively and come along to find out more.

Back in November, we had a very happy family night in Castlebar as Nicola graduated from her health care course. She started it in September 2015 and finished in June last year. Nicola has her name with an agency and hopes to work some hours in the week, probably in a hospital environment. We trust that this will complement our church work and help with our overall financial support as our own family needs increase. Thankyou for your help and prayers into another year.



**Jonathan, Nicola, David, Sarah and Josie (Labrador, missing from above photo!)**

**Personal contact details**—jnmccracken149@gmail.com Tel—00353 94 9372760 19 Rushbrook, Claremorris, Co. Mayo.

**ECM**—Ballymacoss Avenue, Lisburn, N.I. BT 28 2GX Tel. 028 92 666044



## Praise

- For Jeff, Ann and Margaret. We thank God for our new team in this new year.
- A steady core of people who come to church each week and a growing sense of fellowship in the Lord.
- Good relationships in the town with people we meet.
- God's help in 2016.

## Prayer

- Outreaches on St Patrick's Day and Easter.
- The Urich's smooth transition to the work, especially as Jeff begins to preach and teach.
- Protection and strength for us as a new church in Claremorris.
- Margaret's steady return to health.
- Sarah's Junior certificate mock exams in February, 8th—17th.
- A good balance of church, family and work commitments for Nicola.

