

McCracken Update

December Newsletter 2018

Dear Friends, it is a pleasure to write as we fast approach this Christmas time of the year. We value your prayers and offer our thanks, as we continue the Lord's work here in Claremorris.

We have just had "The Amazing Journey" Bible exhibition at the local Boys National School. Around 120 boys interacted with the dramatic stories of Noah, Goliath, Mary and the Egyptian Princess. Afterwards, the boys got to dress up and eat some dry bread, dates and honey...just like in Bible times! Each boy received a pack with an offer of a free New Testament and it would be wonderful to be able to return to the school with some NTs to give out.



Earlier in November, we had to run the advertised Kids Club from our front room! A power outage at the Town Hall meant that we had no other option but to bring the children to our home. We were pleased that the family with 5 girls, consented to have them with us and that we have gained some trust in the process... the electricity going off probably did us a favour, but we hope the power for our **Christmas Club on 15th Dec** stays on! It will be from 3-4.30pm.

Mission changesabout 3 years ago, ECM suggested to its leadership that anyone approaching the grand old age of 50, should be looking around for a deputy. With this milestone just around the corner now for Jonathan, he has been working over the past couple of years to handover his **ECM Field Leader** responsibilities to someone else. That someone is **Colin Holmes**, who leads our ECM team down in Ferrybank, Waterford. Jonathan has been the ECM Leader in Ireland for just over 12 years and at recent leadership meetings in Germany, the baton was successfully passed on to Colin. This is a timely change and we believe it to be a good change as well. Please remember Colin as he takes on this new role.



Jonathan & Colin

The local Town Hall was again host to the annual **Winter Market** at the end of November and again we were there with our table. It is always a good opportunity to be a presence in the community as well as offer Bibles, calendars, pens and childrens' materials for free. One lady remembered our advertising for last year's Christmas Kids Club and was asking about it this year. We have met other traders over the past couple of years and have been able to have meaningful chats with them and pass on helpful Christian literature.

Family Update....thankyou for remembering David and Sarah, they are both doing well. **David** started a **Player Development course** in October, run in conjunction with the FAI (Football Association of Ireland) and the local government training board. He is enjoying the mix of soccer training, matches and classroom work. Several team mates from his Sligo Rovers u-19 days are also doing the course, which is helpful. After this year, he would love to be playing for a good team and getting well paid in the process...and why not?! **Sarah** is still playing GAA and working hard at school. This year, she will have to think more about her future, as next year sees her Leaving Certificate exams looming up. She is studying Agricultural Science, Geography, Economics, French and the mandatory English, Maths and Irish. The "Ag Science" sometimes involves visiting nearby farms where her friends live. How much work goes on is another question! **Nicola** has been getting a little more part time work recently with her Health Care Assistant job. This is always useful, especially at this time of year. **Jonathan** is looking forward to the challenges and encouragements of ministry in 2019. He remains the chief dog walker in our house because it is cheaper and more fun than going to the gym...not a job to handover!

May each of you have a blessed Christmas, love from Jonathan, Nicola, David and Sarah!

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Praise

- We thank God that **Andy and Rachel Millar** have applied to Calvary Mission and have been accepted to work with us in Claremorris. This is a real answer to prayer and we look forward to seeing the Lord's leading in their lives over the coming year.
- A smooth handover in terms of ECM leadership responsibilities. Jonathan will retain his role as **Member Care Facilitator** for ECM missionaries in Ireland.

Prayer

- We ask you to remember the **Boys National School** and those NT requests.
- Also, the **Christmas Kids Club** on the 15th and the **Church Carol Service** on Sunday 23rd. We would love to see families join us at this special morning service.

