

Joy and thanks



Paula Burrows

Deaconess, Ballygrainey Presbyterian Church

Doesn't time fly! Today is my youngest daughter's birthday – she has just turned 13. It can be hard to believe how fast the years go by, often overlooking the goodness that God has bestowed on us each and every day.

The ladies from our badminton and Bible study group were reflecting on how quick people are to blame God for all the bad things that happen in our

world. Why do wars happen?

Why do people suffer cancer

and other illnesses? Why do

our loved ones have to die?

How can a good God allow all

this to happen? Yet we can be

slower to remember to thank

God for the breath he has given us this day, the food we have on our tables, the clothes we wear, the job we go to and the beautiful world he created. Only a good, loving God would give his people these things again and again. Only a good, loving God would get us through all the pain and sorrow of this broken, sinful world.

Only a good, loving God would give us the hope and assurance of an eternal life with him in a new heaven and new earth with nothing to be sad about ever again. What a blessed people we are to be his, to know that our joy can be found through him each day, no matter what circumstances we face. We have so much to thank him for.

Thankful is a word I can definitely use for the privilege I have of serving God in Ballygrainey, and it is a word I hear from many of the church family. Thankful to God for blessing us with a minister who faithfully preaches God's Word. Thankful for godly elders who faithfully seek to discern God's will. Thankful for the leaders of the

various ministries in church who serve God gladly where he has placed them. Thankful for the church family, from the youngest to the oldest, who gather to worship our great God each week.

Joy is another word that comes to mind as I think of Ballygrainey.

Joy on the faces of little ones as they come in to play at Tweenies and on the faces of the carers when it's time for tea and a scone.

Joy of the children of different ages playing together after church as their adults chat with one another. Joy beaming through the face of a sister in Christ as she looks forward to getting to worship after many weeks of recovering from

surgery. Joy as a much-loved man from church gives his life to God shortly before he passes into glory.

Paul tells us in Thessalonians to "rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances," so let's do this each and every day because "this is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."

*What a blessed people we are to be his, to know
that our joy can be found through him each day,
no matter what circumstances we face.*

Please pray:

- Give thanks to God for our minister, Session and church family.
- That those who love God will continue to grow in their love of God and show his love to those in their schools, workplaces, families and communities.
- That we will listen and be obedient to God as he shows us how to reach those in the communities around Ballygrainey.