

Donabate Presbyterian Church

Building intentional relationships

I've been in my role in the north Dublin church since September 2016. My role involves leading and developing the youth ministry, reaching out to the community of Donabate and investigating what evangelism we can do in the areas nearby.

A team of other leaders and myself run a weekly youth club in the local parish hall where we meet every Saturday night. We meet with young people during the week, often in a fine Donabate establishment known as Scrum Diddly's – the best ice cream shop in Dublin! We also have a more in-depth look at the Bible during our youth fellowship on a Sunday. Our aim is to constantly reach more young people and share the gospel with them, while discipling and equipping those who have committed themselves to following Jesus.

In the spring term, we ran an Alpha Course in the community centre, which was very encouraging. A number of new people were connected to church through this and several people committed to following Jesus, which is really exciting!

One challenge has been finding ways of entering into a new community and beginning meaningful relationships with people. However, I thank God for opening up new opportunities and answering prayers in this area. I have been prioritising spending time out and about in Donabate which provides opportunities to run into the same people several times a week and gradually build intentional relationships. Most of the people who I have connected with, I met initially in a local space like a coffee shop, gym or Supervalu! I have had the opportunity to build relationships with a group of young men through sports and would appreciate prayer for wisdom and courage when telling them about Jesus.

A big part of what we're trying to do is to join in with what is already going on in the community and create organic connections between church and life. An example of this was the spring fair that the secondary school hosted recently. It was a great opportunity for the people in church to engage with the community naturally. I am constantly learning on the job that ministry is a long game and building relationships takes time and intentional effort! When I reflect over the past few months, aided by the writing of this article, I can see how God is constantly working in people's lives.

Over the next few months into the summer period we have our summer children's club coming up again which involves a lot of planning. We are also hoping to launch a new children's club in a town north of Donabate. We pray that this will be received well by the community and begin conversations about the gospel.

I am really thankful to be part of a great team led by Rev. Andy Carroll, the minister of Donabate, and the other elders, and also for how the church family have welcomed my wife Kathryn and I into their lives. We would love you to pray for us as

we continue to work in this community and share the good news of Jesus with people on the peninsula!