



# Quon Stothers Journey

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Newsletter January 2013



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## Three Sets of Houseguests. . .

The holidays were quiet and spent with good friends in Belfast. Although it is only the fourth week in January the new year is full of wonder and wonderful things. The Mater Hospital called with a cancellation available for Ward's second cataract surgery. That was completed three weeks ago and he is on the mend, not needing glasses for distance and lower powered reading lenses.

Our local sponsor, EBM, sent Jon Kennedy a Certificate of Sponsorship. His visa application is in the system for moving to Belfast on 1 March. He will be an asset to the work of The Loom as he will tie interest in C.S. Lewis, with interest in Orthodoxy, with computer, writing, and



8:30 a.m. is still dark in mid-December. Five minutes of prayer at City Hall

publishing skills. He will be an encouragement to Ward to bring his poems and prayers together.

Do you believe people want to come to visit in January? Houseguests from abroad are part of our practice of hospitality and mission visioning. Margaret and Patrick, Jerem and Conor, and Vicki and Jennifer all came within a fortnight.

The day Margaret and Patrick came up from Dublin, the flag protestors blocked the road to the central train station. We called Keith who has all the routes in his brain. He asked where are you and said park your car I'll come over to you. He guided us around the city center and through a taxi lane to the proper place. A few days later Jerem and Conor came

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The chilly Dock Walk at the bow end of the Titanic slipway on 26 January

## ...more welcomed

through DUB. Marda bused down and met them at the airport and rode with them as they drove a rental car up to Belfast. Then Vicki and Jennifer came for a weekend to scout out a short program for university students from Los Angeles studying abroad in London. Jennifer wants to

plan a Spring Break study trip to Belfast. Because they are from a Jesuit School in Los Angeles, they want to be based out of our church and do home-stays with Protestants. They hope to learn and to give back something useful, and perhaps develop an ongoing program.

Special prayer points

- PRAISE for special gifts that support us. PRAY for sustained monthly gifts.
- PRAISE for new freedom and a wonderful sponsor. Pray for Jon Kennedy plans to join us on 1 March.
- PRAY for a call for Donna Quigley a gifted rector.
- College Avenue Presbyterian Church, in Oakland, Pastor Monte and congregational growth
- PRAY for poetry to flow and next steps for pottery. Faith and Arts Group presentations, Feb, Mar & Apr.
- PRAISE for new friends and weaving relationships
- PRAISE Sunday morning prayer continues
- PRAY for team building relationships
- Pray for planning and priority in future work.
- Praise for cataract surgery success



Patrick and Margaret at St George's Market Belfast

Our Stronger Together church symposium will address the flags issue on 5 February. It is increasingly clear that the church must reconcile their differences and lead the people in finding common ground for a shared future. Opening eyes to different perspectives by dialogue.

Many of you gave us generous year end gifts. Thank you. As we anticipate a trip home in March and new visa applications, would you consider a one time or monthly gifts so we can anticipate and budget our expenses? We are grateful for many expressions of support.

You may have heard in the news about the Belfast flag protests. The City Council voted in early December to only fly the union jack on designated days. The Loyalist community went ballistic and protests, some violent, continued through the Christmas season and into the new year.

100+ police have been injured and protestors arrested. Business and tourism is affected. People are fed up.

On 15 December we turned up enough people to encircle the City Hall, join hands, and have 5 minutes of silent prayer for the situation. The media noted this was the only church response. Media also pointed to the failure of the politicians jockeying for their vested interest mostly negatively.

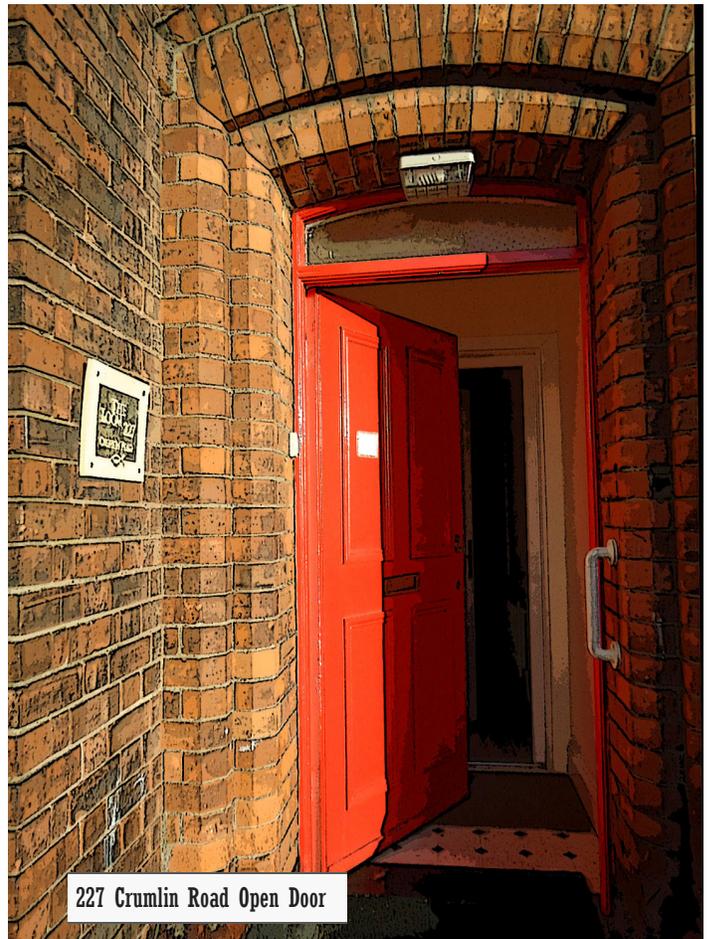
Quiet conversations continue.

The Four Corners Festival on 26 January was a project organized by Rev Steve Stockman and his friend Fr Martin Magill. The twenty year Clonard/Fitzroy Fellowship formed the basis of this work.

We heard about the Festival at the end of the event when Chris Bennett asked for help with the lunch at the Dock Cafe. Mixed worship services were held in the four corners of Belfast in each of the main denominational churches (a Presbyterian, a Catholic, a Church of Ireland (Episcopal in the U.S.) and a Methodist church) and then people gathered at the Dock Café.

Chris Bennett, chaplain to the Titanic Quarter, took us all on a walk where the space is not contested and there are no walls of separation. Jennifer and Vicki met us there after they toured the Titanic

Visitor Centre. They were able to meet the Sisters from Workman Avenue and many others.



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