

Restoration Ministries



He Restores My Soul

June 2012

Dear Friends,

Once again we are in the season of Pentecost. How are we celebrating? Have we just ticked off another feast day in the Christian year, or are our spirits on tiptoe as we wait for what new thing God is doing so that we may join in? It is so easy to reach a place on our spiritual journey where, having encountered challenge and inspiration along the way, we then become comfortable. It's where we belong. It gives us our identity. There's nothing wrong with any of that. It can all be right and good and worthy. And we thank God for the journey and for those places. The problem emerges when we begin to confuse either our denomination or a person or a movement with God and give to them the place that belongs to God alone. It's a sort of subtle idolatry and we all fall into that trap at some time or other. God the Holy Spirit can never be confined to any one church or movement or group or individual. We cannot box him in or label him. God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – is a community of love in constant movement, constant flow, constant giving from one to the other. In the creed we say, "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life who proceeds from the Father and Son. With the Father and Son he is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken – and speaks – through the prophets." And so the Spirit is constantly pushing out the boundaries, refusing to be boxed in, taking us, if we choose to respond, higher, deeper, further into this divine dance that we call the Trinity. He takes us out of our comfort zones into wilderness places, into uncharted territory and there he woos us to a deeper degree of intimacy with himself that will, if the journey is made with integrity, lead to greater fruitfulness.

What a year we have had in Restoration Ministries – so many changes, so much letting go, so much uncharted territory, so much journeying! As we have sought, however stumblingly, to live this

pilgrimage with integrity, we can only trust that it will lead to greater fruitfulness. And in the midst of all of that has been uncertain, there has been so much for which to give thanks. Firstly we give thanks to God for the sale of Restoration House. In the present economic climate it could have remained on the market for several years. We are glad that a young family have bought it and that the children are now enjoying the space that holds so many blessed memories for us. Then we are so grateful to the Parish of St. Brigid's and to Fr Eddie O'Donnell in particular for their hospitality, generosity and kindness as we have sojourned among them since last October. Rose and I have thoroughly enjoyed having our base here and we will be sorry to leave. I know that those of you who have been able to call in or to attend our various events have also tuned in to this sacred space. Our Board of Directors have been ever faithful and vigilant, leading us through all the legal and financial intricacies to where we are today – on the verge of moving into new property, Restoration Ministries' next 'home.' We have a very appropriate address, Harmony Drive, (see elsewhere in this newsletter for the details) and plan to move in early August after the completion of major renovations.

Personally I have found this year a very stretching one. I have seen the nature of the work take on a slightly different emphasis in that I am doing a lot more travelling, both around Ireland and farther afield. It seems as if I am now being challenged to take out to other places and people what we have learned together over the years. As well as being in many different parts of the island with diverse groups, I have also been to France, Italy and Canada. The message of knowing ourselves the beloved, of unity in diversity, of walking the path of forgiveness and of being prisoners of hope taps into the aching space in every community or individual, regardless of race or nationality, who is yearning for 'something more.'

So the ministry continues in a slightly different form. We have not closed down! We will still run our reflection days, in borrowed venues, for those of you who are able to attend. Faith and Friendship is alive and active. Spiritual direction continues, as does the Wednesday prayer, and we are open to welcome any and all of you who care to call in. I know that it would be very difficult for me to go out to all these other places without your encouragement and prayerful support. I have had that over the years for which I thank you from the bottom of my heart and I know I will have it into the future. I look forward to the next chapter and I trust that we will 'journey' it together as friends of a ministry that does not belong to any of us – but to God. Cynthia Bourgeault writes, "Our real business here on earth is to become all flame. A candle is not a candle until it burns, but only wick and tallow." Its true purpose and destiny is when it is set aflame. My prayer for us in Restoration Ministries would be that for whatever length of time is left to us we might become all flame. Now that's a good thought – and prayer – for Pentecost.

Have a good summer. The next letter will be from Harmony Drive.

Ruth

THANK YOU, BETH

In January of this year we said a reluctant good bye to the wonderful lady who has kept our books since the very beginning in 1988. Beth Moore has been meticulous in her work, turning up without fail every Wednesday and keeping us always on the right track. No detail was overlooked, every penny was accounted for and acknowledged, and the books were kept in beautiful script that was a joy to read. Beth is still in touch with us and we look forward to many more years of contact and friendship, but just now I want to acknowledge all her faithful, loving service throughout the years. We are delighted that Raymond Reilly agreed so readily to take over from Beth and we are enjoying his involvement with us in this way very much.



NEW ADDRESS:

(from Sep. 2012)
Restoration Ministries
19 Harmony Drive
LISBURN
BT27 4ED

INVITATION

Pathways to Peacemakers

Saturday 23rd June from 10.30 am to 1 pm
Dromantine Retreat and Conference Centre, Newry

Keynote Speakers: Rev David Latimer
First Derry & Monreagh Presbyterian
Respondent: Sr Brighde Vallely
Dominican Sisters
Chair: Bishop Richard Clarke



RSVP: Reception at Dromantine 028 3082 1964/ dcadmin@dromantineconference.com






END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

DATE: 20th June 2012

TIME: 7.30 pm

VENUE: St Brigid's Hall

Derryvolgie Ave
(Beside Church)

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BELFAST BT9 6JG

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