

WITH CHRISTMAS GREETINGS



THE MANSE,

December, 1973.

Dear Members of McQuiston,

*This letter has a three fold purpose:—*

(1) *To offer you Christmas Greetings and wish you the joy that the message of Christmas is intended to bring us. We are living still in a very contentious and bitterly divided society, and peace seems such a remote possibility that one hesitates to associate it with the Xmas festival of 1973. Yet one of the names given to the Babe of Bethlehem is the Prince of Peace. This should be a reminder to us all that in Him lies the answer to our quest.*

*As we prepare for Xmas 1973 might I suggest that we make a special spiritual effort to let His spirit of love and goodwill take control of our thoughts, our attitudes and our actions.*

*Let each of us seek to put more of the Spirit of Goodwill towards all men into the festive season. In so doing we will be contributing to the healing of Ulster's sores more than we realise. May the Prince of Peace be your Guide and Guest at this Xmas time.*

(2) *We are very concerned about the inroads being made by apathy and carelessness and apparent indifference towards the Church's work and message in our present society. Many changes are taking place in the life of society to-day, and changes are bound to take place for they are part of progress, but is a drift away from the Church and her times of worship and witness to be one of them? Man is made to worship; can he cease to worship God and give that worship to something else without it affecting the spiritual quality and moral standards of his life?*

*I think the answer is so evident that it does not need to be given. We all become like what we worship. As communicant members of the Church our lives cannot continue unaffected if we neglect the sources of spiritual health and renewal. Only a "back to the church" movement by all age groups, and a willingness to let Christ have His way in each of us can turn the tide of violence and stem the downward trends of sinful human nature, which if allowed to continue must bring social, economic and moral ruin to the land we live in.*

(3) *This brings me to my final point which has to do with Flame '74.*

*This project is an effort of our Irish Presbyterian Church to challenge all our professing church members to a renewed endeavour to fulfil the demands and commitments of their church membership. It must be very evident to intelligent and thoughtful christian people that the church's evangelising task must embrace every church member – it cannot be left, and never was intended to be left to the minister and the few who work with him. We are all committed to build up the membership of the particular congregation of which we are a part in whatever ways we find it possible for us to do so. Certainly the witness of our weekly attendance at church, and that word of witness and encouragement by us to others, can have far reaching effects. We hear a lot to-day about the adverse affects of absenteeism in industry and in other social services and where the church is concerned absenteeism is also rendering a very telling disservice to the Kingdom of God, and also to the spiritual life and productivity of those who practise it week by week.*

*Flame '74 is aimed at arousing our members to a new vision and realisation of what each one of us can do, and should be doing for God in these days when Christian lives and values and standards are so essential to the return and maintenance of sanity of justice and law and order.*

*Here is an outline of the programme we purpose to carry through in February, 1974. It consists of a series of talks spread over three weeks as follows, starting on Sunday 3rd February, 1974.*

February	3rd Sunday	11.30 a.m.	<i>"Where does it begin"?</i>
„	7th Thursday	7.30 p.m.	<i>"How can I be sure"?</i>
„	10th Sunday	11.30 a.m.	<i>"What will it mean"?</i>
„	14th Thursday	7.30 p.m.	<i>"What difference will it make"?</i>
„	17th Sunday	11.30 a.m.	<i>"Do I have to share it"?</i>
„	21st Thursday	7.30 p.m.	<i>"What does it cost"?</i>
„	24th Sunday	11.30 a.m.	<i>"Why bother"?</i>
			<i>(Final Meeting)</i>

*It is our prayer that these talks help you to do your part for the Kingdom of God. In doing so you will be helping your native land, too.*

*Your friend and minister*



SUNDAY 23rd DECEMBER

**CHRISTMAS SERVICES FOR EVERYBODY**

11.30 a.m. *Praise led by Young People's Choir*

7.00 p.m. *SERVICE OF PRAISE*

AGNES STREET SILVER BAND AND CHURCH CHOIR

*Special Soloist* — Irene Sandford

*Band Conductor* — Mr E. Ruddock

*Organist and Choirmaster* — Mr J. Beattie, L.L.C.M.

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**CHRISTMAS MORNING**

10.00 a.m. *Family Service*

*Special Offering in aid of the World's Hungry*

*(special offering envelopes available in the vestibule for your gifts)*

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1974

SUNDAY 13th JANUARY

7.00 p.m. *Ordination Service of Mr Thomas I. Harte, B.A.*  
*by a Commission of the East Belfast Presbytery*

*Please keep the above dates free and arrange to attend  
with your friends.*

**EVERYONE WELCOME**