



## Lorna's story

### Rev Lorna Dreaning, Enniskillen Methodist Church

Everyone has responded in their own way to lockdown. It has been a time of thinking outside the box for everyone and no less for Roy and myself. As a couple working in ministry we have been able to develop services and Bible studies, perhaps more than others. It has been a challenging but rewarding time for us in Enniskillen and for our family who have had to endure and sit through all our services with no exceptions.



Sometimes we have had to battle with internet connections and the noise of PlayStation on high volume. When lockdown was announced we sprang into action providing a foodbank for firstly our own vulnerable community in the church, and then into the wider community ending up visiting over 70-80 homes a week up until the end of June. I was absolutely amazed at how the funding for this came in. We were spending £1000 a week on groceries and every penny was provided by Gaelic, football and rugby clubs encouraging us to keep going. Community spirit was at an all-time high.

Secondly there was the need to look at how we would provide spiritually for our people and that has led to many services, evenings of praise and Bible studies. We have received many letters and phone calls which have intrigued us. But many encouraging our online singing on a Wednesday night which seemed to speak to those mainly with dementia and suffering loneliness. We had a lovely phone call from a man whose wife suffered from dementia and he said it was the only time in the week he could relax with her and get her settled.

I suppose going online for me was something I have always been opposed to. It just never appealed to me at all. But since lockdown I have come to the realisation how much value it has been to so many who cannot get out to church in a way they once did. I suppose when we talk about evangelism we think of missions and church doors open but this has given both of us a new appreciation for evangelism and how easily it is to reach so many in today's society. And also, how we need to be thinking outside the box.

One of the most unusual events was my first covid wedding. I feel so sorry for brides who have made great plans and spent a lot of money on preparations. I was to have four weddings this year, three of which are now put back to next year, and two which have been squeezed in at last minute. I was asked to have this wedding in the manse garden but when talking to the congregation a member offered to hold it in theirs. There was only three weeks planning. It was very different and dependable on the weather which for Fermanagh was quite kind to us. Even though I was the one standing in the pouring rain outside the gazebo. We got the happy couple married despite me looking like a drowned rat.



The Coopers hosted a picnic provide by the ladies from the church and the register was signed in their kitchen/conservatory. Definitely not a conventional wedding. And then to the 'mart'. This is our third month of being in the farmers mart on a Sunday morning. And I have to say it has been a very worthwhile experience. We as a congregation are working as a team every week with provision of the lorry, (mobile pulpit), the sound the organ the cameras etc, and it is allowing us to keep track of everyone as well. We as a circuit have come together along with the Derrygonnelly circuit and are strengthening relationships in every way. We had dogs at church and cats and people in pyjamas. Its been amazing and proves that it doesn't matter where or how we preach the Gospel, the message is still the same. Not even mentioning the homes that can hear us on a Sunday morning in the vicinity.

So here in Enniskillen its been extremely busy, but we have gained a fresh perspective for the work of God which is in many ways exactly what we needed. I know it will continue. We have concerts planned for the mart and we plan to hold our harvest weekend there as well, but we look to God who has started to do a new work in our midst to continue it and lead us and guide us.

