

Set On A Hill

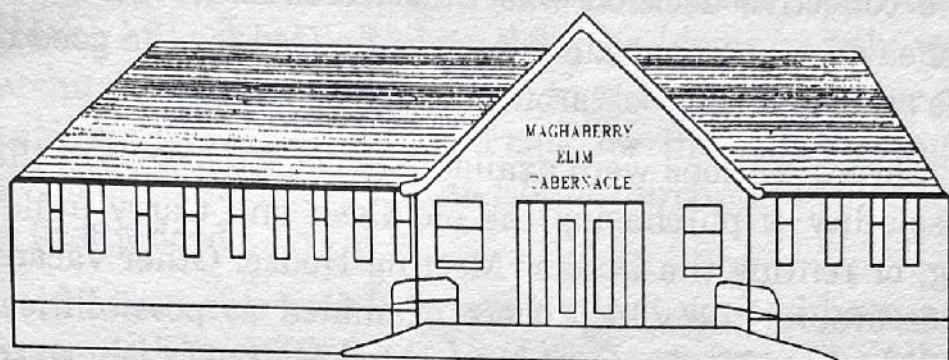


The story of

MAGHABERRY ELIM CHURCH

1926 To 1992

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A message from the Minister on the occasion of the opening of the new church building.

This is an historic occasion for the Elim Church at Maghaberry. When I was inducted as the pastor of this church, some four years ago, we were debt free, and in possession of a modern, brightly lit, serviceable building at the Maghaberry Crossroads. Little did I realise then, that within a few months we would be at another crossroads, metaphorically speaking, where vital decisions would have to be made which would affect the entire future of this church. That Crossroads was not of our choosing at that time. Nevertheless, as we look back now, at the events of that time, we can surely see the hand of God at work.

The peace of the church was at first disturbed by the news that the owners of the site on which we were placed required vacant possession of the land, to develop and build a supermarket complex. Long hours of discussion in

the Church Session followed, as the church leadership decided what should be our reply and course of action. The collective decision was that we should regard this upheaval as an opportunity, given by God for the good of the assembly and look around us for a new site.

Several options were available to us. We looked at the possibility of purchasing the old Cash and Carry building, or renting the Quaker Meeting House. Other vacant sites around the village were examined as possibilities. At this time, Mr Joe Lewis instructed Mairs of Lisburn to offer for sale, as three lots, the land adjacent to 8 Maghaberry Road. Roy Irwin approached Mr Lewis, and an offer to Mairs & Co. was accepted. The Elim Church had found a permanent home.

There were many sad faces as the sectional building and the old wooden church building at the Crossroads were dismantled and removed from the site. The wooden structure was unceremoniously burnt as part of the 11th night bonfire! The sectional building was taken off to Dromara to become a venetian blind factory! At the same time, our friends in Carryduff Gospel Hall were moving out of their temporary accommodation, and into a lovely new building at the Comber Road, Carryduff. We benefited from their success, by being able to purchase their old portable buildings, and thus ensuring that our worship was not interrupted for even one Sunday. Many of us joined with the Congregation of Carryduff Gospel Hall on their opening night.

Life in the mobile hall was never easy, and there was certainly some tension among the congregation. We had no creche facilities, few sanitary conveniences, and no money! Still, there was a great deal of blessing, as the people met to worship the Lord. The move benefited the

children's meeting, which grew and grew.

The new church was commissioned by the Church Session as a DESIGN AND BUILD project by Mr Robert Heak. After some initial teething problems,(mostly with architects!) the structure began to grow, and today we are seeing the results, a new home for the church, and a permanent structure for the Elim Church in Maghaberry, a first indeed.

I began this article by saying that we had been at a crossroads in 1990, when hard decisions had to be taken. there was much heart searching at that time. Were we doing the right thing, could we ever afford it...all of these thoughts were consistently in the mind of the Session. Sadly, some people decided to leave the church at that time, which made these decisions even harder to make. yet we do believe that through all of the maze of complex decisions and problems that we have been forced to face, our God has been guiding and helping us through all of the way, and we see His Sovereign Hand in all of these things.

Finally, some people have wondered at the Session's decision to place the title MAGHABERRY ELIM TABERNACLE above the door. We were keen on using the word tabernacle. Temple seemed a little pretentious for a village church! The tabernacle reminds us of the place of worship in the wilderness, the place where God dwelt, and where grace and forgiveness was found by God's chosen people. May this house be used of God for those purposes also. A New Testament reference to a Tabernacle is found in 2 Corinthians 5:1. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens". So we have! As we begin our

occupation of our first permanent church building at Maghaberry, let us remember that there is nothing permanent about it, as far as eternity is concerned. Some day, this tabernacle will be no more, and we shall worship the Lord in His Mansion in Heaven. Paul is referring to the human body and to the heavenly body, but with that goes all the accoutrements of our humanity, including this new building.

May God grant to the Congregation here, a tremendous sense of destiny and purpose. may this new building be used for His glory, and may many souls find the Saviour within its walls.

So much for the past. The future is in His Gracious Hands.

REV.ROBERT K.McEVOY, Dip.R.S.

MINISTER IN CHARGE.

Rev.Ron Jones writes....

To the Elim Church at Maghaberry.

It is indeed a great privilege to be able to share with you on the occasion of the opening of your new church building. We can certainly say with the psalmist, "The Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad".

I have been thinking about the opening and dedication of Solomon's Temple. What a magnificent splendour - see its glittering gold, its shining silver - its grandeur evident for all to see.

Yet, amazingly, it was none of these that gave it its real splendour, but simply the fact that "The Glory of the

Lord filled the House of the Lord". That must be our prayer. Not just for a special day, but for every day, until He comes.

At this very special time in the history of your church, I would like to leave with you some marvellous words from the 15th chapter of Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, verse 58.... "Therefore my beloved brethren, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

I do pray that these truths will fill your vision for the days ahead.

May God richly bless you always.

RON JONES.

The Irish Superintendent writes:

The completion of any church building always brings a high level of excitement. This project in Maghaberry is no different.

Excitement, firstly because of the need. The need to expand to provide bigger and better facilities, that will serve an ever growing community.

Excitement secondly because of the opportunity. The opportunity to reach people with the good news of the message of grace. Buildings, or the lack of them, do not alter the content of the message. However good and acceptable meeting places provide a base from which to exercise the commission of Jesus Christ. Closure is death

to service, openings provide more opportunities.

Excitement thirdly because of the vision. The vision of those who took the initiative and sought to innovate. Men in leadership who believed that it could happen. May their vision be the push that we all need to expand from where we are. Never think that we have arrived, but simply use each place of arrival as the opportunity to make the next step for the Master even bigger still.

Today this church building has been opened. That is simply the first fruits. For the members and friends of Maghaberry, the first fruits are but a sign of the harvests to follow. Allow the possession of this building to excite you, with all the possibilities that its open doors swing into view.

Rev. Eric McComb.

Personality profiles.

Through the years, in any church, there are personalities who stand out as being people whom God has used to further His will and purpose. In researching into the lives of these men and women, we can get a glimpse of what early life in Maghaberry was like, and how the congregation developed in early days. Here are some of the men and women whom God placed in Maghaberry, to preserve the Elim witness in the village. Although they may not be known on a national level, their faithfulness in the local work has certainly earned them a place in this record, and, as all of these men and women have

gone to be with their Saviour, we know that He will have welcomed them with the words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant".

1918

In 1918, before the Elim work began in Maghaberry, the Faith Mission held a series of meetings in Magheralin Orange Hall. One of those who were saved at those meetings was **MR TOM SPENCE**. At that time, Tom and his wife Margaret lived in Magheralin. His daughter Lily, now living in Lisadian House, Hillsborough, remembers being taken as a little girl to those meetings. It was 1925 when Tom and the family came to live in Maghaberry, and they attended worship at the local Methodist Church. In 1926, Tom and Mr Jimmy Wilson decided to have a series of meetings in the Orange Hall, and they asked Pastor Joseph Smyth from Belfast if he could send someone down to conduct the services. Mr Smyth obliged by sending Mr Edward Geough, and the Elim Church was born.

After about a year these meetings moved to a tin hut (they called it the Iron Hall, which goes to show that there was more than one meeting place of that name!). This hut was erected on a piece of ground rented from a Mr Joseph Hill, for the sum of Ten Shillings (50p) per year.

An honest man, and a good witness!

Tom Spence was a farmer and also a road contractor, and Mr Joe Culbert worked in Spence's quarries as a

labourer. Tom had a reputation of being honest, and fair to his workers. The late John Knox also worked at Spence's, and he once told of how he had to go home early one day, and Tom still paid him the full day's pay. This was not the usual practice in those days, and only a fair and good employer like Tom would have been so kind to those whose labour he hired.

Tom Spence died in 1963 at the age of eighty seven years. Lily, Tom's daughter looked after both her father and mother until the time when the Lord called them to their reward in Glory.

The railway connection.

MR JAMES WILSON or Jimmy as he was known, lived at Chestnut Hill, Soldierstown, with his wife Jeannie. He was a porter at the G.N.R. Station in Belfast where he worked for some thirty five years. Like so many others, Jimmy was saved through the ministry of the late Rev.W.P.Nicholson, whose life and ministry brought the Gospel message to so many in Ulster. After returning from a period in America during, the 1930s, Mr Wilson returned to live in Benson Street in Lisburn.

As a member of the church at Maghaberry, Jimmy was noted for his generosity in helping with finance of the church. He passed away at the home of his nephew, Mr W.Megarry, at the age of seventy years.

MR EDWARD GOEUGH, mentioned above, hailed from Belfast, and was the first to hold Gospel meetings in the Orange Hall at Maghaberry. Also involved at the time were Mr Field, and Mr Walter Upritchard from Lurgan. Little more is known about Mr Geough.

MR GEORGE STANHOPE was an elder in the church from its very early days. Before coming to Maghaberry, George belonged to a little group of believers who met for worship at Kilmore, between Moira and Lurgan. Mr Stanhope married a girl known as Mary(May)Mercer, who was a sister of the late Robert Mercer, pastor of the Hope Street Assembly, Belfast. This Robert Mercer had the privilege of personally knowing and working with George Jeffries, the founder of the Elim movement.

George Stanhope was by profession a signalman on the railway, and worked at Moira Station and at the Damhead Halt. Although Damhead Halt is now disused, Moira Station signalbox is now fully restored as an historic monument, and has attracted much attention recently. Mr Stanhope manned the Station Signalbox all through the years of the Second World War, and kept the trains running.

As well as running the trains, George took a hand at running the assembly. His four children all went to the Elim Church Sunday School, and his eldest daughter, Mrs Heasley, is still a regular attender at our church services. George passed into the presence of the Lord on January 1947.

The man who loved the Lord and tended to the lamps.

Another well known, and much beloved character on the Maghaberry scene was Mr **JOSEPH CULBERT**. Joe was in charge of the assembly, until ill health forced him to retire around the mid 1960's. He was a small farmer, and worked for a time at Spence's quarries, where he was

admired and well liked by all. His job was to break up the stones with a sledge hammer! Each day he had to cycle from home at Mullaghcarton to Soldierstown to work, and then cycle home. Yet he never missed going out to the meetings. His spiritual desire and stamina would put many of us nowadays to shame. Few of us work as hard as Joe would have worked, yet we can so easily find excuses to stay at home on prayer meeting night. Married to May who was devoted to him, they had no children.

The power of prayer.

Joe was known to all as a great man of prayer. he knew all the names of every family in the area, and would pray for all of them individually. One member of the congregation who remembers Joe well recalls that his round face used to beam with the joy of the Lord, as he cycled along the two mile journey to the church, twice on Sundays, and again on Wednesday and Friday evenings. Joe would arrive first, and would set to work, getting the tilley lamps lit, and the pot-bellied stove warmed up for the people coming in. Incidentally, the text in the hall at that time was, "Happy is that people whose God is the Lord". Psalm 144:15. Joe Culbert's life certainly witnessed to the truth of that verse.

A Damascus Road Conversion.

The story of Joe's conversion is as interesting as is his later witness for the Saviour. Joe came under the conviction of the Holy Spirit through the Church Army at Magheragall Parish Church, but he could not grasp the meaning of salvation. It is told that shortly after this he

was talking with his neighbour, Mr George Wilson along the side of the road, the Lord spoke to him, and he cried out, at the top of his voice, "I see it now, I see it now!" There and then he accepted Jesus as his Saviour and was born again of the Spirit of God. That was around 1950.

Joe and other brothers and sisters from the church would regularly take their stand in the open air. Many came to know the Lord at these meetings.

Joe was filled with the Holy Spirit at cottage meetings at the home of Mr and Mrs Bryans, at Ballymalargy. (The present address would be Maghaberry Road). The preacher at many of these meetings was the well known and respected Mr. Walter Upritchard from Lurgan.

Joe Culbert died in 1966, leaving his wife May who was looked after by her sister Grace until she also went to be with the Lord.

Some others who served.

A faithful sister of the Assembly was **EDITH RICHARDSON**. Edi, as she was known, lived at the bottom of Maghaberry hill, and regularly supported the work for many years.

In 1952 **MISS LINTON** came to Maghaberry to conduct a children's mission. At that mission, some of the village children gave their hearts to the Lord, and among their number was a little girl from the village, Miss Margaret Knox, now known to us all in her married name, Margaret Lang. This Miss Linton had only one arm, having lost an arm in a train accident. She rode on her bicycle to Maghaberry from Lurgan, using her one arm to steer the cycle. The children loved her, and she was very talented at her ministry of teaching the boys

and girls.

Another frequent visitor from Lurgan around that time was **MR THOMAS**, the pastor of the Lurgan Church. he was a talented Welsh musician, who thrilled the children of the village with his ability to sing and play.

Every church needs a good secretary, and the church secretary throughout at least part of the 1950's was a man called **DAVID TODD**. For quite a number of years he worked with Joe Culbert in the Maghaberry church.

From Broomhedge by bicycle.

SAMMY ACHESON lived at Broomhedge with his wife Margaret and their son Billy and Daughter Isobel. he worked in the Shipyard in Belfast for 35 years, and before conversion, he was, by his own admission, steeped in the things of the world. he gave his heart to the Lord at his own bedside in the early 1940's. His conversion in 1951 was as a result of much prayer and witnessing by members of his own family. Sammy travelled to the Elim Hall by bicycle, until he purchased a motorbike, which helped him to get up the hills. Sometimes his grandchildren would come with him to the prayer meeting, where they would tidy up the hymn books after the meetings.

Humble and Jolly.

Sammy was responsible for booking the speakers, and he would stand up at the front of the hall (never the platform), and give the announcements from his open dairy. With John Edgar, Sammy undertook the work of visiting the sick, both in the homes of the people and in

the hospital. Sammy was a humble, jolly character, who took a great interest in the people who came to the services. he greeted everyone who came to the door with a friendly handshake and a welcoming smile. Sammy died in 1981, aged seventy two years. At his bedside in the Lagan Valley Hospital, he was visited by John Edgar, and Sammy's last request to his fellow labourer was to hear the 4th Psalm read aloud.

Organist, secretary and treasurer!

Among the faithful women of the assembly was **Mrs Lilian(Lily) Hilda Spence**, the late wife of Mr George Spence. Along with George, and his own sister, also called Lily, Mrs Spence was faithful for many years to the work of God in Maghaberry.

From 1947, Mrs Spence played the organ, first the pedal organ in the old hall, then a piano, and finally the electronic organ in the church at the crossroads. the present organ in the minor hall of the new building was a gift from Mrs Spence to the congregation.

The church was deeply saddened when Mrs Spence, and her dear daughter Margaret Patricia Gage, both passed away within a few months of each other in 1987.

The Heavenly Triplets.

It was the early 1950's, and Joe Culbert had been much exercised in prayer for some of the men of the area. He had held extra prayer meetings for six weeks to pray for their salvation. Among those who were high on Joe's list were **JOHN EDGAR, BILLY BENSON** and

TOMMY VANCE. At the same time Rev Ian Paisley began a crusade in Derriaghy, which these three men decided to attend, out of curiosity as much as anything else. It was 11th November 1952, and all three men were saved at that same meeting. they became known as 'the Heavenly Triplets', and all three began attending the Maghaberry fellowship.

Open -Air witness in Lisburn.

John Edgar worked with Sammy Atchison in the open air meetings around Moira and Lisburn. They preached fearlessly in Lisburn Market on Tuesday afternoons. Weather could not deter these men! Sammy would lead the singing, John would preach the Gospel, and Billy Benson would minister in song. Sadly, Billy Benson died at an early age.

A builder in God's Kingdom.

John was a joiner by trade, and held the position of honorary pastor for a few years during the sixties. It was he who erected the first portable wooden hall at the crossroads on the site granted to the church by the late Mrs Boyse. That building was opened in 1975 by Mr Robinson of Hillsborough.

From tin hut to wooden hall.

The story of the old wooden building on the Crossroads site is typical of the history of Maghaberry Elim's past. The church was forced to vacate the original site, quite near to its present location, and the congregation had nowhere to worship. The local Methodist minister

allowed the Elim congregation to make use of the local Methodist hall, where the Elim folks gladly worshipped for over a year. During that time John Edgar and Sammy Atcheson were looking out for a new site, and it was then that the late Mrs Boyes donated a piece of ground at the crossroads . Unfortunately no deeds were ever obtained, and it was a sad day when the building which John had built on that site had to be demolished to make way for a shopping development.

However, John Edgar never seen the building which he had constructed being demolished. Our brother passed into the presence of his Saviour on Sunday 1st April 1984, having attended the morning service earlier in the day.

At that time the greatest test of faith for the church still lay in the future.

MISS LILY SPENCE.

Sharon McGowan spoke to Miss Lily Spence about the history of the church. Lily recalled, "The Elim Pentecostal work commenced in 1926 in the little Orange hall on the top of Maghaberry Hill. This hall was demolished some years ago. The meetings were conducted by the late Mr Edward Geough from Belfast. There was a great time of blessing. Some souls were saved and a good number received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Most of these folks have now gone to their reward.

The First Elders of the Assembly.

There were two elders at that time, Mr Jimmie Wilson, and Mr Thomas Spence, both now with the Lord. They were later joined by the late Mr Joe Cuthbert and the late Mr Arthur Rudge.

The first of many moves!

It was decided that they would need a new place to worship, and a building of wood and galvanised iron was erected by Arthur Rudge on behalf of the people. The meetings continued in this hall until 1975, and much blessing was the portion of those who met there."

Lily Spence also was able to inform Sharon, that the first pastor of the church at Maghaberry was Mr Walter

Field, from Ballymena, who served at the church around 1930.

MRS E ROBINSON

(Nee McGahie).

Ivan Robinson asked his mother, who has lived a lifetime in the Maghaberry area, what she could remember about the Elim Church during her childhood.

The Church near the Pump!

"I went to the children's meetings at the Elim Church around 1934. It was situated near to the present site, but a little further along the road towards the crossroads, near the village water pump!"

Some of the names that Mrs Robinson remembers will be familiar to others today, "There was myself, Ellie McGahie, Florence Lavery, Mamie Lyttle, Florrie Hamill, Alan Gilmore, and Cecil Crooks, to name but a few".

The Famous Maghaberry Pot Bellied Stove!

"The church was no more than a tin hut with a pot bellied stove in the centre. We dare not touch this stove or go near it, as the heat was almost overpowering. I remember Joe Culbert used to arrive early, before the meetings, to light the fire, and the lamps in the hall. We young people would sometimes make sure that we were there at the same time. As Joe made his way around the hall lighting the lamps we would come behind him blowing out the matches! Of course, Joe was such a good natured man, that he took all this with a laugh,

pretending that it was draughts in the building which was causing the matches to go out!

I can remember someone coming to the church for a special meeting. During the service he prayed for the sick, and a girl who was unable to walk had come the whole way from Londonderry to hear him. After the service the evangelist went out to the car with the lady, and prayed with her. We all witnessed her walking back into the church, and right up onto the platform, where she testified of how the Lord had healed her. It was the first time she had walked for many years."

Mr W. L Herron.

Louis Herron has been the Church Secretary of the Elim Church at Maghaberry since he, along with Herbert Gilmore and John Edgar formed part of the first Session of the church in 1981. In that capacity he has noted many of the events which have occurred in the church.

Louis has listed for this publication, some special events which he thought might be of interest to our readers.

1981 was a year of building up the activities of the congregation. In January a children's meeting commenced under the guidance of Elizabeth Gilmore, Isobel Herron and Eileen Hall. A new meeting in the church was the Ladies Fellowship, which began in February of the same year. Its opening rally gave an opportunity for the members to hear the wonderful testimony of Mrs Agnes Hancock. Healed by the Lord from Parkinson's disease, Mrs Hancock maintained a testimony to the saving and keeping power of God for many years. She has now departed, to be with the Lord in Heaven.

Bob & Alma McAllister, well known Missionaries to Zaire visited the church on 23rd September 1981, prior to their departure to the mission field.

In April 1982, John McGowan was elected to the office of deacon within the church, and on 21 April, a new pulpit was presented to the church by Mr Roy Irwin. The pulpit was beautifully hand made, and features as the central lectern of the pulpit in the new building. The pulpit was dedicated by Eric McComb, who in his remarks to the congregation, pointed out that the pulpit

is, spiritually speaking, a priceless part of the church's worship.

David and Sabrina McAllister, spoke at the church on August 22nd, 1982. As members of C.A.P.A.C.O., they were missionaries to Zaire.

Brian Edwards visited the church on 8th October 1982. Presently the missionary director of the Elim Churches, Mr Edwards spoke on the subject of Elim missionary work in Europe.

Eric Black visited the church on 24th October 1982, with his wife Betty. Eric, who has now gone to be with the Lord, had a tremendous singing ministry, and was the proprietor of the Shalom Recording Studios. At the same meeting, Pastor J.G. Tweed, a previous occupant of the Irish Superintendent's office, spoke on the subject, "Will God disappoint the hope He hath begotten in us" Pastor Tweed spoke from Isaiah 44:22, and recalled that he had been saved by God's Grace in 1915.

On 15th December 1982, a representative from the organisation, "Operation Mobilisation" visited the church to speak on the work of the ship MV Doulos .

In 1983 Pastor Wilson took up residence in the church manse at Magheralin, a house obtained for the church by Roy Irwin. In the same year, Miss Lily Spence retired from the office of caretaker of the church. The congregation showed their appreciation of her many years of faithful service in that capacity by presenting her with a number of gifts. Isobel Herron acted as caretaker for a number of years following Lily's retirement. Also in 1983 great excitement was seen in the church, as the well known healing evangelist George Canty came to conduct a mission in April. A further crusade was held in 1984,

with Syd Murray as the evangelist. Louis recalls that four souls were saved at those meetings.

On Saturday 4th September 1983, Roy Irwin commenced a regular Saturday film presentation in the church. A film projector had been previously purchased by the church, and the first film to be shown was "Heavens Heroes". This ministry proved to be a great blessing to many. Roy was elected as a deacon on Sunday 26th September 1983.

In 1984 the church changed from the use of the traditional chalice to the individual communion cups, a break with Elim tradition which was taking place throughout the Elim movement.

In April 1985, Mr Herbert Gilmore, who has for many years run a successful business in the Maghaberry area, was presented with a Bible from the church for the effort and materials which he put into the clearing and tarmacing of the church car park. It is worth mentioning that the present church car park was also laid by Mr Gilmore, and is a tribute to his expertise, skill, and professionalism in this area.

In 1986, the pews, previously purchased from Portadown Elim Church, were upholstered and the evening service was brought forward from 7PM to 6.30PM.

All of these events will be remembered by those who were at the church during the years in question. They show for us the gradual change which takes place, step by step in the life of an assembly.

Louis is always cheerful, and on many Lord's Days his good nature has been a part of the warmth of the welcome at Maghaberry. Louis has stood at the door of the church, welcoming strangers and giving out hymn-

books. He always has a word of encouragement for all who enter, and many will testify that it was Louis's warm welcome which encouraged them to return to the services after their first few visits.

Characteristically, Louis finished his recollections of the '80s with an anecdote. He recalled that two young ladies were once discussing the possibility of marriage. "When I grow up I want to marry a doctor, so that I can be ill for nothing", was the sage wisdom of the first girl. "No", replied the second, "When I grow up, I want to marry a minister, then I can be good for nothing"!

A sentiment shared by many parishioners everywhere, I'm sure!

The 80's and 90's

The beginning of the last two decades heralded a time of transition for Maghaberry.

The commencement of work on the new prison was the catalyst which caused a number of private developers to begin building houses in and around the village. A sleepy crossroads became, in just a few short years, a large village with some four hundred homes.

The continued development of the village brought with it the problems associated with rapid growth in an hitherto rural area. New people arrived to live in the village. These people were from other areas of the province, attracted to Maghaberry by the prospects of new houses, and jobs in the prison. The M1 motorway provided easy access to Belfast, and a number of people began to use the village as a dormitory town, travelling to the city to work.

These people had no roots in the area and many were experiencing for the first time the stresses of coping with life in the security forces or the prison service. In Maghaberry, alcoholism is high, divorce and separation rates are above average, and recent suicides have highlighted the strains under which some of the local population live. The police have to cope with increasing incidents of juvenile delinquency and vandalism.

Many people do not have any routine of church attendance, and while they may be nominal members of a church, they have very little interest in active worship.

Still, the problems of a growing population in the area

stimulated growth in the local churches also. The Methodist Church was renovated, and a new Methodist Church Hall was built, under the supervision of Rev Joseph Parker, the superintendent of the Donacloney circuit of the Methodist Church. The Church of Ireland began holding services in the Methodist buildings, and the Elim Church began to enlarge its hall at the crossroads. Sadly, the Quaker Meeting House on Maghaberry Road fell into disrepair, was closed down and eventually was given to Lisburn Borough Council, who still maintain the burial ground there.

In 1981 the Elim congregation decided that the time had come to ask headquarters for a pastor, and Mr Dennis Wilson, from Ulster Temple Belfast was appointed as honorary pastor at the church. Dennis is a gifted musician and a talented leader of young people and his faithful witness in the area resulted in souls saved, and bodies healed in Maghaberry.

One of the results of Dennis' musical talent was the formation in the mid-eighties of the Maghaberry Choir. This talented group sang not only in their own church, but at services in other churches as well.

Rev Wilson was ordained to the regular ministry of the church in the Ulster Temple, in September 1986. He served at Maghaberry until 1987.

1987 Rev G Poxon was appointed as pastor of the Maghaberry assembly. Although loved by all Gary was a somewhat controversial minister, and tendered his resignation in July 1988, to resume his ministry at an Elim Church in England.

November 1988 saw the appointment of Rev Robert McEvoy as pastor of the church. No one knew at that

time what lay ahead! At the induction service, Mr McEvoy turned up wearing a pair of black boots (not the hob-nailed variety!) and the Irish Superintendent was heard to remark, "They must be expecting snow about Maghaberry ... Robert's got his boots on!" Perhaps he had misread the situation. Boots are made for walking - and this era of ministry would see the church on the move once again!

The Church Session

According to the Constitution of the Elim Pentecostal Church, the oversight of the assembly is vested in the Church session. This body consists of a number of elders (appointed for a five year term, renewable by the vote of the Church Session) and deacons (elected by the congregation every two years).

Following the death of Mr John Edgar, the Church Session consisted of the following deacons:

Mr W L Herron, Secretary

Mr J McGowan, Treasurer

Mr B Greenfield

Mr H Gilmore

Mr R Irwin

In 1991, following the election of officers, the session changed. Those appointed were:

Mr W L Herron, Secretary

MR J McGowan, Treasurer and Organist

Mr A Greenfield, Prayer Co-Ordinator

Mr R Irwin, Missionary Liason

Mr I Robinson, Youth Work Co-Ordinator

In March 1992, Mr Roy Irwin and Mr Bertie Greenfield were ordained as elders by the Irish Superintendent, Rev Eric McComb.

Other office bearers in the church are as follows:

Mr E Gilmore, Sunday School Superintendent
Mrs J Robinson, Children's Meeting Leader
Mrs W Macklin, Leader of Women's Fellowship
Mrs C Irwin, Missionary Secretary

COUNTDOWN!

Just to remind you of the move from the crossroads to the new church building - here are some notable dates:

26/11/88 Robert McEvoy inducted as pastor.

2/2/89 Session hears news that the site at the crossroads is to be repossessed. Solicitor contacted. Headquarters informed.

9/4/89 Session considers purchase of site adjacent to Maghaberry Arms Inn. Other possibilities were to be pursued.

12/4/89 Roy Irwin reported to the Session that he had inspected a site adjacent to No 8 Maghaberry Road. He had held some tentative discussions with the land owner, Mr J Lewis.

21/4/89 R McEvoy and L Herron held discussions with Lisburn Borough Council and the Society of Friends regarding the possible purchase of the old Quaker Meeting House.

26/5/89 New building fund activated.

6/8/89 The Session was offered the sale of the crossroads site, excluding the car park, and comprising only of the ground on which the building sat, for £18,000. The Session declined the offer.

25/8/89 The Session considered the possibility of purchasing the cash'n carry building. An offer was placed on the premises. Roy Irwin was tasked to continue negotiations with Mr Joe Lewis.

22/10/92 Mr McEvoy formally made an offer of £30,000 for the site adjacent to 8 Maghaberry Road.

5/11/89 The Session were informed by the minister that purchase of the ground adjacent to 8 Maghaberry Road had been agreed, at a sum of £30,000. Work was agreed, to erect a fence, and begin site clearance.

15/11/89 At a congregational meeting, the plans of the Session were relayed to the church members.

9/4/90 Outline planning permission was sought.

10/6/90 The Session was informed that the Boyes family had insisted that the site be cleared as soon as possible. The work began shortly after this on the demolition of the minor hall.

26/7/90 The Session purchased the "Eastbank" portable hall from Carryduff Gospel Hall.

18/8/90 New temporary hall erected at the Maghaberry Road site. Shortly after, meetings were transferred to the new site, and the hall at the crossroads was removed.

14/6/91 The Session held the first formal meeting with Mr R Heak, builder.

September 1991 Work on the new building commenced.

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Happenings!

The life of the church is marked by events, both happy and sad, and Maghaberry is no different.

Since records began, there have been three weddings held in the church.

On 4th September 1985 Mr Moreland Bradford married Miss Wendy Gilmore. Freya Gilmore and Leslie Gilmore acted as witnesses, and Rev Dennis Wilson was the officiating minister.

Keith Black and Jennifer Lang were united in marriage on 25th June 1986. Again, Mr Wilson was the officiating minister and David Emerson and Heather Emerson were the signatories to the register.

Robert McEvoy acted as officiating minister for the marriage of Suzanne Wright and Raymond Dickson. Roy Dickson and Laurie Wright were the witnesses at the wedding.

The new church will have full facilities for weddings, and we look forward at this time, to serving our community in this manner.

Sadly, a number of our congregation have passed away during the past few years also. For those who knew the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord, we have no fear, and we know that we shall meet them again in Glory.

On 13th January 1989, the congregation was stunned by the news of the death of Mr John Macklin. John had come to Maghaberry a few years earlier, and was a great

asset to the assembly. He was a gifted chorus leader, and a man with a Godly manner and a firm grasp of the principles of the Word of God. He is sadly missed. Several items of furniture in the new church are dedicated to the memory of our late brother.

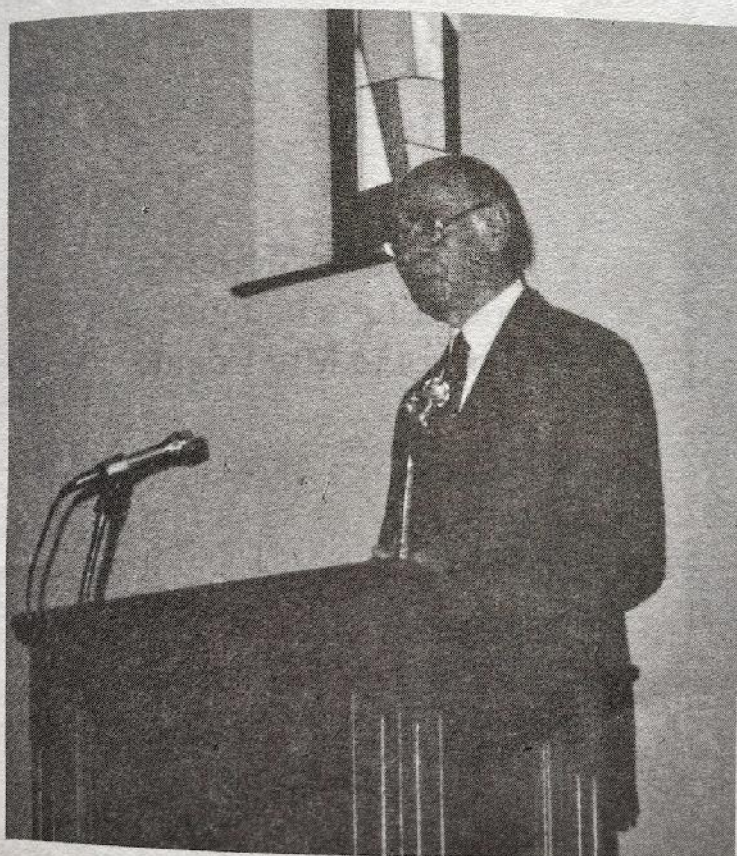
On the same day that John Macklin passed away, the church learned of the death of Mr David Martin. Mr Martin was not a member of the assembly, but had participated as a lay preacher in the services of the church for over thirty five years.

The departure of 1991, and the beginning of 1992 also brought sadness to the assembly. In December 1991, Mr John Knox, dear father of Margaret Lang, Ena Kennedy and Elizabeth Gilmore, went to be with the Lord, following a time of illness. Just a few weeks later, in January, Alma Rea, one of our church members, bade farewell to her dear husband Wesley, who departed for Glory, following a period of illness.

During the years of witness of the church at Maghaberry, many believers have passed through the waters of baptism and many have brought their children to be dedicated unto the Lord.

It is the fervent prayer of the Christians who meet at the Church Set On A Hill, that others will join with them on the journey through life, that leads, by the way of the cross, to Heaven and Home.

Mr Robert Heak,
the builder of the
new church, and
Mrs Edgar, as
they prepare to
declare the
building open.



Louis Herron,
who conveyed the
thanks of the
church to those
who had
contributed or
assisted in the
project.

His Worship the
Mayor of Lisburn
presents the Minister
with a plaque to
commemorate the
occasion



Miss Sharon McGowan
presenting a bouquet of
flowers to Mrs Edgar.

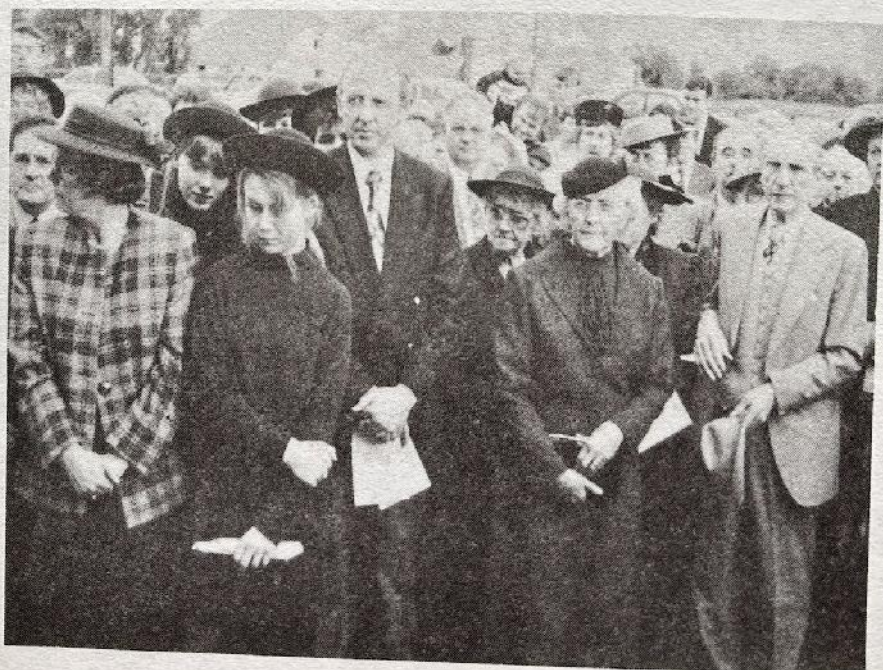
Appendix

The Order of Service on the occasion
of the opening of the new church
building.



Mr Jones & Glenys
enjoy a quiet moment in
the vestry before the
service.

Anticipation!



Maghaberry Elim Tabernacle

ORDER OF SERVICE

On the occasion of
the opening of the
new building

Saturday 3rd October 1992

The service will commence, weather permitting, outside the building, where the church will be declared open by Mrs Agnes Edgar, wife of the late Mr John Edgar, a long serving elder in the Maghaberry Assembly.

Order of Service.

**Welcome and Opening Remarks, The Minister,
Rev. Robert K. McEvoy, Dip.R.S.**

Opening Praise: Psalm 84, verses 1,2,4,10,11,12.

How lovely is Thy dwelling place,
O Lord of hosts, to me!
The tabernacles of Thy grace,
How pleasant, Lord, they be!

Blest are they in Thy house that dwell;
They ever give Thee praise.
Blest is the man whose strength Thou art,
In whose heart are Thy ways.

My thirsty soul longs vehemently,
Yeah faints, Thy courts to see:
My very heart and flesh cry out,
O living God for Thee.

For in Thy courts one day excels
A thousand; rather in
My God's house will I keep a door
Than dwell in tents of sin.

For God the Lord's a sun and shield:
He'll grace and glory give,
And will withhold no good from them
That uprightly do live.

O Thou that art the Lord of hosts,
That man is truly blessed
Who by assured confidence
On Thee alone doth rest.

**Prayer: The Rev Wm. McCandless, Minister of Lurgan Elim
Church. and member of the Irish Executive Council.**

Ministry in Song: Mrs Glenys Lewis.

**Greetings, from the Irish Executive Council of the Elim
Churches, conveyed by the Irish Superintendent,
The Rev. Eric McComb.**

**Greetings from Lisburn Borough Council, conveyed by His
Worship the Mayor, Alderman Ivan Davis.**

**Formal vote of thanks, proposed by the Church Secretary,
Mr. W.L.Herron.**

Offertory Hymn: Count your Blessings.

When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed,
When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost,
Count your many blessings, name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.

Count your blessings, name them one by one,
Count your blessings, see what God hath done;
Count your blessings, name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.

When you look at others with their lands and gold,
Think that Christ has promised you His wealth
untold, Count your blessings, money cannot buy
Your reward in heaven, nor your home on high.

So amid the conflict, whether great or small,
Do not be discouraged, God is over all,
Count your many blessings, angels will attend,
Help and comfort give you to your journey's end.

Ministry in Song: Mrs Glenys Lewis.

Address: The Rev. R. Jones. (Wales)

Closing Hymn: To God be the Glory.

To God be the glory, great things he hath done,
So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,
Who yield His life an atonement for sin,
And opened the Life Gate that all may go in.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
Let the earth hear His voice,
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
Let the people rejoice!

O come to the Father through Jesus the Son,
And give Him the glory,
Great things He hath done.

O perfect redemption,
The purchase of blood,
To every believer the promise of God;
The vilest offender who truly believes,
That moment from Jesus a pardon receives.

Great things He hath taught us,
Great things He hath done,
And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;
But purer, and higher, and greater will be
Our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see.

Benediction.

The Congregation are cordially invited to remain for refreshments after the Service, and to attend a Service of Praise at 6.30PM.

Thanks.

The Church Session of the Elim Church, Maghaberry, wish to express their thanks to the following:

Messrs Robert Heak Ltd., the main contractor, for their overall co-operation and planning in the building project.

Mr J.Lewis, from whom the site was purchased.

Messrs Guthrie & Co., who provided the kitchen.

Messrs McCready & Co., Architects.

Mr C. Haffey, for clearing the site.

The many subcontractors and other construction companies who have worked on the site.

Those who are taking part in the proceedings of the opening ceremony, including His Worship, the Mayor of Lisburn, The Irish Superintendant of the Elim Churches, Members of the Irish Executive Council, The Rev. Ron Jones and Mrs Glenys Lewis, and the many friends, members and guests who have made this day a great success.

All those who stored church furniture and belongings while the church was in the temporary accommodation.

All those, church members and other well wishers, who have contributed to the Building Fund.

