



May 2013

As I write this eletter I am looking out the window of the office where I work to see the rain pelting against the window. The rain has been falling all morning and it makes going outside rather unpleasant.

Now rewind 24 hours and I was out for a walk in the sunshine after lunch. The thought of hunting out a pair of shorts was creeping into my mind and I was trying to remember where my bottle of factor 30 sun cream was.

I'm left with several questions from the last few days...

Has our summer come and gone in that one day? Should I buy a new pair of shorts for this summer? How long is too long in the sun for me, as a ginger?

'We worship a God who is unchanging'

So many things change around us daily, which can be unsettling for us especially when the things that change are more important than the weather. We go from school to university, we start new jobs, our health may suffer; so much can change in our lives.

The amazing news of the Bible, however, is that we worship a God who is unchanging, who offers his unchanging nature as a reason for us to have hope.

Malachi 3:6 says **"For I the LORD do not change, therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed"**.

God points to his unchanging nature and assures the 'children of Jacob', who in this context are the nation of Israel, that they will not be consumed, or destroyed, despite what they are facing in the world around them.

"Yesterday, today and forever"

As Christians today, who are the spiritual children of Israel, that promise remains true for us. The writer of the Hebrews tells us that Jesus Christ is the same "yesterday, today and forever" (Hebrews 13:6); Jesus is the realisation of God's promise to the Christian that we will not be consumed despite what is going on in the world around us.

Reviewing SPUD

Over the last number of months, the SPUD working group have been working on a review of the structure of SPUD and SPUD's objectives and aims for the next number of years.

The working group's hope for this review and the resulting objectives that come from it, is that SPUD will enable young people to play a meaningful part in the life of the Presbyterian Church, in their own congregation and throughout the denomination.

At the end of April a number of young people worked alongside the SPUD Working Group at a Blue Book Overnight. This was a great opportunity to see what the Boards of our church are working on and planning to work on over the next year. What was discussed at the overnight will be the basis of what the SPUD delegates speak on at the General Assembly in June.

The overnight was also a chance to remind ourselves that PCI is doing many good things throughout the island of Ireland and overseas. Most importantly, it was important to see that God is at work in our churches and on this island.

Many things in this world are changing; being Christians in the 21st century in Ireland is not a simple task yet the promises of the Bible remain true, God is still God and his Word stands the test of time.

Things are changing with SPUD, Working Group members are moving on to new chapters in their lives, our work is focussing on the local level with the Grow Your Own SPUD's programme; yet as a working group we remain confident that God is using SPUD for his glory and that is all we can ever pray for!

Please join us in praying for SPUD at this time of change.

God bless,

Andy Downey

SPUD Convenor, on behalf of the SPUD working group