

The

A U T U M N 2 0 1 6

Howellclan Connection

There are several distinctions about driving in Ireland compared to driving in the US. For starters, we drive on the left side of the road and getting into the drivers seat requires a trip around the right side of the car. Instead of miles and mph, we use kilometres and kmh. Even the size of the road takes a little getting used to. Except for the modern motorways, the majority of the roads are very narrow compared to US standards. But with all those differences, I still find the roundabout has the most unique characteristics.

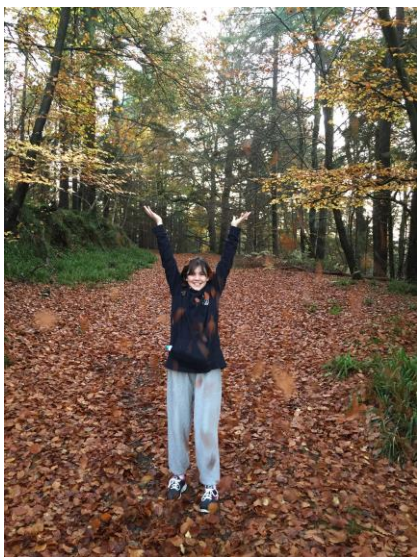


Coming up to a roundabout at speed, I am checking to the right, making sure my indicator is used at the correct time (even though most people don't know when that is), staying in the correct lane, and then merging on and off in a safe manner. Sounds easy, right? Most of the time, I am appreciative of the roundabouts, but there are exceptions.

One day we came up to a roundabout and traffic was heavy and backed up on most roads. As I came around the far side, I had to slow down to exit. Unbeknownst to me, off to my left, was a little red car that was at warp speed and heading our way. He forgot the first rule of looking right. He copped on at the last second, swerved, and missed us by inches.

I've thought of that experience over and over since it happened. Because of this, I am more acutely aware of my surroundings. I have slowed down in my own driving. I am extremely cautious when entering roundabouts. And I am more observant overall.

But this event has challenged me in another way. Why does it take a traumatic event to happen before we become more attentive? I was recently asked to take the men that we work with at the rehabilitation centre on a walk for chapel. By taking time to stop and reflect on what's around them and seeing the beauty that God has created, we were breaking the mold that God can only be worshipped in a building. As we found a quiet place along the trail, we stopped and I shared from Romans 1:20.



As I was speaking, two women came up the trail. One of them was a friend of ours, and as they walked past us in the middle of the woods, they listened. I found out later that the other woman wasn't interested in church, but when she saw the way we "had church" that day and heard the lesson about God's creation, she became very interested. She was asking our friend all kinds of questions and wanted to know more. For her, this time to reflect on creation, with the purpose of seeing God's power and glory, was a brand new idea. And she loved it.

Autumn is my favourite colour of the year. It's a perfect time to slow down, be more attentive to the things around, and see the beauty of God's creation everywhere you look. Don't wait for your roundabout experience. Plan right now how and when it will happen. Who knows, when we do take time, we may have an opportunity to speak love into someone's life and open up a new chapter, ready to be written.

Kids Corner

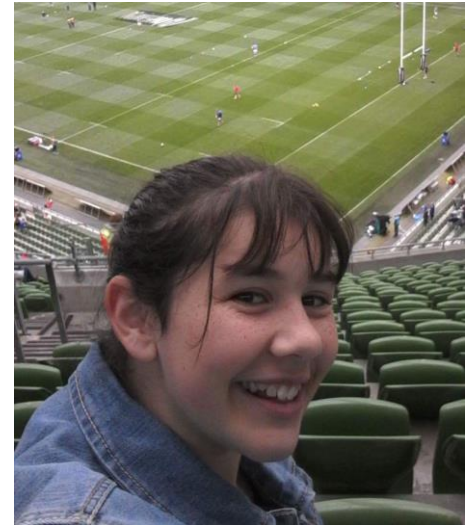
Moriah: Age 13

I have started 2nd year (8th Grade) this year. At the start of the year, there was a prize giving night where one student was awarded a prize for each subject the previous year. I won two prizes for top student in Physical Education and Religious Education.

Just recently we had a football match and we won 9-0. I enjoy sports and play on the schools team for football (soccer), field hockey, and basketball.

This week, our youth group went to Bray Bowl where we played laser tag, bowling and arcade games. I had fun with my friends from youth.

The one thing I like about living in Ireland is the community, because they are friendly and encouraging to me.



My first rugby game



Watching Georgia Tech and Boston College play in Dublin

Jonathan: Age 17

This year I have started 5th year (11th grade). After finishing Transition Year (TY), and all the opportunities to try different subjects and activities, I have picked my subjects for my last two years of secondary school. I am taking 8 subjects, including Biology, Physics, Music, DCG (Computer/Technical Drawing), French and the three core subjects of Irish, Math and English.

The workload came as a bit of a surprise this year after the break of TY. However, things have started to settle down and I am really enjoying the Leaving Certificate course.

Along with academics, the lads in my year have started a basketball team. I have enjoyed getting back to playing basketball.

The one thing I like about living in Ireland is the food. Especially the chipper and the Reese's Peanut Butter cups that have recently come to Ireland.

Praise and Prayer

1. For the way that Abba has gone before us and opened door after door for us. We truly feel blessed.
2. For the support of our friends and the community as we live and serve among them.
3. For a wonderful school experience for our kids. This is something that we prayed regularly for before we arrived and have seen that prayer answered over and over again.

1. As the new school year has kicked into full gear, we have been presented with multiple new ministry opportunities. Pray that we will faithfully express the love of Christ in each of these.
2. For health and safety for our family.
3. That our relationships with our friends and our community will continue to grow and be a blessing both to them and to us.