

# ***CHURCH MATTERS***

The monthly newsletter of the Church of Ireland  
United Parish of Whitehead & Islandmagee.

***Here everyone matters***

**MARCH 2022**



**ST. PATRICK'S  
& ST. JOHN'S**

UNITED PARISH OF  
WHITEHEAD & ISLANDMAGEE

## Don't Forget it's Pancake Day



# SHROVE TUESDAY

1ST MARCH



## A message from our Rector

Over the years I have set a challenge during the season of Lent. It is always a challenge that requires a bit of physical effort from us. A challenge that is designed to help us in our spiritual growth, to improve our Bible reading or prayer life. Many have told me that they have found these challenges to have been beneficial both at the time and for a long time afterwards.



One of the challenges that we have all faced in the last two years is a greater care for our own health and the health of others. We have all taken precautions to protect and preserve our own health; better hand hygiene, wearing masks, social distancing; with the knowledge that this also protects the health of others. It has not been easy, and it is not fully over.

In mid-February almost all of the restrictions were lifted, giving us greater freedom than we have had. With this greater freedom has come greater responsibility. Up until then we were compelled by the state to take precautions for our own and other people's health. That compulsion is now gone! So it becomes our own responsibility; a responsibility to ourselves and to those around us - our families, friends, neighbours and the strangers we meet. It is a lot of responsibility for us as individuals, being responsible for the health and welfare of others. That responsibility is not new. We may feel that it is new, but it isn't! We, as Christians, have always had a responsibility for the health and welfare of others. That responsibility is for their spiritual health and welfare. It is, and always has been, part of our faith as a Christian that we share the good news with others. That we take responsibility for their spiritual health by telling them about the love of Jesus for them.

I know that some of you may find this very hard to do, to talk to others about your faith. But we do not need to do this, talk to others about our faith, to be able to share that faith with them, to take a responsibility for their spiritual health and welfare. St. Francis of Assisi once said "Preach the Gospel to all the world – and if necessary use words." It is often by what we do, the way we live our lives, the help and care we give to others that is the most expressive sharing of our faith in Jesus Christ.

So what is the challenge this Lent? To pray for others, people we know well and people we don't know well. It can be praying for some one in need, some one who is ill, or sad, or lonely, or bereaved. Some one facing problems at home or in work. Some one who is worried about life as a result of the pandemic, or worried about family members or friends. I know that lots of us are doing this any way, but the reality of the challenge is not just to pray for them but to let them know that you are praying for them. To say to people, *"I thought of you today and said a prayer asking for God to bless you/your family/your friends at this time."*

The first few times will be difficult, or uncomfortable, but by Easter it will almost be a habit to pray for others and to let them know we are doing it.

The advantage of this is twofold. It will help us with both our own prayer life and enable us to show our care for others. It will also encourage those whom we pray for and let them know that they are loved and cared for by us, and by others who are doing the same thing.

It may also encourage others to do the same. Other Christians who hear that we are not only praying for people but letting them know that they are being prayed for, and who may be feeling the benefit of being prayed for or notice it in others, may just start to do the same thing.

This challenge is about accepting a spiritual responsibility for others in the same way that Jesus did. We often hear about Jesus having compassion on people and healing them, or on two occasions feeding them. This is us doing the same thing, having compassion for others and acting based on that compassion. It is what Christians are supposed to do.

Every blessing to you all as we enter into Lent and prepare for Holy Week and Easter.

Mark

## Messy Church

Our next Messy Church is on 13<sup>th</sup> March at 2:00 p.m. in the Parochial Hall. This will be a drama, activities and games about St Patrick, lead by the people who did our Christmas Panto Trail in December. Text 07719619286 with your name and the number of adults and children coming so that we can be well prepared for those who are coming.

## February Services & Readings

**Worship and services** - service at 10:30 from St Patrick's will be broadcast on the Parish Facebook page. You can listen to the service on your telephone, as a recording, by ringing **028 93270012** after 2:00 p.m. on the Sunday.

All readers - please read the first reading from the "Sunday Readings" lists

### **Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March - Ash Wednesday (First day of Lent)**

11:30 a.m. Penitential Service (BCP 1926)

Readings - Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Psalm 51:1-12; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

7:30 p.m. Service for Ash Wednesday (BCP 2004)

Readings - Isaiah 1:10-18; Psalm 102; Luke 15:11-32

### **Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> March - 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent**

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One

10:30 a.m. Holy Communion Two

12 noon Holy Communion Two

Sunday Readings - Romans 10:8b-13; Luke 4:1-13

Readers for first Lesson - Corrine Logan / Hazel Robinson

7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer/Compline

Weekday Readings: Genesis 37, 39, 40, 41:24; Psalms 131 - 150;

1 Corinthians 1:1 - 4:7

### **Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> March - 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent**

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One

10:30 a.m. Morning Prayer

12 noon Morning Prayer

2:00 p.m. **Messy Church** in the Parochial Hall - St Patrick's Story - booking required for this services via texting the details of numbers (adults and children) who will be attending to 07719619286

Sunday Readings - Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18, Psalm 27; Luke 13:31-35

Readers for first Lesson - Heather Cupples / Joy Kerr

7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer/Compline

Weekday Readings: Genesis 41:25 - 43; Psalms 1-21;

1 Corinthians 4:8 - 7:24

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March - St Patrick's Day**

11:00 a.m. Holy Communion One - St Patrick's  
Readings 2 Corinthians 4:1-12; John 4:31-38

**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> March - 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent**

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One  
12 noon Morning Prayer  
2:00 p.m. **PARTNERSHIP LINK SERVICE with St Patrick's  
Episcopal Church, Washington, DC.**  
Sunday Readings - Isaiah 55:1-9; Psalm 63:1-9; Luke 13:1-9  
Readers for first Lesson - Alison Higginson / Jim Reid  
7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer/Compline  
Weekday Readings: Genesis 44 - 49; Psalms 22 - 43; 1 Corinthians  
7:25- 10:13

**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> March - 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent - MOTHERING SUNDAY**

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One  
10:30 a.m. Story Teller Service  
11:00 a.m. Shortened Morning Prayer Two  
12 noon Morning Prayer Two  
Sunday Readings - 1 Samuel 1:20-28; Psalm 127:1-4; John 19:25-27  
Reader for first Lesson - Jane Robinson / Maureen Reid  
7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer/Compline  
Weekday Readings: Genesis 49:1 - Exodus 3:22; Psalms 108 - 118;  
1 Corinthians 10:14 - 13:13

**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> April - 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent - Passion Sunday**

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One  
10:30 a.m. Holy Communion Two  
12 noon Holy Communion Two  
Sunday Readings - Philippians 3:4b-14; John 12:1-8  
Readers for first Lesson - Jeni McAughey / Ann Thompson  
7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer/Compline  
Weekday Readings: Exodus 4:1 - 11:8; Psalms 119 - 122: 1 Corinthians  
14:1 - 2 Corinthians 4:18

## Dear Reader

Last month you will remember I told you about my underbelly and being over-weight. Well, I am glad to report that now it's gone thanks to all the walking I've done. I look fit and the winter blues are disappearing fast.

I wonder if you are as pleased with yourself as I am, with the walking you've done to reach America? The map tells me that you should be because you're more than halfway to the USA.

So, Washington DC here we come! I was just wondering if St Patrick's Episcopal Church has a church mouse when out of the blue I received a letter from Palisades. He is the resident Church Mouse there. Apparently he had seen my articles in this magazine online and decided to get in touch so that we can start to exchange views and news about our church doings. So without any more ado here is the letter I received for you to read...

Enjoy and stay well **Church Mouse XX**



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## ***Hello from Washington DC***

Please let me introduce myself. I'm Palisades the St. Patrick's Church Mouse. Likely you haven't heard of me...I'm quiet, as a church mouse, and take up hardly any space. I've been invited to connect with a fellow church mouse at your St. Patrick's in Whitehead. Apparently he writes a regular column for his St. Patrick's and has a big following!

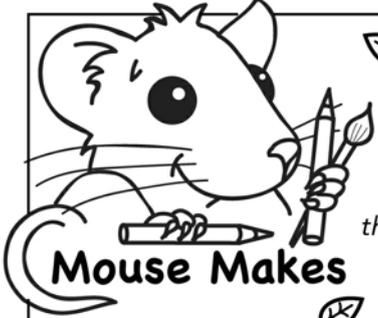


While we continue to observe pandemic cautions, as a mouse I do not wear a mask. Many things are going on at St. Patrick's DC.. I've noticed there are new banners that flank the altar. On the left is one for our church and on the right is one for the Day School. They replace the ones that were worn from age. I am told they were carried many times in our Cathedral for different occasions where our parish was represented. I wonder whether St. Patrick's Whitehead has banners in their church.

I noticed that there are large new photos displayed in the halls of the church. They show different activities in our church: from Service Saturdays to Advent Wreath Making and church services. I enjoy these activities. So many people, so many crumbs! I'll be in touch again soon

..All the best

***Palisades +***



**GOOD FRUIT OR BAD FRUIT?**

Jesus said:  
 "No good tree does not produce bad fruit,  
 nor does a bad tree produce good fruit. Each  
 tree is known by its own fruit...  
 ...Good people bring good things out of the good  
 they stored in their hearts. But evil people bring evil  
 things out of the evil they stored in their hearts.  
 People speak the things that are in their hearts."  
 - Luke 6: 43-45

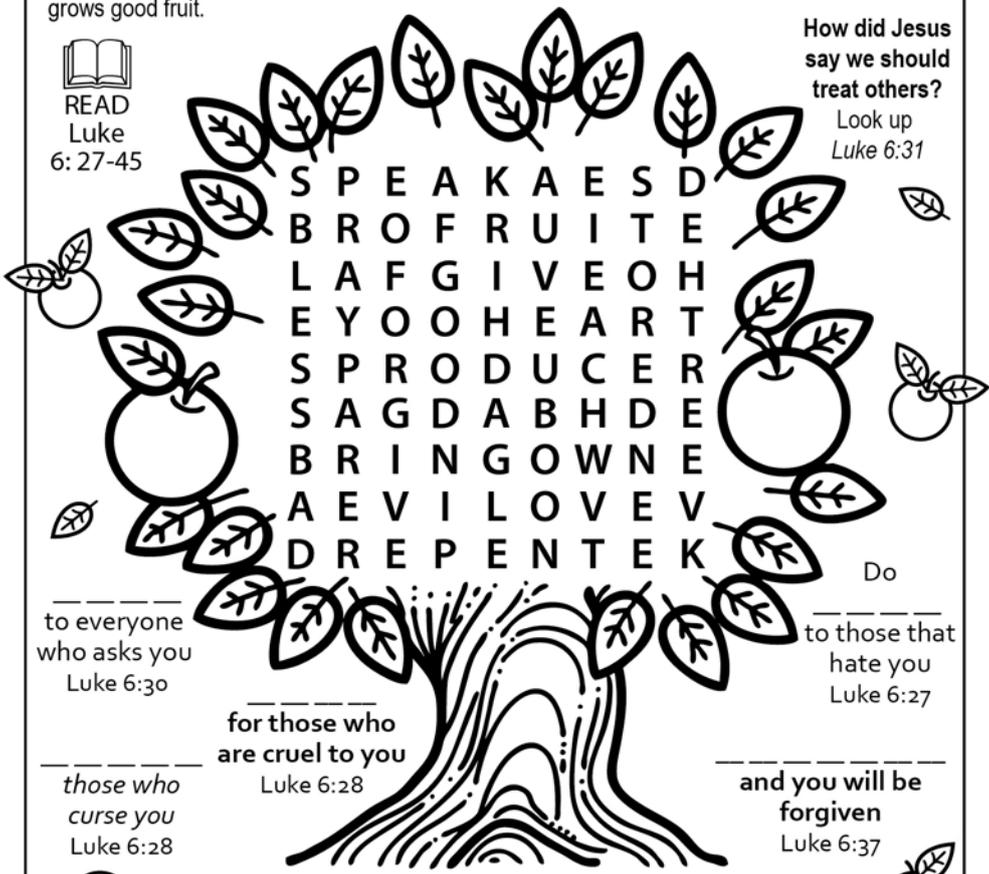
During LENT ask God to help you through His Holy Spirit to turn your hate to **love**, your impatience to **patience** and your unkindness to **kindness**, so we can be like a good tree that grows good fruit.



**READ**  
 Luke  
 6: 27-45

**How did Jesus  
 say we should  
 treat others?**

Look up  
 Luke 6:31



to everyone  
 who asks you  
 Luke 6:30

to those that  
 hate you  
 Luke 6:27

for those who  
 are cruel to you  
 Luke 6:28

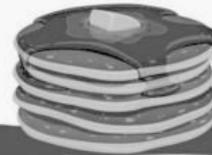
those who  
 curse you  
 Luke 6:28

and you will be  
 forgiven  
 Luke 6:37

Find these words from **Luke 6** in the word search above.  
 GOOD • BAD • FRUIT • TREE • HEART • EVIL • EACH • OWN • STORED  
 PRODUCE • BRING • SPEAK • REPENT • FORGIVE • LOVE • BLESS • PRAY • GIVE

# York Mumbler Pancake Day Fun

**Pancake Scramble - can you unscramble the Pancake Day themed words then join them to the matching picture?**



- Napkace \_\_\_\_\_
- mleno \_\_\_\_\_
- gasur \_\_\_\_\_
- tubter \_\_\_\_\_
- kiml \_\_\_\_\_
- gegs \_\_\_\_\_
- kishw \_\_\_\_\_
- nap \_\_\_\_\_



## Pancake Recipe

- You will need:**
- 2 eggs
  - 100g plain flour
  - 300ml milk
  - Pinch of salt
  - Pancake toppings!

**To make:**

1. Measure out the flour into a bowl or large jug and add a pinch of salt.
2. Carefully crack 2 eggs into a cup, being careful not to get any shell into the cup - if you do you can use a spoon to fish it out.
3. Pour the eggs and 300ml of milk into the flour and give it all a good whisk making sure there are no lumps.
4. Ask a grown up to put a frying pan on a medium heat and let the pan heat up. When it is hot some oil to the pan and swirl it around to coat the pan.
5. Add a ladleful of pancake mix to the pan and swirl it around to create a thin layer of batter. Allow to cook for a few minutes then flip it over for another minute or two.
6. Repeat and eat with your favourite toppings!!



## ‘Ashing Service’ 2nd March

*By The Revd Dr Jo White*

Such a strange name for a church service! Why would anyone be attracted to attend such a thing?

This year Ash Wednesday is close to the start of March; on the Second of the month. As the first day of Lent the service is used to physically place a sign of the cross on each person’s forehead using ashes made from the previous year’s palm crosses.



The use of ashes has a long history in Jewish and Christian worship; the Old Testament referring to sackcloth and ashes over twenty times.

There is clearly a visual link with the blackness of evil and sin but also the ‘dirtiness’ that spreads everywhere from it. We all know how a small amount of mud on the shoes walked into the house will soon go everywhere and take a much harder and longer clean-up operation than if it was wiped off before entering.

In Christian records, ashes are used for penitents by the sixth century, but it is not until the beginning of the eleventh century that the faithful took part in a ceremony on the Wednesday before Lent that included the imposition of ashes. Later this came to be called ‘Ash Wednesday’.

Over the centuries the emphasis of meaning for the imposed ashes has changed, from a preparation for baptism, a renewal of baptismal vows, to an understanding of a community’s preparation for the event of the Paschal mystery of rebirth at Easter. It reminds of what is past and what is to come, and it encourages us to think again of how we can change that journey should we wish to do so.

The Imposition of Ashes is a powerful nonverbal and experiential way of participating in the call to repentance and reconciliation. It is ‘felt’ in the heart and soul – as well as on the skin. And can be one of the most profound experiences of humility as we enter together as a Christian community across the globe- our journey towards the Cross and the Resurrection.

As the Rector or church celebrant says the traditional words over you, “*Remember that you are but dust, and to dust you will return. Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ. Amen.*” .... what will you be focusing upon?

## Hello from St. Patrick's Episcopal Church in Washington, DC!

We were delighted to hear from Jo Pawson and the idea of being the destination for your New Year Fundraiser. After a difficult two years, it was a welcome chance to engage in a new way with like-minded parishioners who just happen to be thousands of miles away. We are excited to build connections, welcome you at the end of your walk, and walk you home after our joint celebration on March 20, 2022.

I am Jo Anne Nelson, the Senior Warden at St. Patrick's DC, like your Rector's Church Warden. I have been a parishioner for almost nine years and have been involved in many of its ministries including the Cantoris Choir, Tech Guild, Service Saturdays, So Others Might Eat, and in various roles on the Vestry.

Many people outside of the city equate the District of Columbia (D.C.) with the Federal Government of the United States (U.S.), which makes sense because it was founded in 1790 as the nation's capital from land ceded by Maryland and Virginia. What most don't know is that it is a vibrant city and diverse culture with roughly 700,000 residents that live in neighborhoods named after the villages that existed prior to the founding of the city. We have art and culture, food and sports teams, and an extraordinary park system with 98% of residents living within a ten-minute walk of a park.

Our church is in the Palisades neighborhood in the northwest section of the city, which overlooks the Potomac River. St. Patrick's was founded in 1911 as the last mission chapel of St. Alban's Parish (established in D.C. in 1854) and was the first Protestant church named after the patron saint of Ireland in the western hemisphere. The Rector of St. Alban's wrote to the Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin, Ireland asking if "stones could be procured from that historic temple wherewith to make a font for little American St. Patrick's Chapel". The Dean sent four 750-year-old stones from the edifice of the Cathedral that were used to create a baptismal font, which we use today.

The Church outgrew its original location and moved in 1985 to join the St. Patrick's Episcopal Day School on Whitehaven Parkway, our current location.



In keeping with the modern architecture of the new building, a clear, crystal cross was purchased from a local artist and used until an unfortunate accident caused it to shatter. During a Vestry retreat in 1996, a discussion about how the new rector and Vestry could show their support for one another led to a creative outcome: they hiked into the woods, found two weathered split fence rails, and used nails and rope to create a cross. It stood behind the altar for two years until a more permanent sculpted cross was carved from durable hardwood and installed in 1998.

The Day School was established in 1956 as a ministry of the church and originally offered classes for pre-school and kindergarten students. Having outgrown the church's original location, it moved in 1975 and today is a thriving school with two campuses serving approximately 500 preschool to eighth grade students. Its mission is to create a



diverse and inclusive learning community of students, faculty, staff, and parents who recognize the infinite value of every individual as a child of God.

We have also had a decades-long program focused on helping to educate future clergy. Seminarians join us for 1-2 years as they complete their field study, typically at nearby Virginia Theological Seminary located in Alexandria, Virginia. Founded in 1823, it is the largest of the accredited seminaries of the Episcopal Church and it prepares men and women from around the world for service in the Church.

We have several groups that gather frequently, particularly our music programs. There are programs for children of all ages, many of whom start in kindergarten with Music in Motion and grow through our Classy Handbells and instrumental programs. When we're lucky, they rejoin us after college for our adult choir and other ministries.

The Bible Babes meet weekly to read and discuss the Gospel for the coming Sunday, Women Together in Fellowship meet monthly for dinner, Senior Saints who pre-pandemic met quarterly for lunch and fellowship, and a few others. We have regular book discussions and learning opportunities, including our upcoming series of discussions about *The Book of Joy* by Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama.

In addition, we serve multiple individuals and organizations within our neighborhood and community, and partner with groups around the city of Washington and in the mountains of Haiti. You can learn more about them, and us, on our website: [stpatrickschurchdc.org](http://stpatrickschurchdc.org).

We are blessed with an incredibly talented Rector, The Rev. Dr. Kurt Gerhard, Director of Music, Dr. Adele Lynch, and Administrator, Mary Beth Howard, who early in the pandemic learned how to create a live stream service with music for parishioners. Their ingenuity really knows no bounds! The Vestry has been creative in offering ways to connect, including a drive-by Halloween parade and a virtual shared meal for last year's Feast Day (including shepherd's pie!). While the pandemic has increased the strain on all of us, we are lucky that many in the parish feel more connected than ever.

One of the reasons we are so excited about your walk is that we are focusing on renewal as we emerge from our latest round of remote worship. This feels like a wonderful opportunity to do just that, and we are energized by the opportunity to 'meet' you in multiple ways and build new connections. We will continue to work with Jo as we flesh out the details, and we look forward to learning more about you and growing together through this journey.

In the meantime, thank you for reaching out, your letter of introduction and wonderful 'hello' from the children of St. Patrick's Whitehead. We are cheering you on from Washington, DC as you walk the remaining 2,000 miles to reach us...

Rev & Mrs Kurt Gerhard  
Rector of St Patrick's Episcopal  
Church

**Editor -Many thanks to Jo Anne Nelson, Senior Warden, St Patrick's Episcopal Church, DC for providing us with this wonderful insight into their church life and community..**



**Some photos we received from St Patrick's Episcopal Church Washington DC. Visit our church website for more & in colour!**



## How to get involved in the Sponsored Virtual Walk to Washington DC

Sponsorship forms can be requested from the Editor. (Back page for contact details) Or pick one up from the back of church.

Register the miles you walk. You can register the miles you walk using the link featured in the post about St Patricks USA walk at the top of our Church Facebook page, or visit our Events page on the Church website to find the same link or send an email or note to Jo Pawson or the Rector detailing the miles you have walked each week or month. Remember we have just until midnight on the 17th March to walk 3,779 miles!



Find out more about St Patrick's Episcopal Church which we are walking to in Washington DC.

They have an interesting website you can visit in the comfort of your home [www.stpatrickschurchdc.org](http://www.stpatrickschurchdc.org)



### NEW -Thursday Fellowship Group

A new daytime group is being set up to appeal especially to anyone interested in meeting to share Christian fellowship in an informal and relaxed way during the day instead of evening time. Starting Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022 at 11am.

Fellowship meetings will be held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month at 11am in the Boucher Room, at St Patrick's Parochial Hall, Edward Road, Whitehead. (Duration 1 hr.)

At the fellowship there will be time to chat and catch up on what's happening in the world from a faith perspective, with the aim of sharing and learning from each other. We will also share a Bible reading, some prayer and hopefully refreshments too.~(Covid restrictions permitting)

No previous church attendance required or special knowledge of the Bible or Church.

Absolutely anyone and everyone is welcome to attend.

If you plan to come, please just confirm with Jo, by calling or messaging her on 07790 241263 before the 3<sup>rd</sup> March. Many thanks..



## THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

Her Majesty The Queen's seventy years of service as monarch have been a symbol of stability and hope throughout the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth and the world. As we mark the anniversary of Her Majesty's accession to the throne, we give thanks for her dedication to us all, and her faithful witness to Jesus Christ. Let us pray that God would continue to strengthen and guide her, and bless her with continued health and wisdom, as we celebrate together the beginning of her Platinum Jubilee year.

I also warmly welcome Her Majesty's wish that HRH The Duchess of Cornwall will take on the title of Queen Consort when, in the fullness of time, HRH The Prince of Wales becomes King. Along with the rest of the Church of England, and millions more around the world, I pray for Her Majesty, for Prince Charles and The Duchess of Cornwall, and for all the Royal Family.

**The Most Reverend Justin Welby**  
Archbishop of Canterbury



# Why do we pray?

By Sandra Thompson

There have been many times when I couldn't, through my own efforts, work myself out of a difficult situation. And if you know me at all, you will laugh and say, "that's Sandra!"

But I can give you two examples of how I was supported by others through prayer. Once, over twenty years ago, when I was receiving chemotherapy, and recently when I was determined to speak at my father's funeral.

Three days after my chemotherapy dose, my children returned home from being looked after, so they didn't see the affects of the anti- cancer drugs on me. They arrived boisterous, chatty, full of energy and, as usual for boys, hungry! All this made me feel worse and I really was at the end of my tether. I asked my church prayer group to pray for me at a certain time on each Saturday. I couldn't do anything for myself, so I finally got my friends to help me out through prayer. I had to be brought that low before I would admit to needing prayer.

Of course their prayers were answered. I felt I wasn't alone. I felt calmer and more positive. I really feel that the boy's behaviour improved on those particular nights. And I slept well. Why was I so slow to ask for help?

And then recently, after my father died; I knew I needed to be supported by prayer during his funeral service. He had told me stories over the last year, that I felt, should be included. I didn't want to pass over this responsibility to anyone else. So again, I asked for prayer. Specifically; that I could hold my emotions together, to get through the eulogy. Many people said afterwards, "I don't know how you did that!" All I can say, that on my own, I couldn't have.

Again, I was helped. I was given confidence. I knew that I wasn't in charge, that I wasn't the important person, but the message I was delivering was in line with my father's wishes and a testimony to God's work in his life.

There are so many verses in the Bible that speak of God's momentous love for us. Many Sunday School choruses to back this up. But why then do we fail to tap in to a freely given major source of support? Is it because we try to do things for ourselves, be independent, and strong?

And yet it is in our weakness that we find strength from God. As a line of a famous hymn says, "*take it to the Lord in prayer*".

Even better, ask the Pastoral Care Team to pray for the situation. They don't sit about with their arms folded, gossiping! They are a group of people who have experienced how God helps in situations of difficulty, through answering prayer. All we need to do is ask. He has promised that where there are two or three gathered together, in His name, praying that their prayers will be heard. This promise is freely given, by a Father who wants the best for you.

**What more do we need?**

## Church Mice

Copyright Karl A. Zorowski



## World Day of Prayer Friday 4 March 8pm England, Wales, & Northern Ireland

This year's gathering of local churches to share in the World Day of Prayer will take place at Ballycarry Presbyterian Church at 8pm. The theme this year is: "I know the plans I have for you" written by women from England, Wales and NI.

### **Can you offer transport or do you need transport to get there?**

If you plan to go and have room to take passengers, please let Jo know on 07790 241263. Asap.

If you would like to attend but don't have transport, also contact Jo Pawson as above before Friday 4th March. Many thanks.

# Lilyscape at Whitehead

NI Tourism Certified

Lilyscape is a modern, fully equipped self catering apartment, perfect for couples, small families and commuters wanting to stay in the area.

The apartment is nestled in the heart of Whitehead. Close to Gobbins Path, Whitehead Railway Museum and Carrickfergus Castle. Being close to local amenities and transport links makes for the perfect stay and easily accessible on foot.

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# How to Celebrate Lent LENT 2022

Lent is a Christian tradition that is observed in many Church denominations. It is the forty-day period leading up to Jesus' death and Resurrection at Easter time.

During Lent, Orthodox Christians, Catholics and some Protestants prepare for Holy Week by fasting, and prayer. These forty days are a wonderful time to rethink everything and to allow ourselves to take up our crosses metaphorically, as Christ once did.

## **Focusing on our Spirituality**

**1. Lent is a season of solemnity and sacrifice commemorating Jesus' 40 days in the desert. Any sacrifice we make is a reminder to us of the sacrifice Jesus made of himself to save us from our sins. Because of this, it is a Lenten tradition amongst many Christians to sacrifice something for these 40 days leading up to Easter.**

- Think about some of the trivial things in your life that shift your focus away from God. Do you find that you dedicate more time to sending text messages and posting updates on social media, than to prayer and time with God? Do you have a habit of eating too many sweet things, or watching too much tv for example? What is something your life could do without at least for a temporary period which could be experienced as a sacrifice?

**2 In addition to sacrificing something, include something special in your Lenten routine. Giving up chocolate or Facebook for 40 days is great, but why not do something positive, too, instead of just removing the negative or some small indulgences in life?**

For example resolve to be more mindful of others' needs, spend more time with your family, pray more, and forgive old grudges.

- Some families decide to set aside their spare change during these 40 days and do something with that money. Either donate it to the church or to a local charity, or spend it on food or clothes for those in need. It's a nice touch to this season, focusing on those that don't have anything to sacrifice in the first place.

**3 Attend Church. It's good to go to church frequently, especially during Lent. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday (3rd March) when we remember that we come from dust and to dust we shall return. Many traditions often have an additional worship service on Ash Wednesday and attendance at these**

services is a good way to participate in Lent. The services can give extra encouragement to stay focused on the reason for making Lenten sacrifices.

**4 Spend more time on devotions.** Spending time in prayer, reading the Bible and Worshiping God are great ways to put yourself in the right mindset for Lent. All our churches will hold special services to prepare us for Easter too.

Any prayer, so long as it means something to us, is a step in the right direction God intends for us. If you have a prayer 'that speaks to you, and that you've grown up with, such as the 'Lord's Prayer, resolve to spend more time focusing on what it truly means and how you can embody that prayer in your everyday life. Or pick up a prayer book, or open your Bible to the Book of Psalms, as it is packed full of prayers that can help strengthen your prayer life. Let's aim at making our prayer simply a living conversation with God.

**5 Take time for self-examination and reflection.** Christmas and Easter are times of happiness and joy. The same cannot be said about Lent. It is a time of simplicity and solemnity. It is a time to reflect on our dependence on God's mercy and saving grace and our understanding of faith. Let us take some moments during this time to think about how we experience and demonstrate Christ's love in our life.

**6 Take something on.** While many people choose to give things up for Lent, such as sweets or other treats, you could use the season to help you build some new good habits.

You could promise to be more patient and kind toward your neighbour, or someone who annoys or frustrates you. Or you could see how you might help the needy in the local community or overseas.

Whether you choose to sacrifice, or to adopt new strengthening habits, you should allow your Lenten activities to help you grow in your Christian faith.

- In addition to bettering our own life, let's take this time to build habits that better the lives of others. Volunteer at a hospital or shelter, or simply get more active in the church.

These are just a few thoughts to make Lent this year so much more meaningful and relevant. See what ideas you can come up with and try putting them into action. There's no right or wrong idea.

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## SOME INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT OUR CHURCHES DID YOU KNOW ?

\* The oldest parish church in England is St Martin's, Canterbury, where St Augustine founded his mission after arriving from Rome in AD597. Pictured



\* One of the newest is Genesis (opened 2020), a boat on the Lee in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and home to the St Columba East London community.

\* The UK's smallest is the church above the holy well of St Trillo at Rhos on Sea, Clwyd (11ft by 8ft, and seats six). Pictured below.

\* Holy Trinity Church in Hull is the largest in England.

\* If you can find it, the pre-Norman Church of the Holy Cross at Kilg-wrrwg, Monmouthshire, is one of the UK's most remote functioning parish churches. Across two fields and a stream from the nearest house, its location is said to have been chosen by allowing a pair of yoked-together heifers to wander and eventually rest.



**Church Mice**

Karl Zorowski

**Pray for your  
RECTOR**



**Your Rector  
Prays for you**

The Rectory

**St James the Least of All**

**On how to sabotage a music festival**

My dear Nephew Darren

It seemed such an innocent suggestion. A local farmer announced he wanted to arrange a Spring music festival. I could already hear Mozart string quartets being played in our Lady Chapel, and arias from Donizetti operas being sung *al fresco* in the Glebe field, while we sipped champagne in the warm Spring sunshine and admired the flowers.



Unfortunately, our farmer was thinking of a heavy metal weekend in one of his fields. The teacups began to rattle when village talk turned to portable lavatories, mobile catering vans and using the churchyard for overflow camping space. Then the police arrived to discuss crowd control and drug policy. At James the Least of All we tend more towards congenial dinner parties, with drinks labelled Bollinger or Glenfiddich..

That was the point when Colonel Trubshaw began to search out his old shotgun. His wife even stopped serving coffee after Mattins, in order to patrol the perimeter of their estate with their arthritic spaniel. On the other hand, Miss Little went a little mad. She exchanged her usual tweeds and brogues and pearls for a red bandana, long patchwork dress and peace beads. She must have enjoyed the 1960s.

It was time to take action, so I told our farmer that St James the Least of All would support him to the hilt. Our ladies would of course do flower arrangements for the stage, and our sidesmen would greet the campers as they arrived. We would provide a full choral Evensong on Friday night, to help set the tone for the weekend. When the farmer gasped something about heavy metal, I was able to reassure him. "Heavy metal? We're doing that Saturday morning from about 6am, when our bellringers will give a three-hour exhibition of change ringing." The farmer pleaded something about singing, and I was able to reassure him on that point as well: "On Sunday we'll do a Songs of Praise, and not to worry, your campers can choose their favourite hymns from 'Ancient and Modern'."

I was thanked profusely, but the following week, our dear farmer wrote to tell me he had decided to graze sheep on his field after all. Shame about that.

Your loving uncle, **Eustace**

# **WORLD DAY OF PRAYER**

**(A WOMEN LED, GLOBAL, ECUMENICAL  
MOVEMENT)**

***“I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU”***



2022 is a special year for World Day of Prayer in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This year, we have prepared the World Day of Prayer service. It has been both challenging and rewarding to write about the three countries that make up our area: our landscape, people and culture all shaped by our history. We celebrate our diversity and the contribution made to our countries by the many groups and individuals who have made their home here. We use our Bible text “I know the plans I have for you” from Jeremiah to reflect on some of the issues facing us today: poverty, domestic abuse and disability, finding hope in difficult situations and encouragement in the help we can give to each other.

World Day of Prayer is an international ecumenical organisation which enables women all over the world to share the ideas and concerns of the writing country. Preparation for the day has taken several years. Our International Committee based in New York coordinates the work of National Committees and facilitates the creation of our annual World Day of Prayer service on the first Friday in March. The service outline, created by the writing country, is distributed to the rest of the world, along with a Bible reflection, country background and children’s and - for the first time - young people’s activities.

**All this work will come to fruition on Friday 4 March 2022** when services will take place beginning in Samoa and moving on through New Zealand and Australia, across Asia, Africa and Europe and finally the United States and South America before finishing in American Samoa. Across England, Wales and Northern Ireland services will take place in large urban centres, such as Central Hall Westminster, and in remote village churches. We will use modern technology to reach those unable to access a service but hope to be able to extend a welcome and hospitality once released from lockdown.

**For further information and resources, together with details of services in your area, see the WDP website: [wwdp.org.uk](http://wwdp.org.uk)**

**Our local service will take place at Ballycarry Presbyterian Church at 8pm on Friday 4th March. See page 17 for more details on getting there or helping others to get to attend.**

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Karl Zorowski



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What Derek means by that  
is that he regularly  
recycles his sermons!

©ANDY ROBB

## **Celebrating St Patrick's Day, beloved apostle to Ireland. 17<sup>th</sup> March**

St Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland but if you've ever been in New York on St Patrick's Day, you'd think he was the patron saint of New York as well... the flamboyant parade is full of American/Irish razzmatazz.

It's all a far cry from the hard life of this 5th century humble Christian who became in time both bishop and apostle of Ireland. Patrick was born the son of a town councillor in the west of England, between the Severn and the Clyde. But as a young man he was captured by Irish pirates, kidnapped to Ireland, and reduced to slavery. He was made to tend his master's herds.

Desolate and despairing, Patrick turned to prayer. He found God was there for him, even in such desperate circumstances. He spent much time in prayer, and his faith grew and deepened, in contrast to his earlier years, when he "knew not the true God".

Then, after six gruelling, lonely years he was told in a dream he would soon go to his own country. He either escaped or was freed, made his way to a port 200 miles away and eventually persuaded some sailors to take him with them away from Ireland.

After various adventures in other lands, including near-starvation, Patrick landed on English soil at last, and returned to his family. But he was much changed. He had enjoyed his life of plenty before; now he wanted to devote the rest of his life to Christ. Patrick received some form of training for the priesthood, but not the higher education he really wanted.

But by 435, well-educated or not, Patrick was badly needed. Palladius' mission to the Irish had failed, and so the Pope sent Patrick back to the land of his slavery. He set up his see at Armagh and worked principally in the north. He urged the Irish to greater spirituality, set up a school, and made several missionary journeys.

Patrick's writings are the first literature certainly identified from the British Church. They reveal sincere simplicity and a deep pastoral care. He wanted to abolish paganism, idolatry, and was ready for imprisonment or death in the following of Christ.

Patrick remains the most popular of the Irish saints. The principal cathedral of New York is dedicated to him, as is the Anglican cathedral of Dublin.

Our own church here in Whitehead is named after St Patrick and so too is our new church link- St Patrick's Episcopal Church in Washington DC.

I wonder how many St Patrick's Churches you know of here in Northern Ireland?

**HAPPY ST PATRICK'S DAY**

## **Becoming a mother, what no one tells you ...or dad!**

*By Christine Daniel, a speaker and blogger for Family Life UK,*

I love being a mum. Becoming a mother was one of the most exciting, miraculous, amazing and also scary times of my life. My birthing plan went out of the window when I needed an emergency caesarean but once our daughter was born, she was laid on my chest, I stared at her enormous eyes in wonderment.

### **She was beautiful, healthy and I was totally in love!**

The next few weeks passed in a blur of exhaustion, emotions, hormones and stress as we navigated the demands of our bundle of joy. It was a rollercoaster, as any new parent will tell you. The demands continued for many years and I, like millions before me, learned on the job. Many rewards came along: the smiles, first steps, first words (including “mumma”) ...and fast forward, there were Mother’s Day cards, bunches of flowers and breakfast in bed.

Fortunately, there are plenty of resources to help you with pregnancy and parenting these days. But there are a few things no one tells you and it can be reassuring to know those things and take action if or when needed.

### **There’s a huge shift in your identity.**

*Becoming a mum brings with it strong feelings, certainly happiness and fulfilment, but also self-doubt, frustration and struggles. Challenges are normal, but in our seemingly glossy Instagram world they are rarely talked about, unless there are more serious mental health issues such as postnatal depression. One brave doctor shares her experience of parenthood in a blog: [Becoming a mum ...what it feels like and things no one tells you!](https://toucantogether.com/blog/becoming-a-mum-what-it-feels-like-and-things-no-one-tells-you) (Use this link to find the article)*

*<https://toucantogether.com/blog/becoming-a-mum-what-it-feels-like-and-things-no-one-tells-you>*

### **Your relationship with the dad will feel the strain.**

New dads often feel incredibly proud and excited, but also anxious and lost. Many new dads experience mixed feelings as they sense the baby has taken first place in mum’s affections. It can be incredibly hard to

admit feelings of jealousy or resentment, and even harder to talk about them as a couple. Fights are normal for every couple, even very loving happy couples.

**There's a fantasy that having a baby will bring you closer together,** when in fact the reverse is more likely to be true, unless you learn to talk to each other about the tricky subjects and grow in understanding and mutual support. It's vital to nurture the health of your relationship as a couple.

Being parents means dealing with a whole new set of challenges, beyond learning how to fit the car seat. There's a whole new domestic load, financial, and emotional load to share. Talking about the nappies and needs are necessary, but hardly romantic. It's easy for your relationship to become functional, and the love to very gradually get lost, without you even realising, unless you are intentional. It's really important to create space for romance and to grow real and lasting intimacy.

Great - and healthy - relationships don't happen by accident, they take a little effort. But it's worth it for the sake of your marriage or partnership and also for your children - happy children are generally those with a stable home life and happy parents.

### **A Prayer for Mothering Sunday**



Loving God, thank you for mums and children and for all the joy of family life.

Be with those who are grieving because they have no mother; be close to those who are struggling because they have no children; be near to those who are sad because they are far apart from those they love.

Let your love be present in every home, and help your church to have eyes to see and ears to hear the needs of all who come.

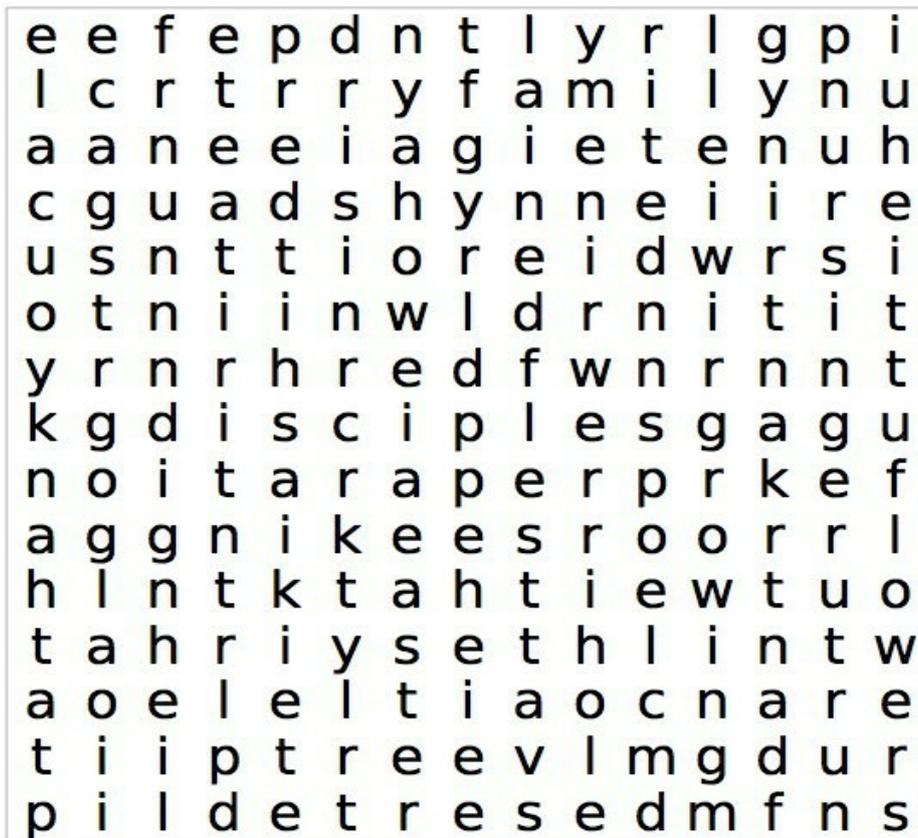
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

## March Wordsearch

March brings us Lent and Mothering Sunday. Lent is a time of spiritual self-assessment as we prepare for Easter. It is a time to turn to God, and grow closer to him. Mothering Sunday reminds us of not only the mothers that have loved and raised us, but of Mother Church, who has spiritually loved and nurtured us throughout our Christian pilgrimage. How many words can you find on these themes in this month's Word Search?

Lent.	Spiritual.	Easter.	Preparation	fasting	love
Prayer.	Desert	finding.	selfdenial	learning	care
seeking	nurture	family	repentance	mothers	flowers
growing	nursing	disciples	worldwide	teaching	thankyou



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Perhaps you need a screen sabbatical! *The 40-Day Social Media Fast* will help you unplug from screens in order to plug into your real life--with the help of a very real God.

Imagine forty days not hunched over your phone. Then imagine forty days with your eyes lifted up. Forty days with empty hands. Forty days without seeing or hearing all those little notifications. Imagine taking a much-needed break from social media in order to get social with God and your loved ones again. It's going to be amazing. What are you waiting for?

Two reviews from readers

"This book is just what I needed to lift my head away from my phone and to think deeply about the world around me. I had not realised how much I looked at social media and my phone in general until reading this book. Wendy goes through the 40 days linking God's word with our lives. She gives many examples that are relatable and make you think about your own actions. Some chapters will be more relevant to you than others, but all give a good grounding for spending time with God and our families, and friends, in a meaningful, all-attention giving way. She also leads into us thinking about what will change when the fast is over. What needs to change? What needs to become a priority? Do you even need to return to all the social media platforms you were on before? That's for you to work out. A great read, interactive, makes you think and hopefully changes your perspective on what is truly important today."

"After reading *The 40-Day Social Media Fast*, I knew that although I can't completely remove technology and social media from life, I need to take a step away from it all and adjust how I get through each day. This is a wonderful book that reads easily but is abundant in rich content!"



## Lost in the dark clouds of life?

*Everyone loves a sunny day, and everyone hates a cloudy day, right? After all, we have a singular medical classification for the negative effects of cloudy dark days on the human psyche. We tend to speak of the beauty of any given*



*day in relation to how much of the sun and sky we are able to see. However, the Bible encourages us to view clouds in a positive way too and to focus our thoughts on the glory and presence of God when we feel surrounded by dark clouds or dark experiences in our lives!*

*The Bible everywhere utilises the imagery of clouds to signal the immediate presence of God in time and space. This is one of those biblical themes that has not often been given due consideration. Surprisingly, the Scriptures have much to teach, by way of illustration, about the symbolic and redemptive significance of clouds.*

*We are all familiar no doubt with the story of Noah and how God saved Noah and his family from the flood, and made an everlasting covenant with them and all living creatures. Noah knew to place his hope in a loving God, who would always love and protect him from all dangers, even when dark storm clouds threatened.*

*"It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud; and I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." (Gen. 9:14-16)*

*An ongoing thought shared by the Benedictine Monks at Rostrevor*

At times – indeed, quite often – it is only with hindsight that we can recognise that the Lord was with us, present to us, when we couldn't see Him caught up, as we were, in our personal struggles, and focused on the negative issues at hand. It happens that we find ourselves, like Jacob, (Genesis 32: 24) after the incident at Peniel, recognising only afterwards – as we limp away, bruised and broken – that the Lord was there with us all the time in our struggles, and we did not realise it.

We can all know thick cloud in our lives, even as we seek to live as Christians. We can know thick cloud as we find ourselves caught up in diverse and sometimes conflicting expectations or experiences.

We can feel surrounded – and even weighed down by thick cloud – when physical tiredness assails us, when we are emotionally drained and feel spiritually exhausted. The cloud can seem all the thicker when we feel lost and alone within it, when support, comprehension and encouragement from others-friends/family/church do not make themselves felt.

In the thick cloud we can feel so alone, fearful and abandoned – and all of this, as I have said, even as church going Christians!

It is consoling for us at such times to refer to what the Bible teaches about the thick cloud and how God dwells in the thick cloud– not only in 1 Kings 8, but in so many other Scripture passages.

In the Bible we are given to see time and time again how the Lord reveals Himself and comes to be with His people in the midst of cloud: be it the cloud of darkness or that of blinding light.

*I recall having read lines from the Late Cardinal Bernardin at one time. He was speaking of Jesus arriving on the clouds and said something along these lines. If it is true that Jesus arrives surrounded by clouds, it is also true that He arrives amidst suffering. (The late Cardinal's personal experience of suffering permitted him to say that. His were words matched by experience.) He went on: Where there is suffering, there is the healing, life-giving Word (that is, Christ). And he concluded: Perhaps that is why we believe in Him so profoundly.*

Today, if we are in the thick cloud – and some of us may well find ourselves in such a place – let us dare to see it as a place of possible graced encounter with the Lord. The Lord is no stranger to thick cloud.



For Christ our darkness is often the place where He wants to reveal Himself – and does – as the ‘Bright Invisible’.

If it is in thick cloud that we find ourselves today, may we be attentive to the voice that came from the cloud that covered the Mount of the Transfiguration. (Lk 9:28-36)

*A cloud came and overshadowed Peter, James and John; and they were fearful as they entered the cloud. And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!”*

*God the Father came down on the mountain and spoke out of the cloud, declaring that Christ was his eternally beloved Son—the fullness of his revelation.*

The voice of God called on the disciples to ‘Hear Christ’ – and it invites us also – to listen to Him and to receive Christ’s help and strength in every situation we find ourselves in

## **Don't just invite people to church.**

Invite them to lunch.

Invite them to your table or patio.

Invite them into your life!

***Be there for them.***

**We—**

**not our building**

**—are the church!**

---

## **Parish Announcements**

The next Vestry meeting is Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March at  
10am in the Parochial Hall

### **Counters for March**

***6th March Bill Pollock***

***13th March David Robinson***

***20th March Brian Joyce***

***27th March Bill Rafferty***

***3rd April Colin de Fleury***

# You Are Welcome Here

No matter:

- Where you've come from or are going;
- What you believe or doubt;
- What you are feeling or just not feeling;
- What you have or don't have; and
- No matter whom you love!



## **Fellowship Activities for All MARCH**

### **The House Group**

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm

We meet in the Parochial Hall at St Patrick's to follow the story of the early church from Acts.

### **Book Club in the Parochial Hall**

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March at 7.30pm

### **NEW- Monthly Thursday Fellowship Group**

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March at 11am in the Boucher Room

**Also Every Week the following 2 groups meet:**

#### **Circus Skills Class**

**Tuesdays @ 10.30am - Parochial Hall**

#### **Indoor Bowling Club**

**Tuesdays from 7pm - Parochial Hall**

New people are welcome to join any of the activities.

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

### **Dear Reader**

March is looking like it's going to be a very busy month with Mothering Sunday on the 27th and before that St Patrick's Day and the start of Lent, when our thoughts will focus on preparing for the coming of Easter.

If you haven't had the opportunity, do drive over to St John's Church to see the beautiful spring flowers now showing off in all their glory in the grave yard.

### **Celebrating St Patrick**

This St Patrick's Day we plan to celebrate our patron saint's day in a really special way by linking up with our new friends that we have made in Washington DC. It has to be said that there is something rather special about forging new friendships, especially with fellow Christians thousands of miles away. I do hope you will take time to read the letter we received from the Senior (Church) Warden Jo Anne Nelson at St Patrick's Episcopal Church and that you will try and **join us at St Patrick's Church Whitehead on Sunday 20th March at 2pm when we will be linking our service live with St Patrick's in Washington DC. Be sure to come wearing something green.**

Our head of music and organist, Loreto McAuley will be present to offer a rare treat as she plays some Irish tunes on her harp for us and our friends in Washington to enjoy.

We are hoping that by the 17th March we will have completed our walk to the USA. Please ensure you send in your miles walked to the Editor before midnight on the 17th March and sponsorship money raised can be handed in at church or to the Rector or Treasurer. Many thanks to all who have supported.

### **World Day Of Prayer**

Don't miss the World Day of Prayer Service taking place on Friday 4th March...see p.17 for more details regarding transport. And times / venue.

### **New Thursday Fellowship Group at St Patrick's**

An open invitation is extended to all readers to come and join our new Thursday Fellowship Group at 11am in the Boucher Room on Thurs 3rd March. We plan to offer an informal and relaxed time of fellowship. Please contact Jo the editor in advance if you plan to attend. Thank you

## WHO'S WHO IN THE PARISH

**Rector: Revd Canon Mark Taylor,**

72 Riverforde T: 028 9337 3300 E: mark205@btinternet.com

**Mobile: 07719 619286**

**George McNeill Diocesan Lay Reader**

Facebook: St Patrick's & St Johns Whitehead & Islandmagee

Twitter: @Whitehead\_Col

Email: churchofirelandwhitehead@gmail.com

Website: **[www.whitehead-islandmagee-parish.co.uk](http://www.whitehead-islandmagee-parish.co.uk)**

**Pastoral Care Team - Tel no 077 0776 8058**

### CHURCHWARDENS

	St. Patrick's	St. John's
Rector's:	Jo Pawson	Pauline Riddle
People's:	Jeni McAughey	William Rafferty

### GLEBEWARDENS

St. Patrick's- Trevor Peoples    St. John's - Jim Reid

### SELECT VESTRY (includes Churchwardens & Glebewardens)

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Sandra Thompson -	Hon Treasurer	07912478331	
Ann Mulholland;	Bill Pollock;	Alison Higginson;	
Valerie Kincaid;	Maureen Reid;	George McNeill;	
Priscilla Carlisle;	Mabel Allen;	Bertnel Thompson;	
Andy Niblock	Austin Jenkins -	Graveyard Manager	St John's

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