

CHURCH MATTERS

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

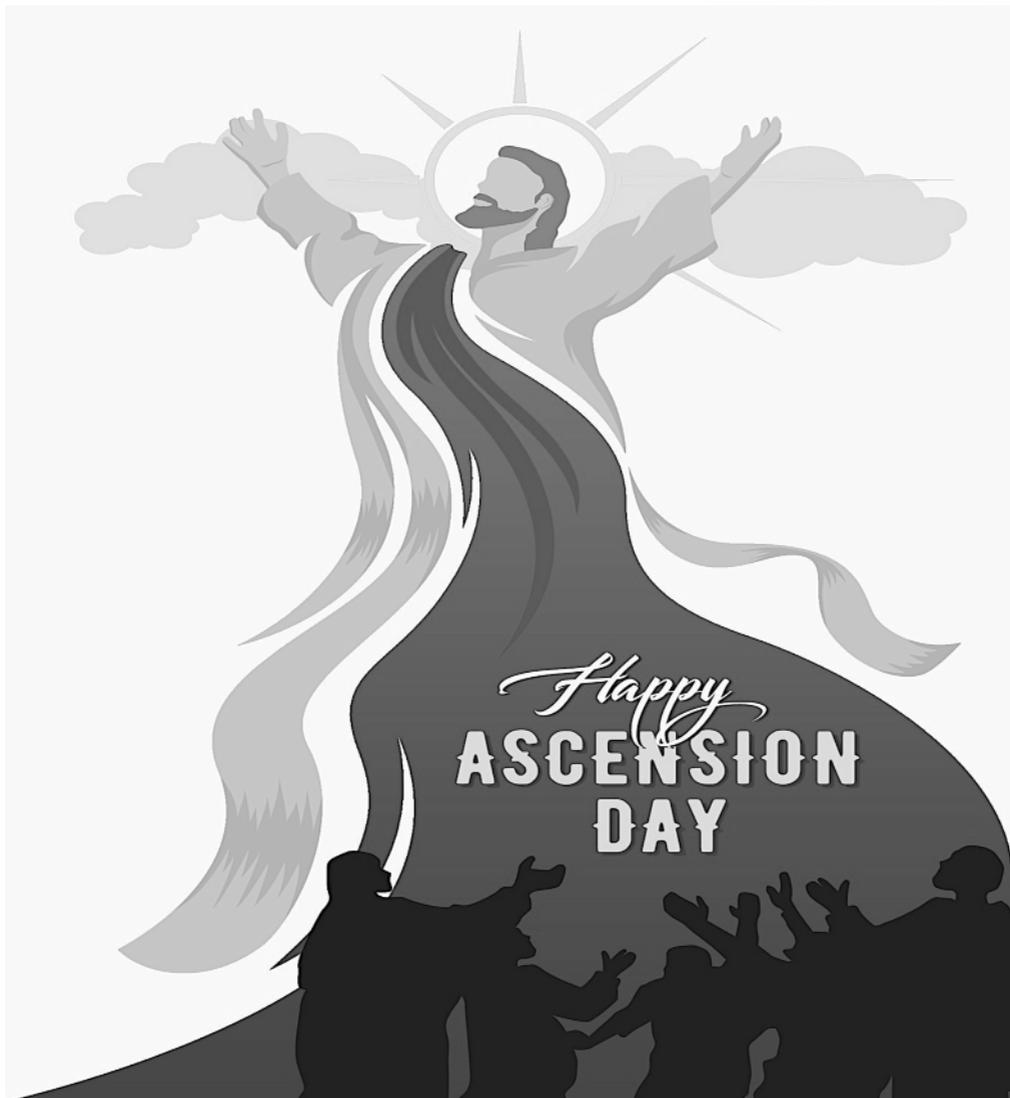
Here everyone matters

MAY 2022



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

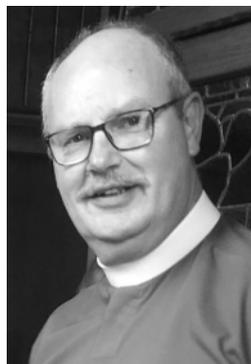
UNITED PARISH OF
WHITEHEAD & ISLANDMAGEE



A message from our Rector

It has been a very difficult time for many of us over the past couple of weeks.

Every thing was going on as normal, the Holy Week services, the preparation for Easter and then the sudden and violent murder of Alyson Nelson, who lived two doors down from St Patrick's. This is something that has touched very many lives in our community of Whitehead and Islandmagee. All this happened on the eve of Easter. As we were preparing to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and our hope of salvation.



Alyson has been ripped from her family, who are devastated not just by her death but by the manner of it.. A person central to their lives has been taken from them, in a flurry of violence, giving them no chance to prepare or to say their good byes. Please pray for them in the coming weeks.

Her friends are bereft at her death. A person they had shared parts of their life with is suddenly gone from them, leaving a hole that cannot be filled. Please pray for them in the coming weeks.

Her neighbours are shocked that such a thing could happen where they live, near their homes and families. They will miss a neighbour and friend. Please pray for them in the coming weeks.

Those who were first on the scene and raised the alarm and tried to help, and those who responded to the emergency calls; who have been affected by what they have seen. Please pray for them in the coming weeks.

For ourselves and our whole community; for this is not the sort of thing that happen here and has left a community that is struggling to come to terms with what has happened in our midst. Please pray for yourselves and all in our community in the coming weeks.

Any death can affect us and be hard to deal with (personally and professionally I am more aware of this than most) but it is much worse when it is not a "normal" natural death as a result of age, illness or even an accident. Therefore we all should pray, for the family, her friends and neighbours, those who were first there and who responded to the calls for help and for ourselves and our whole community.

A number of years ago we, as a Parish, joined the “Safe Place” scheme. That we would be a safe place for people who suffer as a result of violence - especially domestic violence. We handed out White Ribbon badges to show our opposition to domestic violence. Each year at Christmas we support Women’s Aid, to help those who have been on the receiving end of domestic violence. Did you know that our Church buildings are a Safe Place? Did you know that we, as a Parish, a Christian community, are opposed to domestic violence in any form? That we are publicly opposed? On a personal level, have you ever told anyone that you, or we as a Parish, stand against domestic violence? That we are a safe place, that you are a safe person, to come to if someone is suffering as a result of violence in the home, the work place or in the community?

As a whole community we did make that statement over the last couple of weeks. Over one thousand people met on the Saturday after Easter, a week after Alyson’s death, to make that statement by gathering together, walking from Victoria Avenue to the Promenade and tying white ribbons on the railings there. Many hundreds more packed St. Patrick’s, and stood outside, for her memorial service. We were not just standing with a family in their grief we were also standing together as a community opposed to violence in all its forms.

We did this not just as a community which was shocked and horrified by the event that happened in our midst. We did this as a Church, a community of Christians, who are echoing the words and work of Jesus in caring for those in need. This is a constant message, through both the Old and New Testaments, that it is our duty to God, and to each other, to care for those who need our care. When he was asked the question *“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”* **Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”** (Matthew 22:36-40)

Let us make sure we put these laws into practise in our lives, not just in word but also in deed. Let it be known that we love God and our neighbours as followers and servants of Jesus Christ.

I hope that the blessing of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and his saving grace, fills you with all joy and hope in believing. May God continue to bless you all. **Mark**

May 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.

Readers - please read the first reading from the "Sunday Readings" lists

Wednesday in St Patrick's

11:30 a.m. The Litany/Matins/Prayers

Sunday 1st May - 3rd Sunday of Easter

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One

10:30 a.m. Holy Communion Two

12 noon Holy Communion Two

Sunday Readings - Acts 9:1-6; John 21:1-9

Reader for first Lesson - Jane Robinson / Maureen Reid

7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer/Compline

Weekday Readings: Exodus 19, 20, 24, 25, 28; Psalms 139 - 146;

Colossians 1:1 - 3:17

Sunday 8th May - 4th Sunday of Easter

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One

10:30 a.m. Morning Prayer

10:30 a.m. **Messy Church** in the Parochial Hall - booking suggested for this services via texting the details of numbers (adults and children) who will be attending to 07719619286

12 noon Morning Prayer

Sunday Readings Acts 9:36-43; Psalm 23; John 10:22-30

Readers for first Lesson - Judith de Fleury / Ann Thompson

7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer/Compline

Weekday Readings: Exodus 32 - 40; Psalms 147 - 150, 1-3;

Colossians 3:18 - 4:18, 1 Thessalonians 1:1 - 4:12

Sunday 15th May - 5th Sunday of Easter

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One

10:30 a.m. Morning Prayer Two

12 noon Morning Prayer Two

Sunday Readings - Acts 11:1-18; Psalm 148; John 13:31-35

Readers for first Lesson - Colin de Fleury / Bill Rafferty
7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer/Compline
Weekday Readings: Leviticus 8, 16. 19. 23; Psalms 4-10;
1 Thessalonians 4:13 - 5:28, 2 Thessalonians 1-3

Sunday 22nd May - 6th Sunday of Easter - Rogation Sunday

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m. Story Teller Service
10:50 a.m. Morning Prayer Two (no Sermon)
12 noon Morning Prayer
Sunday Readings - Acts 16:9-15; Psalm 67; John 14:23-29
Readers for first Lesson - Bobby Herron / Hazel Robinson
7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer/Compline
Weekday Readings: Leviticus 25, 26 Psalms 11 - 13; Ephesians 1

Thursday 26th May - Ascension Day

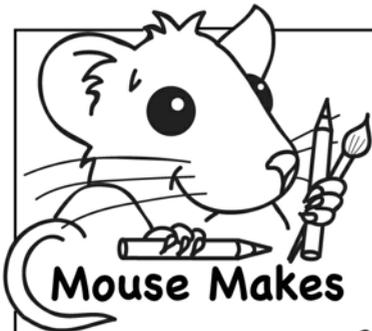
7:30 p.m. Holy Communion Two
Ascension Day Readings - Acts 1:1-11; Luke 24:44-53
Weekday Readings: 1 Samuel 2:1-10, Psalms 14 - 16; Ephesians 2

Sunday 29th May - 7th Sunday of Easter - Sunday after Ascension Day

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m. Morning Prayer Two
12 noon Morning Prayer Two
Sunday Readings - Acts 16:16-34; Psalm 97; John 17:20-26
Readers for first Lesson - Trevor Peoples / Joy Kerr
7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer/Compline
Weekday Readings: Joshua 1 - 9; Psalms 17 - 23; Ephesians 3 - 6

Sunday 5th June - Day of Pentecost (Whit Sunday)

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m. Holy Communion Two
12 noon Holy Communion Two
Sunday Readings - Acts 2:1-21; John 14:8-17
Reader for first Lesson - Corrine Logan / Jim Reid
7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer/Compline
Weekday Readings: Ecclesiastes 7 - 11; Psalms 24 - 31; Galatians 1 - 5



"Give thanks to the Lord for He is good, His love endures forever"
Psalm 136:1

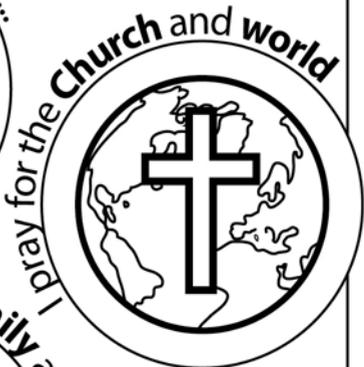
Jesus said,
"This, then, is how you should pray:

Our _____
in _____
hallowed be your _____
your _____

come,
your _____ be
done, on _____
_____ as it
is in _____.
Give us this day our
daily _____.
And _____

_____ us our _____,
as we also have
forgiven our debtors.
And _____
us not into
temptation, but
_____ us from the
_____ one."

Read Matthew 6:9-13 to fill in the words.



"Never stop praying."
1 Thessalonians 5:17



"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."
Philippians 4:6

Christian Aid Week

15th May -21st May 2022

It will soon be Christian Aid week again and this year the focus of the appeal is on the continuing drought situation in Zimbabwe. However, in the last month the deadly violence in Ukraine has captured all our news broadcasts. Over a million people have already fled their homes to escape the conflict there leaving behind jobs, belongings and loved ones and it is predicted that overall 5 million people will be displaced. This would make it one of the biggest movements of people in Europe since World War II.

Ukrainian's need shelter, food and water so Christian Aid Week this year has taken on a new urgency and Christian Aid is working with other Relief organisations in the Disaster's Emergency Committee to answer these needs.

Whitehead has always been generous in its giving to Christian Aid and this year, with the continuing drought in Zimbabwe and the situation in Ukraine, the need has become greater than ever before.

During Christian Aid Week this year from 15th May to 21st May, Christian Aid envelopes will be available in all the churches of the town and also in the local SPAR Supermarket.

To make supporting even easier we have included a gift envelope with this magazine. Please give whatever you can, returning your envelope to any of the six churches in the town or to the collecting points in the SPAR.

Thank you.



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Marmalade and Fruit Loaf Recipe

Kindly contributed by Mabel Allen - New Peoples Churchwarden

Preparation Time 15 mins

Cooking time 45 mins-1
hour

Oven Temperature: Pre-
heat oven to 180°C/160°C
Fan/ Gas 4

Ingredients:

250ml water

226g/8oz. Sultanas

2oz /50g butter

10oz/ 300g self-raising
flour.

198g/ 7oz soft brown sug-
ar

2 dessert spoons medium
cut orange marmalade

Pinch of salt.



2 large eggs-beaten

Method

Grease and line a 2lb loaf tin

Put the water, sultanas, butter, and marmalade in a pan
Bring gently to the boil for a few minutes then leave to cool.

Add the sugar and beaten eggs and stir until well combined.

Mix in the flour and salt.

Place mixture into prepared loaf tin.

Cook in preheated oven for approx. 45 minutes-to one hour (un-
til a skewer placed in the centre of the loaf comes out clean)

Leave to cool in the tin before slicing.

(This fruit loaf is suitable for home freezing.)

Enjoy



Hello everyone and of course a big hi to my new friend, Palisades in Washington DC.

Wasn't the special link up service between our two churches a good idea? I caught a brief glimpse of Palisades waving his tail at me so that was exciting. Exciting also was to hear Loreto playing her harp. More harp please Loreto!!

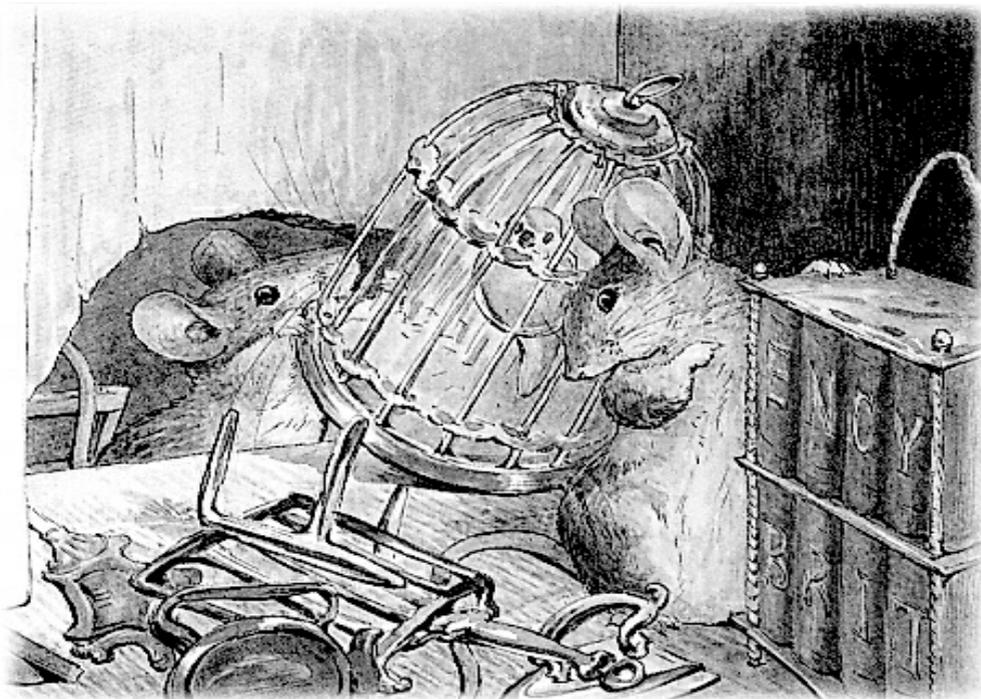
I hear that Palisades and our American friends 'walk to us is going really well and they've already passed the quarter mark which is super news.

I overheard our Church Treasurer talking the other day in the vestry about our Sponsored Walk to Washington DC and she was telling the Rector that so far £1,500 has been raised for the church which is great news.

The other bit of excellent news I picked up in the kitchen when I was hunting for crumbs, was that refreshments are now being served again every Sunday morning after the 10.30 service! That's Sunday lunch sorted!

I've been thinking about heroes recently. My best hero is Beatrix Potter who wrote and illustrated best-selling books for children 100 years ago. Why do I like her? Well, for one thing she dressed mice like me and other animals in clothes, gave them names and made sure they had lots of adventures.

Here overleaf is the naughty mouse, Tom Thumb trying to pull a bird cage into a mouse hole**.



She was also into conservation and farming and left much of her property and land to the National Trust in England for everyone to enjoy today. I wish I'd known her.

Do you have a hero? If so I would like to hear about them. Just say who it is and why they are your hero. It might be someone from the past or living today, local or in the world somewhere. Write it up in a few words, send it to the Editor and who knows you might be rewarded with a Hero sweetie!

And Palisades let's hear from St Patrick's Washington DC who your heroes are!

Stay well and happy

Church Mouse x

**From *The Tale of Two Bad Mice*: Published 1904.

From Printer to Clergyman

When Jo asked me to write something about myself I panicked as I have never written about myself before, it is certainly a lot different than writing a sermon, but here goes - I was born in Belfast on the 25th February 1942. You will be able to tell when my 80th birthday was I was named David George and had my upbringing on a mountain farm in Co. Fermanagh and Belfast. I was raised in a household that was steeped in Anglicanism, my father and grandfather were Select Vestry members and my father sang in the choir for many years.

We moved to the Belfast Road, Whitehead some 50 yrs. ago where my parents lived until they passed away and where I lived until I met Marjorie my soul mate and best friend. We have been married for 46 years. You most likely would have seen my father driving about the village in his blue invalid three-wheeler or my mother serving you in the old post office. Their story of faith and fortitude is another story to be told at another time. A year after we were married Marjorie presented me with a daughter and fourteen months later another daughter, both now married with children of their own. (5 grandchildren)

I left school at 14 and started to serve my apprenticeship as a printer, the reason we started at fourteen was that the apprenticeship was seven years long. I hated school from I started until I left. It was only after I started day release that I took an interest in education, I worked very hard studying. As well as having a day release I had two evening classes all at Belfast Tech. I also took a third evening class in English at Fane Street school. In the following years, I went on to win two degrees and two diplomas. I first felt the call to ministry at 17. All of my friends were of similar minds. My friends who did finish up in Dublin to train were Hugh Hopkins, Bill Brown, Sam Jones, and Brian Courtney, all printers.

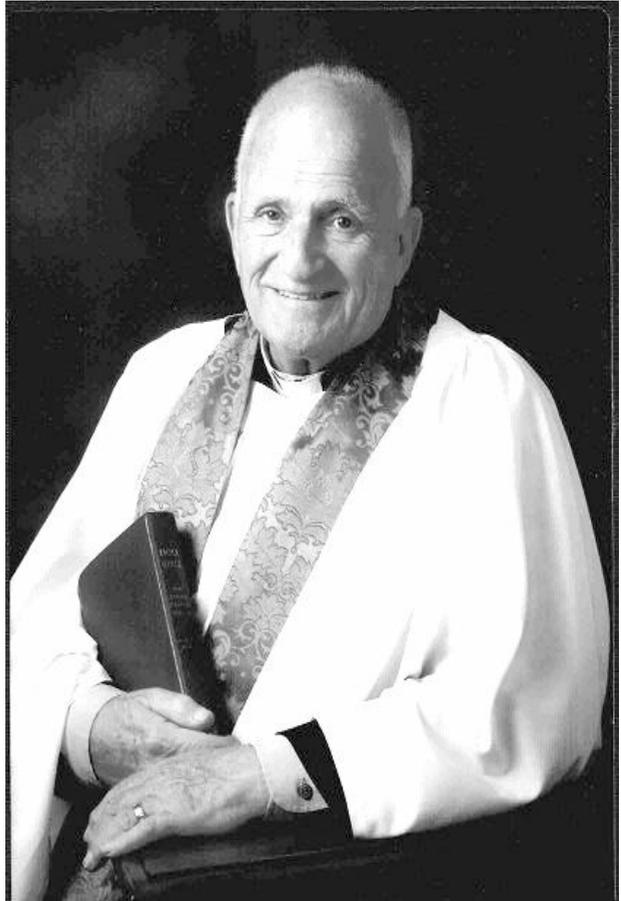
I continued with my apprenticeship because I did not have the education ability at that time but God kept calling. After my apprenticeship, my brother and I decided to start our own printing company called Regency Press. The company grew and it was more difficult for me to get out and answer God's call. After 40 years as the MD of the company, I had a heart attack in January of 2000 which was my way out. In September of that year,

I answered God's call and went to Dublin for 3 years.

I was ordained priest in 2004, God was blessing me as I was ordained to serve my curacy in Holy Trinity and Immanuel under The Right Rev. Trevor Williams. He gave me great training in all aspects of ministry,

I am super at funerals, in my first year I averaged one a week!!!

After my curacy, I moved to the Mater Hospital as the Church of Ireland Chaplain which was both sad, joyful, and again a very different aspect of ministry. I stayed for 12 months.



The Bishop of Clogher contacted me to sound me out on moving to six parishes in Co. Monaghan as Rector. They had not had a Rector for seven years having turned down numerous clergy. As you most likely know when a parish turns down a clergyman three times it then becomes a bishop's appointment. I was duly appointed.

The parishes were more or less in a circle around Marjorie's home place, her brother being a widower was glad to have us stay with him as he said at least he would get a hot meal every night. The rectory was in the middle of a forest and I did not like to have Marjorie on her own at night when I would be out.

As you can imagine without a Rector the churches were not being run along Church of Ireland rules and when I started to pull everything together I was

not a very popular cleric. There was also no Youth Fellowship and again we got that up and running with the help of the diocesan youth officer.

Sunday morning was like a scene from Bonnie and Clyde, after the first service Marjorie would have the car running and I would dash out the door fully robed and on to the next service I did three services one Sunday and two the following Sunday (which felt like a day off.)

When I reached the age of 75 I decided to retire from full-time ministry and enjoy my hobby of rebuilding old motorbikes and cars, I am just finishing off a 1980 Mini.

I am told by my peers that we had a very fruitful ministry, we left the church in the black and the vestries running as they should. Marjorie and I feel very blessed that we were able to do what we felt God wanted.

There are a few things I don't like, tea out of a china cup in the good room when I visit, people who will say they will do something with no intention of doing it, Instant coffee, a badly run service.

Things I do like, are being called George or Rev. George, visiting God's people, having a chat before a service, tea in the kitchen out of a delft cup or mug, and straight-talking (saying what you think)

"Find the good in everything and praise it"

Rev George Beattie

Ed :Thank you George for helping us to get to know you a bit better and welcome to our Parish.



It's Not Too Late to hear the Lecture on Theology: Why it matters to the Academy and the Churches.

When you're used to the comfortable home-based Zoom experience, it takes a lot of will power to go out on a wet evening to hear a lecture. Recently the Church of Ireland and Methodist Chaplaincy of Queens University sponsored a lecture on the subject, Theology: Why it matters to the Academy and the Churches.

It turned out to be a brilliant lecture, well worth the effort. Delivered to a capacity audience in a lively way, the renowned scholar and theologian, Professor Alister McGrath from Oxford University explored the many facets of theology, its relevance for churches, understanding art and literature, and for wider reflection. He underpinned his lecture with extracts from the writings of C S Lewis and other well known literary figures. The professor responded with enthusiasm to questions from young and old, which showed that the audience had been listening and wanted more. I felt encouraged by this.

The lecture is now available to watch at home, with this YouTube link:
<https://youtu.be/eEHjHtC3A>.

Don't miss it!

George McNeill

NEW -Wednesday Fellowship Group

A new daytime group has been 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. Our next meeting is Wednesday 4th May 2022 at 11am.

Fellowship meetings will be held on the 1st Wednesday 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.

Group leader Jo Pawson M:07790 241263

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Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Genesis chapter 1 to 2 verse 3.

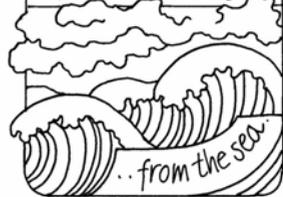
This story is at the start of the Bible, and the start of time...

When God first made the universe it was empty and shapeless. God said...

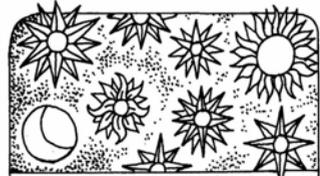
Let there be light!



On the next day, God separated the sky...



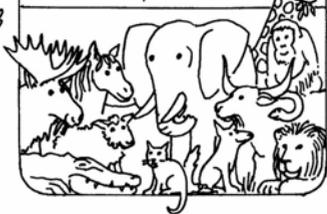
On the third day God separated the sea ...



On the fourth day God made lights shine in the sky for day and night.



On the sixth day God made all kinds of animals ...



God told the people ...
Take care of all I have made



On the seventh day God rested...



Church Treasurer's Report

I have just completed a full year of handling the church's finance. Thankfully, according to David Robinson, I am doing ok!

I would just like to express my sincere thanks to Paul de Fleury who taught me all about the Gift Aid procedures. Without his guidance, I would have found dealing with HM-RC much more challenging.

Thank you to all the Free Will Offering counters who go to the church on a rota basis and count and record all donations via envelopes and of course, David Robinson for auditing the accounts. There's a lot of work goes on quietly in the background to keep the finances up to date and accurate.

Currently we are able to pay our expenses and have no debt. We have a large proportion of church members who donate directly into the church bank account, which has meant there has been little disruption due to the Covid regulations. People have been very generous in relation to their personal giving and supporting the church post bereavement and with sponsorship donations. We are all very grateful for this financial support.

Every donation is vital to the ongoing presence of church life in Whitehead and beyond. Please make sure you let me know of any changes to addresses or contact details so that I can keep up to date. Thank you all again for your support for me personally and the church's continued future.

Sandra Thompson (Hon. Treasurer)



Dali's vision of the Ascension

On Ascension Day, 26th May, it is worth looking at one of the most intriguing and vibrant paintings of the Ascension. But before we see what a masterpiece Salvador Dali created, we ought to look at the Ascension itself.

How do we have any contact with this saving event of 2000+ years ago that Christ accomplished? Is it all just a memory? Can we only tell stories? Or can we experience it?

The Ascension says, "You can experience the Christ Event now, and here's how:"

What Is the Ascension?

'The Ascension of Christ' continues the 'Crucifixion and Resurrection' events. We say in the Creed, "*He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.*" What in the world does that mean? Well, it doesn't mean a golden throne in the sky. Instead, it means the Father saw what his Son did on the Cross and said, "*Yes! I approve of what you have done.*" And then he raises his Son from the dead. Then comes the Ascension where God the Father draws Jesus back to be with him, which is nothing less than God continuing to say "*Yes!*" to the work of his Son.

Being seated at the right hand of the Father means Jesus continues to save and give life. The Crucifixion and Resurrection didn't end at Calvary or in the Empty Tomb. It continues to be a reality today!

Our faith is not otherworldly. Christ is present here and now. He is not simply in heaven.

Whenever we celebrate the Eucharist (Communion) in church, heaven and earth are united, and we can experience the everlasting salvation Christ offers to all who believe in him.

That means we can be at Calvary, we can be at the empty tomb, we can even be at the Ascension, all because the Ascension provides access to something that happened 2000 years ago and continues to happen today. How cool is that!

The Ascension gives us Christ, very real, but in a glorified Body and Blood way. It gives us Jesus as he is now. That's why Salvation is a present event for us and we can partake of it any time we wish.

Dali paints the Ascension?

We come to that wonderful, bizarre, magical, mystical, Salvador Dali, who painted four major paintings of Jesus, all of them having the crucifixion present in them. But interestingly enough, he always presents the crucifixions as in the process of ascending. Here are two of his paintings.



In the painting 'Ascension Pieta' shown overleaf and above left, the feet of Christ lead the viewer to the figure of Christ ascending into a nucleus. The feet of Christ are soiled. They would be the last image the disciples would have seen of Christ as he ascended and represent how Christ came and walked with his disciples here on earth.

Dali first had his vision for this painting in 1950 but didn't complete it until 1958. As you view the painting the round yellow disc that fills the image can represent an atom, a nucleus of a cell, or the sun with its attendant sunflower, or a representation of life itself.

Dali was heavily influenced by the nuclear atom because of the nuclear arms race at that time. However, according to Dali, this nucleus is the "true representation of the unifying nature of Christ."

Dali's wife, Gala, is the model for the Blessed Virgin Mary at the top of the painting, who is weeping, and The Holy Spirit is represented by a dove.

How can this painting be interpreted?

The painting depicts a crucified Christ ascending. Christ is without wounds. However, it is a look at suffering in a different way. That



means the painting is a representation of how the crucifixion should be viewed in light of the resurrection and ascension.

Christ's outstretched hands are powerfully flexing as if in a struggle or battle with evil. The background to the hands is a violent tableau of red clouds or explosions representing the evil he faced on the Cross and the evil still present in the world. For Dali, perhaps, this was nuclear evil.

The Virgin Mary is weeping because she sees the suffering of the world and the continued battle her Son wages to defeat the remnants of evil. Does Dali intend the suffering aspect of this painting to show the ambiguity of a Christian's life and the constant challenges we face here?

Christ's feet are soiled because he is still in the world, not departed totally from it.

Note that the Holy Spirit has its own sphere representing heaven, but Christ is headed that way as well. The Spirit's sphere interlocks with the worldly spheres, divinizing them. So, though we have an inward/upward movement of the Christ figure, we get the impression that Christ is gathering all creation, heaven and earth into unity.



Christ is in command. There is no doubt that the overwhelming message of the painting is one of victory in the midst of suffering, but victory, indeed.

Stretching our Spirituality with the Ascension

Without the Ascension, we would simply have a sterile, static faith. With the Ascension, we have a vibrant, strong belief system that allows us a close loving relationship with God. What other religion has this? Not one. We are so blessed.

We have to thank Dali for re-energizing this concept of a vibrant faith. He, who was once an atheist, came to a Christian faith, and we can only assume that God worked through Dali's own paintings to help get him to that moment of conversion.

By Rev Eric Barr

St James the Least of All

The Rectory

On the perils of the church picnic

My dear Nephew Darren



A Spring parish picnic is always a good idea – although you must bear some details in mind. First, whatever date you choose will turn out be the wettest of the year. English picnics are invariably eaten under umbrellas while wearing Wellingtons and the sort of determinedly cheerful look that defies anyone to admit they would rather be home in front of the fire.

Second, no matter how early in the year, wasps will emerge from hibernation in huge numbers, and terrorise Mrs Hornby with the picnic baskets. And thirdly, someone will bring along their (hungry) dog. Last time Colonel Psmith's spaniel outdid herself: she leapt up, head butted a piece of Madeira cake out of Mrs Horngirdle's hand - and ate the lot – before even a crumb could touch the ground. A good piece of field work, that.

Half-way through the afternoon, some over-excited member of the party will decide to arrange a game of rounders. (Mr Poppinjay tried this one year, as in his youth he had been athletic. Fortunately, the ambulance got there quickly, and the ankle healed well.) Then the mothers who join in will completely ignore the ball sailing past them, while they discuss some burning topic of Mother's Union gossip.

In the meantime, the young choir members, who were the reason for arranging the game in the first place, will have drifted off to the lake to throw stones at the ducks while no one is looking.

For our annual picnic, I use my own car, making sure it is so full of clerical robes and church magazines that no one else can fit in. Throughout the day, I keep returning to it to make sure no one has broken in to steal the Communion wine – and taking the opportunity to catch up on the cricket scores. By the middle of the afternoon, I usually remember that some urgent duty, such as blessing a traction engine, demands my departure.

The rest of the party, by now soaked, cold and knowing the coach to take them home is still several hours off, only wish they had such demanding work to tear them away.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace x



The Refugee By Nigel Beeton

All that I was, I no longer am
All that I have, I hold in my hand
My home, my love, my world are all gone
One among thousands, I shuffle along.

Only last week I knew who I was
All that has gone, and only because
Someone in a land a long way away
Turned life into hell one terrible day.

He started a war, his heart icy cold
He rained down his hell on the young and the old
I ran for my life for I had no choice
And nobody heard the fear in my voice.

Everything's gone, and all that is 'me'
Summed up in a word – the word 'refugee'.
I have no control, no say in my fate
Just one in a crowd, I stand and I wait.

Waiting for what? The future's unclear,
For armed men have taken all that I held dear
Along with my hopes, and all I had planned
All swept away by the tanks in my land.

One thing alone puts a smile on my face
A far nicer stranger has come to this place;
A bed for the night? A cup of hot tea?
And – best of all – someone who sees me as me.

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Church Mice

Karl Zorowski



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The Rev Dr Jo White Reflects on The Meaning of Colours in the Church - part 1

In March, April and May this year the coloured frontal of our church altar will have been changed many times – as will the colour of our Rector's vestments.

Each colour – and there can be as many as six in a church's store – has a different meaning. They reflect the significance of that day or the season.

In March purple was used as a symbol of penitence, as we were in Lent and trying to prepare ourselves for Christ's final act of love for each of us.

Holy Week – the time of Christ's final journey – was denoted by the colour red. Red, the colour of blood, is used for feasts of martyrs as well as those for the Holy Spirit – when it more likely represents his flames of 'fire' which rested on those in the Upper Room.

Maundy Thursday, we switched to white for any Communion service, as this celebrates the remembrance of the first Communion with His apostles which He commanded us to continue.

Good Friday, and we were back to red.

Then on Easter Sunday, the day of the greatest Christian Celebration, we entered to an altar bedecked in gold or the 'whitest' with the most elaborate decoration the church possesses.

'Plain' White will be used for the Easter Season signifying purity and Christ's triumph over death until Ascension Day on 26th May. This, being a special and more significant day in the life, death and resurrection of Christ, goes to gold again: then immediately back to white for the next ten days.

On the day of Pentecost itself, Whit Sunday, 5th June, the colour will be? Yes, you got it, red for flames of fire.

This month: Watch out for the changing colours indicating the special meanings that day has in the life of the church. In June it will all change again, so we'll consider those next month.

Prayer for May

Dear Father in Heaven, as we thank you for May, this most beautiful of months, we are aware that not everything in your world is beautiful; not every attitude or action is beautiful, or kind, or just.

There is so much pain and suffering in the world that we can sometimes feel overwhelmed. Help us, Lord to remember that Jesus came to bring all this brokenness together, to bring reconciliation and wholeness.

Thank you that by His life, death and resurrection Jesus overcame death for ever. Thank you that He ascended into heaven so that the Holy Spirit could come to live in believers, to give strength and power and resilience, so that Your work goes on.

Thank you that nothing in all creation – no evil attacks, no illness, no human powers, no circumstances at all – can ever separate us from Your love.

We will not be overwhelmed as we keep our eyes on You.

We may not always understand, but we acknowledge You to be the Lord, who reigns over all – and we are thankful.
In Jesus name. Amen.

By Daphne Kitching

Why going to church boosts your mental health?

By Deborah Jenkins

Research suggests being part of a church community can lengthen your life and reduce depression. But why? Deborah Jenkins explores

Former words from an old friend ring unpleasantly in my ears. "Why would I go to church? I feel bad enough about myself already. They'll just make me feel worse!"

Her scathing implication that the church was a group of unwelcoming, judgemental moralists, shocked me. It was certainly not my experience. But as the years have passed, I've met others like her, people who feel that churches have not offered them much in the way of friendship or hope, despite longing for both.

There is of course no excuse for this. Churches should be bodies of people who accept and embrace their own failures through the lens of God's fierce love and do the same for others.

In fact, there is evidence that this is often the case. Research shows there are good reasons why involvement in a church is likely to provide more than a few hymns and a free coffee on a Sunday morning. Being part of a church community can lengthen life, reduce depression and promote positive mental health.

Church gives me an opportunity to *be part of something bigger than myself*. Joining with others to work towards a project or goal takes us out of our own bubbles, allowing us to focus on a big picture. It could be volunteering at a lunch club or food bank, joining a choir or hosting a community celebration (eg for the forthcoming platinum jubilee). Local churches can do this kind of thing well. Joining in with them can help us find friends, a sense of belonging, new skills. It can also give us better perspective on our own thornier challenges in life.

Church also helps me to *live in the moment*. In our tech-heavy, digital age, we are tapping into other people's moments all the time on social media. We are prisoners of other people's moments. How to claim back our own? I always think we're most alive to the present when we're doing

things with others. Community activities - singing, praying, confiding, listening, laughing, sharing food, celebrating – these keep us anchored to the moment and are good for mental health. They take place in all the churches I have been part of.

Mental health practitioners sometimes advise a person to ***audit your happiness***. This tip is comparable to that of reflecting. The benefits of reflection include allowing ourselves opportunities to pause, untangle problems, find meaning and reset thought patterns. Churches provide spaces for people to do this, at Sunday services and midweek meetings. Many church buildings are open during the week too, offering opportunities to sit quietly and pray for a loved one. Reflection allows us to express sorrow, face fears and name what we're thankful for. Expressing gratitude has been well documented as a tool for improving well-being. And for Christians, it is something we're commanded to do as well (1 Thessalonians 5:8).

Of course, it's true you could pursue some, though perhaps not all, these things with other community groups too, such as the advice to ***cultivate a passion***. This can lead to improved confidence and resilience with a knock-on effect for self-esteem.

Finally, we're advised to ***accept change***, however hard that might be. When enduring grief, job loss or the end of a relationship, for example, what better place to heal than as part of a loving church community with supportive people?

If our churches are welcoming spaces where people are invited to participate widely, and embraced for who they are, they may find faith in the God we love. Let's not underestimate the role strong, loving local church communities can play in helping people discover the hope God gives, both in this life and the one to come.

Deborah's forthcoming novel, Braver (Fairlight Books, June 2022) explores themes of faith and mental health. The main protagonist is anxious and lonely. When the situation at work threatens to overwhelm her, she asks for help from people at the local church. Feeling welcomed and accepted, she begins to find the courage to face her fears, before a shock accusation rocks the community and friendship is tested to its limits.

LETTER FROM AMERICA- From Palisades the Church Mouse in St Patrick's Washington DC

Hello Everyone

I am glad to report that we are all trying to do our bit to walk to our new friends in St. Patrick's Whitehead, Northern Ireland. I have been doing a lot of scampering around but the pedometers that they provided the people don't work for a mouse! I wonder how I could add my miles to the church total? Any ideas?



So far, as of April 20th, our parishioners have walked over 1,300 miles and they're 35% of the way toward you in Whitehead. I heard our Senior Warden encouraging everyone at church on Sunday to get busy' walking, running, rowing, or biking their way to Northern Ireland and to not forget to log all the miles done.

There was great excitement as our Annual Parish Rummage Sale was held recently. So many people were involved and getting ready for it. (It was the first full sale since the pandemic set us off track.) The funds collected go to outreach: 'Samaritan Ministry', 'Haiti Partnership' and 'So Others Might Eat.'. As far as I know, there isn't

any outreach to 'So Other Mice Can Eat' regrettably, but maybe down the road...

We are fortunate to have different clergy come and assist us as "supply", (whatever that means) while we are in the prayerful process towards finding a new rector for our beloved St Patrick's DC.

We are in the Season of Easter, and we've had many people sharing with us the joys of Easter and after every service I manage to scurry around for crumbs, just like your church mouse does.

Our Senior Warden, Jo Anne, is our leader and I hear the people saying they are so grateful for her and the Vestry who are taking good care of the parish as we go through all this. It's good to see everyone pulling together for the church.

We'll must close now by sending you best wishes for a very Happy Easter from all the humans and me of course.

Palisades x

Church Mice

Karl Zorowski

**Pray for your
RECTOR**



**Your Rector
Prays for you**

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Back from the dead: Tiger, Eriksen and the power of a resurrection story!

By Rev Peter Crumpler

The remarkable physical comebacks of golfer Tiger Woods and footballer Christian Eriksen testify to the power of the resurrection story to engage people's imagination and bring hope in dark places, says Peter Crumpler

As Christians around the world recently celebrated Easter, resurrection has been making headlines in unexpected places.

Newspaper pages, websites and apps have been buzzing with the idea of the 'big comeback' with sporting figures like golfer Tiger Woods and soccer's Christian Eriksen returning to top performances after facing major physical setbacks.



RESURRECTED

Woods came back from a horrific car crash last February to compete in the US Masters a couple of weeks ago, with commentators describing his "fairy tale" return to a major tournament.

Danish footballer Christian Eriksen returned to playing for his nation and Premier League side, Brentford, just nine months after he suffered a near-fatal cardiac arrest during the opening game of the Euro 2020 championships last June. Shocked football fans around the world watched as he received urgent medical attention. Many prayed. Eriksen – now fitted with a defibrillator to restart his heart if it stops working again – later told interviewers he was "gone from this world for five minutes."

“THESE RESURRECTION NARRATIVES POINT TOWARDS A VISION OF HOPE AMIDST THE DARKNESS”

Scanning the sports websites for reports of his comeback, one word stands out: resurrection. One journalist described his return as “the resurrection which has stunned the world of football.” Fans talked about “the player who came back from the dead.”

PALE SHADOWS

Neither Woods or Eriksen have publicly intimated a personal faith of their own. And Woods' fall from grace a decade ago, as his marriage collapsed amid allegations of multiple affairs, has still not been forgotten, or forgiven, by many. Nonetheless, their stories of resurrection play to a powerful cultural narrative. Andre Radmall, a Church of England minister and psychotherapist, explains that: “both the Tiger Woods and Christian Eriksen stories have had a major impact on many people. Their resurrection, ‘phoenix from the ashes’ narratives are baked into our cultural landscape.”

Radmall, an experienced leadership coach and counsellor, asserts: “These stories are like ripples in a pond. They bring hope and possibility to the most hopeless of situations. The cosmic epicentre of these ripples is the death and resurrection of Christ, but they can be experienced everywhere. “Woods and Eriksen are living proof that the imaginative leap of resurrection, as a leap across the boundary of normal limitations, can actually happen.”

“PERSONAL RESURRECTION IS SOMETHING MANY PEOPLE ARE EAGERLY SEEKING AFTER, EVEN IF THEY CAN’T ARTICULATE IT”

As Christians, we know that these sportsmen’s physical triumphs are but pale shadows of the true resurrection story. Christ’s victory on the cross went far beyond his being raised to life from death, to being raised to a glorious new life, with Christ now seated at God’s right hand.

But what Radmall describes as “an imaginative leap” is perhaps the key to understanding the way global audiences have responded to Woods’ and Eriksen’s startling comebacks.

HOPE IN THE DARKNESS

With horrific images and stories emerging from Ukraine, the cost of living soaring globally and the impact of Covid still being felt, these resurrection narratives point towards a vision of hope amid the darkness.

It's a hope that's central to the gospel message that Christians proclaim – a new beginning, hitting the reset button with freedom from guilt and shame as we put our faith in Christ. This personal resurrection may be something that many people are eagerly seeking after, even if they can't articulate their yearning.

The power of the resurrection account, in all its depth and richness, inspired artists for centuries. Yet, as faithful believers, we sometimes underestimate its impact. It may, perhaps, be hidden in plain sight.

In many traditional church services, the congregation joins in the Apostles' Creed, declaring that Jesus "was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead." Sometimes, this is said as more of a ritual than a powerful declaration.

TAKEN FOR GRANTED

Disappointingly, a 2017 BBC survey showed that a quarter of British people who described themselves as Christians did not believe in Jesus's resurrection. Yet as Paul makes clear in his powerful letter to the Corinthians: "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. (1 Corinthians 15:17).

Resurrection plays a key part in Jesus's ministry. In the Gospels, Jesus brings three people back to life: Lazarus (John 11:17-44), the son of the widow of Nain (Luke 7:11-17) and Jairus's daughter (Luke 8:40-56). In Acts 9, in a story that tends to get less attention, Peter brings Tabitha back from the dead.

We live in a society and a culture that places high value on resurrection in its broadest sense. The remarkable stories of Woods and Eriksen testify to its power to engage people's imagination and bring hope in dark places.

As Christians, we need to be ready to respond to our culture's hunger for good news stories of new life and hope – many of them to be found in our churches. These are lessons for us to learn as we celebrate the resurrection of Christ this Easter, and each time we share in the family meal of bread and wine.

Rev Peter Crumple was Communications Director with the Church of England, from 2004 to 2011, he then left to become a CofE priest.



"It comes to something when the state of the pound is such that we *hope* to find lots of foreign coins!"

Parish Announcements

The next Vestry meeting is Thursday 12th May at
7pm in the Parochial Hall

Counters for May

1st May	Sandra Thompson
8th May	Bill Pollock
15th May	David Robinson
22nd May	Brian Joyce
29th May	Bill Rafferty
5th June	Colin de Fleury

Sunday Refreshments Rota

1 st May - Corinne Logan	22 nd May - Anna Rollos
8 th May - Messy Church	29 th May - Paddy Rodgers
15 th May - Evelyn Powers	5 th June - Priscilla Carlisle

Refreshments coordinator Priscilla Carlisle -Tel 07787561517

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- No matter whom you love!



CHANGING ATTITUDE
IRELAND

MAY Fellowship Activities

The House Group

Monday 9th & 23rd May 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

Wednesday 25th May at 7.30pm

This month's book is 'Crooked Branch' by Jeanine Cummins

(Contact Paddy Rodgers for venue)

NEW- Monthly Wednesday Fellowship Group

Wednesday 4th May 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 all of the activities.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Dear Reader

It feels like new life is resurging again in our parish and it is wonderful to see people returning to church after being absent for a while due to Covid distancing. We are still being careful as we gather together, but thanks to Priscilla, the refreshment rota has been reintroduced and we do encourage all who attend services to stay on for refreshments and a chat before heading home.

Our select vestry has also been updated following the Easter General Vestry meeting.. View the back page to see who is serving on our vestry in 2022-23.

Our new midweek fellowship group has also got started and lovely to see folk attending. We have changed to meet on the first Wednesday of the month at 11am in St Patrick's . See p.15 For more details.

I know that our thoughts are very much with our brothers and sisters in Ukraine and I thought I would leave this prayer with you to close. **God**

Bless

A Prayer for Ukraine by David Thomas,

Christian Aid's Ireland's Church and Community Manager

Lord of all people and all nations,

We lift before you the people of Ukraine and the people of Russia,
Each girl and boy, each woman and man living in fear of what tomorrow might bring,

We long for a time you spoke of through your prophet Isaiah,

When weapons of war would be beaten into ploughshares,

When nation will no longer lift up sword against nation,

We cry out to you for peace,

Protect those who only desire and deserve to live in security and safety,

Comfort those who fear for their lives and the lives of their loved ones,

Change the hearts of those set on violence and aggression,

Fill earthly leaders with great wisdom to find paths to peace,

Please Lord come and have your way in your world,

May your will be done here, on earth as it is in heaven,

May your peace reign. Now and always,

We lift this prayer to you, our God who is able to do
more than we can ever ask or imagine,

In the name of Christ our saviour, Amen

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St. Patrick's

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People's: Mabel Allen

St. John's

Pauline Riddle

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;

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Priscilla Carlisle; Bertnel Thompson;

Austin Jenkins -Graveyard Manager St John's

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St John's: Sara Henderson

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