

CHURCH MATTERS

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

Here everyone matters

March 2023



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

UNITED PARISH OF
WHITEHEAD & ISLANDMAGEE

Happy

Mothering Sunday

19th March



March Services & Readings

Worship and services - Wednesdays at 11:30 a.m.

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

Sunday 5th March - 2nd Sunday in Lent

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m. & 12 noon Holy Communion Two
Sunday Readings - Epistle - Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; Gospel - John 3:1-7
Readers for first Lesson - Corrine Logan / Ann Thompson
7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer/Compline
Weekday Readings: Jeremiah 1:1 - 6:19; Psalms 122 - 136; John 4:27 - 5:47

Sunday 12th March - 3rd Sunday in Lent

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m. Morning Prayer
10:30 a.m. **Messy Church** in the Parochial Hall -
12 noon Morning Prayer
Sunday Readings - Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 95; John 4:5-42
Readers for first Lesson - Heather Cupples / Bill Rafferty
7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer/Compline
Weekday Readings: Jeremiah 7:1 - 13:11; Psalms 137 - 150; John 7:14 - 8:59

Sunday 19th March - 4th Sunday in Lent - Mothering Sunday

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m. & 12 noon Morning Prayer
Sunday Readings - 2 Corinthians 1:3-7, Psalm 127:1-4; Luke 2:33-35
Readers for first Lesson - Jane Robinson / Joy Kerr
7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer/Compline
Weekday Readings: Jeremiah 14:1 - 23:8, Psalms 1-10; John 6:1-59

Sunday 26th March - 5th Sunday in Lent - Passion Sunday

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m. & 12 noon Family Service
Sunday Readings - John 11:1-45
Readers for first Lesson - The Rector
7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer/Compline
Weekday Readings: Jeremiah 24:1 - 31:34, Psalms 11-20; John 9:1 - 11:44

Sunday 2nd April - 6th Sunday in Lent - Palm Sunday

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m. & 12 noon Holy Communion Two
Sunday Readings - Epistle - Philippians 2:5-11; Gospel - Matthew 27:1-54
Readers for first Lesson - Judith de Fleury / Jim Reid
7:00 p.m. Evening Prayer/Compline
Weekday Readings: Luke 21-23

HOLY WEEK

Our Holy Week evening Services will be at 7:30 p.m. in St Patrick's
Come and share with us as we worship together and read from the story
of Jesus last week on earth. We will be reading from, and learning from,
St Luke's story of Jesus last days - to be found in the Gospel According
to St Luke chapters 21-23.

Monday 3rd Irish Vigils

Luke 21:1-4 - The widow's Offering

Tuesday 4th - Compline

Luke 21:5-37 - Signs of the end of the age

Wednesday 5th The Litany

Luke 22:1-6 - Judas agrees to betray Jesus

Thursday 6th Holy Communion

Luke 22:7-53 - The Last Supper and Jesus Arrested,

Friday 7th The Three Hours

Luke 22:54-62 - Peter disowns Jesus,
Luke 22:63-65 - Guards mock Jesus,
Luke 22:66-23:1 - Jesus before the Sanhedrin,
Luke 23:2-7 - Jesus before Pilate,
Luke 23:8-12 - Jesus before Herod,
Luke 23:13-25 - Jesus before Pilate,
Luke 23:26-49 - Jesus Crucified.

Friday 7th - Late Evening Office

Luke 23:50-56 - Jesus Burial

Details of our Easter Day celebrations and church services in St Patrick's
and St John's will be published later in March both in Church and on the
Facebook page.

A message from our Rector

Once again I have discovered that the thoughts, prayers and good wishes of friends and family are so very important. Even the thoughts, prayers and good wishes of complete strangers can give an uplift to the soul and mind.

Thank you to all who have included my family and myself in their prayers in these last days. The death of a family member is never easy to deal with, more so when it is unexpected and even more so when they are (at least relatively speaking) still young. The knowledge of your prayerful support have made the unbearable easier to deal with.

All of us are affected by bereavement at one time or another in our lives. As they say the only things you can't avoid in life are death and taxes. The effects of bereavement differ for each of us, as does the way that we deal with it. We also need to be aware that each different bereavement affects us differently.

For me the prayerful support of family and friends is crucial. St James wrote "the prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." *James 5:16* For me this is so very true, not just in times of grief. Last month - before my most recent bereavement - I wrote here about the beginning of the new year as a time when we could improve our prayer life. Praying, earnestly for our friends is a most effective way of doing this. It may also be encouraging for us to see and hear about how effective our prayers are. This is why I am letting you know how much I appreciate and value the prayers that have been offered for me and my family. I know that I am not alone. I know that there are people who care enough about me and my family to set aside time to pray for us. I know that the feeling of comfort and peace that I now have is far better than the desolation I felt when I was first told of my brother's death - and the difference between these two feelings is that people have been praying for me. That God has heard their prayers and has answered them. That these prayers have been both powerful and effective - just as St James said.

Powerful and effective prayer begins with a recognition that God hears us and answers our prayers. The answer is not always what we want, mainly because we do not always ask for the right thing, the thing that is needed. The most effective prayers at this time are not those



prayers that ask God to reverse what has happened. The most effective prayers are those that ask God to provide the strength, the peace and the comfort that is needed to face the situations that we are in. On the night before he died Jesus met with his disciples and shared a meal with them. At the end of the meal he spoke to them. One of the things he spoke about was his own impending death. We can read about this in John 14. At the end of one bit he says (*John 14:27*) “*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives.*” In times of stress and distress it is the peace of Jesus that we need, something that we cannot get from this world. We can get this peace through asking God for it, and we can also get it when others ask God for it on our behalf. This is one of the most important and effective things that we can do in prayer, as for God’s peace for our family and friends. It is stunning how often this simple prayer is answered fully by God. How often people experience a peace within themselves in times of need. A calmness that lets them deal with the problems and issues that trouble them, that lets them face the days to come with steadfastness and patience.

Asking for the right thing can be hard. We know what we want, but what we want is not always what we need. When I am hungry I need food; I may want a specific type of food but what in need is just food, any food. The same when I am thirsty. So it is with our prayers. We ask for specific things, which may be the things we want rather than the things we need.

This is where it becomes difficult to grasp. We cannot always tell the difference between what we want and what we need. (This is where I could start another couple of pages to try and explain this - or . . .)

Most simply, what we really need, above all else, is to know God’s love for us, to have God’s peace and contentment in our lives and to have the blessed assurance that at the last we will receive salvation through the forgiveness of our sins. This is what we really need, everything beyond that is just what we want.

I pray that during this Lent we will face our need and pray actively for Christ’s grace, mercy and peace to fill us. That we will pray for ourselves and for each other every day and have the blessed assurance of God’s love for us.

To each and all of you, may God bless you every day, and all whom you love as we draw near the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, Thank you for your prayers for me and my family. Mark

Some thoughts on Saints, mothers and Easter . .

Be joyful, and keep your faith and your creed. Do the little things that you have seen me do and heard about. I will walk the path that our fathers have trod before us. – St David

I bind unto myself today the power of God to hold and lead, his eye to watch, his might to stay, his ear to hearken to my need: the wisdom of my God to teach, his hand to guide, his shield to ward, the Word of God to give me speech, his heavenly host to be my guard. – from St Patrick's Breastplate

Let the Irish be thankful for the apostle who was not an Irishman and yet was the best Irishman that ever lived. – E McGlynn

The way of this world is to praise dead saints and persecute living ones. – Anon

Honour your father and mother: that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God gives to you. – Exodus 20:12

Love is blind. Your mother started loving you before she ever saw your face. – Anon

The moment a child is born, the mother is also born. She never existed before. The woman existed but the mother, never. The mother is absolutely new. – Anon

Good Friday...in a way...is not Good Friday at all. It is Black Friday – a very Black Friday. It is Good Friday only in the sense that we know Easter will follow. – J E Lantz

Christ's blood is heaven's key. – Thomas Brooks

All history is incomprehensible without Christ. – Ernest Renan

The cross of Jesus Christ is a two-way street; we have been brought to God and God has been brought to us. – Donald Grey Barnhouse

You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving. – Anon

If you can't sleep, don't count sheep: talk to the Shepherd. – Anon

Jesus knows me – this I love. – Anon

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United Parish of Whitehead & Islandmagee

Lunches for Lent



Saint Patrick's Parish Hall
Edward Road, Whitehead

Every Wednesday supporting
Church Restoration Fund & Several Charities.

22nd February - NI Children to Lapland Trust

1st March - RNLI

8th March - Leukaemia & Lymphoma NI

15th - March NI Hospice & Children's Hospice

22nd March - Multiple Sclerosis Research QUB

29th March - Down's Syndrome Association

5th April - Cancer Research

All are Welcome to this Community Meal
Between 12:00 and 2:00pm

Pre-Orders and Carry Out Facilities Available.

Contact Austin for details: 07523 906661

Registered with NI Charity Commission NIC 102649

registered with NI Charity Commission NIC 102649

NEXT TABLE QUIZ NIGHT IN ST PATRICK'S PAROCHIAL HALL

On Friday 31st March at 7.30pm

Bring your own refreshments. £4 pp.

Team number not limited to 4 anymore

Everyone welcome

The Churchkey



We are keen to find out who has a Church Key and also to collect back any that are no longer required for church duties
Please email, or message our Rector (see back page for details)

Or call Trevor Peoples 07904 016 591

If you:

A) Are in possession of any Church KEYS

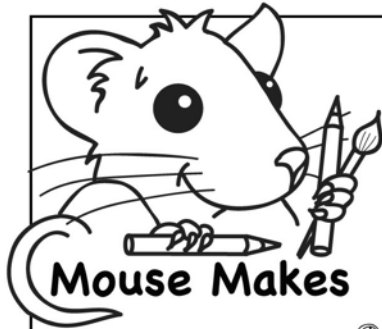
**WE NEED THIS INFORMATION SO WE CAN CREATE
A NEW REGISTER OF KEY HOLDERS**

B) If you have a key you no longer require and wish to return

Many thanks

***Yoga and English as a Foreign Language
Classes are now being held regularly in
the Parochial Hall with day and
evening sessions***

If you are calling in to the church on other business please be considerate that these classes should not be disturbed or interrupted. Thank you.



BIBLE MOTHERS

Who had two sons called Cain and Abel?

_____ Genesis 4:1-2

Who was 90 years old when she had her son Isaac?

_____ Genesis 17:19

Whose prayers for a child were answered by God?

_____ 1 Samuel 1:20

Who was Ruth's Mother-in-Law?

_____ Ruth 1:1-5

Eunice was Timothy's mother, but who was her mother?

_____ 2 Timothy 1:5

Who saved her baby by putting him in a basket in the river?

_____ Exodus 6:20

Look up the Bible verses and find out who the Bible mothers are.



M _____ Matt 1:16

O _____ 2 Tim 1:5

T _____ 1 Kings 1:11

H _____ 1 Sam 1:20

E _____ Gen 34:1

R _____ Gen 30:22

WHO IS MY MOTHER?



- CAIN
- ISAAC
- JESUS
- JACOB
- TIMOTHY
- JOSEPH
- SAMUEL
- JOHN
- ELIZABETH
- HANNAH
- RACHEL
- REBEKAH
- EVE
- MARY
- SARAH
- EUNICE

Look up the Bible verses then find the answers and the names below in the word search

- REBEKAH
- ELIZABETH
- EUNICE
- RUTH
- MARY
- RACHEL
- LEAH
- ZIPLAH
- MOTHER
- MUM



How many other words can you make from:
MOTHERING SUNDAY



E E L O I S Z I L A M J H
 U V N Z M A R Y Z U O Z R
 N E A U U R U T H L T I A
 I J O C H A B E D E H L C
 C I M B J H M U M A E P H
 E L I Z A B E T H H R A E
 R E B E K A H A N N A H L

Letter from the Church Mouse



Hello everyone,

Graham Oakley, a children's author-illustrator, published a series of books a long time ago about a church mouse called Arthur, his fellow mice and a friendly cat called Samson. (Are there really any friendly cats? I wonder.) They got up to all kinds of adventures inside the church including sailing in the font in a boat made of newspaper, eating sweets dropped by choirboys and waving a tiny baton in time to the church organ. At Christmas Arthur dressed up as Father Christmas and the other mice as reindeer. Sounds like fun

*I have heard you laughing at our Rector's jokes and seen some of you dressed up in comical outfits for Nativity plays, and I am glad I am part of a church that can have a bit of fun. In the Bible, in Proverbs chapter 15 it says: "For the despondent, every day brings trouble; for the happy heart, life is a continual feast."
Stay well*

Vicky xx

Church Mouse

Riddle

What comes once in a year, twice in every month and four times in every week? Answer on p 31

Mothering Sunday 19th March

Canon Paul Hardingham considers our appreciation of mothers.

Mothering Sunday is a day of mixed emotions. For many it's a happy, joyous day, but for others it's one of pain and grief. A day to celebrate love, while acknowledging those who cannot have children or have lost them and those who have no relationship with their mother or whose mother has died.

In the dying moments of His life, Jesus honored Mary his mother by showing her love and care. He entrusted His mother to John's protection: *'When Jesus saw His mother there, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to her, 'Woman, here is your son,' and to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.'* (John 19:26,27). While affirming the importance of mothers, Jesus reminds us that the love we show on Mothering Sunday is just a token of our continuous appreciation of them.

Jesus also creates a new way of being family, marking the beginnings of the church. In the past, people would go back to their *'mother'* church on this Sunday, to acknowledge its importance in their lives. Jesus invites us into this new family of love and mutual belonging, where we can find a place, irrespective of our own family circumstances.

Church is not always an easy place to be, because we are shaped by our own experience of mothering. We may find it hard to give or receive love without ourselves getting in the way. However, God's help is available to change things, *'because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.'* (Romans 5:5)

The mother of three difficult youngsters was asked whether she'd have children if she had it to do over again. *'Yes,'* she replied. *'But not the same ones.'*



Mothering Sunday- A Poem by George H Leonard

It is the day of all the year,
Of all the year the one day,
When I shall see my Mother dear
And bring her cheer,
A-Mothering on Sunday.

And now to fetch my wheaten cake,
To fetch it from the baker,
He promised me, for Mother's sake,
The best he's bake
For me to fetch and take her.

Well have I known, as I went by
One hollow lane, that none day
I'd fail to find - for all they're shy -
Where violets lie,
As I went home on Sunday.

My sister Jane is waiting-maid
Along with Squire's lady;
And year by year her part she's played,
And home she stayed
To get the dinner ready.

For Mother'll come to Church, you'll see -
Of all the year it's the day -
'The one,' she'll say, 'that's made for me.'
And so it be:
It's every Mother's free day.

The boys will all come home from town,
Not one will miss that one day;
And every maid will bustle down
To show her gown,
A-Mothering Sunday.

It is the day of all the year,
Of all the year the one day;
And here come I, my Mother dear,
And bring you cheer,
A-Mothering on Sunday.

St Patrick's Green Velvet Sugar Cookie Bars

These Green Velvet Sugar Cookie Bars with Cream Cheese Frosting have the amazing red velvet taste mixed with sugar cookie and could not be easier! The photo doesn't do them justice sadly!



Ingredients

20 oz all purpose flour.
2 TBSPs unsweetened cocoa powder. 1/2 tps salt
1/2 tps baking powder. 12oz granulated sugar
14 TBSPs unsalted butter *room temperature*
2 tps vanilla extract. 1 tsp white vinegar
1 TBSP green food colouring. 1 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
8 oz cream cheese *room temperature.* golden sprinkles
16 oz powdered sugar *not packed* 2 eggs
4 TBSP unsalted butter *room temperature*

Instructions

Preheat your oven to 180°C. Spray a 9 by 13 inch glass baking dish with cooking spray and set aside.

In a large bowl mix together 20 oz all purpose flour, 2 TBSPs cocoa powder, 1/2 tsp baking powder, and 1/2 tsp salt.

Cream together the butter and 12oz of sugar until light and fluffy. Add in the eggs, one at a time, then 2 tps vanilla, 1 tsp white vinegar, and 1 TBSP green food colouring.

Slowly add in the flour mixture a little bit at a time until the dough is fully combined.

The dough will be very sticky. Press it into the bottom of the baking dish and bake for **20 to 22 minutes.**

Remove from the oven and allow it to cool completely.

Meanwhile, mix together the butter and cream cheese until fully combined. Add the vanilla extract. Slowly mix in the powdered sugar until fully combined. Spread over the cooled bars and top with golden sprinkles or edible sweet green decorations.



A Prayer for Mothers

God our Creator, we pray:

for new mothers, coming to terms with new responsibility

for expectant mothers, wondering and waiting;

for those who are tired, stressed or depressed;

for those who struggle to balance the tasks of work and family;

for those who are unable to feed their children due to poverty;

for those whose children have physical, mental or emotional disabilities;

for those who have children they do not want;

for those who raise children on their own;

for those who have lost a child;

for those who care for the children of others;

for those whose children have left home;

and for those whose desire to be a mother has not been fulfilled.

Bless all mothers, that their love may be deep and tender,

and that they may lead their children to know and do what is good,

living not for themselves alone, but for God and for others.

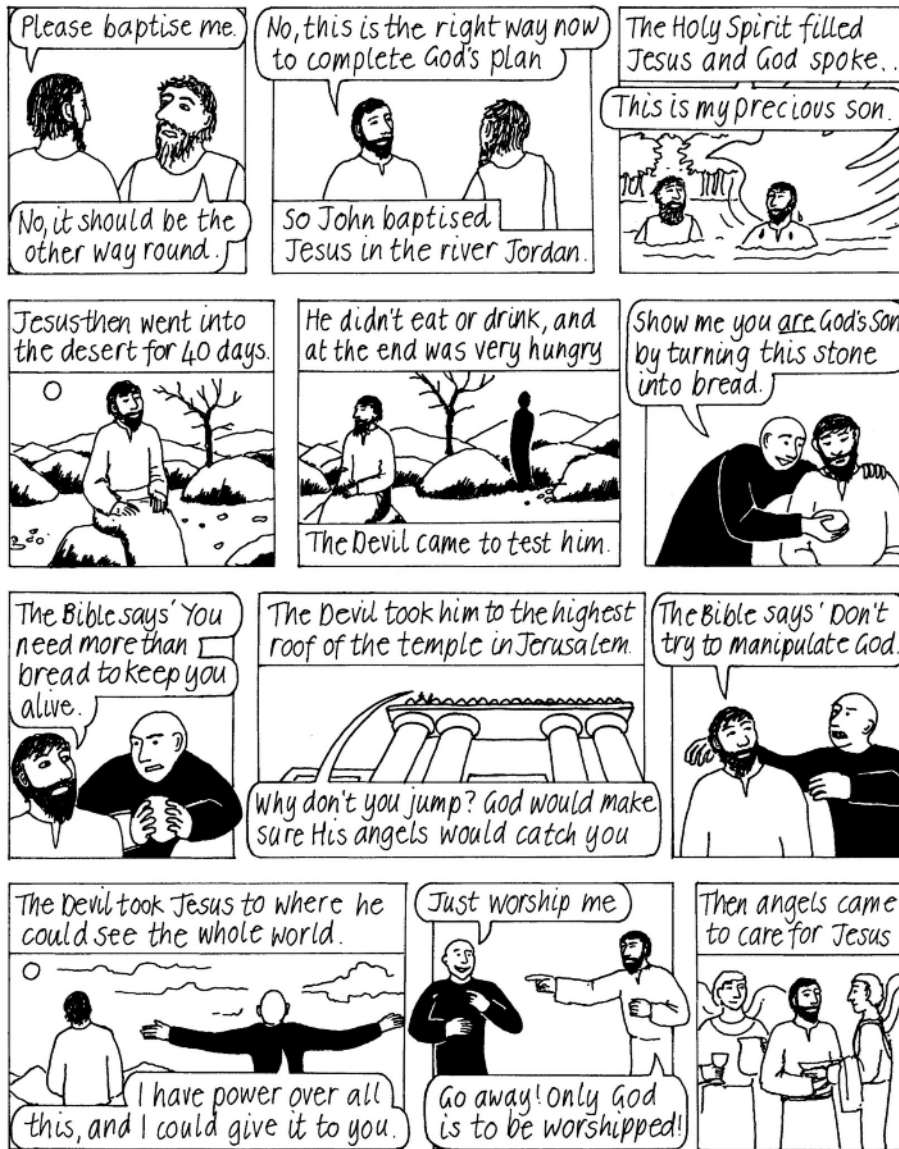
Amen.

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Jn 1:29-34, Mt 3:13-17, Lk 3:21-4:13, Mk 1:9-12

People came to John to be baptised - washed
in the river Jordan - to say sorry for what
they had done wrong. Then Jesus came...



Wordsearch

St Patrick's Day Mothering Sunday, The Annunciation & Lent

Leeks for St David's day, daffodils for the rest of the month: March brings us Spring. St Patrick, who brought Christianity to Ireland, is remembered with parades. Mothering Sunday and Mother's Day are celebrated with more daffodils and Sunday lunch 'out'. March brings us the Annunciation, when the angel first appeared to Mary to tell her of her coming pregnancy. March is the month of Lent, of prayer and preparation for Easter.

Leeks Mum Mother Angel Ireland Wales Fasting
Daffodil Spring. Patrick Sunday Lunch Mary Lent
Pregnancy preparation Day prayer Magnificat parades

M	P	R	A	Y	E	R	P	A	G	S	O
A	D	S	F	C	Y	T	S	R	Y	A	I
G	U	L	G	N	I	T	S	A	F	S	A
N	O	I	T	A	R	A	P	E	R	P	P
I	A	D	R	N	P	I	A	M	A	R	Y
F	T	O	Y	G	R	U	T	Y	N	I	A
I	L	F	S	E	D	A	R	A	P	N	M
C	E	F	L	R	N	E	I	D	D	G	T
A	G	A	A	P	H	H	C	N	U	L	P
T	N	D	M	T	E	E	K	U	L	E	R
D	A	U	O	L	E	E	K	S	D	N	M
Y	M	M	W	A	L	E	S	N	I	T	P

Facts and Figures to Make us Think

Last September the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) released results from the Census 2021 relating to a profile of the Northern Ireland population covering religion.

The results showed that proportionally, the fastest growing groups are the 'None' (No religion) group (up from 45,900 people in 2001 to 177,400 people in 2021), and the 'other religions' group (up from 6,600 people in 2001 to 28,500 people in 2021).

Both the *no religion* and *other religions* groups have approximately quadrupled in size over the last twenty years and now make up over one in ten of the population. This group is now second only to Catholic. Close to home in our own area, Mid and East Antrim, nearly a quarter of the population (23.9%), had 'no religion' or 'religion not stated' on the census return.

This points to the increasingly diverse and secular nature of the population of N Ireland.

As a church what implications does this have for us now and in the future? What will the next census in 2041 show under the heading religion? What would we like it to show?

Whatever the future holds we need to remain steadfast in understanding that the Christian Church exists to share the good news of Jesus Christ, serve our neighbour and bring hope to a troubled world. That's what the church has done for 2,000 years – in times of war and peace; hardship and plenty; revival and decline and it's what the church must do now more than ever.

Close to home let us not lose sight of this and remember the words of Sandra, our treasurer, in the last edition of this magazine, The purpose

of an Anglican church in Whitehead is to be a beacon of light and hope, not just for its members but to the wider community.

We are part of a global faith, the largest movement on Earth and its greatest hope for a peaceful, sustainable future.

George McNeill



St Patrick, beloved apostle to Ireland -17th March:

St Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland. 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 animals.

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.



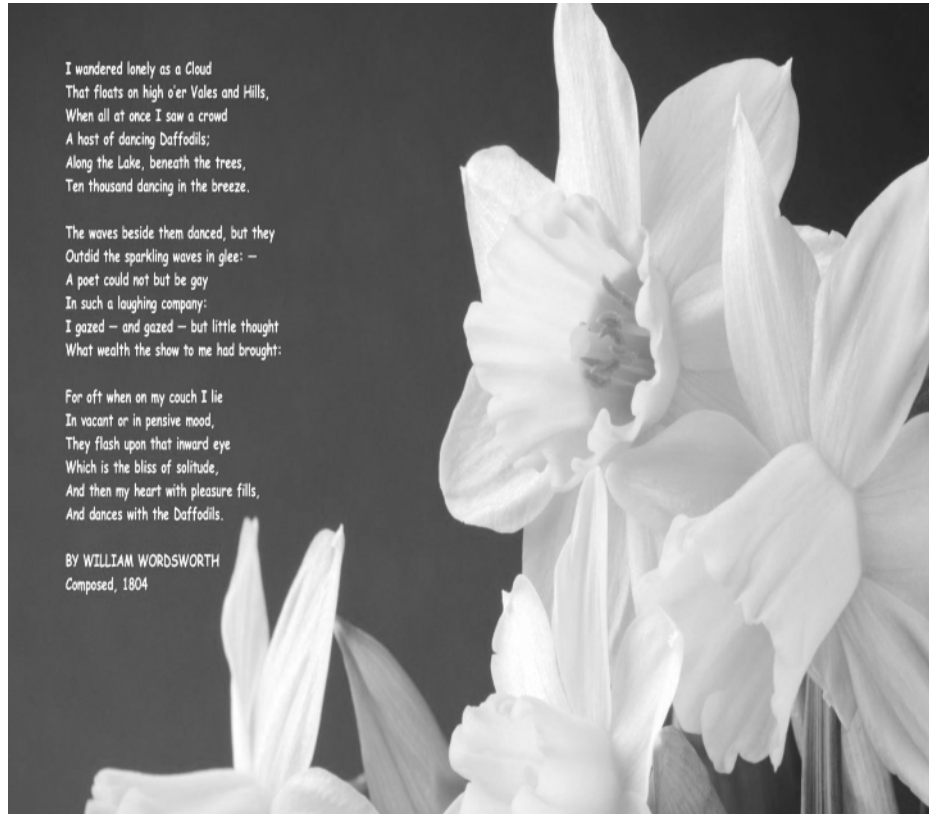
Patrick remains the most popular of the Irish saints. The principal cathedral of New York is dedicated to him, as, of course, is the Anglican cathedral of Dublin and our own Church here in Whitehead .

Church mice

Karl Zorowski



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I wandered lonely as a Cloud
That floats on high o'er Vales and Hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd
A host of dancing Daffodils;
Along the Lake, beneath the trees,
Ten thousand dancing in the breeze.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee: –
A poet could not but be gay
In such a laughing company:
I gazed – and gazed – but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude,
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the Daffodils.

BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH
Composed, 1804

Prayer requests this month

The people of Syria and Turkey as they recover from the recent Earthquake Disaster

The people of Ukraine as they struggle to survive a terrible war.

Our Rector and his family in their recent bereavements

Church Mice Karl Zorowski

**Pray for your
RECTOR**



**Your Rector
Prays for you**

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Learn to bell-ringing for King's Coronation!

The Coronation of the King and the Queen Consort will be held in Westminster Abbey on

Saturday 6th May. It will be conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

A Palace statement has said that it will “reflect the monarch’s role today and look towards the future while being rooted in longstanding traditions and pageantry.”

Meanwhile, in preparation for the Coronation, a national call has been made to recruit thousands of new bell ringers to ring in the new King in May.

A new website, Ring for the King, (ringforthe king.org) has been set up for this purpose by The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers, especially hoping to encourage young people to try their hand.

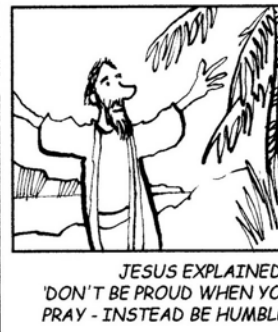
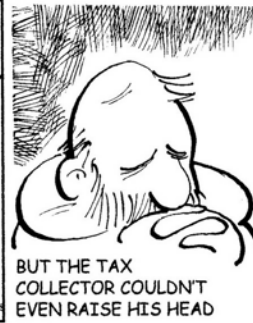
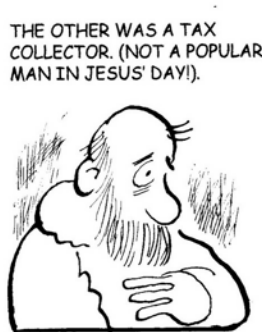
The website says that bellringing is “an activity like no other – a unique mix of physical exercise with mental agility that is a deep part of our history but still practised and evolving today.” It suggests that after ten to 15 hours of one-to-one tuition, a beginner can learn to handle a bell, use a bell rope, and begin to ring with others.

There are about 38,000 church bells, but only 30,000 ringers in the UK. The Central Council has said that while a swell of new recruits in time for the Coronation would be ‘fantastic’, “we hope that people find this new hobby, skill and social activity something they would want to continue with beyond 6th May.”

Editor: Regrettably the bell at St Patrick's Church is electrically operated so no bell ringers required here. Although, our Rector has said our church bell could be disconnected, so that it can be rung in the traditional manner but then we would need a rota for bell ringers three times a day on Sundays and Holy Days!



The
Tale of the
**TWO MEN
SAYING
THEIR
PRAYERS**



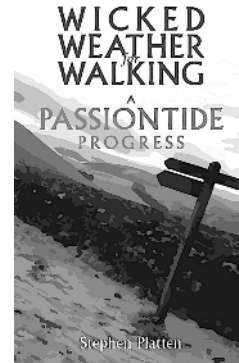
BOOK REVIEWS

Wicked Weather for Walking – a Passiontide Progress

By Stephen Platten, Sacristy Press, £7.99

Rudyard Kipling's poem, *Eddi's Service*, from which this book takes its title, is a set of verses put into the mouth of Eddius Stephanus, St Wilfrid's earliest biographer. It tells of a dedicated priest persevering with a midnight celebration despite appalling weather, and with just a donkey and bullock as his companions.

Reflecting the challenges of the seventh-century missions to Britain and Ireland, the book focuses on those challenges in the early missions to these islands, set in the context of Jesus' passion and, ultimately His crucifixion, in the very first Holy Week of all, in Jerusalem.



Hope for Ukraine – stories of grit and grace from the Front Lines of war

By Kyle Duncan and Esther

Fedorkevich, Baker Publishing via Eden.co.uk, £14.99

Part narrative, part wartime dispatch, *Hope for Ukraine* transports you into the gritty reality of war-torn Ukraine—and the front lines of faith, survival, and miraculous intervention. From scrambling to escape the bombs levelling their neighbourhoods to fleeing sex traffickers in the chaos of border crossings to rescuing orphans trapped by Russian tanks, these stunning first-hand accounts tell the stories of real Ukrainians enduring terrible hardships with grit and grace.

Kyle Duncan and Esther Fedorkevich both have deep family ties to Ukraine, and they take the reader inside the conflict, with dramatic boots-on-the-ground stories and eyewitness accounts of Ukrainian refugees, aid workers, soldiers, and families affected by the conflict. These stories reveal the unbreakable spirit of a nation under siege in which God is indeed at work in redemptive ways.



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**Letting Go and Second
Time Around
by George McNeill**

House sitting is revelatory in the sense that you become aware of the inordinate amount of stuff people possess. This doesn't mean you are being nosy. The excess is inescapable: every possible surface covered, every drawer and wardrobe bulging, shelves of books and piles of 'just in cases'. That's just in the house. The spare bedroom, shed and garage are usually crammed and the loft space - well we don't and won't even go there.



Ownership is one of the most powerful concepts in the human mind. We are not content simply to exist in the physical universe, but want to possess as much of it as possible. But possessions are not just about economic status. Ask why we have things and it soon becomes apparent that we have an emotional attachment to many of the things we acquire. It's therefore difficult to part with them.

To a certain extent, things define us. We believe that happiness comes from getting what we want, but very often what we want doesn't make us happy.

When we die, we leave evidence of ourselves through what we owned, and yet the people we leave it to generally discard most of it into a skip or hope to turn it into cash. So maybe it's time to take stock, remove excess and reveal what truly matters. If this strikes a chord with you then maybe you would like to sell some of your clutter that you think someone else might like to buy the next time we have a sale in our Church Hall at St Patrick's.

To close here are two well known quotations to ponder on: The first by William Morris, the well known textile and wallpaper designer: 'Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful.'

The second from St Matthew's gospel: 'Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also'.

A prayer for Lent

Dear Father in Heaven

In this month, when Lent begins, we remember Jesus' experience in the wilderness. The world today can seem like a wilderness. So many difficult, incomprehensible things going on. It is tempting to turn away in horror or denial, tempting to look out for ourselves, tempting to take the easy path, to pay attention to whatever the culture dangles before our eyes.

Lord, please help us. We need your word to guide us. We need your Holy Spirit to fill and strengthen us. Help us to give our attention and our worship only to you. Lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil.

Thank you, Father, for Jesus, who by his death and resurrection, opens the way to you. Help us to renew our trust in him and through him, to walk with you every day. In his name, Amen.

By Daphne Kitching



'He gave us eyes to see them': Sandro Botticelli's Painting 'Primavera'

By Michael Burgess

Sandro Botticelli's 'Primavera', is a painting that celebrates the glory and wonder of creation.

In this month of March the world around us is moving from the cold and harshness of winter to new birth as the earth comes to life again in the season of spring. It is the theme of 'Primavera' by the 15th century Florentine artist, Sandro Botticelli. His work in the Sistine Chapel in Rome brought him to the attention of the Medici court, which commissioned this painting in 1482. The Medici dominated the political life of Florence, but Cosimo and his descendants were also great patrons of the arts. Humanism, which debated the place of reason in a world of faith, was the mood of the day in court life, and the work of artists at that time expressed the human form in all its beauty.

Scholars have never agreed on the exact meaning of 'Primavera,' but it is certainly a celebration of beauty and fertility. We can identify a host of classical figures: Mercury on the left of the canvas separating the clouds so that Spring may come; Zephyr, the west wind, on the right, who is pursuing Chloris; Flora, the goddess of abundance robed in a colourful dress and adorned with flowers. In the centre we see Venus, the goddess of beauty, with a blindfolded Cupid above, preparing to shoot an arrow at the three Graces, whose arms are joined in a stately dance. The setting is a wooded garden where the trees are filled with oranges, myrtle surrounds Venus, and wondrous flowers spring up from the earth.

At first glance the sensuousness and fruitfulness seem almost profane. But we look again and think we see not Venus in the centre, but the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose own fruitfulness gave birth to the Saviour. The three figures by her side could be the Christian virtues of beauty, truth and goodness who dance in her honour, while all around God's creation blossoms forth to bring joy and new life. It is the world of the



Song of Solomon, which the early Fathers could only accept as an allegory of Christian love, where the individual soul seeks the Saviour. But that book of the Old Testament was written in praise of the love that moves human life, as much as it moves the universe. And that can only be good because God the creator is good.

The writer invites the beloved to accompany her to the fields and vineyards and find fruits in blossom and plants in bloom: a wilderness transformed by growth and goodness. Just so, we enter the garden of this painting. The characters may be classical, some may be Christian, but as we look we see a creative Love that transforms the winter of death and darkness into light and Spring – the birthday of creation.

Riddle Answer from page 11

What comes once in a year, twice in every month and four times in every week? Answer: The letter e

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05-07-1999

YOUR FATHER HAS AGREED TO STAY AWAKE
IN CHURCH TODAY SINCE IT IS MOTHER'S
DAY ... IT WOULD BE NICE IF YOU WOULD
DO THE OPPOSITE FOR ONCE

The Rectory
St James the Least

On the perils of moving from city to country



My dear Nephew Darren

Those parishioners of yours who won millions on the Lottery and moved into this parish have created quite a stir. It was perhaps a little unwise of them to tell everyone the reason why they had become so wealthy. While most of our parishioners also do the Lottery, few would ever admit it in public. (Since your friends arrived, the entire Vestry is buying ever more lottery tickets, but from the shop in the NEXT village, to try and keep it secret.)

However, your family still has much to learn about our country ways. Buying the old Dower House was impressive; and spending a small fortune re-stocking the gardens was certainly commendable. But someone should have told them about installing cattle grids. It must have been quite a shock for them to wake up one morning and find the thirty sheep from the neighbouring field had wandered in for breakfast.

Their brand-new purple Ferrari has certainly brightened up the country lanes around here. The noise it makes as it roars up behind you quite quickens the pulse. Mrs Beamish had been suffering with low blood pressure for months; she says she is quite cured now. The Colonel, who is all for the community supporting the church, then asked if the newcomers would drive the bishop around on the day he came to do his tour of the parish. The Colonel thought that an open-topped purple Ferrari would make a great bishop-mobile; and the newcomers were so kind to agree. What a shame that they decided to accomplish the several miles of parish lanes in record time: the bishop barely even saw the several farmers that they nearly ran down. His new nickname in this parish is: The Purple Peril.

The newcomers have installed security lighting, which is understandable. But now I wonder how much sleep they are getting, as the rabbits, foxes, and badgers who live in their grounds keep it flood-lit for much of the night. Meanwhile, the Colonel is grumbling about the effect of light pollution on his young pheasants in the woods nearby.

But these little inconveniences apart, I am sure they will soon feel at home. I feel confident that by the third generation, they will be properly settled in.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace





We would love to see you.
Why not join us at 10.30am on Sunday

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!



CHANGING ATTITUDE
IRELAND

Parish Announcements

***The Easter Select Vestry meeting will be held
on Thursday 9th March at 10.30am
in the Parochial Hall***

'GAME ON' Sorry cancelled for March

Organiser- Evelyn Powers Tel : 07753 292938

Counters for March

6th March Sandra Thompson 13th March Valerie Kincaid

20th March Bill Rafferty 27th March David Robinson

3rd April Brian Joyce

Sunday Refreshments Rota

Sunday 5th March Janet Peoples

12th March Messy Church

19th March Priscilla Carlisle

26th March Paddy Rodgers

2nd April Alison Higginson

9th April Scotty Heyes

Refreshments coordinator Priscilla Carlisle -Tel 07787561517

March Fellowship Activities

Together in Faith Group

Monday 6th & 20th March at 7.30pm

We will be finishing our study of the Book of Acts

Meet in the Boucher Room, Parochial Hall at St Patrick's Church.

Book Club

Weds 29th March @7.30pm

Reading 'Sankofa' by Chibundu Onuso

(Contact Paddy Rodgers tel 028 93372439 for venue)

Wednesday Morning Fellowship Group (Monthly)

Next meeting will be on WEDNESDAY 12TH APRIL at 11am
in the Boucher Room. (No meeting this month)

New members welcome. We start with refreshments and fellowship .
'We will be looking this month at our own personal faith?'

'Power in Prayer' Group (Monthly)

Wednesday 8th March at 7.30pm in the Boucher Room

Join us and see how powerful prayer can be .

Also Every Week the following 2 groups meet:

Circus Skills - Tuesdays @ 10.30am - Parochial Hall

Indoor Bowls - Tuesdays from 7pm - Parochial Hall

New people always welcome to join in

FROM THE **EDITOR'S DESK**

Dear Reader

March is a beautiful time of the year as the days start to get longer, the weather improves and we see new growth everywhere. Do visit St John's Parish Church in Islandmagee, to enjoy the beautiful spring daffodils whilst they are in full bloom.

During Lent, St Patrick's welcomes members of the local community to join us each Wednesday for our Lenten Lunch. Do come and enjoy not only a tasty lunch, but time to catch up with friends and support a number of charities too.

This month also celebrates our patron saint- Patrick and Mothering Sunday on 19th March. So do put this date in your diary and come and join us then to celebrate and give thanks for our mothers.

In closing thank you to all who contributed to this edition of Church Matters. Please keep the articles coming in.

Stay well and God Bless

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**

CHURCHWARDENS

	St. Patrick's	St. John's
Rector's:	Jo Pawson	Pauline Riddle
People's:	Mabel Allen	William Rafferty

GLEBEWARDENS

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

SELECT VESTRY (includes Churchwardens & Glebewardens)

Inez Moore - Hon Secretary 7 Donegall Drive 9337 8927

Sandra Thompson - Hon Treasurer 07912478331

Ann Mulholland; Bill Pollock; Alison Higginson;

Valerie Kincaid; Maureen Reid; George McNeill;

Priscilla Carlisle; Bertnel Thompson;

Austin Jenkins -Graveyard Manager St John's

Sunday School Leaders

St Patrick's: Frances Taylor St John's: Sara Henderson

Youth Fellowship Leader

Stephen Martin - stepheneddu@gmail.com

Safeguarding Trust Evelyn Powers 9337 2535 Valerie Kincaid 9335 3748

Flowers: St Patrick's: Judith de Fleury 07855736510

St .John's: Ann Thompson 9338 2295

FWO & Gift Aid Sec: Sandra Thompson 07912478331

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