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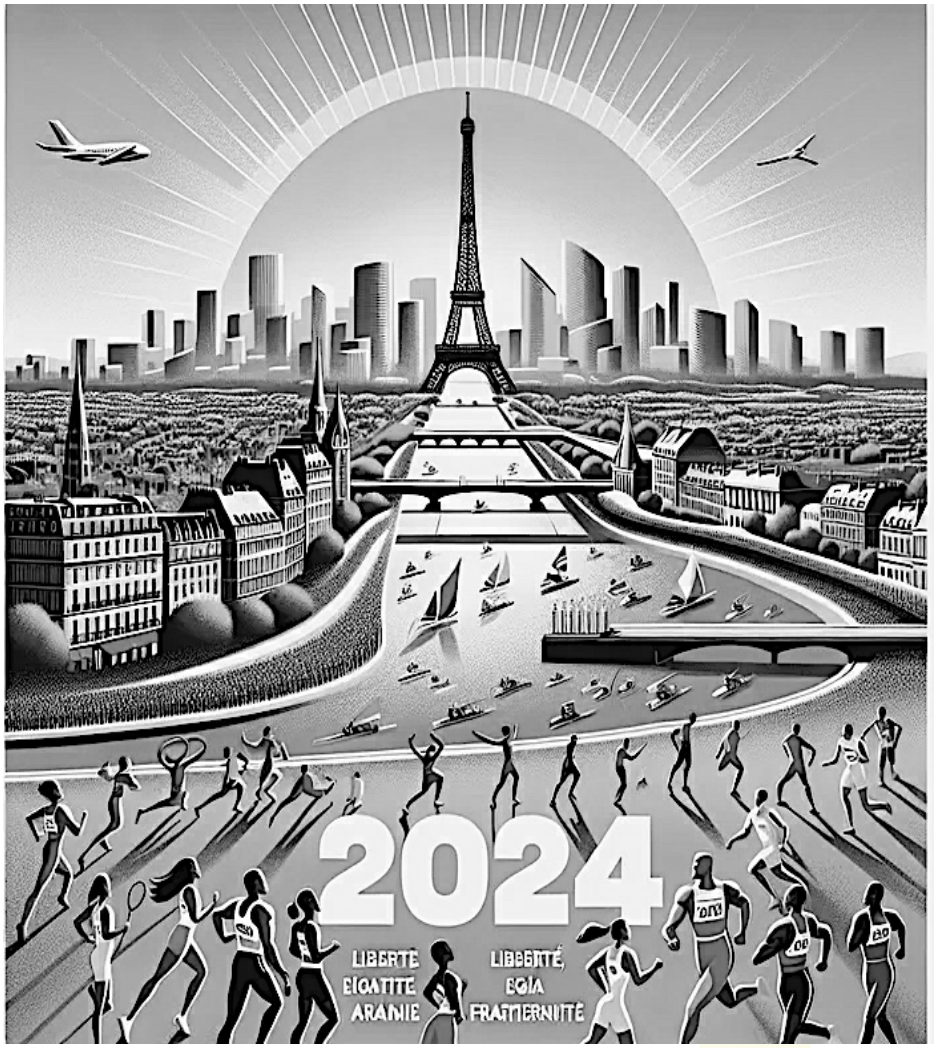
CHURCH MATTERS

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

Here everyone matters

July/August 2024

CHURCH OF IRELAND
ST. PATRICK'S & ST. JOHN'S
UNITED PARISH OF WHITEHEAD & ISLANDMAGEE



July and August Services & Readings

In July the main morning service will be in St Patrick's at 11:00 a.m.
There will be no evening service in July.

Sunday 7th July - Trinity 6
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
11:00 a.m. Holy Communion Two Sunday
Epistle - 2 Corinthians 12:2-10; Gospel - Mark 6:1-13
Reader for first Lesson - Trevor Peoples
Weekday Readings: Numbers 235; Psalms 15-28; Romans 8:26-10:21

Sunday 14th July - Trinity 7
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer Two
Sunday Readings - 2 Samuel 6:1-5, 12b-19; Psalm 24; Mark 6:14-29
Reader for first Lesson - Stephen Martin
Weekday Readings: Joshua 1- 6; Psalms 29 - 42; Romans 11:1 - 13:7

Sunday 21st July - Trinity 8
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer Two
Sunday Readings - 2 Samuel 7:1-14a; Psalm 89:20-37; Mark 6: 30-34, 53-56
Reader for first Lesson - Corrine Logan
Weekday Readings: Joshua 7 - 10; Psalms 43 - 56; Romans 13:8 - 15:33

Sunday 28th July - Trinity 9
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer Two Sunday
Readings - 2 Samuel 11:1-15; Psalm 14; John 6:1-21
Reader for first Lesson - Heather Couples
Weekday Readings: Judges 1 - 6; Psalms 57-70; Romans 16, Acts 1 -2:36

In August the main morning service will be in St John's at 11:00 a.m., the 8:30 a.m. Holy Communion service is in St Patrick's.

Sunday 4th August- Trinity 10
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
11:00 a.m. Holy Communion Two Sunday
Epistle - Ephesians 4:1-16; Gospel - John 6:24-35
Readers for first Lesson - Alan Hayward
Weekday Readings: Judges 7 - 10; Psalms 71 - 84; Acts 2:37 - 5:11

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Dear Reader

By the time you read this magazine we will be worshipping together, either in St Patrick's Church during July or St John's Church, Islandmagee in August. It is good to share fellowship during the Summer and to get to know each other better.

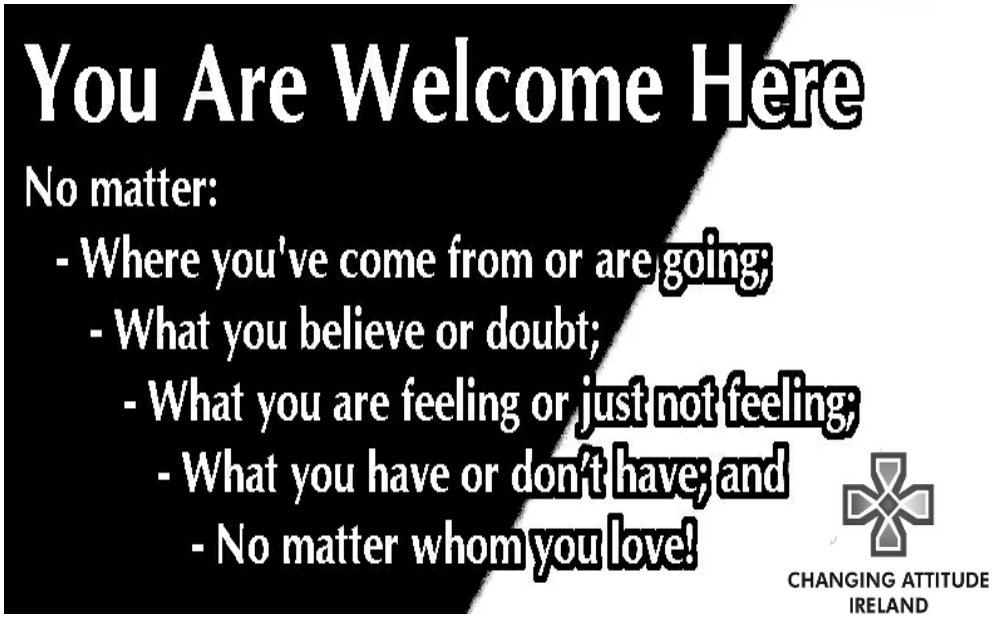
During July we are looking forward to two visits. Firstly we have the Senior Church Warden, Jo Anne Nelson, visiting us from St Patrick's Episcopal Church, Washington DC, USA. She will be staying in our area from Sunday 28th July for a week and would love to have opportunity to meet as many of you as possible, and to visit both our churches.

Please give Jo Anne your warm welcome. Also Rev Lisa Barraclough from the same church, Washington, is visiting the area with friends during July. So please watch out to welcome her too

Please spread the word about all that's happening in church and encourage family and friends to attend services and activities here. And if you are away on holiday we hope you are having a wonderful time. We look forward to seeing you on your return.

Stay well and God Bless.





Sunday 11th August - Trinity 11
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer Two
Sunday Readings - 2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33; Psalm 130; John 6:35, 41-51
Readers for first Lesson - Joy Kerr
Weekday Readings:Judges 11 - 16; Psalms 85 - 99; Acts 5:12 - 7:43

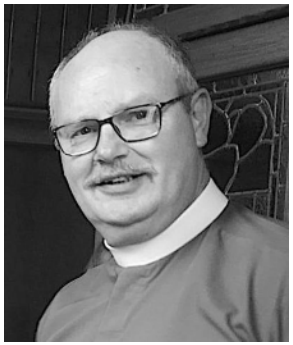
Sunday 18th August - Trinity 12
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer Two
Sunday Readings - 1 Kings 2:10-12, 3:3-14; Psalm 111; John 6:51-58
Readers for first Lesson - Maureen Reid
Weekday Readings: Judges 17 - 18, Job 1 - 3; Psalms 100 - 113; Acts 7:44 - 9:18a

Sunday 25th August - Trinity 13
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer Two
Sunday Readings - 1 Kings 8:22-30,41-43; Psalm 84; John 6:56-69
Readers for first Lesson - Jim Reid
Weekday Readings: Job 4 - 10; Psalms 114 - 124; Acts 9:19b - 11:18

Sunday 1st September - Trinity 14
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m. Holy Communion Two
12 noon Holy Communion Two
Epistle - James 1:17-27; Gospel - Mark 7:18,14-15,21-23
Readers for first Lesson - Jane Robinson / Ann Thompson
7:00 p.m. Compline
Weekday Readings - Job 11 - 19; Psalms 125 - 138; Acts 11:19 - 13:43

Sunday 8th September - Trinity 15 - Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m. & 12 noon Morning Prayer Two
10:30 a.m. MESSY CHURCH in the Parochial Hall
Readings - Isaiah 61:10-11; Psalm 45:10-17; Luke 1:46-55
Readers for first Lesson - Jane Robinson / Ann Thompson
7:00 p.m. Compline
Weekday Readings - Job 22, 25, 27, 31, 32, 38; Psalms 138-150; Acts 13:44 - 15:35

A message from our Rector



Summer is coming - we hope. After the wet winter and spring and early summer we could all do with a couple of months of sunshine and warm weather. Not too much sunshine and not too warm, ...and a wee bit of rain (for the flowers and the farmers). In truth no matter what the weather does we will make a reason to find fault with it. And it is not just the weather! Some of the very eagle eyed amongst you may have noticed that I started the previous sentence with "And" and could tell me why it is wrong. In me defence I will only say, The Lord's Prayer and the Apostles Creed and various other prayers from the Book of Common Prayer, for the lat 400 years.

In truth what is right for one is not always right for another; be it the weather or how we use language or how we dress or wear our hair or what ever. And so it is with faith. Yes we believe in the same God, the same Saviour, Jesus Christ. Yes we share a common faith and practice of that faith. Yes we share a common Creed, which defines our faith. But we are all individuals who are in an individual relationship with Jesus Christ, and we all do things differently.

Years ago every one who supported at sporting team supported the team that represented their village, their town their area. Now we support teams from all over the world, some that play sports that are not even played here, or by people we know. It is all a matter of personal preference, what sport, what team, what player, how active we are as supporters, how interested we are in the sport, its rules and regulations and how it is played. Some are more into their team, its history, the current and past players and how they are doing compared to other teams.

To an extent the same is true with matters of faith. There are those who know lots about their faith, its history and structures. Some people are more active in their faith than others, some are more frequent in their attendance at worship, know more about the Bible and what it says. Some pray more than others. Some live out their faith more, on a daily basis helping others and talking about Jesus.

The thing is, there is no definitive right and wrong about how we live out our faith. There is no list of things we must do; pray three time

A BIG THANK YOU TO THE VOLUNTEERS ON THE CHURCH REFRESHMENT ROTA

Many, many thanks to all who have helped with refreshments from September 2023. A new rota will begin September 2024.

In July & August refreshments will be provided in both St Patrick's & St John's and cash gifts will go to Brighter Whitehead & the Graveyard Fund

Priscilla



Youth Fellowship

Youth Fellowship / Sunday Brunch will resume in September

Given the exam season and Summer holidays, we'll take a pause until September. Thanks to everyone who has been involved this year and we look forward to seeing you along with some new faces (please pray for this) in September.

Stephen Martin
Youth Fellowship Leader
If you want to find out more, contact Stephen Martin (Stepheneddu@gmail.com)

Parish Announcements

The Select Vestry meeting will be held on Thursday 12th September at 7.30pm in St Patrick's Church

Counters for July-August

7th July Sandra Thompson
14th July Jane & David R.
21st July Valerie Kincaid
28th July Scotty Heyes
4th Aug Colin & Judith De.F.
11th Aug Bert Thompson
18th Aug Trevor Peoples
25th Aug Sandra Thompson

Sunday Refreshments Rota

Refreshments coordinator Priscilla Carlisle
Tel 07787561517

Game On Meeting in July/Aug

Meeting in the Library on Wednesday
11th & 25th July & 14th & 28th Aug at 1.30pm
New participants always welcome . And if you are a bit shy, just come and see what games we play first. Of course there will be tea and biscuits served.

Brasso Club this month

Meets on Thursday 18th July & 29th Aug at 10am
Bring rubber gloves, some old rags and an old tooth brush if you have one. We use the main church door to enter the church, not the church hall entrance.

per day, read at least one chapter of the Bible and 1 Psalm per day, do at least two goods deeds to help others per day, give generously for the benefit of those in need. Yes these are all things that we should, and could, do; but there is no prescriptive list of things we **have** to do. Jesus said that all we have to do to be saved is to believe in him *(John 3:16).* This is the basis of our faith. We do need to be mindful, though, of what St James tells us in *James 2:14-26. James 2:17 'In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.'*

We must live out our faith not just by what we say we believe, or by saying that we believe. We must show our faith by the way we act in this life, by reading our Bible, attending worship, praying, helping others, giving to those in need, supporting and encouraging those in difficulties. Without doing these things . . . . . Well 'as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds in dead.' *(James 2:26).* This is echoed in Matthew 25:31-46, *Parable of the Sheep and the Goats.* And Luke 10:25-37 *The Good Samaritan.*

There is no list of things we have to do, but we must do something, and there are lots of suggestions of what we can do.

I hope that you all enjoy the summer and find practical ways to live out your faith. Every blessing to you all. *Mark*

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO COMPLETED A VOLUNTEER FORM

We are grateful to everyone who completed our Church Volunteer Form advising us of different ways you would be happy to help out in the Parish

Our Church Secretary, Inez Moore has compiled a master list containing details of everyone's availability to help when needed. She will be in touch in due course to involve you in any Church activities that you have indicated you would be happy to be involved with.

Once again thank you for your support. And if you did not complete an expression of interest in volunteering form within the Parish, there are spare forms at the back of church or in the hall. Alternatively speak to our Rector.

Going to the Country – the Election 2024



Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. ... For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities ...Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honour, then honour. (Romans 13)

When will you go to bed on 4th July?

This month we have a chance to vote for our Members of Parliament, and the leader of the party that can command a majority will form the government. There is a concern that 'voter engagement' is low, meaning that we are not very interested any more. The turnout at the 2019 General Election was 67.3% which was slightly up from 2015. The lowest turnout in a General Election was recorded in 1918 at 57.2%, due to the end of the First World War.

Between 1922 and 1997 turnout remained above 71%. At the 2001 General Election the turnout was 59.4%. For people under the age of forty it is much less.

Should we be concerned? Voting turnout has been fairly stable since 1918 at between 60% and 70%. The numbers that vote in this country are similar to most other countries.

For the first time at a UK general election, those voting at a polling station will need to show photo ID. Voters should check now if they have an accepted form of ID, and if not to apply for free ID, called the Voter Authority Certificate .

July/August Church Activities

Together in Faith Group

Monday 22nd July & 5h & 19th August at 7.30pm
Meet in the Boucher Room, Parochial Hall at St Patrick's Church.
Studying Paul's letter to the Ephesians, then Book of Esther

Book Club

Book Club meets on the last Wednesday of the month
(Contact Paddy Rodgers tel 07720 404071
for venue & date which may vary over summer)

Wednesday Morning Fellowship Group (Monthly)

Next meeting will be on WEDNESDAY 14th August
at 11am
in the Boucher Room.
New members welcome. We start with refreshments and fellowship . 'We will be looking at Orthodox Church religious symbols to aid worship'.

Also
Every Week the following

Circus Skills Class

Tuesdays @ 10.30am - Parochial Hall

Indoor Bowling Club

On a summer break, starts September - Tuesdays from 7pm -Parochial Hall

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To answer my own question, I am not sure when I go to bed on election night. I do not always stay up all night. Election excitement begins to wane in the early hours! Politics seems to be a spectator sport for most of us. We enjoy the shocks and surprises and the live results when the spotlight is a constituency.



The Christian teaching on politics is clear. We should respect those in authority and admire those who seek it. Most people enter politics for good reasons. Perhaps we should remind them they are God's servants.

By *David Pickup, solicitor,*

Suggestions for Prayer for During the Election Period

As we prayerfully engage with the upcoming election, it's essential to ground our actions in the certainty of God's care and loving action towards and through us. Here are some themes you might reflect in your prayers:

1.That political debates will be characterised by listening, kindness and truthfulness: Pray that voters will listen actively and demonstrate love-filled curiosity towards those they may disagree with or do not understand.

2 Integrity of leaders and candidates: Pray for those standing in the elections and supporting the democratic process to act with integrity and honesty, prioritising the common good over personal or party interests.

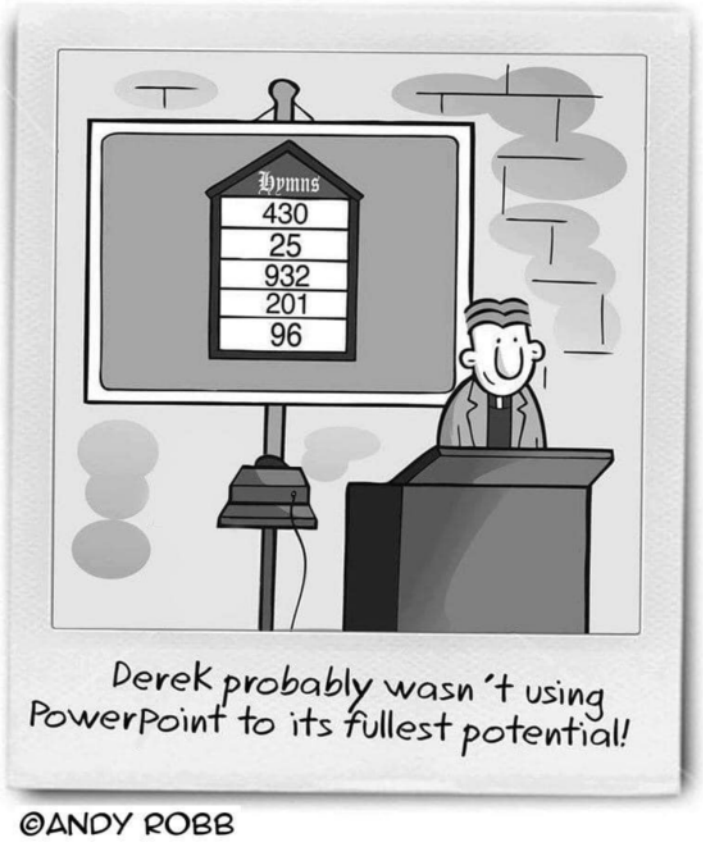
3.Peace-fostering Campaigning: Pray for a peaceful and respectful campaigning period, free from violence and divisiveness. It would be worth focusing prayers for the vulnerable, that policies that impact them the most are not used for political expediency.

4 Just policies: Pray for policies that promote justice, equity, and care for the marginalised, reflecting Christ's love and compassion.



Prayer for August

Dear Heavenly Father, In this month of August, thank you for your presence. Whether we're at home or on holiday, in one place or travelling, working or resting, happy or sad, young, middle-aged or elderly, you are with us.
As we journey through the different stages of this life on earth, help us to know that wonderful assurance of your presence, by putting our trust in Jesus now. No matter what ups and downs come our way, we will never be alone. You are with us, sharing it all day by day – and leading us home.
Thank you, Lord of all our journeys, In Jesus' name. Amen.
By Daphne Kitching



Ukraine: “goodness will triumph”

Church leaders in Ukraine have urged their citizens not to lose heart in face of the renewed Russian air and land assaults and the delayed arrival of fresh Western military aid.



The Primate of Ukraine’s independent Orthodox Church (OCU), Metropolitan Epiphany (Dumenko) said that after years of war, every village has names of people who had “lain down their lives defending the Motherland” – though often such lists were only “etched in the hearts of the survivors.”

Metropolitan Epiphany went on: “The enemy seeks to destroy us, leaving just barren ashes and scorching heat, and sometimes it may even seem that evil is winning. But its victory is only temporary – it can never be final, because goodness, light, and life will inevitably triumph.”

The Primate urged that Ukrainians should learn from the example of their women, who were often the “first teachers of faith and virtue” by placing their hope in God, and “never despairing, even when conditions seem insurmountable.”

Ed: Let’s add our own prayers of encouragement for the people of Ukraine..

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had seemed to cast doubt on the virgin birth and the Resurrection. He had been consecrated at York Minster three days earlier.

The Archbishop of York, Dr John Habgood, described that idea as "ridiculous", though some – including a few members of the fire service – felt that arson by objectors could not be ruled out. As many as 114 firefighters from over North Yorkshire were involved in tackling the blaze. Insurance cover on the Minster had just been increased by its treasury department: the damage to the south transept, with its wooden vaulted roof, amounted to £2.25 million. and included new roof bosses to designs which had won a competition put on by BBC Television's Blue Peter programme for children. The roof trusses were rebuilt in oak, but some were coated with fire-retardant plaster.

York Minster is a huge landmark and tourist attraction in the city: many consider it to be one of Europe's most impressive Gothic buildings. The glass in its famous 16th century Rose Window, which had recently been renovated, cracked into 40,000 pieces, but the new lead edges held it all together.

Queen Elizabeth attended the rededication ceremony in October 1988. This year a new exhibition called *Out of the Ashes* tells the story of the blaze and marks its anniversary.
by Tim Lenton



The Burning of York Minster 1984

York is my home city and I remember vividly the horror I felt, when I heard on the news that York Minster was on fire. I was in South Wales at the time and all I could do was hope and pray that this iconic cathedral which gives York its spiritual heart could be saved. Thankfully the cathedral was saved, and like the Notre Dame it was able to rise again out of the ashes. Editor



Forty years ago, on 9th July 1984, York Minster was struck by lightning, which set fire to the roof and destroyed the south transept.

It was the most recent of five fires that have occurred there over the years: the causes have ranged from workmen burning coals (1753) through arson using torn-up hymnbooks (1829) to an unattended candle (1840) and a tarpaulin catching fire (1971). Although night lightning was the official explanation in 1984, some suggested that God might have been reacting to the very recent appointment as Bishop of Durham of the Rt Revd David Jenkins, a famously controversial cleric whose comments



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General Election 2024: the Christian vote

Discussion of how American Christians, especially evangelicals, will vote is a perennial feature of US politics coverage. But when it comes to UK elections, there is little exploration on how Christians will vote. While British Christians do not act as a coherent bloc vote, they will play a role in the upcoming general election in several interesting ways

<u>What does the Christian electorate look like in the UK?</u>

The 2021 Census for England & Wales asked the question: "What is your religion?" and offered eight options. A total of 27.5 million people — 46 per cent of the population — identified as Christian. In Scotland 38.8 per cent identified as Christian and in Northern Ireland 79.7 per cent said they belonged to a Christian denomination.

While Christianity remains by far the largest single religion present in Britain, Christian affiliation has been in decline for many decades, dropping from 72 per cent in the 2001 Census for England and Wales.

<u>How do Christians engage in politics?</u>

Religion counts, recent research by the Theos think tank, quotes social scientists saying that "religion, by nurturing civic skills, inculcating moral values, encouraging altruism, and fostering civic recruitment, is a primary source of social capital".



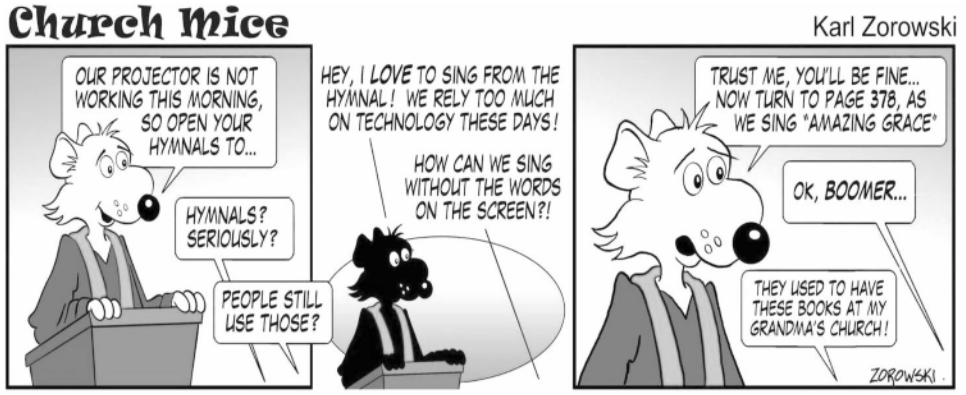
Many studies have shown that Christians are notably more likely to engage in politics then the general population, especially around election time. The long-running British Election Study (BES) found in its latest surveys that 83 per cent of Christians said they were very or

So what do we really know about Mary? The Gospels tell us that she came from Magdala, a town in Galilee, and Jesus healed her by casting out seven evil spirits. After this she followed Jesus, with other women, on His ministry providing resources. Later, Mary watched Jesus die on the cross, and having cared for His needs while He was alive, wanted to care for Him after His death.

It was when Mary went to anoint the body of Jesus at the tomb that the risen Jesus appeared to her. He told Mary to go to His disciples and tell them about His return to Heaven. She was obedient and became the first emissary of the resurrection. In those days, the witness of a woman was worthless. Despite ridicule, Mary had the courage to speak about Jesus in a place of great disbelief. We have to ask ourselves do we have the same courage as Mary? How prepared are we to stand our ground to share Jesus with others in the face of those who mock and scoff at us?

Although we usually associate Mary with the Easter story, this month on 22nd July, the Church celebrates her Feast Day. In this snapshot of Mary's life we know she had experienced great distress and suffering. After Jesus healed her, Mary expressed her gratitude by being utterly committed and devoted to Him.

Jesus can give everyone a new start; a new purpose and direction in life. Like Mary we can thank Him for blessing us, loving us and forgiving us and moving into practical forms of service. Only Jesus can transform our lives so that we can glorify God in all that we do.



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What do we really know about Mary Magdalene? Saint Day 22nd July



Fake news is not new. Perhaps one old example is the assertion that Mary Magdalene was a prostitute. Back in the 6th Century, Pope Gregory is said to have confused her with two other women in the Bible. Medieval Bible scholars also attempted to name an unidentified sinful woman who had washed and anointed the feet of Jesus. As Mary Magdalene is mentioned in the next chapter, they regarded her as the same person! After this, many classical artists painted Mary in various states of undress, perpetuating a falsehood.

fairly likely to vote in the next general election. Turnout in recent elections has been in the 60 to 70 per cent range.

<u>Can't be bothered to vote in the General Election this month?</u>

Some reasons why you should….

You're in the pub. The topic of the election comes up. Someone sighs: "Well, I can't really be bothered to vote this year. I'm tired of politics. I feel disillusioned and despondent.

What are you to say? Is it worth sticking out from the crowd and encouraging people to vote? To Show Up and get involved in politics?



Yes, of course! At a time where there is a good deal of apathy and disinterest towards politics, it is all the more important to get involved, become engaged, and encourage others to do so.

Now, more than ever, we need to get off the side-lines of political debate and get on to the pitch.

<u>Christians should vote in the election</u>

The UK the polls suggest our elections will be the most hotly contested elections in living memory. Yet many Christians are ambivalent about it. Some people think that politics and faith don't mix, but I would say that misunderstands God's nature.

If your God is not interested in politics then you are not worshipping the God of the Bible. Take the Lord's Prayer for example. In it we pray that God's Kingdom would come - that is a politically loaded prayer. It is asking that the reign of God would come to fruition here on earth as it is currently in heaven. We pray not that souls would escape up to heaven, but for God's kingly reign to invade our world.

Of course, politics is far more than voting in general elections. We seek God's reign for every second of our Christian lives, not just for one day every five years. So in one sense voting is the very least we

can do. It is us, as believers, playing our part in the democratic process that we have been invited to participate in.

HERE ARE 10 REASONS WHY CHRISTIANS SHOULD VOTE:

1. Voting publicly recognises that we submit to the authority of the political system in our nation as established by God. (Romans 13:1-7)

2. Voting recognises the equality of all people and their right to speak and be heard. (Deuteronomy 10:17-19)

3. It is one way that we can obey God's command to seek the good of those around us and our nation as a whole. (Jeremiah 29:5-6)

4. It shows that we care deeply about who our leaders are as we are urged to offer prayer and intercession on their behalf. (1 Timothy 2:1,2)

5. It is a simple yet significant way we can do something about politics in our nation. 'All that is required for evil to prevail is for good men to do nothing', Edmund Burke. (Psalms 34:14)

6. It makes a difference the way a grain of salt makes a difference, and that is how we are to influence our society for good. (Matthew 5:13)

7. It is a privilege not to be taken for granted. Those of us who reap the benefits of living in a democracy should play a part in upholding democracy.

8. Not voting is a form of voting, as it will influence the outcome. We need to take responsibility for our actions, as well as our lack of actions. (Luke 10:25-37)

9. Voting has biblical precedence for example Acts 14:23 describes that the early Christians elected elders by voting.

10. Voting is part of our stewardship to use all the resources we have been given in ways that honour God; to waste a vote is to squander a gift.

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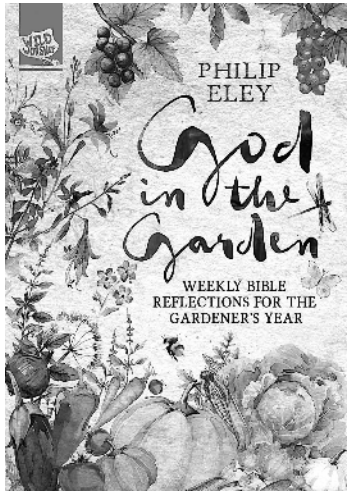


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Prayer for July 2024

Father, thank you for summertime, when thoughts turn to holidays and relaxation.
July is a month of endings for many; the ending of the school or college year and for some a moving on to the next stage of education or work. Often, there is uncertainty or trepidation about the future.
Whatever stage of life we are at, whatever season of the year it is, we can feel uncertain and concerned in a world which seems increasingly secular and confusing.
Remind us Lord, of Your promise to be with us always, every step of every way, when we put our trust in You, through Jesus.
Thank you that in the ups and downs of life, You never change. You are the rock on which we stand securely, eternally. Help us to move forward confidently, trusting in that truth.
Thank you, Lord.
In Jesus' name.
Amen.
By Daphne Kitching

BOOK REVIEW



God in the Garden

By Philip Eley, Kevin Mayhew, £14.99

A year of weekly Bible reflections that follow the seasons and changes of the gardener's year. They help to encourage consistent devotional time – outside with God and deepening a spiritual relationship.

A good gift for gardener's, organic food growers, families with allotments and fans of our Wild Worship series. *The book* includes reflection questions, practical tips, advice and space for journaling.

A Day at the Diocesan Synod

By George McNeill

Jo, the Rector and I attended Diocesan Synod on a wet Thursday in June. A good day to be indoors. On arrival at the venue, Christ Church. Lisburn, we received a warm welcome. The day began with Holy Communion, an uplifting service



The Presidential Address given by the Bishop of Connor reminded us all that those present, clergy and laity, are part of something bigger - meaning that we are part of a diocese, part of a national church, which is part of a fellowship of Christians which reaches right around the world. That's easy to forget, but importantly he emphasised that we should take time to consider how we work together and encourage one another in the joys and challenges of serving Christ in his world today.

His final words were: "Whatever your role in ministry in Connor Diocese, from the smallest parish to the largest cathedral, whether you wear a collar or exercise your ministry with a sweeping brush, it's my prayer that you will know the value that we place on what you do and pray too that you will know the equipping of God's Spirit as we serve Him together in this diocese."

It made me think that it's very easy to forget that arranging the flowers, cleaning the brass, tending the graveyard, attending meetings, making

hymns were played fortissimo and at double speed and the choir in rotation dropped hymn books throughout my sermon.

Inevitably, when you staff another church, you will be told: 'It's the normal Service.' It will be *nothing of the sort*. Hymns will appear in unexpected places, Sunday schools will enter and leave (and enter again) apparently at random, objects will be brought to you to be read from, placed on the altar or blessed - just as you were about to try and find the pulpit. In any case, wherever you are standing, you will find you should have been standing somewhere else. But not to worry - most mistakes will be forgiven – provided your sermon is short.

So - enjoy your visits to other churches. <u>And above all, make sure that your temporary replacement is so spectacularly incompetent that your own people will welcome you back with open arms on your return</u>.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace



St James the Least of All
On the perils of 'standing in' for another vicar.



Take note Mark.. some sound advice here as you go on holiday soon

The Rectory
St James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

You should not complain about doing duty in other churches when their clergy are on holiday. It is only in other churches that you will be appreciated. Beatification only comes from your own church on the day you leave – which is a way of firing a shot across the bows of your successor. I remember being greeted by a churchwarden on my first day here at St James the Least of All with the encouraging words: 'I've seen six Rectors of this parish; each one was worse than the last.' As the years have gone by, I am sure I will have entirely fulfilled his expectations.

No; when you visit another church, you will be told all the many defects of their own vicar, and whatever *you* do will be praised. Store up these memories for the day you return to your own patch – when you will then be told how outstanding your own temporary replacement has been and how congregations thrived in your absence.

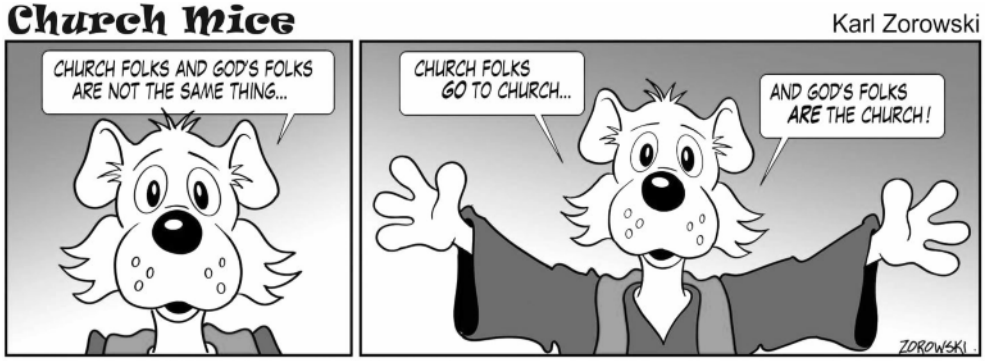
Naturally, this gives you the right to make similar remarks about your own congregation in the churches you visit. Unfavourable comparisons with the bell ringers, vergers and congregational singing in your home patch to the superb standards in the church you're temporarily serving will be much appreciated. Just make sure that the church you are staffing is sufficiently far from your own that word will not get back to your home team.

It is a mistake I made only once. After filling in for a colleague, I happened to complement the choir on the singing of the anthem. Unknown to me, a tenor was the second cousin of my organist, who received a rather embellished story that I had compared my own choir back home unfavourably with theirs. On my return the following Sunday, all the

and serving refreshments, editing, collating and delivering the magazine and all the unseen ministries that go on, are all part of the ministry of Christ.



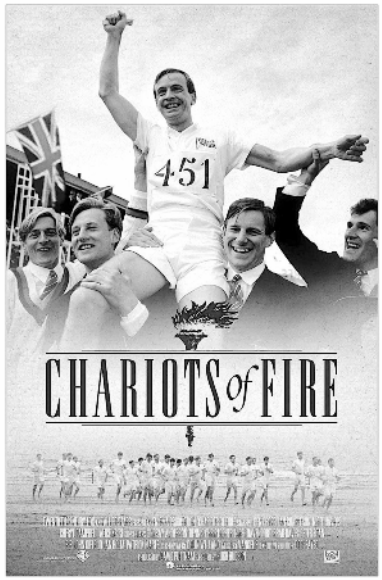
In later sessions it was inspiring to hear about uplifting ministries in the diocese including children's, (mention was made of Messy Church which is so prominent in our own church), youth, healing,vocations to ordained and lay ministry, community projects and much else besides. I had no idea that many of these were going on.
If you would like to read the full Synod Report then I would be pleased to email it to you.
When we left it was raining more than ever but this did not dampen the memories we had of a day well spent amongst the body of Christ.



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Remembering the faith of Eric Liddell – 100 years ago at the Paris Olympics

Many people will recall the popular film Chariots of Fire which came out in the 1980s. We are approaching the centenary of that big race



The 2024 Paris Olympics (26 July – 11 August) will soon be here. It was 100 years ago this summer, also at the Paris Olympics, that a young science student at Edinburgh University, Eric Liddell, ran an astonishing race that caught the imagination of millions worldwide.

Liddell had been born in China in 1902, to Scottish missionaries there. Early on, he had made a deep commitment to Jesus Christ, and sensed he was being called to spend his life in serving others. But Liddell was also an outstanding sportsman, playing rugby for Scotland before settling on athletics.

When he was chosen for the Paris Olympics, he expected to run his preferred 100m. But then came the news that the race would be run on a Sunday, and Liddell refused. Quickly, he trained for the 200m and 400m. He took bronze at the 200m, but no one expected much from him at the 400m. Instead, he won, and even broke the world record in the process.

After the Olympics, Liddell felt God calling him to his life's work. He went back to China, to teach in a Christian college. As the Second World War loomed, he sent his wife and children home, but stayed on himself. By 1943 Liddell was confined to a brutal prison camp, where he shone among the fellow prisoners – encouraging them, teaching Bible classes, and praying for both his fellow inmates and the prison wardens. Deeply malnourished, his health failed and in 1945, just months before the war ended, he died, aged only 43.
In 1981 his story was made into the Oscar-winning film *Chariots of Fire*.

A National Treasure by George McNeill



Don't miss seeing the painting by the artist Caravaggio now on display in the Ulster Museum until September 1st. 10 am - 5 pm. It's on loan from the National Gallery in London. The subject is the "Supper at Emmaus", painted in 1601.

On the third day after the Crucifixion two of Jesus's disciples were walking to Emmaus when they met the resurrected Christ. They failed to recognise him, but that evening at supper he '... took bread, and blessed it, and brake and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight' (Luke 24: 30–31).

This canvas was painted at the height of Caravaggio's fame. It is among his most impressive domestic religious pictures. He brilliantly captures the dramatic climax of the story, the moment when the disciples suddenly see what has been in front of them all along. Their actions convey their astonishment: one is about to leap out of his chair while the other throws out his arms in a gesture of disbelief. The stark lighting underlines the dramatic intensity of the scene.

The disciples are shown as ordinary working men, with bearded, lined faces and ragged clothes, in contrast to the youthful beardless Christ, who seems to have come from a different world.

Alongside it is another painting by the same artist, 'The Taking of Christ' (1602). This is on loan from the Jesuit Community in Dublin, with the support of the National Gallery of Ireland.

Both paintings very rarely travel and they have hardly ever been seen together since the first quarter of the 17th century.

To find out more about the life of Caravaggio go to: https://youtube/1KcdgFxmnb4.

Do go and see it for yourself.

Poetry Corner

Consumers or Disciples?

(Mt 11:16-19)

To what can I compare this generation?
They are like children sitting in the market-places and calling to others:
We played a flute for you, and you did not dance;
We sang a dirge for you and you did not mourn.
We are a market-place generation.
Consumers devoted to pick and mix,
Café church, traditional church,
Fresh expressions, stale expressions,
Flute playing, dirge-singing
Dipping in and out, Moving on,
Rejecting what doesn't please me, right now.
We are consumers, yes.
But disciples?
Life-long learners,
Committed to the Way,
Devoted to the Truth,
Experiencing the fullness of Life which is Jesus?
Prepared to endure to the end,
Being thankful in all circumstances,
Even when that involves a cross?
Are we really becoming
And making disciples?
God, who sent the flute-player
And the dirge-singer, Give us wisdom.

By Daphne Kitching

If you write poetry do send us a poem to print here.
Email your poem to the editor by August 10th



Olympic star Adam Peaty says faith helps him fight burnout as Paris 2024 Games approach

by Heather Preston

Three-time Olympic gold medallist Adam Peaty credits his motivation to continue competing to his Christian faith and church community.

Peaty holds the world record for 100m breaststroke and has won Gold at both the Rio 2016 and Tokyo 2020 Olympics.
Speaking in an interview with *BBC Sport,* Peaty describes how his church community has helped him deal with the pressure and isolation of competing.

"It wasn't really until I went back to church when I was burning out that [I realised I had] a community that is there no matter what, from all walks of life. This puts a lot more into perspective and I actually feel at home here," he said.
The triple Olympic champion went on to explain that his Christian faith helps him to stay grounded and be both a better athlete and a better father, partner and friend, by remaining accountable to others and continuing to read God's Word during challenging moments.

Peaty's selection as part of the British swimming team for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games was announced in April 2024.
Looking ahead to the competition, Peaty said he has been "highly blessed" and feels he has "already won" regardless of the outcome.



Recipe

Cajun fried shrimp



Preparation and cooking time
Prep:10 mins - 20 mins. Cook:20 mins (depending on if you are de-shelling your own prawns)
Serves 4 as an appetiser
Fry up a batch of crispy Cajun spiced shrimps – they are completely addictive. Put the beer on ice, too, for an informal dinner with friends and family

Ingredients

- 500g extra large raw king prawns (the biggest raw king prawns in the supermarket are often in the frozen section), defrost thoroughly, peel if needed, then pat dry with kitchen paper – if buying from a fishmonger, ask them to peel and de-vein them for you
- 1 tbsp hot & herby Cajun spice mix (see below)
- 284ml tub buttermilk
- 100g polenta
- 100g cornflour
- 1 tsp mustard powder

For the mayo

- 4 tbsp mayonnaise
- 1 tbsp hot sauce

For the Cajun spice mix

- 2 tbsp paprika
- 4 tsp garlic powder
- 4 tsp cayenne pepper
- 2 tsp ground black pepper
- 2 tsp onion powder
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 tsp dried oregano

Method

STEP 1. Stir all the ingredients for the mayo together, adding lime juice to taste. Set aside.
STEP 2. Coat the prawns in ½ tbsp Cajun spice mix. Decant the buttermilk into a bowl and give it a good stir to loosen slightly. In another bowl, mix the polenta, cornflour, mustard powder and remaining Cajun spice mix together.
STEP 3. Fill a deep frying pan 2 inches full with oil. Heat to 180C on a cooking thermometer, or until a piece of bread browns in 20 seconds when it is dropped in the oil. Dip each seasoned prawn briefly in the buttermilk then coat in the flour mixture. Fry the prawns for 1-2 mins on each side until golden brown and curled. Drain on kitchen paper, then serve with the mayo and lime wedges for squeezing over.

Be careful of the sun this summer – melanoma is on the rise

Skin cancer cases are expected to top 20,000 for the first time this year, according to a recent study by Cancer Research UK.

While the increase in skin cancers has occurred across all the ages, it is highest in the elderly, who enjoyed cheap package holidays to sunny countries during the 60s and 70s. They were exposed to higher ultraviolet radiation without realising the dangers.

The numbers of people aged 80 and over who develop skin cancers has soared by 57 per cent in 10 years. And while younger people are more likely to take precautions against the sun, those aged 25 to 49 are still predicted to see a seven per cent rise in skin cancers this year. Anyone who notices any unusual changes to their skin should contact their GP.

Cancer Research UK has partnered with Nivea Sun to advise the public to stay in the shade between 11am to 3pm, cover up with clothes, a hat and UV-protected sunglasses, and use sunscreen with protection levels of at least factor 30.

Finding safety in shade goes right back to biblical times. The book of Jonah even tells us that: ‘the LORD God prepared a vine, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shade over his head, to deliver him from his discomfort. So, Jonah was exceedingly glad because of the vine.’ (Jonah 4:6)