CHURCH MATTERS

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

Here everyone matters

September 2024

CHURCH OF IRELAND

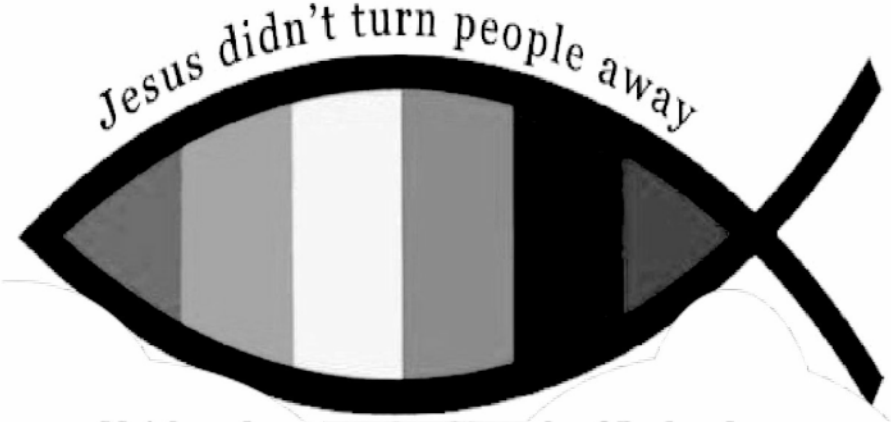
ST. PATRICK'S & ST. JOHN'S

UNITED PARISH OF WHITEHEAD & ISLANDMAGEE

Come As You Are

You're more than welcome here

at St Patrick's Church, Whitehead
& St John's Church, Islandmagee



Neither do we at the Church of Ireland
because all are welcome here.

September Services & Readings

Wednesday 11:30 in St Patrick's - a brief service of prayers or the Litany One

Readers, please read the first reading on the Sunday List

Sunday 1st September - Trinity 14
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m. and 12 noon Holy Communion Two
Sunday Readings - James 117-27; Mark 7:1-8, 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 - 13:34

Sunday 8th September - Trinity 15 - Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m. MESSY CHURCH in the Parochial Hall
10:30 a.m. and 12 noon Morning Prayer Two
Sunday Readings - Isaiah 61:10-11; Psalm 45:10-17; Luke 1:46-55
Readers for first Lesson - Judith de Fleury / Joy Kerr
7:00 p.m. Compline
Weekday Readings: Job 22, 25, 27, 31, 32, 38; Psalms 139-150;
Acts 13:44 - 15:35

Sunday 15th September - Trinity 16
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m. and 12 noon Morning Prayer Two
Sunday Reading - Proverbs 1:20-33; Psalm 19; Mark 8:27-38
Readers for first Lesson - Colin de Fleury / Jim Reid
3:30 p.m. Pet Service in St Patrick's
7:00 p.m. Compline
Weekday Readings: Job 40 - 42, Esther 1 - 2; Psalms 101 - 113;
Acts 15:54 - 17:34

Sunday 22nd September - Trinity 17
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m. and 12noon Family Service
Sunday Readings - Mark 9:30-37
Readers for first Lesson - The Rector
Weekday Readings: Esther 3:1 - 9:28; Psalms 114 - 125; Acts 18:1 - 20:16

Sunday 29th September - Trinity 18 - St Michael and All Angels
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m. and 12 noon Special Service of Hymns and Readings
Sunday Readings - Genesis 28:10-17; Psalm 103:19-22; John 1:47-50;
Readers for first Lesson - Sheila Mason / Ann Thompson
7:00 p.m. Compline
Weekday Readings: Hosea 1:1 - 6:11; Psalms 126 - 150; Acts 20:17 - 22:29

Sunday 6th October - Trinity 19
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
11:00 a.m. United Service for Harvest Thanksgiving in St Patrick's, followed by a shared meal in the Parochial Hall
Sunday Readings - Joel 2.21-27; Psalm 126; Matthew 6.25-33
Reader for first Lesson - Scottie Heyes
7:00 p.m. Compline
Weekday Readings: Hosea 6:12 - 13:3; Psalms 1 - 29; Acts 22:30 - 25:27

Messy Church and Family Service dates for September 2024 - June 2025

Month	Messy Church	Family Service
September	8th @ 10:30am	22nd @ 10:30 & 12 noon
October	13th @ 10:30 am	27th @ 10:30 & 12 noon
November	10th @ 2:30 pm	24th @ 10:30 & 12 noon
December	8th @ 10:30 am	22nd Nativity Service @ 10:30 & 12 noon
January	12th @ 10:30 am	26th @ 10:30 & 12 noon
February	9th @ 10:30 am	23rd @ 10:30 & 12 noon s
March	9th @ 10:30 am	23rd @ 10:30& 12 noon
April	13th @ 10:30 am	27th @ 10:30 & 12 noon
May	11th @ 10:30 am	25th @ 10:30 & 12 noon
June	8th @ 10:30 am	22nd @ 10:30 & 12 noon

A message from our Rector



The start of a new academic year in early September is also, for many in the Church, the start of a new year for activities and events. We run our Messy Church from September to June, Sunday Brunch (our Youth Fellowship) also restarts at the beginning of September, as do the Indoor Bowls and the Brasso Club. I also bear in mind that I was instituted to the Parish on the 27th of August 22 years ago - so I only really got stared into the ministry of the Parish in September.

For me, this year, September is a very special new start. I am beginning a new life as a grandparent, and while every thing is the same, every thing is also different. My grandmother told me, well in reality told my father in front of me, that it is the job of a grandparent to spoil their grand children (as she gave me another piece of apple pie with loads of whipped cream). My father told me the very best thing about being a grandparent is that you get to play with the children with no real and actual responsibility for their upbringing and discipline, you get to hand them back at the end of the day and then spend the evening and night reliving the fun part of the day. My mother frequently told me that after a day with the grandchildren they hardly slept that night, mainly because they were constantly talking about the fun they had had and reminding each other of the things the children had done and said. I also know these things to be true from conversations with, and the real life experiences of watching, new grandparents.

So for the next number of months (or years) my grandson may well regularly feature in conversations and sermons, as he will be regularly on my mind.

The new life and new start that this September is bringing is not just for me, and Messy Church and the Bowlers and those in school or college or university. The new life and new start are for all of us; and not just at the beginning of September!

Hymn 59 in our hymn book says, “New every morning is the love our waking and uprising prove; through sleep and darkness safely brought, restored to life and power and thought.” It is a lovely hymn, and is printed out over leaf. Please take the time to read over it, to pause and consider what it is saying and how it relates to your life. This is a hymn for us all for every day of our lives, lives lived in and through God’s love for us.

It is wonderful to know that God's love for us is fresh and new each and every day. When we repent and seek God's forgiveness all that is past is done away with and we have a fresh start. And, there is no limit to the number of times that we can repent and seek God's forgiveness.

Please take the time to slowly read through the words of the hymn below. Don't just read it once, read it three times, slowly; think what its author was trying to convey, what this hymn means.

I hope September is a time of new beginnings for you. A time of new hopes and new expectations. I pray that we will all find a deeper faith in the weeks and months ahead, a faith that will be "a road to bring us daily nearer God."

Every blessing to you all for all that God gives, Mark

1 New every morning is the love
our wakening and uprising prove;
through sleep and darkness safely brought,
restored to life and power and thought.

2 New mercies, each returning day,
hover around us while we pray;
new perils past, new sins forgiven,
new thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven.

3 If on our daily course our mind
be set to hallow all we find,
new treasures still, of countless price,
God will provide for sacrifice.

4 Old friends, old scenes will lovlier be,
as more of heaven in each we see;
some softening gleam of love and prayer
shall dawn on every cross and care.

5 The trivial round, the common task,
will furnish all we need to ask,
room to deny ourselves, a road
to bring us daily nearer God.

6 Only, O Lord, in thy dear love
fit us for perfect rest above;
and help us, this and every day,
to live more nearly as we pray.

CHOIR PRACTICE FOR HARVEST

Starting on Sunday 8th September at 9:45 a.m. there will be weekly Choir practices on a Sunday morning, before the 10:30 a.m. service in St Patrick's, to prepare a piece for our Harvest Thanksgiving.

Any and all are welcome to come and join the choir for this service.



Back to school?

This month more than 10.7 million children will be going back to school. That means that millions of households across the country are now busy preparing for the big day.

Regular bedtime routines are back, packed lunches are planned, uniforms are washed and ready to go.

Some parents find it helpful to take children to the park for a good walk, or to go for rides on bikes or scooters in the final days of summer. The exercise will relieve stress, and help the children settle better at night.

For younger, perhaps anxious children, hugs are also very important. For all children, it is good to get them into the habit of feeling gratitude towards God for the positive things that happen in their daily lives, and for all the things that they already have.

While it is normal to feel a bit anxious before going back to school, there are things that parents can do to help. Praying with their children and reading a bit of a child's story Bible to them each night will encourage their faith and remind them that they don't have to face the ups and downs of school life all on their own.

Dear God,
As we send our children back to school, we pray for Your protection and guidance. Keep them safe from harm, both physically and emotionally. Help them to find friends who will support and encourage them. Give them wisdom as they face challenging situations. And help them to always remember that You are with them, no matter what.



"Finally, we're still waiting for someone from last week's Parent & Toddler Group to come and claim this lost property…"



HARVEST THANKSGIVING

"May the peoples
__ __ __ __ __ __ you, O God!
May all the peoples praise you!
The land yields its harvest;
God, our God blesses us."
Psalm 67:5-6 NIV

"God ... has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons. He provides you with plenty of __ __ __ __. He fills your hearts with joy."
Acts 14:16-17 NIV

"Let us fear and respect the Lord our God. He gives us autumn and spring __ __ __ __ __ at the right time. He makes sure that we have the harvest at just the right time."
Jeremiah 5:24 ERV

"Honour the Lord with your wealth and the first part of your harvest."
Proverbs 3:9 ERV

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

HARVEST • THANKSGIVING • LAND • EARTH • FERTILE • SOIL • SEED • SOWN
NEED • WATER • SUN • SEASON • AUTUMN • SPRING • YIELD • PRODUCE
FRUIT • GATHER • CROPS • PLENTY • PRAY • GOD • PROVIDE • JOY
BLESSED • GOODNESS • SHARE

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Find the words from the questions too!

Happy as Larry

Downing Street has seen rather a lot of comings and goings over the past few years, hasn't it? But one occupant of Number Ten has been slightly more constant: Larry the cat But Larry's getting on now – he is 17 years old. He's earned his retirement, I think. So maybe Sir Keir's cat, Jojo, will be appointed Chief Mouser to the Cabinet Office!

Happy as Larry?
(Or, His Majesty's Chief Mouser to the Cabinet Office)
If you should be in Downing Street
It may just be that you will meet
A public servant of long years
Who has a tail, and pointy ears!



His job, around that famous house?
To keep it free of any mouse.
A job he'd have more chance of keeping
By hunting rather more than sleeping!

His name is 'Larry', this fine cat
Upon the step you'll find him sat.
Prime ministers? They are only guests
Seen off like mice, or other pests.

Or Palmerston, a nearby cat
(The Foreign Office cleared of rats.)
But Larry, he withstood the threats –
That cat has gone, like Thatcher's wets!



So Larry, happy, licks his paws
No cat around to test his claws.
But wait! What's this? Another drama!
A cat has come with Sir Keir Starmer!

By Nigel Beeton

Sewing Bee Crafts



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Letter from Co Limerick from George McNeill



I am writing this from the study in the Rectory at Askeaton overlooking the lawned area towards the gate which leads into an overgrown glebe field. Quite a change from the seaside of Whitehead and Marine Parade.

As Reader-in-Charge, on a voluntary basis, of four churches in the Rathkeale and Kilnaughtin Group of Parishes in the Diocese of Limerick and Killaloe I am facing new challenges and opportunities: taking services, visiting parishioners, developing links with the church school and the Traveller community.

As I begin this new chapter in my life I reflect on my ministry in St Patrick's and St John's which began when I was baptised in St Patrick's. (No you won't find my name on the baptismal role so that gives you a clue as to my age!). One of the hymns we sang at my final service at St John's (Who will go Lord) reminds us all that our Christian lives take us on a journey, going where God leads. In my case, it was to an entirely unexpected place. God is a God of surprises! We just need to be open to be surprised!

It has been a privilege to serve in the parish with Mark's unstinting and kindly support and I am grateful to you all for your friendship and prayers.

Christine and I have taken with us very many happy memories of time spent amongst you. Thank you.

George

Editor. We wish George and Christine every blessing as they settle in their new home and commence church duties.

Please send us updates on how you are doing so that we can support you with our prayers.

LETTER FROM AMERICA

Dear Friends,

It was a joy to visit St. Patrick's in Whitehead in late July, thank you so much for your hospitality! One of the things I love most about St. Patrick's Washington DC is its welcoming and supportive community, and it was wonderful to find the same welcoming community with you.

A huge thank you to Jo Pawson and Jean Gascoigne for welcoming me into their home and being such incredible hosts. I was truly blessed to spend time with them, and I am so grateful to Jo for reaching out during the pandemic to launch our churches' friendship.



During my trip, I was lucky enough to visit many beautiful sites. But I purposely avoided those related to St. Patrick because, while we don't have a specific timeframe, St. Patrick's DC is in the early stages of planning a trip to visit you in person. The goal is to deepen the relationship we've built over the last few years, and jointly visit sites relevant to our patron saint. There is still much to do to make the trip a reality, but I plan on being part of it and look forward to seeing you again.



All the best,

Jo Anne Nelson

Senior Warden
St Patrick's Episcopal Church,
Washington DC



By Sarah Joy

I walk into church and people are already talking to each other in their seats or in the lobby. They smile and laugh, happy to be in their own groups. Everyone belongs to a group. They sit together with the friends they've had for years. They make plans for lunch after service, patting themselves on the back for their good Christian efforts over the past week. And they nod as the pastor preaches his sermon, promising to do better, be more friendly this week. The pastor shakes their hands as they go out the door.
And yet, no one has tried to talk to me.

This is the scenario that many regular church-goers find themselves in. Church is meant to be the place where the sick and broken-hearted find healing, where the lost find their way, and where the lonely find friendship. However, some become broken-hearted, lose their way, and feel *more* alone when they are going to church. This is because they feel like they don't belong.
This is not to say that everyone in all churches feel that they don't belong. I know a number of people who feel like their closest group of friends is from church. But a need exists out there for inclusion, and we must fill that need.

Growing up, I was very shy, but even as a kid I could tell instantly when someone genuinely cared. As soon as I felt like someone was faking it, I didn't trust them.

I go to multiple congregations with different types of music. But while the music differs, people in groups are very much the same. In each congregation,

there are people who I feel are genuinely warm and caring, there are people who I instantly feel are faking it, there are people who don't reach out and stay within their circle. Don't get me wrong, I'm sure that those who don't reach out are also warm and caring to the people within their circle. I can see that from afar as they laugh and get lunch together. But there's a clear distinction between those who fit in that circle and those who don't. It's as if we are the ones in charge, and not God.

What if I were a non-believer visiting for the first time? Would I believe that Christians actually love me? Would I want to come back?
And, furthermore, what if I'm not a newcomer? Those who have attended that same church for years, who might also be shy, get passed by unnoticed by people who don't really reach out. If I had a nickel every time someone from the church has asked me "How are you doing?" without wanting to talk longer than 15 seconds, I'd be a millionaire by now.
I'm not a millionaire.

Truth is, we all want to belong somewhere. It's easy to fall into the thinking of: *We're the ones who've worked hard to find friends, and now we have friends. Why should I try to make more friends?* We're so scared of not being included, that in our attempt at maintain comfort, we end up excluding other people. *Why invite that person to lunch if they might say no? What if my friends like them better than they like me? What if I don't end up liking this person?*
But God does not call us to be comfortable. If Jesus expected Peter to 'step out of the boat' (Matthew 14), then he expects the same of us. God calls us to step out of our comfort zone, because that's where he is most present. It's when we shift our sight from Jesus that we start to sink. "Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, 'Lord, save me!' Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. 'You of little faith,' he said, 'why did you doubt?'" (Matthew 14:29-31).

We must be ready to open our heart to new friendships instead of thinking we'll fail. We must be ready to feel awkward and uncomfortable. Believe me, I know this is not easy. I'm still working on it myself. But remind yourself that Jesus will work through the uncomfortable to bring you closer to Him. I made some my best friendships because I stepped out of my comfort zone for a minute or two, just to say hi. And suddenly they felt less alone, and so did I. You will surprise yourself.

Everyone belongs in the church because God loves all of us. We are meant to work together as one unit, one body (1 Corinthians 12:12-13), one spirit. Easier said than done. How can we work together as a unit if there are those who feel isolated, right in front of our faces? "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit." There are no divisions in Christ. This is not a choice – this is a commandment.

We are meant to work together. Let's keep our eyes on Jesus. We won't sink if we do.



Shirley reminded them they were going out there to praise the Lord, not to kick ass

The Merry Opera Company
Handel's Messiah
(Northern Ireland tour)

8th November - 7th December 2024

Seen by over 14,600 audience, the Merry Opera is going on our 15th tour of the staged Messiah by George Frideric Handel: Twelve strangers seek spiritual comfort in their struggle to understand the world. Singing together in a church, they inspire each other to pick up the ragged ends of their faith and look to the future with hope.

Venues:

St Patrick's Church, Whitehead

on Saturday 9th November @ 7:30 p.m.

and

St John's Church, Malone Road, Belfast; Londonderry Guildhall; Coleraine; Armagh Cathedral; Lisburn Cathedral; Stormont Great Hall; Portico of Ards

(We are in some pretty august company)



Tickets for this stunning performance of Handel's Messiah are available online from **www.merryopera.co.uk**

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Refreshments will be available during the interval.

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Matthew chapter 20 verses 1-15

Jesus told a story to describe God's kingdom. A vineyard owner went to the marketplace at dawn to hire workers to pick his grapes.



z	c	n	d	e	b	s	a	m	e	k	w
z	v	i	v	j	e	s	u	s	l	v	u
f	a	i	r	o	e	d	b	n	z	t	l
p	g	x	n	l	n	a	z	e	s	u	s
m	a	r	k	e	t	p	l	a	c	e	s
x	i	r	i	s	y	o	l	o	p	l	t
h	n	r	n	t	h	a	e	a	u	q	o
x	f	u	g	w	h	i	r	e	d	s	r
j	i	e	d	m	k	g	o	d	i	e	y
b	r	w	o	r	k	e	r	s	n	y	l
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story
God
friend
same
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money
give
grapes

Jesus
kingdom
day
wage
fair
sunset
vineyard
again

whole
first
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workers
jealous
last
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hired

Civil Unrest on our streets….
by Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury

Across the UK, communities have been left horrified by the violent scenes in our towns and cities, with most of us reduced to murmuring inadequate truisms: rioting is bad. Law and order is good. Be nice to people.

The trouble with such statements is that they contain just enough truth to inoculate you against the real thing. The violence across England and Northern Ireland in recent days does contain common features. It is racist. It targets ethnic minorities. It is anti-Muslim, anti-refugee and anti-asylum seeker. It was detonated by lies and fuelled by deliberate misinformation, spread quickly online by bad actors with malignant motivations.

The lies and misinformation flourished in fertile ground cultivated by years of rhetoric from some of our press and politicians, arriving at a point where some felt emboldened to try to set fire to a hotel housing asylum seekers and target mosques.

How, then, do we begin to find a way forward, to dismantle these divisive and violent forces and instead pursue a path towards peace? Brave statements and great announcements do not propagate peace; peace is achieved through painstaking meetings and with careful plans, developed in one place and piloted in another, requiring time to change things.

It is fundamental that free speech, freedom of worship and the right to peaceful protest must be protected. When freedom of religion and belief is forbidden to many around the world, it is important that we defend these things as a matter of policy – and encourage religious literacy in education and in government, to equip people to live in a faith-filled world.

Atheism or agnosticism are choices people may make, as are the different faiths, but no choice is an excuse for ignorance of others. And to remove any doubt, the Christian iconography that has been exploited by the far right is an offence to our faith, and all that Jesus was and is. Christians should not be associated with any far-right group – because those groups are unchristian.

Against the backdrop of racism and violence, some of the most powerful scenes after the riots have included an imam in Liverpool bringing food to a small group of far-right rioters and engaging in conversation, bravely crossing boundaries to demonstrate shared humanity and defusing tensions in the process.

In Southport, a group of bricklayers helped to rebuild a mosque that had been vandalised. And in Sunderland, a Church of England chaplain worked with international students to clear away debris after an evening joining with others to shield the minster from damage. He then escorted Black nurses to their work in a nearby hospital in the face of violent threats. We must develop and cherish these examples of civic virtue that have been counter-messages to those of the mob.

Jesus told stories of people such as the good Samaritan, or the prodigal son. At the heart of his teaching was a message to love God and love your neighbour – not in an emotional way, but in a tough, practical, actively seeking the flourishing of others way.
And "neighbour", to Jesus, did not just mean those living next door "like us", but instead, extended to those who were different, even ancient enemies.

This country has shown at times that it is capable of that embrace of difference. Let's build more of those bonds, learning from those in riot-hit areas such as the imam in Liverpool and the chaplain in Sunderland, who have shown us a better way.

This difficult path towards living well together means setting the foundations for reconciliation. Rather than the idea of a quick fix or a warm hug after a disagreement, reconciliation is the long and often painful process of addressing injustice, careful research into the deep-rooted causes of division and facing uncomfortable truths. It requires enormous care, where the misuse of privilege and power are put aside and we turn outwards to one another as the starting block of building a flourishing community.

We cannot do these things accidentally. We can do them if we focus and work with real intent together, and we must do this work to achieve a better future, rooted in the common good and in solidarity. That means

no preferences except on the basis of need. It means good housing, health and education for marginalised communities in our urban centres and former mill towns, as well as on the coasts and in the outer estates.

Because, let us make no mistake, those communities left behind in our country's race to growth reflect the rich and precious diversity that is our nation today. It will involve serious conversations about what it means to live together well, knowing we share lots in common: streets, schools, universities, workplaces, media, as well as our fundamental humanity.

Embracing the opportunities and challenges offered by living in such a diverse country is a task for all of us, and it is clear from the last few weeks that that work is long overdue.

Church of Ireland Belfast bishops' statement on civil unrest in the city

"Words and actions that lead to violence on our streets, the damage of property, and putting the safety of people at risk cannot be condoned but must be condemned by all of us.

"In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus Christ taught that our neighbour is the person whom we meet, whatever their background, race or belief. It is imperative on the Church then, in every local context, to find ways to welcome the stranger, to care for the refugee, and to extend God's love, kindness, grace and care to every person that we meet. In reaching towards others with welcome and blessing



in every way we can, we demonstrate faithfulness to the call of Jesus and a better way to live.
"We have made strides forward in Northern Ireland in terms of reconciliation and the pursuit of all that makes for peace.

"This is a time for all of us to work together, pursuing acts of welcome and kindness which are always stronger and more powerful than anything that flows from fear and prejudice."

The Rt Revd George Davison is the Bishop of Connor and the Rt Revd David McClay is the Bishop of Down and Dromore.

Adaptation of the Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi
Heavenly Father, we cry out to you for our country
and ask that you make us instruments of Your peace.
Where there is racial hatred, help us to sow Your love.
Where there is injury, help us to heal and bring pardon.
Where there is discord, help us to bring harmony.
Where there is error, and misinformation let us bring truth.
Where there is doubt that we are all your children, let us bring faith; Where there is despair, let us bring hope;
Where there is darkness, shine your light;
and where there is sadness, help us to bring joy.
O Divine Master, grant that we may not so much
seek to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Monty Don brings back the lawn

After years of insisting that garden lawns should be left unkempt and blended with wild flowers, Monty Don the TV gardener has made a U-turn with his lawnmower.

In a recent article in *BBC Gardeners' World* magazine, he admits: "This spring and summer I have made a tightly mowed and evenly green lawn. This is slightly surprising…."

But his turn-around will be welcomed by all those who love a neat-looking lawn to show off their flower beds, and to give their children somewhere to play outside.

Monty Don stresses that gardening is, above all, about getting "the space right." Otherwise, "it will not look or feel good regardless of what plants you use, be they ever so rare or fascinating."

An unmown lawn, he now argues, makes your space look smaller, not bigger. "Long grass fills a space to quite a surprising extent, whereas mown grass takes the same area and expands it. Gardens need room for the eye and mind to drift and breathe. Too many plants and it becomes suffocating."



How could God let all these bad things happen?

A journalist once asked Billy Graham's daughter why God allowed all the problems in the world today. Here is what Anne Graham Lotz replied:

"I believe God is deeply saddened by this, just as we are, but for years we've been telling God to get out of our schools, to get out of our government and to get out of our lives.

"And being the gentleman He is, I believe He has calmly backed out. How can we expect God to give us His blessing and His protection if we demand He leave us alone?"

"In America some years ago people complained that they did not want prayer in our schools. And we said OK. Then someone said: 'you better not read the Bible in school ... the Bible says thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, and love your neighbour as yourself.' And we said OK.

"Then Dr Benjamin Spock said we shouldn't spank our children when they misbehave because their little personalities would be warped and we might damage their self-esteem (Dr Spock's son committed suicide). We said an expert should know what he's talking about. And we said OK. "Then someone said teachers better not discipline our children when they misbehave. The schools feared bad publicity, and said there was no difference between proper discipline and cruel humiliation. And we said OK.

"Then some of our top elected officials said it doesn't matter what we do in private, as long as we do our jobs. Agreeing with them, we said it doesn't matter to me what anyone, including the President, does in private as long as I have a job, and the economy is good. And we said OK.

"Then the entertainment industry said, 'let's make TV shows and movies that promote profanity, violence, sadistic cruelty and illicit sex. Let's record music that encourages rape, drugs, murder, suicide, and satanic themes.' And we said it's just entertainment, it has no adverse effect, nobody takes it seriously anyway, so go right ahead.

"Now we're asking ourselves why our children have no conscience, why our society is so violent and dangerous, why no one seems to know right from wrong, and why it doesn't bother people to cheat, threaten and even kill each other. Probably, if we think about it long and hard enough, we can figure it out.

"I think it has a great deal to do with 'WE REAP WHAT WE SOW'."

St James the Least of All

On why you should never replace your hymn books



The Rectory
St James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

I am surprised you are considering buying a new set of hymn books for your church. I had assumed everything you sang would be projected on to one of those screens which are invariably placed to obscure the altar.

In my – fortunately limited – experience of such devices, they provide the projectionist with endless opportunities for showing the wrong hymn, or the right hymn but from another edition, which will contain either one verse too many or one too few. Should the hymn run to two pages, then the turnover always takes place some milliseconds after that verse has started, so that the congregation is faced with the snap decision of either trying to sing two lines at double time, or just to join in late, making a nonsense of the words.

When we decided to change hymn books some years ago, the reverberations made the consequences of that little event in Sarajevo seem insignificant. The proposal was to move from *Hymns Ancient and More Ancient* to the more recent version: *Hymns Ancient and Slightly Less Ancient*.

Colonel Wainwright said he would be happy so long as we continued fighting good fights and urging Christian soldiers onwards. The men wanted the hymns they remembered from school, the ladies those they sang at their weddings, and no one would consider anything that dropped 'thines' or 'wouldsts'. The basses in the choir wanted hymns they knew the tenors found difficult and those who couldn't read music wanted more hymns sung in unison. When a rumour started that the books may contain hymns written in the last 50 years, timetables were consulted for bus services to the next village.

Eventually we reached a perfect compromise: doing something which made no change whatsoever. Miss Simpson was charged with buying yards of sticky backed plastic and repairing the current books. She put a note on the front of every copy that if the page for the hymn they wanted was missing, they should share with the person sitting next to them – an experience which will be almost as traumatic as being invited to pass the peace. Yet another decision has thereby been deferred for a Church Council to make some time next century. Harmony reigns once again.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace



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The Salvation Navy 1885- 1888

Research by The Salvation Army to mark 150 years of the church and charity in Wales during 2024 has revealed that briefly in the late 1800s there was also a Salvation Navy – and all thanks to a famous Cardiff shipping family.

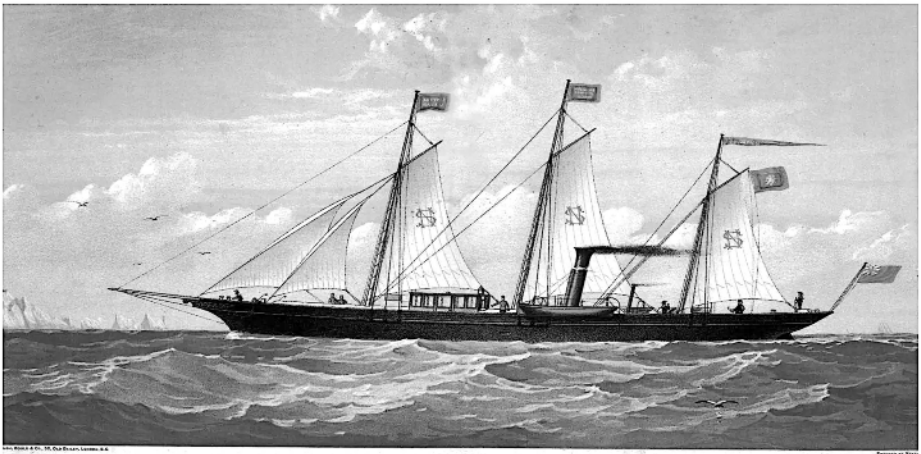
The crew of The SS Iole



It is fascinating to imagine the outcome today had early proposals for a Salvation Navy worked out as planned.

While the familiar red shield and mission work of The Salvation Army is known around the world in more than 130 countries, the existence in the Victorian era of a Salvation Navy might have been lost to history had a fragile letter from 1885 not surfaced during preparations for celebrating the 150th anniversary in Wales. The handwritten letter, addressed to founder William Booth from his son, Bramwell, details a gift from the celebrated Welsh industrialist John Cory of Cory Brothers and Co. namely, *'A three masted steam yacht, 100ft long, to The Salvation Army'*.

Steven Spencer, Director of The Salvation Army International Heritage Centre in London, has assembled additional evidence that reveals an almost unknown seafaring history and clues to what 'might have been' 150 years ago as the church expanded its mission in Victorian Wales.



Steven Spencer said: "It is fascinating to imagine the outcome today had early proposals for a Salvation Navy worked out as planned. The story of The Salvation Army in Wales began on 15th November 1874, at the Gospel Hall on Bute Street, near the docks. Within fifteen years 120 churches, or corps, had been established across the country. Initial progress towards establishing a seafaring service came amid this rapid expansion of the mission in the late 1800s across Wales.

"John Cory and his brother Richard were committed Christians becoming friends and benefactors to our founders, William and Catherine Booth, who admired a well-appointed yacht named SS Iole originally purchased by John as a pleasure cruiser for his wife. It seems he gifted the ship to The Salvation Army on hearing about Bramwell Booth's vision for a seaborne mission – and after discovering that his wife did not have sea legs. The Cory family were wealthy and John was surprisingly sanguine about giving away the expensive, unwanted gift. He wrote in the letter to Bramwell Booth, 'Evidently, God has been ordering things'."

The SS Iole was launched as the flagship of the newly formed Salvation Navy in August 1885 and captained by an officer of The

Salvation Army, Staff Captain Sherrington Foster. He wrote in the ship's log as they set sail, detailing their mission, *'To visit every fishing town and seaport village along the Welsh, Irish, Scotch and English coast, boarding every vessel when lying in any stead, giving bibles and good books, preaching Christ.'*

The Iole, which featured the original 'S' logo on its sails pre-dating today's iconic red shield, spent the winter of 1885/6 visiting ports in the English channel. Records reveal attempts were made to acquire a second ship but the deal appears to have fallen through and there was only ever one official craft in The Salvation Navy at any one time. As an alternative approach, Naval Brigades were established, comprising privately owned ships crewed by Salvationists, and encouraged to fly The Salvation Navy colours. On one occasion William Booth personally launched one of these Naval Brigades where a dozen boats of all shapes and sizes were seen to fly the colours. Unfortunately, despite a promising start, within a year the project experienced a major setback.

Steven Spencer added: "The whole enterprise was hit by disaster in the treacherous currents of the River Humber on 11 June 1886. The weather in early June that year is recorded as cyclonic, showery with '*thunderstorms of considerable severity'* over the North Sea. The flagship struck a sandbank just off the coast near Hull and immediately began taking in water. It quickly became clear the damage was significant, possibly caused by debris from a previous shipwreck. While the crew survived, the SS Iole sank along with the crew's possessions and all contents, including a piano used for accompanying hymns."

Following the sinking, it was seven months before Cory again came to the rescue presenting an 82ft racing yacht, The Vestal(5) for a similar purpose under Captain Abbot Taylor and crew. Unfortunately, a further collision signalled the end of the project. The Salvation Navy disappears from record after 1890 as Booth concentrated on a rapidly growing mission on land.

The Salvation Army is marking 150 years of mission in Wales this year with 150 days of prayer on X / Twitter, posting one story @TSA_Wales every day until an event at The Senedd to mark the

anniversary in November 2024. There will also be a presence at festivals such as the Royal Welsh Show and the National Eisteddfod. More information on the story of the Salvation Navy can be found at: **The Salvation Army International Heritage Centre**.

Prayer for September 2024

Lord, here we are in September – a beautiful month at the end of the summer, but before the autumn has taken hold. A month of excitement and new starts for many, a month when courage is needed for our children and young people.

And Lord we pray for courage, compassion and integrity for our new Prime Minister and our new government. We pray for justice and peace in our country and in the world.

Help us Lord, to know that you are Lord of September; you are Lord and giver of every new month, every new day, every new minute. Help us to put our trust in you for our adventures and for our mundane everyday routines.

You are our generous, loving Father and promise that you will never leave us or forsake us when we trust in you, through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

By Daphne Kitching



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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

September Church Activities

Together in Faith Group

Monday 2nd & 16th September at 7.30pm
Meet in the Boucher Room, Parochial Hall at St Patrick's Church.
Studying 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 25th September **at 11am in the Boucher Room.**
New members welcome. We start with refreshments and fellowship .

Also

Every Week the following

Circus Skills Class

Tuesdays @ 10.30am - Parochial Hall

Indoor Bowling Club

Starts September - Tuesdays from 7pm -Parochial Hall

New people always welcome to join in

Parish Announcements

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

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Counters for September

1st Sept David Robinson 8th Sept Brian Joyce

15th Sept Scotty Heyes 22nd Sept Valerie Kincaid

29th Sept Trevor Peoples

Sunday Refreshments Rota

1st Sept Priscilla 8th Sept Messy Church

15th Sept Judith de Fleury 22nd Sept Paddy Rodgers

29th Sept Heather Craig

Refreshments coordinator Priscilla Carlisle

Tel 07787561517

Game On Meeting in September

Meeting in the Library on Wednesday

11th & 25th Sept 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 19th September 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.

Youth Fellowship Sunday Brunch will meet on Sunday 1 September and Sunday 6 October in St Patrick's. We join everyone else in the church for the start of morning service at 10.30am before moving into the hall for some Bible study, games, craic and brunch. Anyone of secondary school age or young adult under 25 is welcome to join us.

If you want to find out more, please come along or contact Stephen Martin (stepheneddu@gmail.com).



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Dear Reader

As we move into Autumn it's time for us to get back into the routines of church life once again, with clubs starting up this month and plans in place for various special services between now and Christmas, for you to invite friends and family to.

St Patrick's Church has also had some work done over the summer to deal with flaky paint and plaster. I think you will agree a good job has been done especially inside the church.

We are especially grateful to members of our congregation who help to keep our two churches well maintained and tidy inside and out. We are also greatly blessed to have two beautiful church buildings that help us to worship together, share fellowship and have fun.

Stay well and God Bless.

WHO'S WHO IN THE PARISH

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Mobile: 07719 619286

Facebook: St Patrick's & St Johns Whitehead & Islandmagee
Twitter: @Whitehead_CoI
Email: churchofirelandwhitehead@gmail.com
Website: **www.whitehead-islandmagee-parish.co.uk**

CHURCHWARDENS

	St. Patrick's	**St. John's**
Rector's:	Colin De Fleury	John Hall
People's:	Mabel Allen	Pauline Riddle

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;
Janet Peoples Alan Hayward ;
Priscilla Carlisle; Jo Pawson William Rafferty
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

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Registered with NI Charity Commission NIC102649