CHURCH MATTERS

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

Here everyone matters

March 2026

CHURCH OF IRELAND

ST. PATRICK'S & ST. JOHN'S

UNITED PARISH OF WHITEHEAD & ISLANDMAGEE



Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: (Matthew 6:28-29).

March Services & Readings

Each Wednesday there is a service in St Patrick's Church at 11:30 a.m.
You are all welcome to come and join in prayer for 30 minutes.

Sunday 1st March - 2nd Sunday of Lent
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m. & 12 noon Holy Communion Two
Epistle Reading Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; Gospel Reading John 3:1-17
Reader for the Epistle - Corrine Logan / Alan Hayward
7:00 p.m. Compline
Weekday Readings: Genesis 44 - 46; Psalms 21-30; Hebrews 1:1 - 4:13

Sunday 8th March - 3rd Sunday of Lent
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m. MESSY CHURCH
10:30 a.m.& 12 noon Morning Prayer Two
Sunday Readings: Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 95; John 4:5-42
Reader for first Lesson - Heather Cupples / Sara Henderson
7:00 p.m. Compline
Weekday Readings: Genesis 47-50; Psalms 31-40; Hebrews 4:14 - 8:13

Sunday 15th March - 4th Sunday in Lent (Mothering Sunday)
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m.& 12 noon Morning Prayer Two
Sunday Readings: Exodus 2:1-10, Psalm 127:1-4; Luke 2:33-35
Reader for first Lesson - Sheila Mason / Joy Kerr
7:00 p.m. Compline
Weekday Readings: Exodus 1 - 7; Psalms 41-50; Hebrews 9:1-11:16

Sunday 22nd March - 5th Sunday in Lent (Passion Sunday
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m.& 12 noon Morning Prayer Two
Sunday Readings: Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm 130; John 11:1-45
Reader for first Lesson - Jane Robinson / Jim Reid
7:00 p.m. Compline
Weekday Readings: Exodus 8-11; Psalms 51-60; Hebrews 11:17-13:25

Sunday 29th March - 6th Sunday in Lent - Palm Sunday

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One

10:30 a.m.& 12 noon Morning Prayer fro Palm Sunday

Sunday Readings: Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16;Matthew 21:1-11

Reader for first Lesson - Judith Defleury / Maureen Reid

3: 00 p.m. Palm Sunday Prayer Walk in Whitehead with members of the other Churches in Whitehead praying for our whole community as we prepare for Holy Week and Easter

7:00 p.m. Compline

Weekday Readings: See below

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 John's story of Jesus last days - to be found in the Gospel According to St John chapters 12-13; and on Good Friday chapters 18-19

Monday 30th March Irish Vigils

John 12:1-11 - Jesus Anointed at Bethany

Tuesday 31st March Compline

John 12:20-36 - Jesus Predicts His Death

Wednesday 1st April The Litany

John 13:21-32 - Jesus Predicts his Betrayal

Thursday 2nd April Holy Communion

John 13:1-17, 31b-35 -Jesus Washes the Disciples Feet and Gives a New Commandment

Friday 3rd April The Three Hours - 12noon to 3:00 p.m.

John 18:1-11 - Jesus Arrested

John 18:12-18 - Jesus Taken to Annas, Peter's First Denial,

John 18:19-27 - The High Priest Questions Jesus , Peter's Second and Third Denial

John 18:28-40 - Jesus before Pilate,

John 19:1-16 - Jesus Sentenced to be Crucified by Pilate,

John 19:17 - 27 - Jesus Crucified,

John 19:28-37 - The Death of Jesus

Friday 3rd April - Late Evening Office

John 19:38-42 - Jesus Burial

Sunday 5th April - EASTER DAY (1st Sunday of Easter)

6:30 a.m. Dawn Service in the lower Car Park, Old Castle Road
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m. & 12 noon Holy Communion Two
Sunday Readings - Epistle Acts 10:34-43; Gospel John 12::1-8
Reader for the Epistle - Colin de Fleury / Ann Thompson
No Evening Service on Easter Sunday evening
Weekday Readings: Exodus 12 - 14; Psalms 60 - 70; 1 Corinthians 15

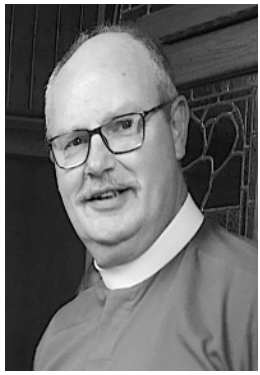
Sunday 12th April - 2nd Sunday of Easter

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m.& 12 noon Morning Prayer Two
Sunday Readings: Acts 2:14a, 22-32; Psalm 16; John 20:19-31
Reader for first Lesson - Jack McKinney / Joy Kerr
7:00 p.m. Compline
Weekday Readings: Exodus 15 - 18; Psalms 71 - 80; Colossians 1 - 4

Messy Church

8th March, Starting at 10:30 a.m.
St Patrick's Parochial Hall
Edward Road., Whitehead.
Come and join us for fun, games, crafts, singing and food as we discover what the Bible says to us.
If you have not been before and want to know more contact Rev Mark Taylor: Email mark205@btinternet.com or TEXT Mobile: 07719 619286

A message from our Rector



Lent has begun, we know this because we have already had two weeks of Lenten Lunches and we are saying the Collect for Lent at all of our services in church, after the Collect of the Day.

Traditionally the Collect for Lent, which is the Collect of Ash Wednesday, was to be said every day during Lent - and some of us still do. It is a beautiful prayer that reminds us of the true purpose of Lent and, if prayed every day, or as frequently as we can manage, can strengthen us for living a Christian life - not just for Lent.

Almighty and everlasting God,
you hate nothing that you have made
and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent:
Create and make in us new and contrite hearts
that we, worthily lamenting our sins
and acknowledging our wretchedness,
may receive from you, the God of all mercy,
perfect remission and forgiveness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The reminder that God does not hate us, even though we are sinners, and that he does forgive the sins of all who are penitent I find hugely comforting. While, during Lent, I consider my sins and faults to be daily reminded of God's forgiveness and love is fantastic and uplifting.

We then ask God for his help. That he will "create and make in us new and contrite hearts". We are not alone in this. This is not something that we have to do for ourselves, by ourselves. God is active in helping us, strengthening us and guiding us forwards.

We have recognised that we are sinners. Now we recognise that we should be sorry for our sins, and that we

recognise how unworthy we are of God's love and care. But yet we, in the same breath, give thanks for God's great mercy and that he is willing to give us perfect remission and forgiveness.

This simple collect is a wonderful reminder of what Lent, and our faith in Jesus Christ, is about. Lent is not just about temptation and our sins, it is about about the remission of those sins and the forgiveness that comes from Jesus Christ through his death and resurrection.

In a large part this is why there is a link between Lent and Easter, the beginning and end of Jesus earthly ministry. After his baptism Jesus was led into the wilderness to be tempted. After this time of temptation he began his ministry of preaching, teaching, healing and showing people the truth about the Kingdom of God. At the very end of his ministry he was arrested, tried, crucified and rose from the dead.

In Lent we focus on the temptations of Jesus as we look at our own temptations. We recognise the ministry of Jesus as we look at his teaching as we progress through Lent. At the end of Lent we look at Jesus death and resurrection - the act through which we receive forgiveness and the remission of our sins. Though Jesus temptation and death are separated in time they are united, theologically, in Lent and Easter and through this wonderful collect.

I ask that you try, and if you fail try again and again, to say this Lenten Collect each and every day during the rest of Lent. Say it in the morning as you rise and prepare for a new day and seek God's help and guidance. Say it in the evening as you reflect on the day that is past and give thanks for God's presence with you through the day. Say it in the middle of the day as you move forward with your life and the business of the day.

It does not matter when, or where, you pray this Collect; or even if you do not manage it every day. But if you try

Mark

Prayer using a Finger labyrinth

When I lived at Emmaus House Edinburgh we had a Labyrinth behind our chapel. many of our guests found it helpful and kids love to play on it. I had seen finger versions so I decided to make one out of high salt dough and I spent hours working on it, only to open the box one day and my labyrinth was full of cracks and had started to turn a very strange colour. I was so upset.

I have copied a template for a paper version below for you to have ago with you fingers, no baking required.

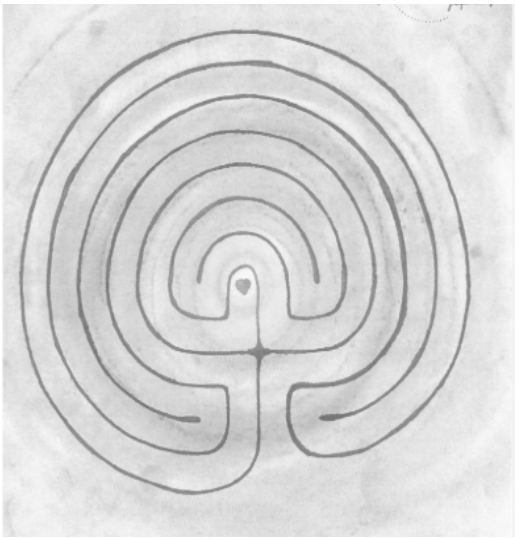
I have adapted it from walk to trace your finger

Three Key Stages of Labyrinth Prayer:

Entering (Releasing): As you trace you finger towards the centre heart, let go of concerns in life, daily worries, and distractions. This is a time to quiet the mind and surrender concerns to God.

Centre (Receiving): Upon reaching the centre, pause and rest in God's presence. This is a space for meditation, prayer, reflection, and listening for guidance. Do not rush out.

Exiting (Returning/Integrating): As you move your finger out, integrate the insights you have received. You may feel more connected to God, empowered, or filled with gratitude. Why not have ago, you never know you may enjoy it.



Finger Labyrinth - Prayer Tool

Labyrinths come in more that one design. It is not a maize, you cannot get lost so not stressful. Place your finger at the opening and move slowly between the lines towards the centre heart. Stop contemplate and then when you are ready move your finger back out.

(Being Benedictine website)

Safeguarding within our Parish

We have heard much in the media regarding the awful abuse, neglect and appallingly poor treatment of children and vulnerable adults, rendered powerless by their circumstances. Let down and cruelly abused by those entrusted with their care, or people in authority around them. A follow-up review of the Criminal Justice inspection published in Dec 2025 showed that further progress was required by the criminal justice system to protect children in Northern Ireland from abuse and to disrupt and prosecute perpetrators effectively. https://www.cjini.org/reports/child-sexual-exploitation-follow-up-review-an-assessment-of-the-criminal-justice-systems-response/

Our government has been cracking under the strain of associations and decisions in a murky world of excess power and money. In the shadows float the lost and devastated lives of young women used as 'currency'. Of no value. Not believed.

The news has highlighted the inaction and failures of those who knew, and how much went on in 'plain sight'. Many individuals and organisations have yet to truly acknowledge the lifelong pain and heartbreak they caused. In the cases of historic abuse it is often cited that times and standards were different. In truth abuse and cruelty cause the same pain whether it is 1926 or 2026.

Kindness, humanity and decency easily slip through our fingers if we do not hold them tight. We all have a responsibility to protect and care for those around us, especially children and the more vulnerable adults we encounter. We must speak up if we are concerned by anything we see or hear. Even if it 'just doesn't feel right'.

The Church of Ireland Safeguarding Board have policies, guidance and training in place to ensure Clergy and volunteers are aware of

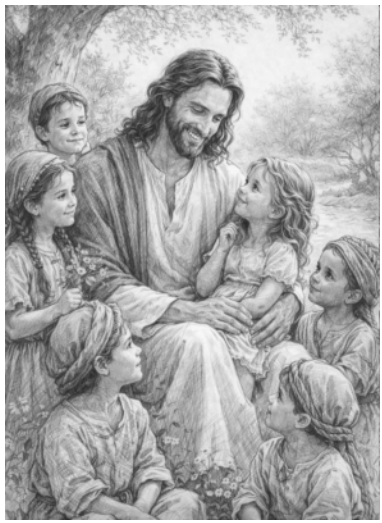
their duty of care and that the highest standards of safeguarding are maintained. For more information check out:

https://safeguarding.ireland.anglican.org/

In St .Patrick's & St John's the Rector, along with Evelyn Powers and Valerie Kincaid are your first point of contact if you have any concerns, no matter how small. We will endeavour to ensure that the principles of good practice are carried out in all aspects of Parish life, including Messy Church & Youth Fellowship.

Our church aims to be friendly, safe and welcoming and we can all play our part in that.

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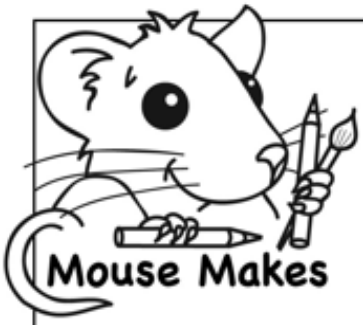


Thank you Valerie, for this important article which prompted me to look up what God says about protecting and caring for vulnerable people, particularly children and young people. Here is what I found

Proverbs 31:8 calls us to "***speak out on behalf of the voiceless, and for the rights of all who are vulnerable"***.

Mark 10:13-16 - we see Jesus valuing children. He defends them and shows them his favour. Jesus underlines this in his words in Matthew 18:5. - Jesus puts himself on the same level as the child saying "***whoever receives a child in my name, receives me.***"

In Matthew 18:6, Jesus warns those who do not care for those who are vulnerable using strong, even angry language: ***"anyone who causes these little ones to stumble, it would be better to have a millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea."***



Mouse Makes

The Bible has many stories of mothers who had great faith in God. With their love, care, encouragement and prayers their children grew up to be great people of God.





Who saved her baby by putting him in a basket in the river?
Exodus 2:1-3 and 6:20



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

Across

3. **Obed's** mother
   Matthew 1:5
4. **John's** mother
   Luke 1:57-60
7. **Reuben's** mother
   Genesis 29:32
8. **Joseph's** mother
   Genesis 30:22-24
9. **Jesus'** mother
   Acts 1:14

Down

1. **Boaz's** mother
   Matthew 1:5
2. **Solomon's** mother
   1 Kings 1:11
4. **Timothy's** mother
   2 Timothy 1:5
5. **Ishmael's** mother
   Genesis 16:15
6. **Jacob and Esau's** mother
   Genesis 25:21-26

Who had two sons called Cain and Abel?
Genesis 4:1-2



Answer the questions then put them into the crossword

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Mothering Sunday Prayer

We give thanks for the mothers who have nurtured us.

We pray for those whose Mother has died and are comforted that they are with you.

We pray for those who have not been nurtured by a loving mother. Lord be to them Father and Mother.

We Pray for Children who no longer speak to their mother, we pray that you will heal the broken hearted and bring parents and children together.

We pray for the Sons and Daughters who have become the carer for their mother, help them to do this lovingly and patiently. Support them in this challenging role.

We pray for all single women who are bringing up children alone.

We pray for mothers who have lost their child.

We pray for mothers who have children with special needs.

We Pray for mothers with young children who due to illness struggle to look after their children.

We pray for mothers who have a child who had done something terrible and are broken hearted.

We pray for Grandmothers who makes such a difference to little ones and the family.

We pray that for those who can be with their mother on mothering Sunday; that the time is precious and they are blessed by being together.

We pray for those who cannot be together and that they too can share their love in a different way or remember.

We give thanks for the Virgin Mary who said yes when God asked her to become the mother of Jesus. Without her where would we be now?

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

A service for everyone!

Friday 6 March

I will give you rest, come

Nigeria 2026

Our Lady of Lourdes Church

Victoria Avenue,

Whitehead

8pm

All welcome



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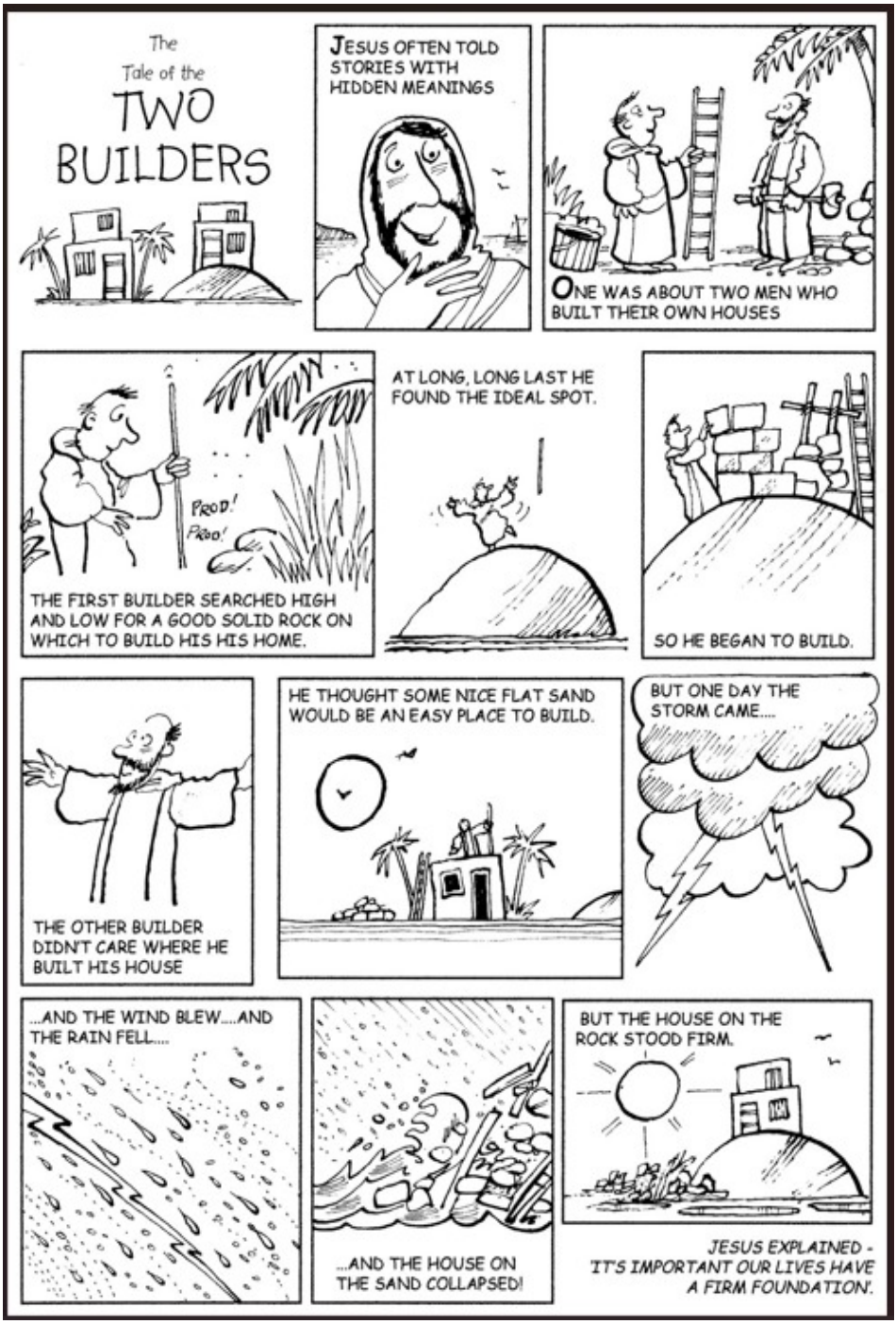


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The
Tale of the
TWO
BUILDERS
JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS
ONE WAS ABOUT TWO MEN WHO BUILT THEIR OWN HOUSES
PROD!
PROD!
THE FIRST BUILDER SEARCHED HIGH AND LOW FOR A GOOD SOLID ROCK ON WHICH TO BUILD HIS HIS HOME.
AT LONG, LONG LAST HE FOUND THE IDEAL SPOT.
SO HE BEGAN TO BUILD.
THE OTHER BUILDER DIDN'T CARE WHERE HE BUILT HIS HOUSE
HE THOUGHT SOME NICE FLAT SAND WOULD BE AN EASY PLACE TO BUILD.
BUT ONE DAY THE STORM CAME....
...AND THE WIND BLEW....AND THE RAIN FELL....
...AND THE HOUSE ON THE SAND COLLAPSED!
BUT THE HOUSE ON THE ROCK STOOD FIRM.
JESUS EXPLAINED - 'IT'S IMPORTANT OUR LIVES HAVE A FIRM FOUNDATION'.

Stories of Hope from Gaza

Children's Creativity and Healing: Young Palestinians in Gaza are using art and photography, supported by groups like Save the Children, to document their daily lives and dreams, transforming trauma into creative expression.

Education and Resilience: Despite the destruction, educators and students at Al-Aqsa University are finding ways to continue their academic work, focusing on "pedagogical resilience" as a form of resistance.

Medical Care and Community Support: Despite a collapsing health system, staff at the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) clinic in Jabalia continue to provide essential, life-saving care.

Finding Hope in Daily Survival: Stories of individuals like Aisha, who, despite multiple displacements, holds onto the hope of reuniting with her family and seeing peace, highlight the enduring human spirit.

Hope for the Future: Projects such as "Jiddo's Treasure Chambers" and the Big Hope Fund in 2026 are focused on bringing narratives of hope, joy, and rebuilding to children in Gaza. (Amos Trust)

These stories highlight that even in the darkest circumstances, the pursuit of education, art, and connection remains a powerful force for hope.

We give thanks to God for all those who work for peace and relief of suffering in Gaza.



Dear God help them.

Lord Hear us

Lord Graciously hear us.

Sudoku

Pencil and rubber to hand, your favourite cuppa or a nice glass of wine and few nibbles.

Little more challenging to get those brain cells working.

Answers page 37

2					3	4	1	
	1		8					5
		6		9				
5							6	
	2	4		7		8	3	
	6							2
				8		6		
6					4		2	
	4	1	9					8

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Brasso Club

Keeping our brasses in tip top shape on

This small, merry band meets on the third Thursday of each month at 10 am, usually for an hour or so. New folks are welcome to join the chat and the cleaning. We aim to keep the shiny things in Church bright and beautiful!

Enter at the front of the Church by the smaller door on the right-hand side. Cleaning supplies are provided but if you can, bring rubber gloves, cloths, and an old toothbrush for little corners

Next date: Thursday 19th March

Thank you for all you do.

Together in Faith Group

This group has been meeting every two weeks to study the Bible and share our lived experiences. The attendance is fairly strong and everyone joins in with the discussion each time we meet. Currently we are studying Romans, quite a demanding book! One of the most amazing positives about this group is that through time together, we become enthusiastic about Bible study! We find out how beneficial it is to spent time in study and sharing what we feel about the passage we are reading.

We always feel that we have learned something new. We really do experience the guidance of the Holy Spirit. For me, being able to tease out what verses in the Bible mean, helps me to retain and strengthen my faith. Our individual stories also help us to see examples of that faith in action.

I would really like to recommend you join us! Our next meeting is At each meeting we set the date for the next so we are not strictly meeting on the 1st and 3rd weeks of the month (This is due to my grandparent duties!!).

Sandra Thompson



Hebrews 10:24-25

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another"

A Simple Prayer for our Rector and his Team



In the hectic month of March, in both churches, Lord we pray that you will sustain our Rector Mark and his family so they stay strong and well.

As we move through Lent we pray for all who are working together to supply Lenten Lunches in the Hall and the community. Help us to be willing volunteers in ways that make a difference through Lent, coming up to and through Holy Week. We give thanks for the words from the pulpit, the fellowship within our congregation, the various groups that enable us to have fun and grow as Christians.

We particularly give thanks for Sandra our Treasurer and pray for her as she completes 'the books' at the end of the financial year. Help us to find someone to take on the role of treasurer and bless her for all she has done over the years.

Help us to be respectful and supportive of the Rector and others with key church roles. Keep us mindful of their needs and each other.

In your mercy hear our prayer Amen.

****

My Favourite Quote of the month from Parish Pump

(Philip Pare,1910-1992. An Anglican priest & chaplain in World war II)

"Very often, when people first turn towards God and realise that God loves them and that everything about them matters to Him, a wave of joyful emotion overwhelms them. But actual faith is mostly the realisation that, even though we don't in the least deserve it, God believes in us and finds us lovable. This is astonishing."

Bringing love with cigarettes and the Bible - Woodbine Willy

The Church of England remembers this 'saint' from the 1st World War – the Revd Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy MC, or 'Woodbine Willie', as everyone knew this much-loved army chaplain on the Western Front.

Studdert Kennedy (27th June 1883 – 8th March 1929), born in Leeds, the seventh of nine children. After reading divinity and classics at Trinity College Dublin, he'd studied for ordination at Ripon Clergy College, and served his curacy at Rugby.

By the time war broke out in 1914, Studdert Kennedy was vicar of St Paul's Worcester. He volunteered to go to the Western Front as a chaplain. Life on the front line in the trenches was a desperate affair, but soon Studdert Kennedy had hit on a way of bringing a few moments of relief to the stressed-out soldiers: as well as good cheer he gave out copious amounts of 'Woodbines', the most popular cheap cigarette of the time.

One colleague remembers: "he'd come down into the trenches and say prayers with the men, have a cuppa out of a dirty tin mug and tell a joke as good as any of us. He was a chain smoker and always carried a packet of Woodbine cigarettes that he would give out in handfuls to us lads. That's how he got his nickname. He came down the trench one day to cheer us up. Had his Bible with him as usual. Well, I'd been there for weeks, unable to write home, of course, we were going over the top later that day. I asked him if he would write to my sweetheart at home, tell her I was still alive and, so far, in one piece… years later, after the war, she showed me the letter he'd sent, very nice it was. A lovely letter. My wife kept it until she died."

Kennedy was awarded the military cross in 1917, after running into no man's land in order to help the wounded during an attack on the German frontline. Soon after the war, he turned to Christian socialism and pacifism. He went on to work for the Industrial Christian Fellowship, where he was working when he died at only 46.

He once described his chaplain's ministry as taking "a box of fags in your haversack, and a great deal of love in your heart." (Parish Pump)

CHURCH OF IRELAND

ST. PATRICK'S & ST. JOHN'S

UNITED PARISH OF WHITEHEAD & ISLANDMAGEE

LENTEN LUNCHES

All welcome to join us for a weekly community meal

Every Wednesday 12-2pm from 18th February to 1st April 2026

In St Patrick's Parochial Hall

Edward Road, Whitehead

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Contact Co-ordinator Priscilla Carlisle to find out what help is needed with setting up, catering, serving.

Tel 07787561517

Making Lenten Lunches happen - Thank you

As our Lenten Lunches continue, I would like to pass on our thanks to all who support this annual event. There are too many of you to mention individually but I acknowledge those -

- Who create and post fliers,
- Who set up the hall
- Who go the Cash and Carry for provisions
- Who donate ham, cheese, tomatoes, mayonnaise to fill the rolls.
- Who make bread, deserts and supply gallons of custard
- Who produce gallons of homemade delicious soup,
- Who serve, clear tables, wash and dry dishes.
- Who welcome and guide our visitors in the hall, take the money.
- Who co-ordinate the carry out service from taking orders to getting the food delivered.
- Who tidy up throughout the day and clear the hall at the end
- Who work behind the scenes making sure it happens
- Who come and enjoy their delicious lunch

All this works because you give the time, money and work so well together, not just once but seven times. It is hard work but well worth the difference it makes to us, the community and charities we support.

Thank you

Priscilla

Catering facilitator






Letter from St James the Least of All

Happily, the Church of England still retains some singular parish clergy. Take the parish of St James-the-Least-of-All, for example. Here the elderly Anglo-Catholic vicar, Eustace, continues his correspondence to Darren, his nephew, a low-church curate recently ordained… by the Revd Gary Bowness.



The Rectory
St James the Least of All
On how to run a church council meeting
My dear Nephew Darren

Clearly, the sight of your vicar running out of the room halfway through your last church council meeting, saying he should have stayed as a traffic warden, where he was universally liked, has unnerved you. It would have unnerved me too, since a universally popular traffic warden is an exceptional creature.

But perhaps it is necessary to give you some advice for the day when you do have to chair your first church council meeting.

1. Consider every agenda issue carefully beforehand and decide what you would like to do. Then, at the meeting, consult widely, listen to every opinion, weigh all the arguments, and then do precisely what you had decided before the meeting ever took place.

2. Never, ever, let council members discuss hymns, which avoids getting blood on the carpets.

3. Arrange the seating in rows, all facing the front, so that everyone must respond directly to you. The last thing you want is for council members to be able to discuss matters freely with one another.

4. Start smoking a pipe. At those times when you are faced with an issue when you really are unsure of how to respond, taking out your pipe, dismantling it, searching for a pipe cleaner, squinting down the stem to see if it is clean, mopping out the goo in the bowl, searching for your tobacco pouch, filling the pipe, tamping it down, asking if you can borrow matches and attempting to light it several times over, will give you more than sufficient time to formulate a reply. Once you have perfected the routine, the silence will have been so protracted, that most of the committee will have long forgotten what the question was anyway.

5. If someone is talking too long, consult your diary, noisily and obsessively, about next month's appointments, or write a note to a committee member who is at the back of the room and get it passed to him. The speaker should soon get the message.

These are the simpler techniques of committee management. The advanced procedures must wait until you are strong enough to bear them.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace
****



A Bucket of Tadpoles: Springtime, Curiosity, and the Theology of Science

When I was nearly three, I knocked a bucket of tadpoles all over the patio. Those unfortunate creatures must have been collected to educate my brother and I on where frogs came from, but a toddler can't just stand by and watch. Can I see up close? Or maybe I was 'helpfully' moving it to another place. I just remember doing something I shouldn't have done, and tadpoles on the ground. I was sad that I wouldn't get to see those creatures grow up.

I might have been great at destroying things when I was a child (my family would probably say I still am), but I absolutely love watching living things up close. The more I learn, the more my sense of wonder grows. For a tadpole to become a frog, large sections of its gut, salivary glands and muscles must die, as well as the gills. The cells in those tissues are programmed to curl up and disintegrate, and are then swallowed up by a specialised kind of white blood cell. Legs grow from small sacs of cells on the tadpole's body, and one of my textbooks says that 'The nervous system is also remodelled' - which I suspect is a bit of an understatement.

This knowledge removes a little of the mystery of how a tadpole turns into a frog, but there is plenty more to discover. These few details also reveal the cleverness of the process. Metamorphosis is surprisingly common in the animal kingdom. How is that an efficient way to grow up, or is efficiency not the most important thing for an animal?

Scientists are essentially grown-ups who are still very much in touch with their inner two-year-old. They refuse to stop asking questions, even when finding an answer becomes decidedly more awkward than opening a textbook.

Many scientists are people of faith, and this also drives their questioning. They believe that God created a world that was very good, that the purpose of all Creation is to praise Him, that we are made in God's image, and that we are tasked with looking after Creation. So Christians, of all people, should be enjoying and investigating our surroundings. These are the bones of a theology of science which serves some of us very well, and keeps us looking into things like buckets of frogs – that is, until a two-year-old comes and knocks them over.

This series God in Science is written by Dr Ruth M. Bancewicz, who is Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge. Ruth writes on the positive relationship between Science and Christian faith. (Parish Pump).

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The Love that gives love

By *Hildegard of Bingen 1098 – 1179*

Jesus Christ, the love that gives love,
You are higher than the highest star;
You are deeper than the deepest sea;
You cherish us as Your own family;
You embrace us as Your own spouse;
You rule over us as Your own subjects;
You welcome us as Your dearest friend.
Let all the world worship You.

Delicious Leek and bacon Bread and butter pudding



Quick alternative to Quiche, French toast style texture

Ingredients

- Butter for greasing pie dish and buttering bread.
- 8 thick slices buttered Bread or a baguette cut into triangles
- 150 gms cooked crispy bacon pieces or bacon Lardons.
- 1 Leek or onion sauteed lightly in butter or bunch of scallions chopped which does not need to be pre cooked.
- 300 gms gruyère or mature cheddar cheese grated
- 5 large eggs beaten,
- 800 mls full cream milk (or use 400 mls milk, 400 mls cream)
- Add tablespoon of mild mustard (optional)
- Salt and pepper

Method

Grease the bottom of a deep 20 x 30 cm baking dish generously with butter. Line the bottom of the dish with half of the buttered bread Sprinkle generously with half the sauteed leeks, bacon and a third of the grated cheese.

Place remainder of buttered bread on top and sprinkle over the remaining bacon, and leek.

Beat together the eggs, milk, mustard, salt and pepper and third of grated cheese and pour over to soak **all** of the bread. Sprinkle generously with remainder of grated cheese. Cover and chill in fridge for at least 2 hrs or overnight.

Heat oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Bake for 40-45 mins until the top is crisp and golden and the egg mixture is cooked through. If the top browns a little too quickly, cover with foil for the remainder of the cooking time. Serve hot for breakfast, lunch or dinner. Yum

Serve immediately.

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Thanks Audrey for sharing joyful photographs of your new born lambs with us. I love these - in the first mum is watching over her beautiful lambs, then she turns and looks straight at you Audrey the shepherd. Wonder what she is thinking. Reminds me of our Good Shepherd looking after us, his sheep.

We commit all shepherds and their flock to you Lord especially in lambing season. Praying for better weather for you all.



Need your Help and an apology from Janet

I have become aware that some of you had good content for the magazine that never got published. I was not in church so it was given to someone else in paper format to pass on to me, but I did not get it. I was so glad when someone asked me if what they sent was not ok. However I had not received the piece. So to prevent this happening again if I am not at church, please leave content in the yellow folder on table at the back of the church (For Church Magazine) include your name. When I am back I will pick it up. Remember you can also WhatsApp or email me content. Keep sending your contributions in, it is invaluable, thank you. I sincerely apologise.



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Facts you may, or may not, know about St Patrick



St Patrick wasn't Irish - He was born in Britain, probably in Wales or Scotland, around the year AD 385.

He was kidnapped as a teenager - At 16 years old, Irish raiders captured him and took him to Ireland as a slave.

He worked as a shepherd - While enslaved, Patrick spent many lonely hours looking after sheep. During this time, he began to pray and grow in faith.

He escaped after six years - Patrick believed God told him in a dream how to escape. He walked nearly 200 miles to the coast and found a ship home.

He went back to Ireland on purpose -After training as a priest, Patrick returned to Ireland because he felt God calling him to share the Christian faith there.

He used a shamrock to teach - Legend says he used the three leaves of a shamrock to explain the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The snake story is probably a legend - Ireland never had snakes after the Ice Age! The story likely represents Patrick driving out pagan beliefs rather than real snakes.

Blue was the original St Patrick's colour- Green became popular later because of Ireland's nickname, "The Emerald Isle."

He wrote a book - St Patrick wrote a short work called *Confessio*, where he described his life and faith. It still exists today.

He was never formally made a saint by the church. He became known as a saint because people honoured him for his holy life and work.

St Patrick's Day marks his death - He is believed to have died on 17th March, around AD 461.

He is the Patron Saint of Ireland - And one of the most famous Christian missionaries in history.

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We would love to see you.
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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

Parish Announcements

The Select Vestry

meets on Wednesday, 11th March at 7pm
in Boucher room, St Patrick's church
Date may change due to vestry member availability

Counters Rota March 2026

2nd March	Colin de Fleury
9th March	Scotty Heyes
16th March	Trevor Peoples
23rd March	Sandra Thompson
30th March	Valerie Kincaid

Refreshments Rota March 2026

1st March	Heather & John Craig
8th March	Messy Church
15th March	Janet Matthews
22nd March	Judith de Fleury
29th March	Alison Higginson

Refreshments coordinator Priscilla Carlisle - Tel 07787561517

Wednesday Morning Fellowship

Second Wednesday in the month

Next meeting 11th March at Valerie's house.
We start with refreshments and fellowship from 10.45 am.
Followed by discussion led by the Rector
New Members Welcome

Church Activities in March

Together in Faith Group

1st and 3rd Mondays in the month at 7.30 pm
Dates may vary and at each meeting the next meeting date is agreed
Meet in the Boucher Room, Parochial Hall
St Patrick's Church.
For more information see article, page 19

Book Club

The last Wednesday of the month 7.30 pm
(Contact Paddy Rodgers tel 07720 404071)

Game On Meeting

Meeting in the Library usually second and fourth Wednesday
11th and 25th March at 1.30 pm
Some members play Mexican Train, others Backgammon.
New participants always welcome.
Come and join us for tea and biscuits, even if you don't want to

Circus Skills Class

Come along and try some light exercise and may be learn a few manual dexterity skills on Tuesdays 10.30 am - 12 noon - every week
Parochial Hall
St Patricks Church

Indoor Bowling Club

Tuesdays from 7pm every week - Parochial Hall
St Patricks Church

New people always welcome to join in all the groups

Youth Fellowship Sunday Brunch

1st March and 5th April for Easter celebration

Anyone of secondary school age (or young adult under 25) is welcome to join us. We'd love to see some new members.

We take part in the first few minutes of the service in St Patrick's at 10.30 before moving into the hall for Bible study, prayer, games and fun.

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



2	9	8	7	5	3	4	1	6
3	1	7	8	4	6	2	9	5
4	5	6	2	9	1	7	8	3
5	7	9	3	2	8	1	6	4
1	2	4	6	7	5	8	3	9
8	6	3	4	1	9	5	7	2
9	3	2	5	8	7	6	4	1
6	8	5	1	3	4	9	2	7
7	4	1	9	6	2	3	5	8

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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	Alan Hayward
People's:	Mabel Allen	John Hall

GLEBEWARDENS

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SELECT VESTRY (includes Churchwardens & Glebewardens)

Geradine Scott-Heyes Hon Secretary 07702431610
Sandra Thompson - Hon Treasurer 07912478331
Ann Mulholland; Bill Pollock;
Priscilla Carlisle; Pauline Riddle; Paul Heyes;
Janet Matthews; David Young; Terry Waugh;
Inez Moore Austin Jenkins - Graveyard Manager St John's

Youth Fellowship Leader

Stephen Martin - stepheneddu@gmail.com

Messy Church

Contact the Rector

Safeguarding Trust Evelyn Powers 9337 2535 Valerie Kincaid 07909 545651

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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If I am not in church leave in Church magazine folder at the back of the church..

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



Blessings to all as our days lengthen and hopefully we get less rain. The signs of spring are lifting our spirits when we get the chance of even a short walk or a drive near the sea.

Many of you have been hit by the flu or covid and may be struggling to fully recover. I often feel guilty when I take to my bed for a duvet day when not feeling well. So I wanted to find out what God has to say about me tucked up under my duvet, with me wee Dog Rosie tucked in at my back. Will he appease my guilt?

Well while this is not necessarily about me it applies loosely -

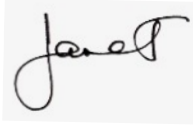
Key promises include that God sustains individuals on their sickbed (Psalm 41:3), cures diseases (Psalm 103:2-3), and brings health to the brokenhearted (Psalm 147:3), encouraging believers to seek Him for healing and comfort.

Scriptures declares that God promises, "I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds" (Jeremiah 30:17). During illness, God offers to sustain us on our sickbed and strengthen the weary (Psalm 41:3, Isaiah 40:29-31).

When we are sick we often feel miserable, but as well as physical recovery, God heals broken hearts, forgives sins, and provides peace that surpasses understanding, (Psalm 103:2-3, 147:3) we all need that.

I struggle with knowing that God has the power to heal, but does not heal all. While the Bible acknowledges that suffering can have purpose, and that not all healing occurs immediately or in this lifetime. I do know from my nursing career that this can be little consolation to some. Yet for others I have seen God's grace being given to those who need it right at the point of need, enabling them to cope.

So I particularly extend love, prayers for comfort, healing and blessings to those of you overcoming the cold, covid or flu, or living with chronic or more serious illness. May the longer brighter days bring us all hope .



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Let us thank God each day for those who struggle to improve their lives, especially those who fight against addiction to alcohol or drugs.
Let us pray for those of their family and friends who have been affected by their addiction.

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Do you have a problem with drugs and Alcohol?

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Cocaine Anonymous meeting

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