CHURCH MATTERS

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

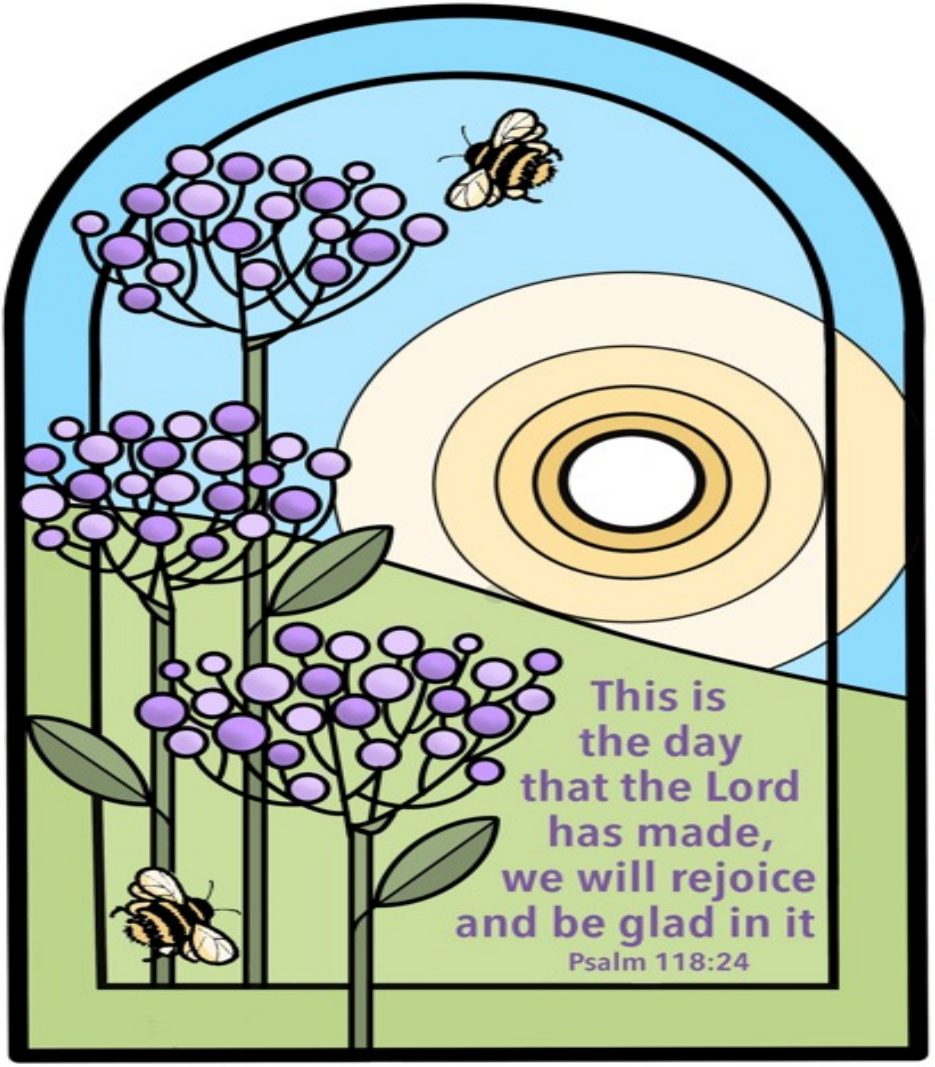
Here everyone matters

July & August 2026

CHURCH OF IRELAND

ST. PATRICK'S & ST. JOHN'S

UNITED PARISH OF WHITEHEAD & ISLANDMAGEE



Summer 2026
Services & Readings
JULY

In July the main morning service will be a united service held in St Patrick's at 11:00 a.m.

There will be no evening service or Wednesday morning service in July.

Sunday 5th July - Trinity 5

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
11:00 a.m. Holy Communion Two
Sunday Readings - Romans 7:15-25a; Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30
Readers for first Lesson - Trevor Peoples
Weekday Readings: 1 Samuel 1:1 - 4:22; Psalms 41 - 50; Luke 19:28 - 20:40

Sunday 12th July - Trinity 6

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer Two
Sunday Readings - Romans 8:1-11; Matthew 13:1-9,18-23
Reader for first Lesson - Corrine Logan
Weekday Readings:1 Samuel 5:1 - 10:1; Psalms 51 - 60; Luke 20:41 - 22:23

Sunday 19st July - Trinity 7

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer Two
Sunday Readings - Genesis 28:10 - 19a; Psalm 139:1-11, 23-24; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
Reader for first Lesson - Sheila Mason
Weekday Readings: 1 Samuel 10:1 - 14:23; Psalms 61-70; Luke 22:24 -23:12

Sunday 26th July - Trinity 8

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer Two
Sunday Readings - Genesis 29:15-28; Psalm 128; Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52
Reader for first Lesson - Geraldine Scott-Heyes
Weekday Readings: 1 Samuel 14:24-18:16; Psalms 71-80; Luke 23:13-24:53

Summer 2025 Services & Readings
AUGUST

In August the main morning service will be a united service held in St John's at 11:00 a.m.

There will be an 8:30 a.m. Holy Communion Service in St Patrick's

There will be no evening service or Wednesday morning service in August.

Sunday 2nd August- Trinity 9

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
11:00 a.m. Holy Communion Two
Sunday Epistle - Romans 9:1-5; Gospel - Matthew 14:13-21
Readers for first Lesson - Sara Henderson
Weekday Readings: 1 Samuel 19:1-23:29; Psalms 81 - 90; Acts 1:1- 3:10

Sunday 9th August - Trinity 10

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer Two
3:30 p.m. Pet Service in St Patrick's
Sunday Readings: Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28; Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b; Matthew 14:22-33
Readers for first Lesson - Joy Kerr
Weekday Readings: 1 Samuel 24 - 31; Psalms 91-100; Acts 3:11 - 5:42

Sunday 16th August - Trinity 11

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer Two
Sunday Readings - Genesis 45:1-15; Psalm 133; Matthew 15:10-28
Readers for first Lesson - Maureen Reid
Weekday Readings: 2 Samuel 1 - 9; Psalms 101 - 110; Acts 6:1 - 8:25

Sunday 23rd August - Trinity 12

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer Two
Sunday Readings - Exodus 1:8 - 2:10; Psalm124; Matthew 16:13-20
Readers for first Lesson - Jim Reid
Weekday Readings: 2 Samuel 10 - 17; Psalms 111-120; Acts 8:25 - 10:33

Sunday 30th August - Trinity 13
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
11:00 a.m. Morning Prayer Two
Sunday Readings - Exodus 3:1-15; Psalm 115; Matthew 16:21-28
Readers for first Lesson - Alan Hayward
Weekday Readings - 2 Samuel 18 - 24; Psalms 121 - 130; Acts 10:34-13:12

SEPTEMBER

Sunday and Wednesday services return to our normal pattern.

Sunday 6th September - Trinity 14
8:30 a.m. Holy Communion One
10:30 a.m. Holy Communion Two
12 noon Holy Communion Two
Epistle - Romans 13:8-14; Gospel - Matthew 18:15-20
Readers for first Lesson - Jane Robinson / Ann Thompson
7:00 p.m. Compline
Weekday Readings - 1 Kings 1 - 8; Psalms 131 - 140; Acts 13:13 - 16:5

Messy Church

Next Messy Church will be on 13th September,
starting at 10:30 a.m. in 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.
Kids Praise and Prayers - Sunday 11th October
(More details on 13th September)
Please pray for our new season of Messy Church, for those who lead, those who prepare and set up for the activities, crafts and games and all who come to take part.
Pray that we may continue to reach out to children and their families and welcome them in to share with us.

A message from our Rector



The summer is upon us once again. We are all, quietly, praying and hoping for warm days, plenty of sunshine and rain only at night (when we have gone to bed). It is the same hope we have every year, and we are often disappointed. But yet we still, generally, enjoy the summer.

What is it about the summer that we enjoy the most? The sunshine and warmth of good weather? The time we spend with others? The time we may get to rest and relax? The ability to refresh ourselves and recover from the "winter"?

For me it is mixture of all of them all. We all need time to rest and renew ourselves, and for most people this is best done when the weather is warm and pleasant and we are feeling more relaxed and happier to start with.

Our need to rest and relax is not a selfish thing, it is enshrined in Holy Scripture and God's commandments to us. In Genesis 2:2&3 God rested after the work of creation; in Exodus 20:8-11 God reminds us of the need to rest from our work and makes it a commandment, to make the day holy. For the Jews the Sabbath is a Saturday, a day of rest and there are a lot of other laws attached to keeping the Sabbath. For Christians, we keep our Sabbath on the first day of the week as we remember the resurrection; and many of us can remember the Sunday restrictions of old, all shops and parks and social areas closed for the day. Muslims keep their Sabbath on a Friday (although it is not strictly a day of rest but of worship and reflection). Even Buddhists, who don't have a Sabbath, encourage their followers to take a periodic day of rest and reflection.

Take time, not just over the summer, to rest and refresh yourself - it is good for the soul as well as the body. All too often, in this busy world, we just keep on going and doing things every day, because they need to be done. There is a wonderful story of two men cutting down trees. One worked all day, without stopping. The other stopped for ten minutes every hour, and cut down more trees. His friend asked how this could be. He told him that when he rested he also took time to resharpen his axe. Take time to rest and renew your strength, and to resharpen you axe, as we work for God in this world. Every blessing,

Mark

Messy Church and more!

We are making a bit of a change to how things will be. From September we will be having **Messy Churc**h and **Praise and Prayer** on alternate months. Both will be at 10:30 a.m. In the Parochial Hall. Messy Church will be the same as usual. Praise and Prayer will be more songs, including learning some new ones, a short Bible story (which may be interactive or have parts or roles for people to play), there may be an activity based on the Bible story and a time of prayer. The songs will be spread out through the session.

There will be refreshments after both Messy Church and Praise and Prayer and a time for parents and children to socialise with each other, and with those who come into the Hall for Fellowship after Morning Prayer.

As some of the children are getting older we will also be looking at restarting the work we did in the past with **puppets**. Teaching the children how the puppets work and seeing if there are any adults who would be interested in helping out with using puppets to tell Bible stories and teach about our faith (training will be provided).

It is an exciting time as we move forward in these ministries.

We asked, during June, if we any volunteers would be willing to help us - so that we can make plans during August for next year (September 2026 - June 2027). So far, three people have volunteered, a couple more would be useful so that it would only be for 2 or 3 times a year that people were needed.

Please contact the Rector (07719 619 286) for more information about Messy Church, Praise and Prayer or using the puppets or if you are able to help with any of these things.

Thanks God for Pets

Pets play a quiet but powerful role in our lives. They shape daily routines and create moments of balance in increasingly busy, screen-led schedules. While this is obvious at home, the connection between pets and well being is becoming more visible in the workplace too. With more than half of the world's population now owning a pet, creating pet-friendly environments across businesses and communities are no longer a 'nice to have'. They reflect how people live and work today, and what they need to benefit from the strength of the human-animal bond.

Often, this impact shows up in small, everyday moments. One pet owner's story described before getting a dog, her days blurred together. She worked late, ate in front of a screen and rarely stepped away. With a dog depending on her, that changed. Evenings gained a natural pause point. The laptop closed, she stepped outside for a walk and her phone stayed behind. What began as a responsibility became a simple well being routine, with small, reliable moments of movement and time to reset built into each day. This matters more than ever. 45% of people across 31 countries now say mental health is their biggest health concern[1], and anxiety disorders affect 301 million people globally[2]. As these pressures grow, people are instinctively reaching for the comfort, stability and routine that pets bring. An Outgo research survey of 30,000 pet owners found that most pet owners feel this intuitively - 83% say their pet has positively impacted their mental well being and 84% say their pet helps them feel relaxed during the day[3].

A study lead by Dr. Megan Mueller, Associate Professor at Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University, says, "Young people today face unprecedented levels of anxiety. Without proper coping mechanisms, social anxiety can persist through adulthood and lead to other mental health challenges. Research has shown that relationships with pets – in particular, dogs – can relieve anxiety for young people. ." Read full article at https://www.forbes.com/sites/mars/2026/03/19/the-everyday-power-of-pets/

Blessing of Pets Service

3:30 p.m.

Sunday 9th August, 2026

St Patrick's, Whitehead.

Pets are the responsibility of the owners.

The service is in the Church so that the pews can hide the animals from each other - which is handy for those who are shy.



A Poem by F.W. Harvey

When God had finished the stars and whirl of coloured suns
He turned His mind from big things to fashion little ones;
Beautiful tiny things (like daisies) He made, and then
He made the comical ones in case the minds of men
Should stiffen and become
Dull, humourless and glum,
And so forgetful of their Maker be
As to take even themselves - quite seriously.
Caterpillars and cats are lively and excellent puns:
All God's jokes are good - even the practical ones!
And as for the duck, I think God must have smiled a bit.
Seeing those bright eyes blink on the day He fashioned it.
And he's probably laughing still at the sound that came
out of its bill!
From Christian Poetry (Thanks Bill for sharing)



Frederick Harvey lived (1888 - 1957) wrote "Ducks" whilst a prisoner of war camp in Germany. His whimsical observations on the ducks were prompted when a fellow inmate had drawn a picture of ducks in a pool of water at the camp. Harvey had been captured in 1916 and spent the rest of the war in various Prisoner of War camps.

Harvey cheerfully pontificates upon the place of the duck in the great scheme of things. The duck is one of the "little" things that God decided to create after he had finished with the "big things" and he cheerfully suggests that God himself may have been amused by his own creation and the sounds that "came out of it's bill".

Frederick William Harvey became well known as a war poet during the Great War as a prisoner of war. He was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal and written for one of the first trench newspapers writing poems full of humorous insights, a longing for home and an appreciation of the camaraderie of friends.

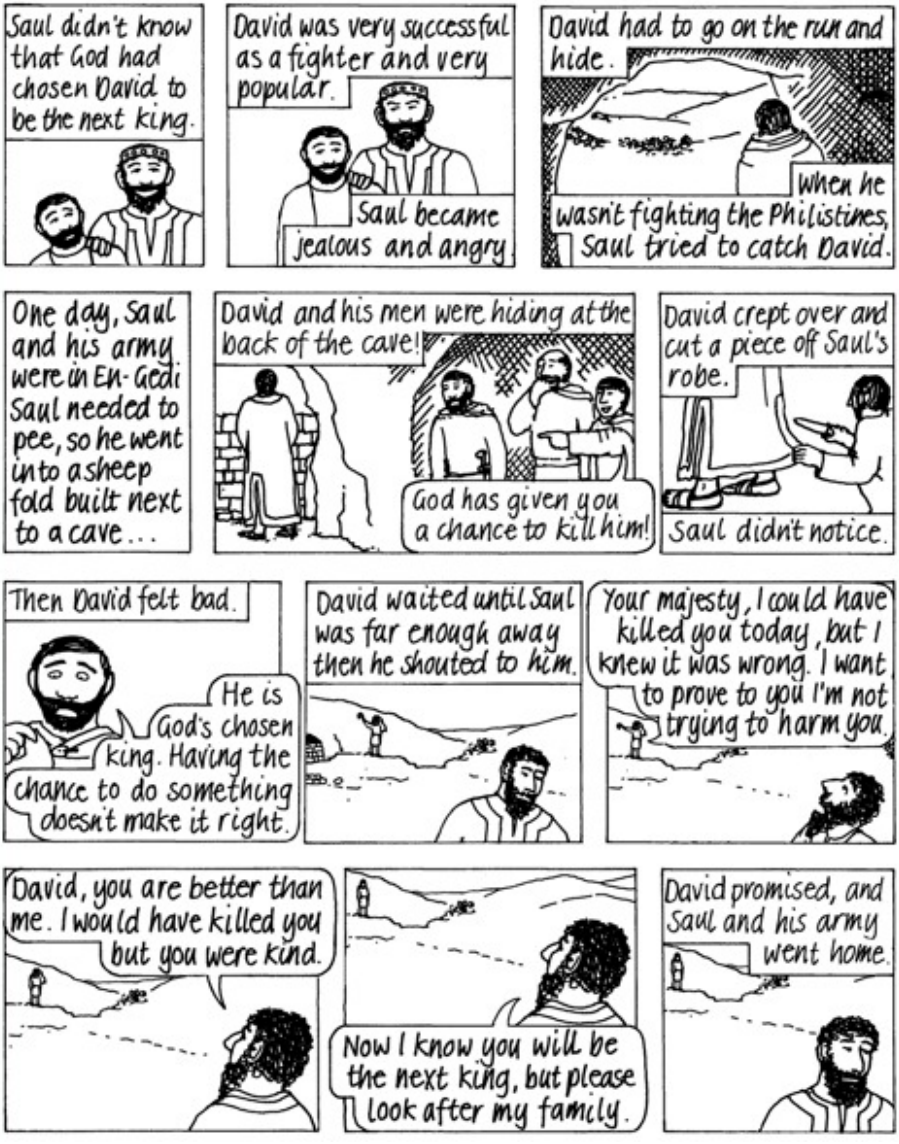
He continued to write after the war and worked as a popular broadcaster.

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in 1 Samuel 24

God chose Saul to be the King of Israel, but Saul chose to disobey Him. God said that the next king would not be Saul's son.



Alcoholics Anonymous Ireland

Do you want another chance at life?

Alcoholics Anonymous meeting

Every Saturday 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Now meeting upstairs at
Whitehead Community Centre:
Call 02890 351222
www.alcoholicsanonymous .ie
All enquiries are treated in strictest confidence

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 them, their family and friends who have been affected by their addiction.

Cocaine Anonymous

Do you have a problem with drugs and Alcohol?

So did we.

Cocaine Anonymous meeting

Every Monday 8 pm - 9:15 pm
Oakfield Community Centre:
Oakfield Drive, Carrickfergus, BT38 7SP

Call 0330 043 2789 (8 am - 10 pm)
www.caireland.live

Letter from St James the Least of All



The Rectory
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren
On war between parishes.

So, now you have enjoyed your first Summer Fete. Don't say I didn't warn you. It may be small consolation but remember that they only happen once a year - although in your case, you still have another 30 to endure before retirement.

I negotiated our own last week. As usual, the band from our neighbouring parish of St Eusebius played. There has been much bad blood in the past between our two villages. The trouble started on the day that St James the Least of All never told St Eusebius that the Vikings were coming up the river. We may have long since buried the hatchet, but both sides remember where they put it.

Tension between the two communities down the centuries has moved on from occasional slaughter to something a little more refined. Just as I began my opening speech to crown the Rose Queen, the band struck up with the National Anthem. When the hog roast started, they played "smoke gets in your eyes" and when it came to the necessary music for the maypole dancing, they all disappeared into the beer tent.

With great Christian charity, we shall bide our time. In September we have the annual football match between the two churches' Servers. Last year, in addition to winning the match, the St James' boys sent three of their side off with concussion. Naturally, I visited them in hospital.

Miss Prendergast, as always, played Gypsy Rose Lee. If the tall, dark, dear lady tells me one more time that I am about to find romance with a tall dark lady, while she flutters her eyelashes at me, I swear I shall throttle her with a bell rope. Besides, I already have a beautiful dark lady in my life - and my Labrador is devoted to me.

The only real hiccough came when I bought 12 packets of fudge from Mrs Masheder to present to our choirboys. Yet again, she had misread salt for sugar in the recipe. After I presented the packets at Mattins the following day, a formal complaint was rapidly made by a parent to the police that the Rector was attempting to poison their son. But as I explained to the officer, if I had intended to poison anyone, I would have done it far more discreetly - and infinitely more efficiently.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

Editor: Happily, the Church of England still retains some singular parish clergy. Take the parish of St James-the-Least in the county of C- for example. Eustace, continues his correspondence to Darren, his nephew, a low-church curate recently ordained... by the Revd Dr Gary Bowness

A Light in the Window

On a wet November evening, Margaret stood at her kitchen window watching the rain run down the glass. The days seemed shorter than ever, and she felt a little lonely. Her children lived far away, and many of her old friends had passed on or moved. The village felt quieter than it once had.

As she sighed and turned away, she noticed a small envelope lying on her doormat. Curious, she opened the door and picked it up. Inside was a simple handmade card decorated with bright colours and cheerful stars. The message read: "Thank you for always smiling and saying hello. You make our village a happier place." There was no name, just a little drawing of a heart.

Margaret sat down and read the card again. Tears filled her eyes, but this time they were tears of joy. She had never imagined that her everyday greetings and friendly chats mattered to anyone. The next morning, she pinned the card beside her window and went for her usual walk. As she passed people, she smiled as always. Yet something felt different. She realised that kindness is never wasted. Even the smallest acts can bring light into another person's life.

Weeks later, Margaret discovered that the card had been written by a group of local children as part of a school project about gratitude. They had chosen her because they thought she was the friendliest person in the village.

That Christmas, as lights twinkled in the darkness, Margaret often looked at the card and remembered an important truth: hope grows whenever people take the time to notice and encourage one another. Sometimes the brightest light comes from the smallest gesture or a thank you note slipped under the door.



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A Simple Prayer for our Rector and his Team



Heavenly Father

We give thanks as a congregation for the safe arrival of baby Ruairí, a second Grandson into our Rector's family. We pray particularly for his parents. For mum's recovery after the delivery, for all those who support them, and for his big brother as he makes sense of this little addition to his family.

As Rector Mark and Frances enjoy a well earned holiday in July we pray for safety in their travels, a blessed time of rest and fun, sunshine and little or no rain, and then only at night.

We pray for all those who step into fill the gap, that they will be welcomed into our congregation. We pray for all those who play a part in supporting the day to day church ministry and welcoming those on holiday over the summer who join us for our services.

Amen.

A service marking Racial Justice Sunday was held at St Anne's Cathedral in Belfast

A Church of Ireland minister has said she hopes churches "feel emboldened to counteract racism whenever they see it".

Describing her experience ministering as a person of colour, Rev Eileen Cremin said it was "overall positive". She said she encountered "very small amounts" of direct racism - due largely to "prejudice borne out of ignorance and misunderstanding".

Rev Cremin was giving a sermon marking Racial Justice Sunday at St Anne's Cathedral in Belfast. She hoped the service would help raise awareness of racial justice and encourage both people and churches to be more welcoming to those from different backgrounds.

"I hope that churches will feel emboldened now to counteract racism whenever they see it," she said. "That churches will give a welcome to people who look different to them."She said the theme of the service was "Love Your Neighbour" - which meant " a love that helps people to feel at ease, to feel welcome, to feel at home, and a recognition of the fact that we may look different but we're basically human beings like everyone else"

She said that if churches were to reach out to show what racial justice could look like, that could trickle out to wider society and help combat much of the "negative rhetoric" experienced here in recent years.

Parish Pump Holy Days

16th July St Helier – losing a loved one to violence

Take the book of Samuel in the Bible, add a bit of Luke Skywalker father/son conflict from Star Wars, stir in a dash of Pirates of the Caribbean, and you sort of have the story of St Helier – the first saint and martyr of Jersey.

According to the legend, it all began in 6th century Tongeren (now in Belgium). A pagan couple badly wanted a child, but the wife was barren. In desperation they sought the help of a local Christian, Cunibert. He advised them to pray to the Christian God, and to promise that any child born would be 'given back' to God. So they did, and then the wife fell pregnant and gave birth to a son, Helier.

The parents were delighted – at first. But as the baby grew into a boy, it became clear that Helier was different from other children – he was precociously intelligent and could perform miracles. Helier's father found this unsettling and grew jealous of Cunibert's influence over his son. Finally he plotted to have Cunibert murdered.

In horror at such treachery, Helier fled. He wandered far, eventually reaching a monastic community in Normandy, run by Saint Marculf. Here he settled, seeking a life of contemplation, but it was not to be. Marculf had received pleas for help from the very few residents of an island called Gersut, or Agna (now called Jersey). They, too, had had bitter experience of violent men who killed their loved ones without warning: the Vikings and Saxons and Vandals had each visited the island in turn. Now they sought some comfort from the Christians: would someone bring them the Gospel? They had no one to shepherd them. Marculf could not ignore such a plea, and so he sent Helier and a companion, Romard, to Jersey. The two monks found a small community of

fishermen on the sand dunes where the modern town of St Helier would later grow. Helier chose to settle on a tidal islet, nowadays known as the Hermitage Rock. Romard, it was agreed, would act as the 'go between' between Helier in his hermitage and the fishing village.

Helier had chosen a remote spot for the peace and quiet it would give him as he approached God. But one day he discovered that his tidal islet had another great advantage as well. While looking out to sea and praying, he suddenly saw the sails of attacking pirates, stealthily approaching the island in boats.

Frantically, Helier signalled the shore of danger coming, and the fishermen and their families scattered into the surrounding marshes, beyond the reach of the bloodthirsty, lustful pirates. This happened time and again, and became so well known in island history that even today, small dark clouds on the horizon are still known as *les vailes dé St. Hélyi* (the sails of St Helier). As if that were not enough, Helier's prayers and the sign of the cross on another occasion stirred up such a storm that a raiding party was driven clear off the island.

One day the pirates finally caught up with Helier on his tidal islet. They beheaded him. Helier was deeply mourned, and has always been revered in Jersey for having brought Christianity to the island.

When his head and body were sent back to France, a healing spring is reputed to have sprung up on the place where the boat came ashore, and so Helier is better known there as a healing saint. The traditional year of his martyrdom is 555AD. His feast day is still marked in Jersey by an annual municipal and ecumenical pilgrimage to the Hermitage, on 16th July.

3 ingredient butter biscuits



Perfect strawberry and ice cream sandwich for a Summer day

Ingredients

1 cup (230 g) Butter softened (salted or unsalted according to taste)

2 cups (250 g) All-purpose flour

2/3 cup (85 g) Icing sugar

Optional additions: Vanilla extract, Icing Sugar for decorations, Chocolate chips

Method

Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.

Cream the butter and sugar: In a large mixing bowl, beat softened butter and powdered sugar together using a hand or stand mixer until the mixture is pale, light, and fluffy (about 2–3 minutes).

Add the flour: Gradually add flour and mix until a smooth dough forms. If the dough feels too soft or sticky, add 1-2 tablespoons of flour until it's easier to handle.

Shape the cookies (2 methods):

1. Cut-out biscuits: Shape the dough into a flat disk, wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 1 hour. Roll out to ¼-inch (½ cm) thickness and cut into circles using large cookie cutter.

2. Slice-and-bake cookies: Roll dough into a log, wrap in plastic wrap, and freeze for 30 minutes. Slice into ¼-inch (½ cm) rounds. No waste method



Bake: Arrange biscuits on the prepared baking sheet and bake for 12–15 minutes, or until the edges are lightly golden.

Cool: Let biscuits cool on the tray for a few minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

Sandwich a scoop of you favourite ice cream and sliced strawberries between .

Dust the top with Icing sugar.

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

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

Wider Christian perspective on Racially Provoked Riots NI.

Christian leaders in Northern Ireland have strongly condemned a recent surge of race-related violence and xenophobia, actively organizing anti-racism rallies and supporting targeted minority and migrant communities. Prominent church figures across denominations have explicitly characterized racism as a "grave sin" and called on congregations to actively counter prejudice. (The Tablet)

Catholic Church - Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh has strongly denounced the orchestrated attacks against migrant homes and businesses, stating that Christians must stand against racism. He has emphasized that human dignity is not restricted to particular backgrounds. (The Tablet).

The Methodist Church in Ireland reiterated its "fundamental disgust" at recent racist events, stressing that every individual bears the image of God. They actively advocate for welcoming refugees, noting that Jesus was a refugee himself. (The Methodist Church in Ireland).

Church of Ireland Clergy have emphasized the importance of Racial Justice Sunday, calling on churches to be bolder in counteracting racism and ensuring that people from ethnic minority backgrounds feel welcome in their congregations.(BBC).

Community and Reconciliation Efforts Active Support: Local church groups mobilized to physically check on and support victims of racist intimidation, including shopkeepers and healthcare workers in affected areas like North Belfast.

Interfaith and Community Work: Organizations such as the Corrymeela Community continue their long-standing work to foster peace, reconciliation, and integration.

Faith groups have joined hundreds of citizens in anti-racism solidarity rallies throughout Belfast to counter fear and promote unity.

Dear God thank you for this and continue to help us find the solution to the immigration problems we have in UK and Ireland.

Mind body and Soul by Ian Cooke

If you've got Social Media and you are not feeling ok.
Then head on over to mindbodysoul.uk
There is always someone who can talk things through
As the most important thing is the feelings of you

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Shared by a member of the congregation

--Thanks for sharing this, I decided to follow this up https://www.mindbodysouluk.org/ and what a great mental health resource this is. On their 'about us' page they say

Mind Body Soul UK, is a Psychology/Sociology specialised Mental Health Service based in London UK - We are here to guide you through life's most complex and difficult matters. We truly care about our clients' well-being and guarantee top of the line Mental Health mentoring catered to your needs. We aim to raise awareness of Mental Health and for people to reach out who are dealing with challenging life experiences. Our client's well-being is our number one priority, and we go above and beyond to help them through all their obstacles. Get in touch with us today for more information.

Something to share with someone who may need help and not know where to turn.

The Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh has delivered a powerful warning about the rise of far-right ideology, racism and hostility towards migrants.

Following the same theme, Speaking during the Church of Ireland's 2026 General Synod, Archbishop John McDowell warned that the treatment of "the stranger" would become one of the greatest tests of Christian faithfulness in the years ahead.

Archbishop McDowell delivered a strongly-worded address condemning racism, anti-migrant hostility and the rise of what he described as the "so called Christian Right".

Drawing on the teachings of St Paul, Archbishop McDowell reflected on the revolutionary Christian belief in the equality of all people, regardless of nationality, race, gender or status.

"The Roman world in which St Paul moved was characterised by a sense of radical inequality," he said. He quoted from Galatians 3:28 : "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female; for all are one in the Messiah Jesus."

"That word 'one' signalled a new transparency in human relations," he said, adding that Paul insisted on "the moral equality of all humans" and the possibility of creating a new self through Christ. However, Archbishop McDowell said both the Church and wider society had failed to fully live out those principles, particularly in attitudes towards migration and racial equality.

"It is my own view that our attitude to migration in Ireland, both north and south, is one of the great touchstones and tests of our Christian authenticity," he said.

While acknowledging there could be differing political views on immigration policy, he said Christians had a clear responsibility towards migrants and refugees. "It seems to me that there is a fairly simple imperative when it comes to the 'stranger that is in your midst', and that is to welcome him or her and to care for him or her."

The Archbishop also directly challenged narratives promoted by far-right groups surrounding migration and Islam, rejecting claims that migration forms part of a wider conspiracy.

****

Some church bulletin notices have a charm all their own, when you know that they MEANT to say….

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What Is Hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practise.

Next Thursday there will be try-outs for the choir. They need all the help they can get.

Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married last Saturday in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.

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July 22nd The Other Mary

By the Revd Canon David Winter from Parish Pump



As the traditional Easter story is remembered again this month, you may notice that there is one name that frequently occurs. It is that of the 'other' Mary – not the mother of Jesus but Mary of Magdala, who stood by her at the cross and became the first human being, male or female, actually to meet the risen Christ.

That's quite a record for a woman who, the Gospels tell us, had been delivered by Jesus from 'seven devils'. As a result, her devotion to Him was total and her grief at His death overwhelming.

In church history Mary Magdalene became the 'fallen woman', a harlot who was rescued and forgiven by Jesus. And while there is no evidence to prove she was a 'fallen woman', the contrast is sublime: Mary the virgin mother, the symbol of purity and Mary Magdalene, the scarlet woman who was saved and forgiven, the symbol of redemption. Surely, we all fall somewhere between those two extremes.

What we do know is that the two Marys stood together at the cross, the Blessed Virgin and the woman rescued from who knows what darkness and despair.

The second great moment for her was as unexpected as it was

momentous. She had gone with other women to the tomb of Jesus and found it empty. An angelic figure told them that Jesus was not there, He had risen – and the others drifted off. But Mary stayed, reluctant to leave it like that. She became aware of a man nearby, whom she took to be the gardener. She explained to Him that the body of 'her Lord' had been taken away and she didn't know where to find Him.

The man simply said her name 'Mary' and she instantly realised it was Jesus. She made to hug Him, but He told her not to touch Him because His resurrection was not yet complete. She was, however, to go to the male disciples and tell them she had met Him. She did – but they couldn't believe her.
Her words – 'I have seen the Lord' – echo down the centuries. the very beating heart of the Christian gospel.



Fortunately it was a perfect mosquito, without spot or blemish

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Brasso Club

No meeting is scheduled for July or August 2026.
Next meet up: St Patrick's Church at 10am on
Thursday, 17th September 2026.
Absolutely everyone is welcome in September!

As attendance at monthly meetings has been very low this year, in September, we will consider together the best way forward. Perhaps a different day or time would suit better? It would be lovely to see some new faces alongside the seasoned veterans of polishing.
As the years go by some are less able to do some things, but everyone can play a part, be it seated at a table with the candle sticks, standing by the eagle or getting down to some of the lower bits!
Between us we create sparkle and glow, showing care for our Church. Equally important, is the benefit to us as we bring the building alive with our chat, laughter and developing friendships.
Have you 1 hour to spare? Hoping to see you there.

Scotty

Whitehead Summer Festival - Food and Folk Fest

Saturday 8th August 2026

Cake and Buns Stall

Can you help on the day or by making and baking?

Fill in the sheet at the back of the Church as soon as you can.

Thank you!

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The social power of Crafting and Knitting, and it's ability to bring people together, is something that owner, and keen crafter Louise Williamson holds at the heart of her business. Lighthouse Yarns runs many classes and events. Call in, to find out what we're working on now!

Email enquiries to lighthouseyarns@yahoo.com

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

You Are Welcome Here

No matter:

- Where you've come from or are going;
- What you believe or doubt;
- What you are feeling or just not feeling;
- What you have or don't have; and
- No matter whom you love!

CHANGING ATTITUDE IRELAND

Have you noticed the seagulls lately?
Or rather – the lack of them?



A recent survey published by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), found that the total number of gulls wintering in the UK has fallen from 3.9 million to just under 2.5 million over the past two decades.

It is thought that the reason for the decline of gulls is due to improvements in waste management, both on our streets and in landfill. Avian flu, agricultural practices and climate change may have also played a part.

The survey targeted the black-headed gull, common gull, lesser black-headed gull, herring gull, and black-backed gulls. It found all species, apart from herring gulls, had declined.

The great black-backed gull, the UK's largest, saw a 66 per cent drop in numbers wintering in the UK. Black-headed gulls declined by almost half. Common gull numbers fell by 26 per cent, and those of lesser black-backed gulls dropped by 47 per cent.



Emma Caulfield, a BTO research ecologist and survey co-coordinator, said: "These figures are pretty alarming. Despite these smart and adaptable birds figuring out how to live alongside us, the ever-changing world appears to be moving too fast for them to keep up."

Youth Fellowship

Closed for the summer, We meet again Sunday 6th September 2026, 10th October

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).



Parish Announcements June 2026

The Select Vestry

Reconvenes Wednesday, 16th September at 7pm
in St Patrick's Hall

Counters Rota

July		August	
06/07/2026	Valerie Kincaid	03/08/2026	Trevor Peoples
13/07/2026	Terry Waugh	10/08/2026	Bert Thompson
20/07/2026	Colin de Fleury	17/08/2026	Valerie Kincaid
27/07/2026	Scotty Heyes	24/08/2026	Terry Waugh
		31/08/2026	Colin de Fleury

Refreshments Rota

Just turn up, Priscilla and Paddy will make sure
we get a cuppa in St Patricks in July

In August we will enjoy the wonderful hospitality
at St John's

Many thanks to all who have helped provide refreshments from September 2025. A new rota will begin in September 2026.
In July, all refreshment donations will go to 'Brighter Whitehead' and in August all will go to St John's Churchyard fund.
Refreshments coordinator Priscilla Carlisle - Tel 07787561517

Game On Meeting

Meeting in the Library usually second and fourth Wednesday
Time 1.30 pm
Some members play Mexican Train, others Backgammon.
New participants always welcome. Come and join us for tea and biscuits,

Church Activities

Together in Faith Group

Meets again in September

Usually first and third Mondays in the month at 7.30 pm
Dates subject to change .
We meet in the Boucher Room, Parochial Hall
St Patrick's Church.

Book Club

Closed for the Summer, we meet again in September

Contact Paddy Rodgers tel 07720 404071

Wednesday Morning Fellowship

Closed for the Summer, we meet again in September
Second Wednesday in the month
Meeting in the Boucher Room from 10.45 am.
Starts with refreshments

Circus Skills Class

We are taking a break on 30th June and during July, back again in August

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 Patrick's Church

Indoor Bowling Club

Tuesdays from 7pm every week - Parochial Hall
St Patrick's Church

New people welcomed to join in all activities

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

How did you get on?

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WHO'S WHO IN THE PARISH

Rector: Revd Canon Mark Taylor,

72 Riverforde T: 028 9337 3300 E: mark205@btinternet.com

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

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

SELECT VESTRY (includes Churchwardens & Glebewardens)

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

Messy Church

in the Parochial Hall on the 2nd Sunday of the month at 10:30 a.m.
Contact the Rector if you plan to come.

Youth Fellowship Leader

Stephen Martin - stepheneddu@gmail.com

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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Registered with NI Charity Commission NIC102649

A Note From Janet



Update on the review.

I want to say thank you to those who have contribute to the review so far which is much appreciated. I need a few more review forms to produce a meaningful report to inform what we do next with Church Matters. If you have had not yet had the opportunity to contribute , and wish to do so, please cut back page off, tick the boxes and return to me asap. It takes less than 5 minutes to complete. Best to do it now when you have the magazine in your hand. If you prefer you can complete, take a photo and send it as whatsapp message to me 07581031915. I will then issue a full report of results in September edition and take it to the September Select Vestry.

Praying for sunshine for the summer months, joyful days and holidays with the children off from school. Praying for your good health

Many Blessings



Feedback on the Magazine

If you are happy reading each section below, put a ✓ in the box.
If you skip reading a section in the magazine, put an × in the box

- ☐ Readings, and service information
- ☐ Rectors letters
- ☐ Information about the wider church world
- ☐ Articles, stories of hope amid tragedy in the world
- ☐ Letters from St James the least of All, Rectory
- ☐ Prayers
- ☐ Poetry
- ☐ Joke fillers
- ☐ Puzzles (suduko or crossword)
- ☐ Comic style bible story
- ☐ Word search
- ☐ Story behind the hymn
- ☐ The recipe
- ☐ Church notices and rotas,
- ☐ What is going on in church
- ☐ What is going on in the community
- ☐ Who is who in the parish
- ☐ Content shared by members of the parish.
- ☐ Information from parish pump
- ☐ Parish announcements
- ☐ A note from Janet (editor)

Your brief overall comment about the "Church Matters" magazine.

Please cut out this page and return it to Church, or give it to someone going to Church. Thank you for your participation.