

THE PARISH OF ST PETER AND ST JAMES
BELFAST

PARISH NOTES

DECEMBER 2018/JANUARY 2019

Rector: The Rev'd Brian Lacey
St Peter's Rectory, 17 Waterloo Park South, Belfast, BT15 5HX



GOD . LOVING . PEOPLE



Christmas Fayre

**Saturday 8th
December**
10.30am—12 noon



Children £2

**includes visit to Santa and a present
and entry to children's activity room**

Adults £3

includes tea/coffee and cakes

RECTOR'S NOTES

HOLY COMMUNION AT HOME

If you are permanently or temporarily housebound over Christmas then I would be delighted to bring you Holy Communion, whether in your house or care home. I already have a list of those whom I expect to visit, but it would be very useful if you could ring me on 90 777 053 to confirm that you would like me to do so. Please note that as Rural Dean, I will be doing the same this year for parishioners in Cloughfern and Greenisland, so do let me know as soon as possible, so that – like Santa – I can make a list and check it twice. These visits will begin on Monday 10th December, and should take two weeks, so I would appreciate it if you contacted me before that date.

SERVICES IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY

The month of December launches us into the season of Advent until Christmas Eve, at which point the season of Christmas properly begins, which is followed within just a couple of weeks by the season of Epiphany.

Normally we mark the First Sunday of Advent (2nd December) with an **Advent Carol Service** in the evening (not to be confused with Nine Lessons & Carols), but unfortunately the choir have—despite their hard work—usually been singing to an otherwise empty church. So, this year we've moved the service forward to 11am, and I do hope you will be there to mark the beginning of this important liturgical season.

Each Sunday evening in Advent (which is the first four Sundays of December) will be a service of **Compline**. The choir will be present for the first Sunday, whereas the rest will be largely said rather than sung. For our Advent theme this year (for the evening services) we will be considering how some of the main characters in the Nativity Story would have felt in response to the news that the Son of God was coming into the world. I am delighted that our Assistant Priest, Rev'd Ken Houston, and one of our Parish Readers, David Cromie, and one of our former Student Readers, Alan McCracken, will be joining me in giving these short talks. Please do come along each Sunday as we prepare ourselves to celebrate Christ's birth.

On the Second Sunday of Advent (9th December) we have our **Christingle Service** at 11am. In recent years this has largely taken the form of Morning Prayer, during which the children go off to the halls to prepare the Christingles. Later in the service they return to distribute them, and there are some relevant prayers and hymns.

Even for parishioners who don't often come to worship, the traditional service of **Nine Lessons & Carols by Candlelight** is very popular in the run up to Christmas. We tend to hold this service on the Monday before Christmas Eve, and so this year it will be at 7.30pm on Monday 17th December. Mulled wine and shortbread are served afterwards.

By the time we get to the Fourth Sunday of Advent (23rd December) we are only hours away from Christmas. Instead of Morning Prayer at 11am, we will have a much less formal **Nativity Service**, in which the story of Christ's birth is narrated, and the children play the various roles. It isn't a Hollywood production; rather we're aiming for—as one person said last year—“the cute factor”! If you would like your child to be involved (even as a brief cameo) please speak to me.

WORK AROUND THE CHURCH

Premises the size of St Peter's need a lot of ongoing care and maintenance, and I am grateful to the parishioners who regularly devote their time and energy to keeping the place clean and tidy, both indoors and in the grounds. We still need a few more volunteers to help out in order to better share this responsibility. If you could spare even an hour or so each month (or even more if you can) then please speak to me, or to Noel and Annette Beattie.

On the theme of work, I and the Select Vestry are immensely thankful to Paul Gibson for organising repairs to the metal fence in the carpark and to the gravel soakaway beside it. It is uplifting to see how dedicated our parishioners are to keeping our beautiful church and grounds in good order to the glory of God.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Thank you to Mark Sterling and Sandra Hutchman for laying the wreaths at our 11am Act of Remembrance this year, and to Tony Swan who laid the wreath at the 9am service. I am also grateful as ever to Stanley McDowell for procuring the wreaths and organising the supply of poppies from the Royal British Legion.



FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

Our Sunday, Thursday, and Friday Fellowship Groups take a break throughout December and much of January, and will all be up and running again from February. I'm really pleased to see parishioners learning a little more about Christianity in these various groups, and particularly when friendships are being formed and sustained. If you haven't yet been to one, then please consider doing so when they resume next year.

FLOWERS IN CHURCH

The flowers that decorate the church always bring a bit of colour to St Peter's, and it's lovely to see them, particularly knowing that they are often given in memory of someone. Could I just give a gentle reminder about some practicalities. The reredos (which is the stone carving behind the Communion Table) is a beautiful piece of art, and it's very important that it should never be obstructed. To that end, if you wish to arrange flowers for the little shelf on the reredos, there really need to be two small or crescent shaped arrangements for either side, rather than one large display in the middle. Please also note that anything on the reredos needs to be narrow enough that I can stand between it and the Table without either damaging the flowers or staining my white surplice. If you wish to provide one display of flowers (rather than two smaller ones) then a flower stand may be placed to the left of the Communion Table in the sanctuary, or on either side of the steps between the pulpit and lectern. If you're unsure of what I mean by any of this, then please talk to me or to our Flower Co-ordinator, Sandra Davison. Many thanks to all of you who bring some life and colour into the church in this way.

TALENTS FUNDRAISING

Earlier this year we were all given £1 and asked to make it grow. I am very pleased with the response so far, with some parishioners making a straightforward contribution, and others selling goods or organising events. As a snapshot of the information I have at the moment, let me list some of the ideas: Daphne McClements made cushions; Jill Bradley and Rosemary Johnston hosted a tea party; Ken and Patricia Houston made calendars and scarves; Thelma Cross, Frances Gooding and Christine Hall separately made jam; Annette and Noel Beattie hosted a coffee morning; Anne Noblett and Barbara Greenlees organised a sunflower growing competition; my wife and I hosted afternoon tea in the church; Ann Mitchell made a cot quilt; Hilary Shields hosted a ladies' lunch; Dora Hanna and Michelle Cole separately did various odd jobs; Sandra Hutchman made bookmarks; Tony Swan made leaflets about the history of St Peter's; Margaret Mulligan made a soup lunch for the ladies of the Crafty Goodness sewing group; Harold Mitchell and Rosemary Hinds produced and sold CDs (Henry Hinds—Six Spiritual Songs); and Heather Swan made fruit loaves. To date, we have raised nearly £3000 for parish funds through such activities, and through donations. Many thanks to all involved! It's been wonderful to see parishioners rising to the challenge.



SERMON SUMMARIES

On *All Saints' Sunday* (4th November) we considered what does it mean to be “a saint”? Well, forget everything you know about the process of making saints, particularly in the Roman Catholic tradition. That process of—what is called—canonisation, is really just an honour bestowed on a person whom the Church considers to have exemplified Christian virtues during their lifetime, and more importantly, who seems to have performed miracles since their death. Forget all of that.

The word “saint” comes from the French word “sante” which comes from the Latin word “sanctus” which means set apart for the purposes of God, made different by the power of God, or imbued with the spirit of God.

It has the exact same meaning as the words “holy” and “hallowed”. But we tend to refer to humans as “saints”, and to things as “holy”. So we have the Holy Bible, and the Holy Table, and Holy Communion. But we have St Peter, St James, St Paul. There are of course exceptions to this rule. For example, we refer to St Michael, even though he’s an angel and not a human. And we refer to the Holy Trinity, even though God is not “a thing”. But suffice it to say that they all mean the same thing.

We could call King David, Saint David if we wanted; after all, he was chosen by God to be king, he was changed by God, and God’s Spirit worked in him and spoke through him (most notably in the Psalms). The same for Saint Moses, or Saint Jeremiah, or Saint Elijah. We tend not to do that, however, because by custom, we give such honorary titles to those who lived after the time of our Lord Jesus, such as the Apostles, like St Peter. But we also have St Anne, the grandmother of Jesus, and sometimes we refer to John the Baptist as St John the Baptist.

Interestingly, Mary the mother of Jesus is referred to as the Blessed Virgin Mary. Which is strange because the term

“Blessed” is actually considered to be a rank lower than a saint as understood by the Roman Catholics.

Maybe this is done to avoid confusion with the other Saint Marys, who could be Mary Magdalene or Mary the sister of Lazarus, whom we read about today. It doesn’t really matter though, because—as I said—these are just honorary titles given to show that the person was somehow set apart for a role in God’s plan for the world, and that he worked through them to achieve his purposes.

That’s why, following the Protestant Reformation, we tend to avoid canonising new people (that is, making them saints) because in reality aren’t we all saints? All Christians have been called by God to a particular role in his plans for the world. All Christians have been given a new heart and a new outlook on life. And all Christians have been imbued with God’s Holy Spirit. On that basis, we are all saints. Why then should we give that honorary title to just a select few?

So, whilst we celebrate the saints who have lived in the generations before us, let’s give thanks also for our own sanctity, our own holiness, and remember to think and behave as saints should, whether in the past or the present day.

On the *2nd Sunday Before Advent* (18th November) we thought about all the hundreds (perhaps thousands) of Christian denominations there are throughout the world. Now, if you went on a tour around all of these different Christian denominations, the most noticeable thing would be how they worship, and that includes the style of building that they worship in. But in reality, the Christian Church is fractured over what we believe. What we believe about the nature of God; What we believe about who and what Jesus is; What we believe about sin; What we believe about the necessity of salvation, and the plan for salvation, and the mechanism of salvation; What we believe about the inspiration and authority of the Bible; What; we believe about how Christians should live; And so on and so forth.

Each of the many Christian denominations will answer those questions in their own unique ways, and even where they agree with each other, they may disagree as to the relative importance of each of those questions. And every disagreement leads to one more fracture in the Christian Church, and often this results in another denomination being created.

But why does the Church keep splitting? Well there are two reasons.

First of all, there is the traditional concept of Judgement, in which there is a good place in the afterlife for those who understand and implement Christianity correctly, and a bad place for those who don't. And it is the fear of not wanting to go to the bad place, that naturally makes people want to know that what they believe is the correct way to get into the good place. Therefore people don't want to be taught the wrong thing in their church. Now that in itself might not cause a church to split. But when you add it to the second reason then a split is likely to happen.

That second reason is, that in some verses in the New Testament, there is a clear command that Christians who believe the truth, should not associate with so-called Christians who believe a corruption of the truth.

So if you have someone in a congregation who thinks that what their minister is preaching is wrong, and if that person feels that their spiritual wellbeing is in danger by remaining in that congregation and listening to their minister's 'lies', then they will leave, and either they will try joining other churches until they find one which proclaims the truth as they understand it, or else (particularly if they are highly motivated) they will set up their own new church. But then of course after a few years, someone sitting in the pews in that new church will disagree with something the preacher said there, and they'll be so theologically offended by it, or spiritually disturbed by it, that they too will head off to another church, or even set up their own even newer church. Such is the cycle of how the church continues to split.

And what we are left with are hundreds (probably actually thousands) of Christian denominations, all of which say “We’ve got it right”, and by extension therefore “Everyone else is wrong.”

The reason I mention this is because our Lord Jesus warns us that many people will come along and claim to be him, and will lead people astray spiritually and theologically. Now whilst there have been some lunatics over the years who have literally said “I am he” and claimed to be the Son of God, there is a greater spiritual and theological danger from individuals who—whilst not claiming divinity for themselves—believe that they alone have all the answers, and they alone know the truth of Christianity.

We need to be wary of such individuals who would claim to exclusively speak in God’s name. They might be very charismatic; they might be very intelligent; they might be very important; but we need to be wary about those people who say “We are the only ones who can tell you what God really wants, and if you want to get into heaven, you need to do what we say.”

So be on guard against both those who claim to be Jesus, and those who claim to exclusively speak in his name. Remember that you have two tests, which will keep you from going astray by following such people, or belonging to such churches.

The first test is the Holy Bible. If you are being told to do or believe something by a Christian leader which cannot be proven by the Bible, then you are under absolutely no obligation to do it or believe it.

But you know, plenty of people have twisted Scripture to suit their own ends, so there’s also a second test. And this is the Spirit of God living within you. If what you are being told to do promotes peace, joy, and love, then it is from God. If it leads to infighting, anger, and hatred, then it most certainly is not.

So use these two tests when you hear Christian leaders speaking in God’s name. Don’t blindly accept what they say. Ask: what do the Scriptures say? And what does the Spirit say?

CHORAL VISIT TO SHERBORNE ABBEY

OCTOBER 2018

On 27th and 28th October, Robert Thompson led a choir made up of singers from St Peter's and the Priory Singers which sang at three services in Sherborne Abbey, Dorset. The trip was arranged by Derek Gallop a member of the Priory Singers and a native of Sherborne. Having all the choral talent of a boiled potato, I tagged along as a "groupie" or some such.

Most of the choristers arrived via Bristol Airport over several preceding days, and so had plenty of time to enjoy the towns and countryside of that part of England – and the weather was simply spectacular. Some folk managed to visit Wells and Salisbury cathedrals together with other wonderful ancient properties and towns. Sherborne is one of those beautiful old English towns studded with buildings dating back in some cases to the Elizabethan and earlier times. The castle (the "new" castle that is) started as a hunting lodge until it was bought by Sir Walter Raleigh and built into something much more spectacular. The "old" castle, where Charles I reviewed the troops in 1642, was held for the King, enduring two sieges during the Civil War until 1645, when it was destroyed by Sir Thomas Fairfax, but substantial ruins remain. During the second siege, the game-keepers of Sherborne castle and estate gained much praise for their ability to pick off Parliamentary officers with their fowling pieces!

A number of the choristers stayed in the Half Moon Inn, a centuries' old inn within yards of the Abbey. Just up the street is a fourteenth century alms house still used for the care of less able people in the locality. The Sir Walter Raleigh theme was brought into very sharp focus by the tolling of a bell in the Abbey just before 9am on Monday, 29th to mark precisely the 400th anniversary of his execution.

The Abbey is simply stunning: handsome and well-proportioned outside, inside it has soaring columns with gothic arches and a fan-vaulted ceiling to rival King's College, Cambridge. There has been a church on the site for over 1,300 years, ever since it was chosen by St Aldhelm as the site for the cathedral for the newly created Diocese of Sherborne in 705. The bishopric was transferred to Old Sarum in 1075, so the cathedral lost its status and became an abbey. The fan-vaulting was completed around 1490. Two Saxon kings are buried there together with quite a collection

of abbots and other monks. Considerable work was done to develop the abbey by the Digby family, the local bigwigs, who bought the castle and virtually all of Sherborne when Sir Walter fell foul of James I. John Digby, third Earl of Bristol, secured Dorset for William of Orange, during the Glorious Revolution in 1688, encouraging the flight of James II and leading to the accession of William III – so there is a little connection with Ulster.

The choir sang Choral Evensong on the Saturday and Sunday evenings, and on the Sunday morning sang at the 9.30am Eucharist. Later that morning the Abbey hosted an RAF service celebrating the 100th anniversary of its establishment. Older members of St Peter's may remember Hooton Mitchell, who sang in the choir for decades: he was a pilot in WW1 and flew as a member of the Royal Flying Corps, the forerunner of the RAF, which he later joined upon its creation in 1918. How appropriate that his grand-daughter, Anne, was in Sherborne for the centenary, with the roundel of the RAF flying from the Abbey tower.

The Sunday services were very well attended with a congregation of about 200 in the morning and almost 100 in the evening and we were delighted to discover worshipping with us a long-time friend of St Peter's—Brother Raymond Christian who was a dear friend of Brother Roger Damian who served with us in the 80s.

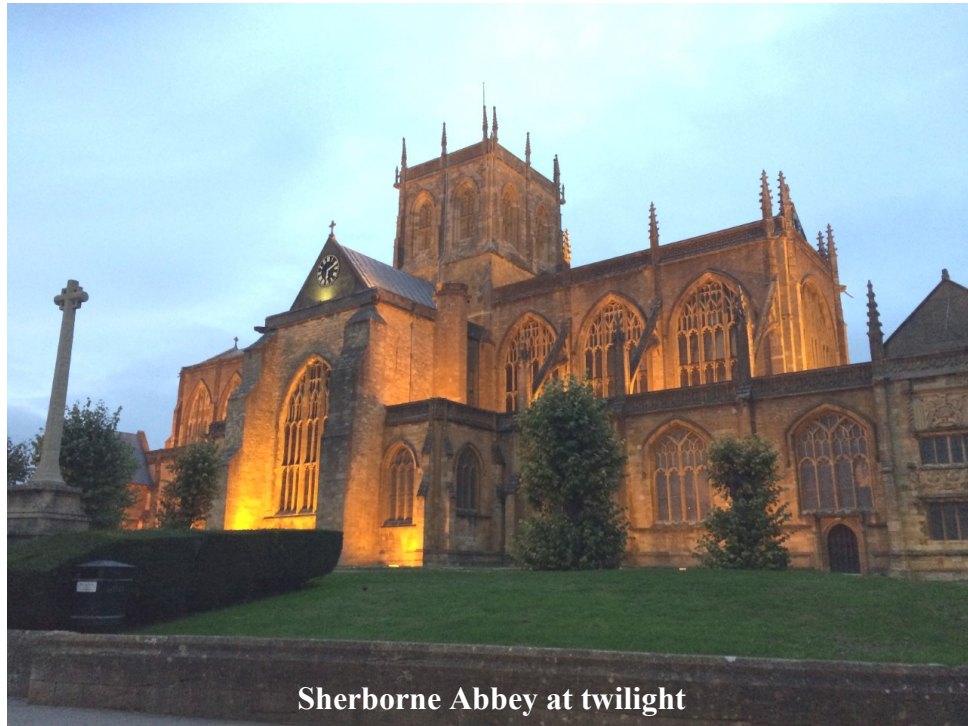
The music was greatly appreciated by the various clergy and congregations, in particular the standard of chanting was commented upon very favourably. This was a great opportunity to show case the musical talents and dedication of these singers from Northern Ireland under the skilful direction of Robert, and they lived up to the highest expectations.

Aside from providing wonderful music in an equally wonderful setting, the whole trip great fun. There was plenty of fine dining, some excellent wine and lots of laughter. I could say much more about the social aspects of the trip but, they warned me, “what happens in Sherborne stays in Sherborne” - you are free to speculate, but I have the photographs!

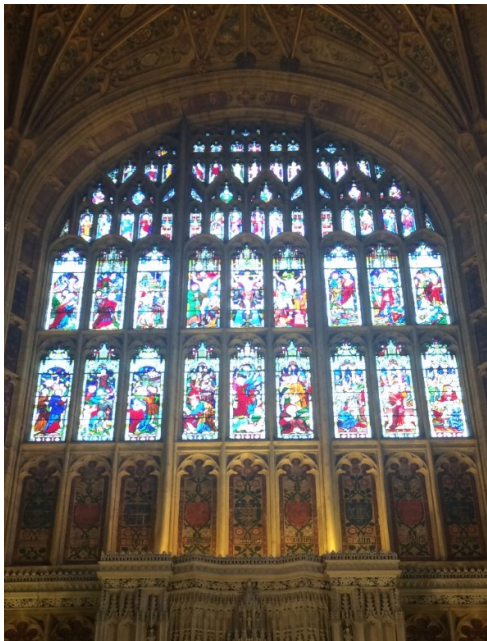
Hopefully there will be further such joint efforts in future.

David Cromie

PS Please turn over to see some photos that I *am* able to show!!



Sherborne Abbey at twilight



East window



RAF flag on Abbey tower
(Dorothy McCausland will like this one)



**That magnificent
fan-vaulted ceiling**



Reredos and high altar



Sung out and happy, with the Rector of Sherborne

CHURCH SERVICES IN DECEMBER

SUNDAY 9am 11am 6.30pm	2nd DECEMBER Holy Communion Advent Carol Service Sung Compline	THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT <i>traditional, Resurrection, purple</i> <i>modern, Nave, purple</i> <i>traditional, Nave, purple</i>
WEDNESDAY 10.30am	5th DECEMBER Holy Communion	MID-WEEK <i>modern, Resurrection, purple</i>
SUNDAY 9am 11am 6.30pm	9th DECEMBER Holy Communion Christingle Service Compline	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT <i>modern, Resurrection, purple</i> <i>modern, Nave, purple</i> <i>traditional, St James, purple</i>
WEDNESDAY 10.30am	12th DECEMBER Holy Communion	MID-WEEK <i>modern, Resurrection, purple</i>
SUNDAY 9am 11am 6.30pm	16th DECEMBER Holy Communion Choral Eucharist Compline	THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT <i>modern, Resurrection, purple</i> <i>modern, Nave, purple</i> <i>traditional, Nave, purple</i>
MONDAY 7.30pm	17th DECEMBER Nine Lessons and Carols	WEEKDAY SERVICE <i>traditional, Nave, purple</i>
WEDNESDAY 10.30am	19th DECEMBER Holy Communion	MID-WEEK <i>modern, Resurrection, purple</i>
SUNDAY 9am 11am 6.30pm	23rd DECEMBER Holy Communion Nativity Service Compline	THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT <i>modern, Resurrection, purple</i> <i>modern, Nave, purple</i> <i>traditional, Nave, purple</i>
MONDAY 11pm	24th DECEMBER Choral Eucharist	CHRISTMAS EVE <i>modern, Nave, white</i>
TUESDAY 10.30am 11am	25th DECEMBER Christmas Service Holy Communion	CHRISTMAS DAY <i>modern, Chancel, white</i> <i>modern, Resurrection, white</i>
WEDNESDAY 10.30am	26th DECEMBER Holy Communion	ST STEPHEN <i>modern, Resurrection, white</i>
SUNDAY 9am 11am	30th DECEMBER Holy Communion Morning Prayer	THE FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS <i>modern, Resurrection, white</i> <i>modern, Nave, white</i>

CHURCH SERVICES IN JANUARY

WEDNESDAY 10.30am	2nd JANUARY Holy Communion	MID-WEEK <i>modern, said, Resurrection, white</i>
SUNDAY 9am 11am	6th JANUARY Holy Communion Choral Eucharist	THE EPIPHANY <i>modern, said, Resurrection, white</i> <i>modern, sung, Nave, white</i>
WEDNESDAY 10.30am	9th JANUARY Holy Communion	MID-WEEK <i>modern, said, Resurrection, white</i>
SUNDAY 9am 11am	13th JANUARY Holy Communion Choral Matins	THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY <i>modern, said, Resurrection, white</i> <i>modern, sung, Nave, white</i>
WEDNESDAY 10.30am	16th JANUARY Holy Communion	MID-WEEK <i>modern, said, Resurrection, white</i>
SUNDAY 9am 11am	20th JANUARY Holy Communion Choral Eucharist	THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY <i>modern, said, Resurrection, white</i> <i>modern, sung, Nave, white</i>
WEDNESDAY 10.30am	23rd JANUARY Holy Communion	MID-WEEK <i>modern, said, Chancel, white</i>
THURSDAY 7.30pm	24th JANUARY Holy Communion	THE CONVERSION OF ST PAUL (transferred) <i>traditional, said, Chancel, white</i>
SUNDAY 9am 11am	27th JANUARY Holy Communion Renewal Service	THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY <i>modern, said, Resurrection, white</i> <i>modern, sung, Nave, white</i>
WEDNESDAY 10.30am	30th JANUARY Holy Communion	MID-WEEK <i>modern, said, Resurrection, white</i>

Carols by Candlelight
Priory Singers
Saturday 15th December at 8pm

Campbell College
Tickets £10
tel 9077 6706

Advent Carols

Sunday
2nd December
11am

All welcome

Nine Lessons and Carols

by candlelight

Monday 17th December 7.30pm

Mulled wine and shortbread afterwards

Everyone welcome



Christmas Fayre

This year we are asking for your ideas regarding the format of the Fayre and of course for your support in the usual way, ie, attending, donating items (especially for the Tombola and these may be left in church on Sundays or in the parish office on weekdays), advertising, etc.

We are hoping that some people may be interested in running their own bric-a-brac stall. This will work by hiring a table for £20 and selling your own bric-a-brac from it and then donating the proceeds to a charity of your choice. However, if you donate the proceeds to St Peter's the table space will be free of charge. If you are interested in doing this please contact one of the Churchwardens for advice. All help is much appreciated.

The Church of Ireland Gazette is changing

The Church of Ireland Gazette has been published weekly since 1856. However, from January 2019 the Gazette is not only going to be published monthly but is also going to be in magazine format.

The Gazette provides vital, unifying and unique links across the Church of Ireland, throughout Northern Ireland and Ireland, for news, debate and information.

The Gazette provides deeply researched articles as well as providing opportunities for discussion and debate.

The 'new' Gazette will be able to cover a wider variety of stories, contributions and details of the wide spectrum of life in the various parishes and communities.

The intention of the editor and board is that the Gazette will make a strengthening contribution to the life and witness of the church, parishes and communities.

Should you like to receive the Gazette would you please speak with Anne Cromie (Office) or Ashlee McCune (Hon Treasurer).

The Gazettes are brought to St Peter's Church for subscribers to collect each month.

Margi Crawford

SELECT VESTRY BULLETIN

The Parish Meeting has continued to meet on the first Monday evening in recent months, and this has provided an important opportunity for parishioners to give their input into how we go about developing our worship and ministries. Such changes have already been introduced into our weekly services—such as amendments to our single service booklets, or the introduction of a said Lord's Prayer at Choral Matins—and this helps ensure that our services reflect the needs of our parishioners. At the most recent meeting, our upcoming Advent and Christmas services were discussed at length, and you will see some of these changes in the coming weeks, such as the 11am Advent Carol Service, and a revision of the services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

It is especially important at this time of year to make our presence known in the local community. To this end, leaflets advertising St Peter's have been produced with parishioner input, and we are keen to attract volunteers to distribute these materials locally. If anyone can assist with this important work, I would encourage them to put their name on the sign-up sheet at the back of the church or speak to the Rector.

In addition to this, the Parish Meeting has also discussed purchasing additional banners for display at the front of the church, with suggestions on how to improve their appearance and message in order to encourage new people to join us.

If you have any thoughts about how we can continue to develop our worship and ministries, or how we could attract new members, or if you have suggestions for new parish events, then please come along to the next Parish Meeting at 7pm on Monday 4th February.

Gareth Larmour, Hon Sec to Select Vestry

Our Parish Family ...

Please let us know about any happy events and/or exciting news happening within our parish family. Good news is always worth sharing!

Congratulations

to Ryan Delaney,
who has been awarded
a PhD in Biomedical Science,
his specialism being
retinal angiogenesis.



LESSON READERS AND INTERCESSORS

The following parishioners are on the reading/intercessor rota at the 11am Sunday services. If the date is unsuitable, please contact either Sandra Hutchman, tel 95 149 564 (readings), or Rosemary Johnston, tel 90 840 534 (prayers).

Dec	First Reading	Second Reading	Intercessor
2nd	<i>Advent Carol Service</i>		David Cromie
9th	Sandra Hutchman	Dora Hanna	Daphne McClements
16th	Wes Holmes	Hilary Shields	Forde Patterson
23rd	<i>Nativity Service</i>		Marie Burrowes
30th	Moya Bell	Forde Patterson	Dora Hanna
Jan			
6th	Anne Roberts	Peter Coiley	Sandra Hutchman
13th	Marie Burrowes	Barbara Greenlees	Colin Bell
20th	Caroline O'Kane	Tom Campbell	Ashlee McCune
27th	Philip Williamson	Dora Hanna	Noel Beattie

FLOWERS IN CHURCH

Thank you to everyone who presented flowers in 2018

The Flower List for 2019 is now open for bookings and we would ask that all existing contributors contact the Parish Office (90 776 706) to confirm their usual Sunday for the coming year. Of course, as there are always some Sundays left available we appeal to new people to come forward and donate flowers, perhaps to mark a particular occasion or anniversary for them. It may be a wedding anniversary, the birth of a child or grandchild, to remember the death of a family member, or indeed as an act of thanksgiving for some notable blessing. All such donors will be acknowledged on the church notice board and in the Parish Notes.



We deeply appreciate all who contribute flowers Sunday by Sunday and also all those who devote so much time and energy in arranging them and looking after them mid-week.



Ladies' Guild

On Tuesday 11th December we will enjoy a festive afternoon at Hillside Garden Centre. We will meet at 2.45pm at the entrance but I hope it will be possible to supply transport from church for as many people as possible. Afternoon tea will be served after which we can enjoy a leisurely browse around the Christmas shop. If you would like to go please see me by no later than 30th November. Further details to be supplied.

On Tuesday 8th January at 2.30pm we will find out a little more about the work of Guide Dogs for the Blind. Hopefully we will have a four-legged friend to help us with this. We will also have a Bring and Buy Sale. If you would like to 'bring and buy' the hall will be open from 2pm for you to browse.

Our meetings are open to everyone. If you would like to attend but don't have transport please speak to me or one of our members after church and we will be happy to arrange a lift for you.

Looking forward to seeing you.

Anne Stewart, Hon Sec (tel 9096 6597)

POPPY APPEAL

This year parishioners donated £118.54 to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

Stanley McDowell

Traidcraft

Due to poor sales recently, sadly Traidcraft have decided to discontinue trading at the end of December. However, I will continue to set up the stall in the new year while stock lasts. As you know Traidcraft promoted fair trade especially in the third world. Fair trade means that the producers of the goods they sell are not exploited but earn a fair wage. If you agree with this principle then I hope you will continue to support it by seeking out fairly traded goods in our supermarkets—they are recognisable by the logo shown above.

A big thank you to all of you who supported the stall in church each month and I trust you will continue to support this worthy cause.

Jill Bradley



Don't forget about



In this run-up to Christmas, more and more of us shop online. In doing so, do you realise you can use easyfundraising to raise funds for our parish?

Over 2,700 well known retailers (including Amazon, John Lewis, eBay and Tesco) will donate a small percentage of what you spend online to our parish to say thank you for shopping with them.

Let's say you wanted to buy a book from Amazon. Instead of going directly to www.amazon.co.uk, you first go to www.easyfundraising.org.uk. From the easyfundraising website, click through to Amazon to make your purchase. This tells Amazon you came from easyfundraising. The price of the book is exactly the same. It costs you absolutely nothing extra, and it can generate a lot of much-needed income for us. Please try it!

Just visit www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stpjbelfast and follow the simple steps to sign up. Thank you.

Ashlee McCune, Hon Treasurer

A WORD OF WARNING

I spotted this sign in the porch of Sherborne Abbey during our recent choir trip:

Dear Visitors,

Welcome to Sherborne Abbey.

*We are delighted that you have come to visit this glorious church,
founded by St Aldhelm in AD 705.*

*It is entirely possible that, whilst you are here, you will sense the
voice of God speaking to you in heart and mind. Listen to Him.*

However, it is unlikely that He will call you on your mobile.

*Please turn off your phones. If you would like to talk to God,
choose a quiet space, talk to Him, and listen for Him in the silence.*

If you want to see Him, send Him a text whilst driving.

Please drive safely this winter.

Anne Cromie

Each year our members vote to support six charities. This year our fifth chosen charity is Connor Diocese Ordination Fund.

CONNOR DIOCESE ORDINATION FUND

Connor Diocese Ordination Fund is managed by the Diocesan Office. This fulfils a number of roles for the Diocese of Connor. Its principal role is to manage the resources of the diocese through budgets, reports and accounts together with controlling its banking and capital assets to enable the Diocesan Council and its committees to be as effective as possible in supporting and developing the church in the Diocese of Connor. The great bulk of diocesan income is received through the General Fund assessment on all parishes. This is a complex mechanism designed to ensure that the cost of sustaining the diocese and its mission is shared proportionally—the stronger parishes contributing more than the weaker. The scheme is based on a rolling triennial assessment of the core income of each of the 94 units which make up the 74 parishes in the diocese.

The Connor Diocese Ordination Fund is used to support Ordinands through their studies at the Church of Ireland Theological College, this is done primarily by providing a book grant to all ordinands from Connor Diocese in each year of their study. Should the fund allow, the Diocese also provides funds to the Bishop to allow presentation of Ordination Bibles to all curates being ordained within Connor Diocese.

The Ordination Fund is invested in the Church of Ireland Trustees with many small donations being invested over the last 60-70 years, but there have also been some larger donations made to the fund particularly in the 1970's.

The training for an ordination takes some time. There are 2 full years of study at college to complete, then a full year out as a deacon intern with a parish (on top of which they must complete their dissertation) at which point they can be ordained a curate and have a further 3 years training under a rector, along with doing Continuing Ministry of Education courses at the Theological Institute.

The number of Ordinands starting training at the Theological Institute has been relatively low over the last few years but the intake has more than doubled this year with 10 commencing training full-time, 3 of which are from Connor Diocese. Support for these along with the part-time students and those in the years above, along with those into the future is much appreciated.

If you would like to support the parish's charitable giving to Connor Diocese Ordination Fund then we encourage you to give cash, or write a cheque payable to "The Parish of St Peter and St James, Belfast", and bring it to church or to the parish office in an envelope marked "Connor Diocese Ordination Fund". Thank you.

Peter Gray

North Belfast Historical Society

Date: Thursday 20th December
Time: 7.30pm for 7.45pm (out by 9pm)
Where: McCollum Minor Hall
Speaker: Jim Ferran
Subjects: Belfast's Original Poor House



Jim Ferran spent 40 years in the health service, retiring as a senior manager in 2016. Jim has a passion for local history. He has been volunteering at the Clifton House for 18 months and regularly leads tours of the house and/or the cemetery. Clifton House is an 18th century grade A listed building, today it gives a 'Georgian Elegance in the Heart of Belfast'. It has been a poor house, a nursing home and an event venue. Clifton House has served Belfast for almost 270 years providing help and shelter.

Date: Thursday 17th January
Time: 7.30pm for 7.45pm (out by 9pm)
Where: McCollum Minor Hall
Speaker: Fr Martin J Magill
Subjects: The Poor Clares



Fr Martin Magill was ordained in 1988 and has served in several parishes. He returned to North Belfast in 2013 where he rekindled his deep interest in the Poor Clares of Belfast. He researched their 88 year history in great depth and his long awaited book was published in June 2018. The monastery was located on the Cliftonville Road from 1926 – 2012. From their arrival in 1924 the nuns became very important to the people of North Belfast and beyond. They had, as has been described as, 'a ministry of listening'. The monastery was a safe place where people of all walks of life, could and did share their burdens.

Do come along to hear these interesting speakers—everyone is welcome.

Margi Crawford

DECEMBER FLOWER LIST

9TH BARBARA JACOBS IN MEMORY OF HER PARENTS
16TH THE CHOIR



JANUARY FLOWER LIST

6TH THE REID FAMILY IN MEMORY OF THEIR PARENTS

Thank you to all who give of their time and effort in beautifying the church with flowers. If possible, flowers should be in keeping with the liturgical colour of the season, particularly during Advent and Lent.

ORGANISATIONS/HALL TIMETABLE

Sunday

9.45am—10.30am Sunday Fellowship
11am—12noon: Sunday School

Monday

7pm Parish Meeting (1st Monday in month)
7.30pm Select Vestry (3rd Monday in month)
8pm—11pm: Badminton Club

Tuesday

10.30am—12.30pm: Crafty Goodness
2.30pm—4.30pm: Ladies' Guild (2nd Tuesday in month)
6pm—7pm: Beaver Scouts
7pm—8pm: Cub Scouts

Wednesday

2pm—4pm: Bridge Club
6.30pm—7.45pm: PhysioPilates
7.30pm—9pm: Choir

Thursday

6pm—7pm: Rainbows
7pm—8pm: Brownies
7.30pm—9pm: Thursday Fellowship (every week except 3rd in month)
7.45pm—9.30pm: Historical Society (3rd Thursday in month)
8pm—9.30pm: Guides and Senior Guides

Friday

10.30am—11.45am: PhysioPilates
11.30am—12.30pm: Friday Fellowship (1st and 3rd Friday in month)
4pm—8pm: Speech and Drama

*For more information on the parish organisations (including term dates)
please contact the appropriate personnel listed on the back page
or the Parish Secretary.*

PASTORAL CARE

If you would like to arrange for the Rector to visit you at home, whether to share your anxieties in confidence, for spiritual advice, for prayer, or for Holy Communion, then please contact him on 90 777 053. This is an essential part of his ministry and he will be pleased to visit you and help in whatever way he can.

If the Rector is unavailable, there will be contact details for other clergy on the answer machine.

If you or a loved one is seriously ill, particularly if you are admitted to hospital, please inform the Rector. He often visits the hospitals but has no way of knowing who has been admitted unless he is informed. If you are visited by a hospital chaplain and they ask if you would like your Rector to visit, please say “yes” and he will gladly come to see you.

Parish Notes On-line

There are full colour versions of Parish Notes on our website.
Visit www.stpeters.connor.anglican.org and click on “Parish Notes”.

The next meeting of the Select Vestry will take place on Monday 21st January at 7.30pm. The next Parish Meeting, to which all parishioners are invited, will take place on Monday 7th February at 7pm.

PARISHIONER CONTACT DETAILS

For speed of communication and to keep our records up to date please send your email address to Anne Cromie at stpeterandstjames@outlook.com. Also please don't forget to let us know if you move house, change your telephone number or change your email address.

Holy Dusters Cleaning Rota

3rd Dec—8th Dec -----	Group 8
10th Dec—15th Dec -----	Group 1
17th Dec—22nd Dec -----	Group 2
24th Dec—29th Dec -----	Group 3
31st Dec—5th Jan -----	Group 4
7th Jan—12th Jan -----	Group 5
14th Jan—19th Jan -----	Group 6
21st Jan—26th Jan -----	Group 7
28th Jan—2nd Feb -----	Group 8

*Please send material for the February issue of Parish Notes to:
Anne Cromie, Parish Office, St Peter's Church,
Fortwilliam Drive, Belfast BT15 4EB
or email: stpeterandstjames@outlook.com
by Monday 21st January. Thank you.*