

THE PARISH OF ST PETER AND ST JAMES
BELFAST

PARISH NOTES

NOVEMBER 2021

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

*Stonemason, Tim Fulford, working on the
Victory Window in the south transept*

GOD . LOVING . PEOPLE

RECTOR'S NOTES

SERVICES IN NOVEMBER

Our 10am Sunday services continue throughout the month, with a Family Service (7th November), Holy Communion (14th), Morning Prayer (21st), and Holy Communion (28th).

At 11am on Sundays, we have two special services this month. There will be an Act of Remembrance on Remembrance Sunday, 14th November, at which the names of parishioners from St Peter's and St James' will be read aloud. Our Advent Carol Service will be held on the First Sunday of Advent, 28th November.



MINISTRY TO THE HOUSEBOUND

It is a source of great joy to me that I will be able to celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion with parishioners who cannot come to St Peter's to receive it.

If you are permanently unable to leave your home without assistance, and would therefore like me to bring Holy Communion to you, then please let me know by email or telephone as soon as possible. I need this information to update my own records, and this updated list will determine who receives Holy Communion at home in the run-up to Christmas.

You can email me at **brianlacey@stpeterbelfast.org** or telephone **90777053**. If you need such a visit, then please make sure to inform me before the end of November, as I will need to make arrangements to visit the housebound in two local vacant parishes as well (see below).

RURAL DEANERY

The parishes of St Paul & St Barnabas and Mallusk both continue to be vacant (that is: without an ordained minister of their own). St Paul & St Barnabas has been vacant for a full year, and Mallusk has been vacant for four months. As Rural Dean, it's my responsibility to manage vacant parishes in north Belfast and Newtownabbey until such time as the Bishop makes an appointment. At the most basic level, this means charring meetings of the Select Vestry, and responding to pastoral crises, such as arranging (or indeed conducting) funerals. I'm pleased to say that efforts are being made to appoint ministers in these vacant parishes, but clergy are increasingly hard to come by and there is no guarantee that anyone will be appointed soon. For me personally, there are not enough hours in the day to give these parishes the attention that they need, without forfeiting some of my duties in my own parish. But more worrying than that, parishes with extended periods of vacancy can often find it difficult to recover, as parishioners begin to drift away and there is a pervading sense of uncertainty about the future. Please do pray for these two parishes, that the activity of the Holy Spirit would lead to the right appointments being made as quickly as possible.

SPECIAL COLLECTION

If you have received a hard copy of these Parish Notes, then you should have also received a Special Collection envelope tucked inside. So far this year, we have spent around £12,500 more than we have raised through our regular income. This is fairly typical of our finances in recent years, but it hasn't been helped by our inability to organise fundraising events during the pandemic. On behalf the Select Vestry, could I please appeal to you to give generously to this Special Collection—in addition to examining your regular Free Will Offering and seeing if there is any possibility of increasing your offering to the Church.

If you have not received a Special Collection envelope, then you can make a donation by cash or cheque in any envelope, so long as you write “Special Collection” on it. If you’re very savvy with online banking, then you can also arrange a BACS transfer using the following information, specifying “Special Collection” as the reference.

BANK: **Danske**

SORT CODE: **95 01 21**

ACCOUNT NAME: **St Peter/St James**

ACCOUNT NUMBER: **31037609**

PASTORAL CARE

The word “pastor” means “shepherd”, and “pastoral care” is therefore a poetic reference to guiding, protecting, and nurturing a community of Christians in the same way that a shepherd tends his sheep. The good shepherd is, of course, our Lord Jesus himself, and ultimately he is the one to whom we must all turn for pastoral care. But, he shares this ministry with his Church, who must act as his hands, feet, and voice.

At the most basic level, all Christians are involved in the pastoral care of other people, in the sense that everyone is called by God to take an interest in the welfare of others. But pastoral care should go beyond asking “How are you?”—as important as that is. Nurturing each other spiritually requires us to ask “How are you *with God*?”

Now, all Christians can ask and answer that question, but sometimes it’s important that such a conversation be couched in an understanding of the fundamental doctrines of apostolic theology. If that last sentence has left you scratching your head, then don’t panic; that’s precisely why—following their calling by God and their affirmation by the Church—individuals are trained in theology and ordained to serve in a Christian community. We call such individuals “ministers”.

As an ordained minister, one of my functions within the Church is to discuss—in private—your journey of faith, and to ask “how

are you with God?” But although I would love everyone to say “Great!” in response, I know it’s more likely that many people will be struggling with some aspect of the Christian faith, or with their perception of God, or their awareness of his presence, or their willingness to be obedient to his commandments. As strange as it may be, I would much rather that you are honest with me about the state of your faith, rather than trying to tell me what you think I want to hear. Please understand that my role is not to assess your faith, but to journey with you and—if necessary—to point you back towards Jesus.

As always, please do contact me by email or telephone if you would like to arrange to talk.

However, we do also have a dedicated team of lay ministers (who are members of the congregation) who keep in telephone contact with parishioners, particularly those who are temporarily or permanently housebound. If you would like to be added to the list of those who receive such calls, then please speak to either myself or to Dora Hanna, the Coordinator of Lay Pastoral Ministry.

STONEMASON

It’s worth bearing in mind that much of our church is just over 121 years old, and the Scrabo stone—as beautiful as it is—is very susceptible to weathering. A while ago, one expert told me that the building might last only another couple of hundred years before crumbling to dust if nothing was ever done to preserve it. Well, I’m glad to say that our Select Vestry is pro-active in ensuring that St Peter’s continues to exist as a place of worship for generations yet to come.

You might have seen someone up a ladder in the grounds of the church at various times this year. That person was Tim Fulford, a stonemason hired by the parish to repair some of the damaged stone on the exterior and interior of the building. Even if you didn’t see him at work, then you might have noticed the scaffolding in the south transept (see front cover).

I'm pleased to say that the National Churches Trust "Treasure Ireland" grant scheme has paid for 50% of the costs of the work carried out so far, but there is more to come. So whilst we will of course continue to look for funding, much of the cost will have to come from parish funds, and that means from our parishioners. If you would like to make a contribution to the stonework repairs, then please do so by cash, cheque or BACS transfer. Thank you.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEAD WORSHIP?

Once upon a time, you needed to be an ordained minister (with a clerical collar and "Rev'd" prefixed to your name) in order to lead worship. That changed quite a while ago with the introduction of Readers. Not to be confused with Lectors (who read the Bible during a service of worship), a Reader is a lay person who has been called by God, selected for training, and licensed by the Bishop to lead services of Morning Prayer and to preach. Technically, such a person is referred to as a Diocesan Lay Reader, and it's important to note that they lead services and preach in parishes throughout the diocese, although they tend to serve in their own home parish more often than not. More recently, Parish Readers have been appointed as well. These individuals are not permitted to preach sermons, and so their training is more focussed on how to lead services, than on theology.

Before Covid-19, we had three Parish Readers in St Peter's: David Cromie, Forde Patterson, and Tony Swan. Each of them either assisted me during worship, or else led a simple service in my absence. Very sadly, Tony died in December 2020, and in recent months, Forde has decided to retire. Let me pay tribute to both Tony and Forde for being willing—and exceptionally able—to fulfil this role. David, of course, continues to serve, and many of you will recognise him as my sidekick at 11am on Sunday mornings.

Now that Church activities are normalising, it's time for us to discern the will of God and to see who he is calling to a leadership

role within our worship. In addition to Parish Readers (who may lead Morning Prayer), and Diocesan Lay Readers (who may lead and preach), there is also the very recently introduced role of Ordained Local Minister. This last position not only entitles a person to lead and preach, but also to celebrate Holy Communion and indeed to perform any other duty that you might associate with ordained ministers.

If you're interested in exploring any of these roles, then please talk to me. If you're hesitant or scared, then remember that nobody is born wearing a cassock and surplice. I had to take my own rector aside one day and tell him I was interested in ordained ministry, and he then guided me through the next steps. So, if you feel God calling you to some form of leadership in the Church, then let's have a chat about it.

HARVEST DONATIONS

It is wonderful to see the generosity of parishioners each year, as we collect various products for the Welcome Organisation. It is particularly appropriate that we do so at Harvest, when we give thanks to God for all that we have. Such gratitude should always spur us on to help those with genuine needs in our community. So, thank you to all who offered something to help those who are amongst the most vulnerable and impoverished in our society.



FLOWERS

In addition to donations of products for the homeless, the church was beautifully adorned with flowers, fruit, and vegetables for Harvest. Thank you to all who contributed and arranged them. Going forward, if you would like to supply flowers for church services, please contact Anne Cromie our Parish Administrator to book an available date, and then, if you would like help with, or advice about, the floral arrangements, please contact Sandra Davison, our Coordinator of Church Flowers.

There are four basic rules when it comes to flowers in church.

- Flowers may not sit in front of the stone carving behind the Communion Table. However, smaller arrangements on either side of the sculpture are permitted, so long as they do not cause an obstruction to the person celebrating Holy Communion.
- Flowers at the chancel steps should not be so tall that they obscure the view of anyone sitting at the Prayer Desks.
- The colour of the flowers should be, as far as possible, consistent with the liturgical season. This means bright colours (particularly white) during Christmas, Epiphany, and Easter, which would not be appropriate during the penitential seasons of Advent and Lent. From July until November (during Ordinary Time in the Church's calendar) flowers can be of whatever colour you choose!
- Traditionally, flowers are not displayed in church for most weeks during Advent and Lent, although there are two exceptions to this: the Fourth Sunday in Lent (Laetere Sunday) and the Third Sunday in Advent (Gaudete Sunday). I acknowledge, however, that you may wish to provide flowers in memory of someone during these weeks, and I am always willing to find a compromise. In such cases, flowers may be placed on the chancel steps or at the back of the church (but not beside the Communion Table), and these should be more muted in colour than at other times of year. If in doubt, please do talk to me about this, and we'll see what can be done.

Men's Breakfast

The first 'Men's Breakfast' will be held at 9.30am on Saturday, 20th November at the church hall. Unsurprisingly, the breakfast will be a fry-up for those so inclined, with toast and cereal for those minding their cholesterol. The focus will be on enjoying each other's company over a meal, but we will also discuss how we might develop a regular breakfast slot which will be informative, even educational and, above all, fun.



So, ring or text me on 07547 510698 or email davidcromie@stpeterbelfast.org (I need to know how many sausages to buy), make excuses to friends and family about 'serious business' down at St Peter's and bring an appetite.

See you there.

David Cromie



The Parish of St Peter and St James, Belfast

SPECIAL COLLECTION

November 2021

As some of you will be reading this online rather than a hard copy, you won't have received the Special Collection envelope that is included in this issue of Parish Notes. So, in that case, you are invited to leave a donation in the box at the back of the church, using any envelope marked with your name and "Special Collection". Alternatively, you might wish to do a bank transfer (Sort Code 95-01-21, Account Number 31037609) and, if so, it would be helpful if you would insert "Special Collection" in the reference field. Thank you.

Ashlee McCune, Honorary Treasurer

Parish Notes On-line

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

AN EXCITING NEW CLASS AT ST PETER'S

Tai Chi Classes will begin in the main hall on Monday 8th November from 11.30am to 12.30pm. Tai Chi combines deep breathing and relaxation with flowing movements. Originally developed in 13th-century China, Tai Chi is now practised around the world as a health-promoting exercise.

Studies have shown that Tai Chi can help people to reduce stress, improve posture, balance and general mobility, and increase muscle strength in the legs.

The class is suitable for people of all abilities including complete beginners. Each class costs £8 or a block of 6 classes is £40. To book your place please contact Joe on 07890 087678.

Each session includes breathing exercises to help reduce anxiety and promote better sleep and mindfulness techniques to reduce stress.

No special equipment is needed and all exercises can be done standing or seated. Each participant is invited to wear loose, comfortable clothing.

TAI CHI CLASS GENTLE EXERCISE FOR MIND, BODY & SOUL

Mondays at 11.30am in the main hall
(starts 8th November)



**SIMPLE
EXERCISES TO
HELP YOU
RELAX AND
SLEEP BETTER**

**£8 PER CLASS
OR £40 FOR
6 CLASSES**

SUITABLE FOR EVERYONE INCLUDING BEGINNERS

For more information contact Joe on 07890 087678

PARISH REGISTER

Christian Burial

"At rest in the Lord."

Paule Cole

Cremation at Roselawn Cemetery

on 6th October 2021

Pause for Thought and Prayer

by Rosemary Johnston

On being too early at the Bus Stop

Some time ago I arrived too early at the bus stop, (near the Abbey Centre). At first I was annoyed at having to wait, but, instead of fretting and moaning I decided to take in my surroundings. To my right stood Marks & Spencer, so white, so clean, so new, and below it passed the traffic, on and on and on, going who knows where, always noisy, always busy. Then I turned to my left and there sat Cavehill, looking so majestic, high above and away from the cold, hard, metal warehouses across the road. Huge white clouds sailed over it as if in acknowledgement of its majesty. Then the sun shone down on it lighting up its grandeur, the trees lower down just beginning to show their autumn colours. And every now and then, just for a moment, the relentless traffic faded into the background and all was still, only for it to start up again and the spell was broken. The bus soon arrived and I was on my way, but because I was too early at the bus stop I did have 'time to stand and stare'. Cavehill has sat there watching over us since time immemorial and it will still be there long, long after we are gone.

Heavenly Father, bless us, we pray, with those precious moments of calm and balm to help us see a clearer path through our difficulties and to give thanks and glory to you for your help and guidance.

***Please send material for the December/January issue of Parish Notes to:
Anne Cromie, Parish Administrator, St Peter's Church,
Fortwilliam Drive, Belfast BT15 4EB
or email: annecromie@stpeterbelfast.org
by Monday 22nd November. Thank you.***

PARISH CONTACTS

Rector:	The Rev'd Brian Lacey	90 777 053	brianlacey@stpeterbelfast.org
Parish Administrator:	Mrs Anne Cromie	90 776 706	annecromie@stpeterbelfast.org
Organist and Choir Master:	Mr Robert Thompson	25 631 505	marlaghodge@gmail.com
Honorary Assistant Priest:	Rev'd Dr Ken Houston	90 771 830	skhouston43@gmail.com
Ministry Assistant:	Mrs Sarah Coates	07734 850060	sarahcoates@stpeterbelfast.org
Ministry Assistant:	Mr David Cromie	90 775 669	davidcromie@stpeterbelfast.org
Rector's Churchwarden:	Miss Daphne McClements	07730 127350	daphnemcclements@stpeterbelfast.org
People's Churchwarden:	Mrs Dora Hanna	95 733 374	dorahanna@stpeterbelfast.org
Sacristans:	Mr Adam Alexander	07736 736870	adam.rae@hotmail.co.uk
	Mrs Rosemary Johnston	90 840 534	
	Mrs Heather Swan	90 849 400	swanarshms@talk21.com
Co-ordinator for Intercessors:	Mrs Rosemary Johnston	90 840 534	
Co-ordinator for Lectors:	Mrs Sandra Hutchman	95 149 564	sehutchman@hotmail.com
Co-ordinator for Flowers:	Mrs Sandra Davison	94 439 230	sbdavison@hotmail.com
Rector's Glebewarden:	Mr Victor Davis	90 771 197	davisvictor9@aol.com
People's Glebewarden:	Mr Quinlin Mulligan	07597 136805	
Honorary Secretary:	Mrs Yvonne Crozier	07525 134947	yvonnecrozier@stpeterbelfast.org
Honorary Treasurer:	Mrs Ashlee McCune	95 739 988	ashleemcune@hotmail.com
FWO & Gift Aid Secretary:	Mr Noel Beattie	90 778 428	noelbeatie@stpeterbelfast.org
Badminton:	Mr Harold Jacobs	90 779 945	harold.jacobs@binternet.com
Beaver Scouts:	Miss Caroline Oliver	07702 208528	carolinemoliver@icloud.com
Bridge:	Mrs Florrie Greer	90 776 812	florriegreer@gmail.com
Brownie Guides:	Mrs Lee Kennedy	90 772 023	lee_kennedy@binternet.com
Cub Scouts:	Mr Graham Foster	07813 945840	graham.f@ntworld.com
Crafty Goodness:	Miss Daphne McClements	07730 127350	daffernmcclements@binternet.com
Guides & Senior Guides:	Mrs Lee Kennedy	90 772 023	lee_kennedy@binternet.com
Rainbow Guides:	Mrs Lee Kennedy	90 772 023	lee_kennedy@binternet.com
Scouts:	Mrs Valerie Gibson	90 772 699	gibsonvalerie01@gmail.com
Walking Group:	Mrs Jill Bradley	90 842 998	jill.bradley1@binternet.com

Produced by the Parish Office of St Peter and St James, Belfast

www.stpeters.connor.anglican.org www.facebook.com/stpeterbelfast

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