


THE PARISH OF ST PETER AND ST JAMES, BELFAST

PARISH NOTES

DECEMBER 2022/JANUARY 2023

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



OUR GLORIOUS DEAD, 1914-1918	
FRANCIS WALET OF LEONARD 29 April 1916	ROBERT KELLY POLLEN 31 July 1917
LAWFORD BURNE CAMPBELL 1 July 1916	WILLIAM SHIELDS 5 September 1917
ERIC HILTON STEWART 16 July 1916	EDWARD LAWSON McDONALD 23 November 1917
JOHN MEHAFFEY 14 March 1917	THOMAS CHERDY 14 December 1917
STUART SIMON FAUSSETT 31 July 1917	JOSEPH GREER 14 December 1917
JAMES THOMPSON ROBINSON 8 September 1918	
"THEIR NAME LIVETH FOR EVERMORE"	

*Daphne McClements
and
Mark Sterling
on Remembrance Sunday*

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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".



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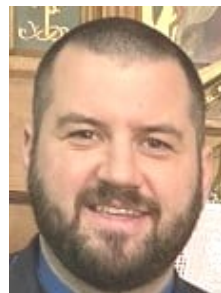


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RECTOR'S NOTES



SEASON'S GREETINGS

May I wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year! This is a time of mixed feelings for many people, but I hope and pray that we always remember what we are celebrating: The coming of God into the world as our Saviour Jesus Christ. Could I please encourage you to make every effort to gather as a Christian family in St Peter's on Christmas Eve (11pm) or Christmas Day (11am). It would be wonderful for us to celebrate together.

SERVICES IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY

Our **10am Sunday services** will pause for much of December and January, but there will be the Christingle Service on 4th December, and Holy Communion on 11th December. The 10am Sunday services will resume on a weekly basis again from the beginning of February.

The liturgical pattern of our **11am Sunday services** will change slightly because of Christmas and the subsequent holiday period. There will be Holy Communion on the 4th December, 25th December, 1st January, and 15th January. Morning Prayer is on the 11th December, 8th January, and 22nd January. There will also be our Nativity Service on the 18th December, and our Candlemas Service on 29th January.

We will have **6pm Sunday services** on the first three Sundays of December: Choral Evensong on the 4th, Compline on the 11th, and our Blue Christmas Service on the 18th.

10.30am Wednesday services continue as normal, although there will be Morning Prayer instead of Holy Communion during the first week of Christmas.

Our traditional service of **Nine Lessons & Carols** will be at 7.30pm on Monday 19th December, and there will be **Midnight Communion** at 11pm on Christmas Eve.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

I am extremely grateful to Cheryl Hurson for leading **Kids' Church** at 10am on Sunday mornings. Following the Christmas holidays, this will resume in February. If you would like to help to lead or assist, then please do speak to either Cheryl or myself.

Our **Christingle Service** will be at 10am on Sunday 4th December, and we will be making the Christingles during the service itself. This is our Family Service, so please do make sure to bring children of all ages.

At 11am on Sunday 18th December, we will have our **Nativity Service**. As in recent years, this will be a mixture of pre-recorded video segments and live action. Any children are welcome to join in, so I will be contacting parents very soon in order to arrange this. If you haven't heard from me, and would like your children to be included, then please speak to me before Sunday 11th December.

BROADCAST SERVICES

When we first began to broadcast our services on Youtube, the web address was a cumbersome list of random numbers and letters. Thankfully, it has now been simplified. You can watch all of our recorded services at [youtube.com/@stpeterbelfast](https://www.youtube.com/@stpeterbelfast).

If you have a Google account, you can subscribe to our Youtube channel. This costs nothing, and it will notify you whenever a new service is broadcast.

BURIAL REGISTER

Every year on All Saints' Day, I read aloud the list of those associated with St Peter's whose funerals have been conducted during the previous twenty-four months. This year we remembered:

Lyllah Hodges (buried on 5th November 2020)

David Gooding (26th November 2020)

Billy Ginn (23rd December 2020)

Tony Swan (30th December 2020)

Peter Gray (13th August 2021)

Rosemary Hinds (3rd September 2021)

Sarah McIvor (14th September 2021)

Paule Cole (6th October 2021)

Susan Saville (17th November 2021)

Barbara Cornett (25th November 2021)

Alexander Johnston (1st March 2022)

Siobhan Spratt (29th April 2022)

Alfie Tate (4th June 2022)

Geraldine Amruth (10th June 2022)

Maureen Ginn (29th July 2022)

Derrick Macrae (29th September 2022).

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Occasionally referred to as "The Longest Night", some churches have held this service on or close to the Winter Solstice. It is a simple act of worship with comforting readings and a verse or two of a few traditional Christmas carols. This is an alternative to the busyness and excitement of our other Christmas services, and it is particularly intended for those who are bereaved. Please do join us. There will be an opportunity to light a candle in memory of your loved ones. The service will be at 6pm on Sunday 18th December.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

I am sure it is never easy to listen to a long list of names being read aloud, but reading the names of the Fallen is a privilege which I never take lightly. Each name was a person who loved and who was loved, and although we cannot put a face to most of them any longer, we undertook a solemn vow to “remember them”. As should be the case, our Remembrance Sunday services are always dignified and reverential, and I am grateful to Samuel Cromie for presenting the flag, and to Dora Hanna and David Cromie, and Daphne McClements and Mark Sterling (see front cover) for laying the wreaths. For quite a number of years – certainly throughout my time as Rector – Mark has accompanied his mother Joyce to our Act of Remembrance. This year, sadly, Joyce died just a couple of weeks beforehand, and I’m sure Mark keenly felt her absence.

BELFAST: A VIEW OF THE CITY

One of our choristers, Derek Gallop, has edited a book of photographs which shows the sites, life, and culture of Belfast. It is a large, beautifully presented book, which he is offering to parishioners for only £5 – which is well below what I reckon it is worth. If you would like to buy a copy, please speak to Derek directly, or to Anne Cromie in the parish office. It would make an excellent Christmas gift for anyone who lives here, or perhaps for those in far-flung places who remember the city fondly.

THE KINGSHIP OF CHRIST

You only need to look at the fact that Jesus was crucified, to recognise that Christianity in its earliest days was not popular. It took the next hundred years after the crucifixion, for the Church to spread west, all around the Mediterranean, and east into Arabia and India. But even then, Christians were a persecuted minority.

It's amazing therefore to think that within only a few hundred more years, the Church had become a very politically influential and wealthy organisation. Indeed, you could easily argue that by a thousand years after the Crucifixion, the Christian Church had become the most powerful and dominant organisation that has ever existed on the face of this planet.

Now, you might be pleased that Christian values were therefore able to shape the culture of – certainly – the western world. The Church took the initiative in developing education, health care, and social services. And Christians have been to the fore in social justice, not least in the abolition of slavery. But the Church, over the last two millennia, has also involved itself in some shady business. Its power attracted people who lust for power. Its wealth attracted the greedy. Religious fanatics within it killed an unimaginable number of people, whether in the Crusades, or through the Spanish Inquisition, or in Witch Trials, or the persecution of Jews, or clashes between protestants and roman catholics all over Europe, not least of course here in Northern Ireland.

The old saying, “power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely” applies as much to the Church as to any other organisation. The more dominant the Church, or a faction of the Church, became – the more that dominance has been expressed through subjugating and suppressing the people who disagree with it. It is that dark side of Christianity that we must always be wary of.

It's a darkness that has been there since the very beginning. Think of Judas Iscariot. He is best known for betraying Jesus, but prior to that, the gospels record that he was a thief, who would steal from the little purse of money which the disciples used to pay for their provisions. Think also of James and John. Unlike Judas, we describe these two disciples as “saints” and yet the gospels record that they longed for power – to sit at the left hand and right hand of Jesus when his kingdom was established. Look even at St Peter, who took a sword and cut off the ear of

one of the men sent to arrest Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. He probably would have done worse than if Jesus had not intervened.

Violence, greed, and a thirst for power, have always existed within the Church. Because although the Church is a divine, holy institution, it is nevertheless entirely composed of human beings – with all our faults and frailties and vices.

It's interesting that although James and John desired to sit at the left and right hand of Jesus when he established his kingdom, it was two criminals who received that honour. Although by our human reckoning, it was a perverse kind of honour. They were crucified, one to the left of Jesus, and one to the right. Unlike the twelve disciples, it was these two criminals who accompanied Jesus through the final hours of his earthly life. The three of them together suffered the same excruciating agony, as they slowly died, side by side, on a Cross.

They were, in their own strange way, a microcosm of the Christian Church. Both criminals recognised Jesus in their midst as the Messiah. And yet their individual responses to the divinity of Jesus was markedly different. One sought to use the power of God at work in Jesus to save himself. "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself, and us." The other perceived that salvation went much further than simply coming down from the Cross and carrying on with life as usual on earth. Somehow, he knew that Jesus needed to die on the Cross, in order to offer us something much greater than anything this fleeting world can give. "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

For anyone standing at the foot of the Cross, hearing this exchange, they must have looked up at Jesus, pierced through his wrists and feet, struggling to breathe, growing weaker and weaker each second – and they must have wondered, "what on earth could that kingdom be?" "How is this tortured and dying man, a king?"

A few decades later, when St Paul was writing one of his letters to the Christians in the Greek city of Corinth, he described the death

of Jesus on the Cross as “a stumbling block to the Jews, and foolishness to the Gentiles.” In other words, to the average onlooker, the Crucifixion makes no sense. And yet, despite that, Paul declared, “we proclaim Christ crucified.” That suffering and death of Jesus, that absolute poverty, absolute powerlessness, absolute selflessness, is the only way to understand the true nature of what Christianity is about. It’s summed up in another verse from St Paul’s letters, in which he explains: “God’s power is made perfect in weakness.”

It shouldn’t come as a surprise to us, then, that the Church was so full of life and growth in its earliest days when it was at its most weak – or, indeed, that the Church seems now to be in decline after hundreds of years of decadence and power. But let’s look on the bright side: we are once again becoming weak. And although you might think that’s an odd thing to be pleased about, it really isn’t.

I’ve laboured the point in my sermons in recent months that the Exile to Babylon – rather than destroying Judaism – actually galvanised it; strengthened it; refocussed it. Sometimes we all need to rid ourselves of all the religious baggage that we accumulate, and rediscover the very heart of what it means to be a child of God.

And at its heart, Christianity is about giving. Using our resources to help others in need. Giving hope to those in despair. Showing compassion to those who feel unloved. Extending the hand of friendship to those who feel alone.

We must give, and give, and give. That has to be our attitude, both as a Christian Church, and as individual Christians within it. And only in giving do we receive our reward. That’s where we’ll see growth in our own lives, and in the pews each Sunday: when we recognise that God is most powerfully at work through us, when we seek nothing for ourselves, and instead we seek to feed the hungry, empower the marginalised, pray for those who hate us, and proclaim the free gift of eternal life. This is the heart of the kingship of Jesus Christ.

SERVICES IN DECEMBER	OFFICIANT	LECTOR	PREACHER	INTERCESSOR
SUNDAY 4TH DECEMBER—THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (PURPLE)				
10am Christingle Service	Rector	Dora Hanna	Rector	Henry George
11am Holy Communion 2	Rector	David Cromie	Rector	David Cromie
6pm Choral Evensong 1	David Cromie	Daphne McClements	-	David Cromie
WEDNESDAY 7TH DECEMBER—ADVENT (PURPLE)				
10.30am Holy Communion 2	Rector	Rector	Rector	Rosemary Johnston
SUNDAY 11TH DECEMBER—THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (PURPLE)				
10am Holy Communion 2	Rector	Quintin Mulligan	Rector	Daphne McClements
11am Morning Prayer 2	Rector	David Cromie	Rev'd Andrew Irwin	David Cromie
6pm Compline	Rev'd Mellissa Jeffers	Rev'd Mellissa Jeffers	Rev'd Mellissa Jeffers	Rev'd Mellissa Jeffers
WEDNESDAY 14TH DECEMBER—ADVENT (PURPLE)				
10.30am Holy Communion 2	Rector	Rector	Rector	Daphne McClements
SUNDAY 18TH DECEMBER—THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (PURPLE)				
11am Nativity Service	Rector	-	-	Dora Hanna
6pm Blue Christmas Service	Rector	Rector	David Cromie	Rector
MONDAY 19TH DECEMBER—ADVENT (PURPLE)				
7.30pm Nine Lessons & Carols	Rector	Nine Lectors	-	Rector
WEDNESDAY 21ST DECEMBER—ADVENT (PURPLE)				
10.30am Holy Communion 2	Rector	Rector	Rector	Timothy Wilson
SATURDAY 24TH DECEMBER—CHRISTMAS EVE (WHITE)				
11pm Holy Communion 1	Rector	David Cromie	Rector	David Cromie
SUNDAY 25TH DECEMBER—CHRISTMAS DAY (WHITE)				
11am Holy Communion 2	Rector	Rector	Rector	Rector
WEDNESDAY 28TH DECEMBER—THE HOLY INNOCENTS—CHRISTMAS (WHITE)				
10.30am Morning Prayer	Dora Hanna	Quintin Mulligan	-	Daphne McClements

SERVICES IN JANUARY	OFFICIANT	LECTOR	PREACHER	INTERCESSOR
SUNDAY 1ST JANUARY—THE NAMING AND CIRCUMCISION OF JESUS—CHRISTMAS (WHITE)				
11am Holy Communion 2	Rev'd Mellissa Jeffers	Daphne McClements	Rev'd Mellissa Jeffers	Rev'd Mellissa Jeffers
WEDNESDAY 4TH JANUARY—CHRISTMAS (WHITE)				
10.30am Holy Communion 2	Rev'd Andrew Irwin	Rev'd Andrew Irwin	Rev'd Andrew Irwin	Rev'd Andrew Irwin
SUNDAY 8TH JANUARY—THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY (WHITE)				
11am Morning Prayer 2	Graham Chipperfield	Dora Hanna	Graham Chipperfield	Graham Chipperfield
WEDNESDAY 11TH JANUARY—EPIPHANYTIDE (WHITE)				
10.30am Holy Communion 2	Rector	Rector	Rector	Jill Bradley
SUNDAY 15TH JANUARY—THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY (WHITE)				
11am Holy Communion 2	Rector	David Cromie	Rector	David Cromie
WEDNESDAY 18TH JANUARY—EPIPHANYTIDE (WHITE)				
10.30am Holy Communion	Rector	Rector	Rector	Marie Burrowes
SUNDAY 22ND JANUARY—THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY (WHITE)				
11am Morning Prayer 2	Rector	David Cromie	Rector	David Cromie
WEDNESDAY 25TH JANUARY—THE CONVERSION OF SAINT PAUL—EPIPHANYTIDE (WHITE)				
10.30am Holy Communion 2	Rector	Rector	Rector	Quintin Mulligan
SUNDAY 29TH JANUARY—CANDLEMAS—EPIPHANYTIDE (WHITE)				
11am Candlemas Service	Rector	Rector	Rector	David Cromie

Of Bacon and the Water of Life

by David Cromie

Yes folks, your gallant heroes, armed only with knives and forks, did the parish proud in removing a pile of sausages, bacon and all the trimmings on Saturday, 12th November. A goodly crowd turned up, some old hands, well experienced at this sort of thing, and one or two new ones—Rowan Crozier brought along his big brother, dad and grandfather and, at six weeks old, became the youngest ‘man’ to face my cooking: in truth, faced with a sausage and a heap of mushrooms, his courage failed him and he stuck to a liquid diet.



As ever, the early arrivers sauntered into the kitchen and lent a hand. Between the throng and the cooking, there came a point where we realised we were rapidly running out of oxygen and could hardly see each other and had to open the back door to let in some air.

The craic was mighty, even theological! We covered such topics as the translation of Gaelic words, the etymological roots of whisky, raki and vodka, the joys of south Tyrone and whether Anglicans are actually protestants—the jury is still out on this last one. Quintin told us about the time he had the honour of meeting President Ford, or was it the other way round?

Rector came too late for the grub, but in perfect time to help with the washing up, and with a few hands on deck, we tidied up in a manner we think/hope the ladies might approve of.

My thanks to all who came along, to Quintin for setting up the Minor Hall and, as ever, to Sam for his mastery of the frying pans. There will be another breakfast for the boys in the New Year, and hopefully we will be joined by some more gallant souls desperate to quit a healthy lifestyle. Dear knows where the conversation will go on that occasion.

PARISH REGISTER

Christian Burial

"At rest in the Lord."

Joyce Sterling

Cremation at Roselawn on 3rd November 2022

Holy Baptism

"Born again of water and the Holy Spirit ..."

Rowan Colin Crozier

son of Aaron and Yvonne Crozier

on 20th November 2022



**The Rector along with
Aaron and Yvonne Crozier
after Rowan's baptism.**



**Lots of fun was had at our
Hallowe'en Party!**

**Thank you to all our volunteer cleaners
and gardeners—the church and grounds
are looking splendid!**

Prayer

If you would like your name added to our prayer list please get in touch with Rosemary Johnston or Daphne McClements.

Contact details on back cover.



North Belfast Historical Society

Date: Thursday 15th December

Time: 7.30pm

Where: Minor Hall

Subject: What happened before the grouping: the tribulations of two Victorian railway companies.

Speaker: David Cromie



Everyone is very welcome to come along to what promises to be a very interesting evening.

Daphne McClements, Chairman

PARISHIONER CONTACT DETAILS

For speed of communication and to keep our records up to date please send your email address to the Parish Office at:

annecromie@stpeterbelfast.org

Also please don't forget to let us know if you move house, change any of your telephone numbers or your email address. Thank you.

Thank you

A big thank you to all our distributors (*Noel and Annette Beattie, Marie Burrowes, Anne Cromie, Peter and Joan Gallagher, Wes Holmes, Rosemary Johnston and Hilary Shields*) who regularly go out delivering Parish Notes and other correspondence in all weathers. It saves us a lot on postage and helps those parishioners who cannot attend services to keep in touch with what's going on. You are very much appreciated.



In the event of a pastoral emergency when the Rector is on his Christmas holidays, please get in touch with The Rev'd Andrew Irwin—contact details on back cover.

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PAUSE FOR THOUGHT AND PRAYER

by Rosemary Johnston

In the Bleak Midwinter

Christmas is coming and the busyness and excitement (or dread) mount up—what to get for Jane or John or what can we afford to put on the table. And in all the fuss and panic over the shopping and preparations for the Big Day do we miss the very reason we have celebrations at all—the birth of Jesus, God’s Son, the most important gift of all? However, others have a different concern—where am I going to sleep tonight—is there a doorway to shelter in from the wind and rain and the bitter cold? People end up homeless for many different reasons. Yes, tragically, there are those who are addicted to drink or drugs or have been put out of their own homes for one reason or another. Others may no longer be able to pay the rent, perhaps having fallen on hard times—maybe losing their jobs; I knew a couple many years ago who had to sleep in the car. On 18th August the Belfast Telegraph reported that in 2021/22, 1,380 renters were made homeless after their rented accommodation was sold—an increase of 117% on the 636 recorded the previous year. The paper also reported that the total number of people presenting as homeless after losing their private accommodation because of the property being sold or for other reasons increased from 1,689 to 2,463 during the same period—a rise of 45.8%. Whatever the reason no-one should be sleeping and dying on the streets of our towns and cities. There are hostels providing shelter, but some people are afraid to go there as they feel they may be in danger from violence. Thankfully there are also people and organisations like the Salvation Army and Manna4Many—Street Aid for the Homeless (see Parish Notes, January 2022) who go out at night seeking those sheltering in doorways and elsewhere, who offer safe shelter for the night as well as food and medical help.

Heavenly Father, we ask for your blessing on all who find themselves homeless, afraid and wondering how they are going to survive; and may those who are addicts be helped to overcome this life-ruining grip on their lives. We also ask for your blessing on all who give of their time and effort to go out at night to help those a lot less fortunate than ourselves. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Parish Choir

Not one, but two new pieces for the choir have been supplied by choir member Rory Douglas-Smith—an arrangement of the traditional tune for ‘Away in a Manger,’ and an original setting of ‘Coventry Carol.’ Composed in late 2019, both pieces are intimate, unaccompanied settings of the texts, which detail the events that occur in the time of Jesus’ birth. The performances of both pieces at the choir’s Christmas Concert in Donegore will be a double world premiere, with their Saint Peter’s premiere being at the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols on Monday 19th December.



Rory and his fiancée, Rebecca, who sometimes joins us in the choir.

The congregation may expect colourful close harmonies, and some rather striking but appropriate dissonances.

Rory, a graduate of Music at Queen’s University, Belfast, has sung bass occasionally with the choir for many years, but became a full member of the choir in September as part of the new Saint Peter’s Choral Bursaries scheme. He is grateful to Robert Thompson for obligingly accepting his musical offerings, and looks forward to the opportunity to compose music for the choir and organ in the future.

Church Grounds—thank you!

Due to various personal health problems I am sorry I am only now thanking all the volunteers who undertook maintenance of various parts of the church grounds during 2022. Whilst most weeds and plants have ‘gone to sleep’ for the winter, now is the time, please, to do a final tidy up of your patch for the year. I know you will have to pick your day carefully, but if possible would you try to carry out this task as soon as possible, removing any weeds, tidying the edges and binning any blown in rubbish. Your assistance in this matter is greatly appreciated and thank you again for your work in keeping the church grounds in pristine order.

Noel Beattie



*Festival of
Nine Lessons and Carols
Monday 19th December at 7.30pm*

**This beautiful service by
candlelight is one of the
highlights of the
Christmas season.**

**Please make a special
effort to invite your
friends and family
to come along.**

**Mulled wine and
shortbread afterwards.**

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

to those with upcoming birthdays:

Noel Beattie in December

Catherine Lyons and Amelie Lacey in January.

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

*If you would like to add your name to our birthday board,
you'll find it on the notice board at the back of the church,
alternatively you can ask Anne our Parish Administrator, to add it for you.
No years mentioned!*



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please contact the Parish Administrator, Anne Cromie.
Contact details on back cover.**

FLOWER LIST FOR DECEMBER

18TH THE CHOIR

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



*Please send material for the February 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 23rd January. Thank you.*

P A R I S H C O N T A C T S

Rector: The Rev'd Brian Lacey 90 777 053 brianlacey@stpeterbelfast.org
 Parish Administrator: Anne Cromie 90 776 706 annecromie@stpeterbelfast.org
 Organist and Choir Master: Robert Thompson 07590 851564 marlaghodge@gmail.com
 Honorary Assistant Priest: The Rev'd Dr Ken Houston 90 771 830 skhouston43@gmail.com
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 Ministry Assistant (TLG): Laura Lacey 90 777 053 lauralacey@stpeterbelfast.org
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Rector's Churchwarden: Daphne McClements 07730 127350 daphnemcclements@stpeterbelfast.org
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 Co-ordinator for Lectors: Sandra Hutchinson 95 149 564 sehutchman@hotmail.com
 Co-ordinator for Flowers: Sandra Davison 07738 403667 sbdavison@hotmail.com
 Co-ordinator for Groundskeeping: Noel Beattie 90 778 428 noelbeattie@stpeterbelfast.org

Rector's Glebewarden: Victor Davis 90 771 197 davisvictor9@aol.com
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 FWO & Gift Aid Secretary: Noel Beattie 90 778 428 noelbeattie@stpeterbelfast.org

Baby Sensory: Heather Trojan 07590 928384 belfastnw@babysensory.co.uk
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 Bridge: Florrie Greer 90 776 812 florriregreer@gmail.com
 Crafty Goodness: Daphne McClements 07730 127350 daffersmcclements@btinternet.com
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