

RECTOR'S NOTES



SERVICES IN SEPTEMBER

Sunday 7th September is the **Twelfth Sunday after Trinity**, on which there will be Choral Eucharist at 10.30am. Our guest preacher will be the Rev'd Adrian Dorrian, who served as the sixth rector of St Peter's from June 2009 until early 2012. Following his resignation from St Peter's, Adrian served as rector of St Mark's Dundela, and then as vicar of the Lecale Area Mission Partnership (LAMP), and is currently rector of Conwal and Garton.

Sunday 14th September is the **Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity**, on which there will be two services: Family Matins at 10.30am, and Choral Evensong at 3.30pm.

Sunday 21st September is **St Matthew's Day**, on which there will be Choral Eucharist at 10.30am. Our guest preacher will be the Rev'd Nathan Ervine, who formerly served as our Youth and Families Worker. Since his ordination in 2020, Nathan served as Deacon Intern in Magheragall, then as Curate Assistant in Carrickfergus, and is currently the Minister of the joint Church of Ireland and Methodist congregation at Monkstown.

Sunday 28th September is the **Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity**, on which there will be Choral Matins at 10.30am.

There will be celebrations of **Holy Communion** at 10.30am every Wednesday throughout the month.

BEREAVEMENT GROUP

On Wednesday 10th September, from 12pm until 12.45pm, there will be a service of thanksgiving for our loved ones now deceased, and an informal opportunity to talk about our loss. If you would like to know more, please speak to Dora Hanna or myself.

PRAYER GROUP

On Wednesday 17th September, from 12pm until 12.30pm, there will be a informal time of open or silent prayer, bringing before God our own personal needs, and those of others, and for the world. If you cannot attend, but would like prayer for yourself or someone else, please either use the online form on our parish website or use the prayer request box at the back of the church.

CHRISTIAN LEARNING

On Thursday 4th September from 7.30pm till 9pm, our Discipleship Group meets for the first time in the new academic year. This month we will be exploring "Who is Jesus?" This is a fairly informal discussion group, and it is aimed at parishioners who know nothing rather than everything on the subject! We meet in the Minor Hall.

On Thursday 11th and 25th September, from 7.30pm till 9pm, our Bible Fellowship continues where we left off at the start of the summer—studying the Book of Exodus. We meet in the Minor Hall.

On Wednesday 24th September, from 11.30am till 1pm, our Lunchtime Bible Study meets in the Minor Hall.

SAINT PETER'S DAY

Although we have been, and will continue, celebrating the 125th Anniversary of Saint Peter's church this year, the focal point was Saint Peter's Day on Sunday 29th June. Our Bishop, the Rt Rev'd George Davison, was with us to celebrate Holy Communion and to preach. We even sang a new hymn written for the occasion by David Cromie! Joining the Bishop and myself in the sanctuary were our Parish Readers—David Cromie and Dora Hanna, and our Ministry Apprentice—Robert Long, and our Associate Minister—the Rev'd Andrew Irwin (see front cover). Afterwards, we moved next door to the Lansdowne Hotel where we had a buffet lunch, with a cake prepared by Judith Cowan. A "get well soon" presentation was made to Daphne McClements, our long serving Rector's Churchwarden, who was unfortunately unable to take part in the service owing to a broken leg. She did, however, join with the Bishop in cutting the cake! As ever, we are grateful to everyone who organised or was involved in the service and the lunch.





SAINT JAMES' DAY

We are blessed with two patronal services over the summer months! Saint James' Day is officially the 25th July, but we celebrated it a couple of days later on Sunday 27th. It was lovely to see the choir return from their summer break for the day, and afterwards we had bouncy castles for the children, and a barbecue in the halls (*see photo*). Thank you to Michael and Florence Moore and to David Cromie, for producing such tasty burgers and hotdogs!





LOOKING FORWARD TO HARVEST

Our Harvest Thanksgiving this year will be on Sunday 12th October at 10.30am. St Peter's will be open the prior morning, Saturday 11th October, for donations of flowers, fruit, and vegetables, and you are very welcome to lend a hand in decorating the church under the guidance of Sandra Davison.

We will also be collecting the following food items for two local charities:

The North Belfast Foodbank has requested: long life breakfast orange juice, UHT milk (1 litre), rice pudding & custard, tinned fish, and dried 'smash' potatoes.

The Welcome Organisation has asked for: coffee, sugar, spaghetti hoops, baked beans, pot noodles, instant noodles, cuppa soups, cereal, crackers, biscuits, canned potatoes, tinned veg, spam, corned beef, pasta sauces, tuna, tinned fruit, tinned ravioli, tinned (or jar) hot dogs, small/large butters, jam, peanut butter, chocolate spread, custard portions, bottled water, and gravy mix.

If you would like to donate any of the above items, you do not need to wait until the morning of our Harvest service. You can bring them to any Wednesday or Sunday service at Saint Peter's throughout September. Simply place them in the trolley at the back of the church. Thank you!

WHY ARE YOU INVOLVED IN THE CHURCH?

There was a Shadow Cabinet reshuffle over the summer. I'm sure most of you know what that means, but for those not interested in politics, the leader of the Conservative Party re-jigged her top team of MPs. (I suspect that if you really have no interest in politics, then my explanation won't make any sense either.) In the grand scheme of things, this reshuffle won't do anything to affect our lives. The Conservatives are not in government, so the Shadow Cabinet's role is largely to critique what the Labour government is doing. I wonder, though, did those Conservative members of parliament get into politics because they wanted simply to stand on the sidelines, shouting abuse at those in power?

I would doubt it. I mean, there are people who seem to work best leading a protest movement rather than actually having to make the tough decisions, but I reckon that most people in the Shadow

Cabinet are desperate to get their hands on real power. They don't want to be His Majesty's Loyal Opposition. They want to form His Majesty's Government. They want to call the shots. They want to rule the country. The question is "why?" What motivates someone to enter into politics?

In a recent sermon, I talked about how Saint Peter's was designed to be a beautiful place of worship. It was the specific intention of the committee of bigwigs in Belfast at the time who wanted to build this place. And I asked the question: Did these wealthy, powerful men want to build a beautiful church because it glorified God, or because it would glorify themselves? And, if you recall, I was at pains to point out that we'll never know the minds of the people who built this place, but if they were as human as we are (and they were) then the chances are that probably they wanted to glorify God and themselves. Although I think in public they would have made sure to mention only God. I remind you of that, because it's important to acknowledge that at the heart of most good decisions that we all make, there tends to be some level of self-interest: Doing good is always easier when we receive some benefit from it.

And for people have got involved in politics in order to do something good for their community, there is likely to be some benefit to them personally. It might be the power or the influence that comes with their position; it might be the fame and prestige; it might be the money. (In the first three months after resigning as Prime Minister, Boris Johnston earned £1,000,000 from after-dinner speeches and things like that.) I'm sure many people enter politics wanting simply to do good, but there are a lot of perks and benefits, and I am certain that these are attractive too for anyone thinking of standing for election.

Being motivated by fame, power, or wealth, is not, of course, reserved for politics. In many careers the thought of such benefits is a major driving force. There are not many people

who strive to climb the career ladder simply because of the challenge to take on new responsibilities and learn new skills. Most people, and I'm happy for you to prove me wrong, climb the career ladder because they want more money to afford a better lifestyle, and/or because they want to be in charge so that they can be the ones to tell others what to do, rather than being told what to do by others. And that of course is how we tend to measure how "successful" a person is. We look at what that person has got from their career: are they well known? Do they have a big house? Do they have a flashy car?

It's interesting when we discover that someone has chosen a path in life which does not result in materialistic rewards. If you learned that someone was an artist, (for example) living on the breadline, with no interest in the luxuries that most people aspire to have, you might say, "Well, as long as they're happy." As if being "happy" was the runner-up prize to having lots of expensive stuff.

I think, as a society, we've got ourselves into a bit of a muddle. Happiness, however it is found, should be our goal in life. And challenging ourselves to be the best that we can be, should be more important that trying to accumulate power, wealth, and fame.

Why am I telling you this? Because in Matthew 20: 20–28, the request of the brothers James and John to sit at the left and right hand of Jesus in his Kingdom, shows us that even in the Church, there can be a strong desire for personal benefit.

Through their mother, their request to Jesus was: When you, Jesus, are established as King, and you are sitting on your throne, let us have the seats of honour beside you. Let us have the prestige that comes from being the closest advisors and confidants of the King. It was a very human request, because it shows how we tend to think about success.

And in response, Jesus says, "You don't know what you are asking." The Crucifixion, when Jesus was up on the Cross, is—in a perverse way—the Coronation of Jesus as King of the Jews. In his torture and death, he gave himself for us. And he showed us the nature of true leadership, true discipleship, true humanity. It's not about what we can get out of it. It's about how much we can give each other.

When the mother of James and John made her request to Jesus, Jesus knew that if James and John were to be either side of him in his kingdom, they too would hang on a cross, one on his left, and one on his right—just like the two criminals that would end up joining Jesus at Calvary. If James and John really wanted to share in the Kingship of Christ, they too would suffer for it.

Of course, that's not what the mother of James and John thought. She wanted her sons to have a life of luxury. She wanted them to gain something from their relationship with Jesus. And the point that Jesus made in response to her, is that greatness in the Kingdom of God would never look like success in the eyes of the world.

So my challenge to you, is to consider what is most important to you? And how do you measure success? And why is it that you are involved in the Church? For Christ's glory, or your own? Is your purpose in life to get as much out of it for yourself as you can? Or is it to follow in the footsteps of Jesus—serving others, rejecting the materialism of this world, and letting love—not ambition—determine every step that you take?



Please join us for Charal Evensong Sunday, 14th September, at 3.30pm

SERVICE SCHEDULE FOR SEPTEMBER										
SERVICE	OFFICIANT	LECTOR	PREACHER	INTERCESSOR						
Wednesday 3rd September (Green)										
10.30am Holy Communion	Rector	Jim Wilson	Rector	Rosemary Johnston						
SUNDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER—THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY (GREEN)										
10.30am Choral Eucharist	Rector	Sandra Hutchman	Rev'd Adrian Dorrian	David Cromie						
Wednesday 10th September (Green)										
10.30am Holy Communion	Rector	Margaret McK Black	Rector	Daphne McClements						
Sunday 14th September—The Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity (Green)										
10.30am Family Matins	Rector	Rector	Rector	Lucas Todd						
3.30pm Choral Evensong	David Cromie	Dora Hanna -		David Cromie*						
Wednesday 17th September (Green)										
10.30am Holy Communion	Rector	Rosemary Johnston	Rector	Jim Wilson						
Sunday 21st September—Saint Matthew's Day (Red)										
10.30am Choral Eucharist	Rector	David Cromie	Rev'd Nathan Ervine	Robert Long						
Wednesday 24th September (Green)										
10.30am Holy Communion (1662)	Rector	Dora Hanna	-	Robert Long						
SUNDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER—THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY (GREEN)										
10.30am Choral Matins	Lucas Todd	Rosemary Patterson	Rector	Sandra Hutchman						

ALTAR GUILD ROTA FOR SEPTEMBER

Date	Time	Set-up	Wine Cruet	Wine Chalice	Colour	Location	
Wednesday 3rd	10.30am	Jill Bradley	Margaret McK Black	Robert Long	Green	Resurrection	
Sunday 7th	10.30am	David Cromie	Dora Hanna	David Cromie	Green	Chancel	
Wednesday 10th	10.30am	Jim Wilson	Rosemary Johnston	Robert Long	Green	Resurrection	
Wednesday 17th	10.30am	Kathryn Hennessy	Dora Hanna	Robert Long	Green	Resurrection	
Sunday 21st	10.30am	Robert Long	Dora Hanna	Robert Long	Red	Chancel	
Wednesday 24th	10.30am	Dora Hanna	Dora Hanna	Robert Long	Green	St James	

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Please note these dates for the following meetings to be held in September:

Senior Officers

Friday 12th at 11.30am in St James'.

Select Vestry

Monday 22nd at 7.30pm in St Peter's.



PARISH REGISTER

Christian Burial

"At rest in the Lord."

John Cross

Cremation at Roselawn

on 18th September 2025



Pause for Thought and Prayer

by Rosemary Johnston

"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done ..."

A very long time ago Almighty God saw fit to create a planet which would be home to all sorts of creatures on land, in the sea and in the air. Finally God created us humans. According to the scientists, the earth went through many stages in its formation and when God had finished he 'saw that it was very good'. It had everything we needed and God would take care of us. We just had to enjoy it, except for one thing and we all know what that was—'Do not touch the tree of knowledge'. But, of course, we couldn't resist the temptation, and the rest, as they say, is history. Over the years after we were given this beautiful planet, our only home, to steward, what have we actually achieved? Yes, we have achieved much, especially these last few hundred years since the industrial revolution. People from earlier times would find it hard to comprehend what they were witnessing, eg, electricity giving us light and powering machinery; aircraft; amazing developments in medicine and surgery; other wonders of modern technology and, of course, AI. We have all this amazing technology, literally at our fingertips—but to what end? Is it to make life better and safer for those around us? Is it to enhance our planet by creating wonderful gardens to enjoy; to produce healthy food; to care for the animals by treating them humanely and to live a healthy, contented lifestyle at peace with our neighbours? Or is it also to rule over others, making them live in fear of harm and even death? When we look at TV or other screens today, we are appalled at what we see, whether it is the carnage in Gaza, Sudan, Haiti, Ukraine and elsewhere, or the pollution poisoning our seas and rivers, ruining the land, do we think—what are we doing to each other and to our world? Has God been left out of the picture? So many people today know little, and care less, about faith in God. They think they can sort things out on their own, and look where it has got them—and us. With climate change accelerating and more people in danger as a result of floods, wildfires, storms, sea level rise, we need to acknowledge that we have made a mess and need help. And God is there, as always, willing us to come back to him; for he cares about us—we are his children and he loves us and wants the best for us. Like the prodigal son we need to go home and throw ourselves at his mercy.

> Heavenly Father, we have gone astray like lost sheep. Please shepherd us back into your fold to relearn how to honour, obey and follow you, now and evermore. Amen.

Reflections of a Church Warden

by Daphne McClements

Church Wardens take on the voluntary role that involves working alongside the Rector to support him and the congregation, assisting in practical ways, and seeking to foster unity and peace within the parish. In bygone days they were responsible for ensuring order and decency in the church during the services, hence the wands!

Although I attended Sunday School in Rosemary Presbyterian and Duncairn Presbyterian (my family church), for many years I didn't attend church. However, one Sunday I was alone in the apartment in Richmond, Surrey, and decided to go to the local parish church in the village. During the service the Rector prayed for the people of Northern Ireland and the forces there and on the way out I thanked him. He looked surprised and said he had never prayed for them before but he would now continue to do so. Again I still didn't attend church although I always liked to visit churches, mosques and temples across the world during my travels.

When I eventually returned to Northern Ireland I decided one Sunday morning to attend All Saints Parish Church in Antrim and that was when I decided the Church of Ireland was for me. The next Sunday I rang my mother as I wanted to go to St Peter's Parish Church which was very local to her. I had never been inside before but as soon I came through the south porch door I knew this was where I belonged – it felt like I'd come home.

Canon Harris was the Rector at that time and he was a wonderful person to talk to and, in fact, he instilled a faith in me I've never lost.

Other rectors followed, Stephen McBride along with his wife, Helen, and children Rachael and Alex were a great asset. Charles McCollum was next – he was very different having found his vocation later in life and I must say he was a wonderful support to me during my mother's illness and subsequent death. After Charles left, along came Adrian Dorrian for a short incumbency – we enjoyed a common interest in youth and drama - he was full of fun.

In June 2012 a fresh-faced Ballymena curate arrived and was met by both church wardens, Sandra Hutchman and myself - both ex Presbyterians! Not long after, along came Laura, his wife, and then two children – Dylan and Amelie. His ministry among us continues to thrive and we are blessed to have him with us.

For many years I stood at the top of aircraft steps greeting people and making them welcome – I hope that experience has helped me to welcome everyone into the family of St Peter's Parish Church and will continue to do so.

TRIP TO POWERSCOURT

by Jill Bradley

On Saturday 23rd August, a group of parishioners went on an outing to Powerscourt Estate in County Wicklow. Setting off from Belfast before 9 o'clock, the first stop was a coffee break at Applegreen. After refreshments, the group continued on their way, arriving at Powerscourt at approximately 1 o'clock where we were free to visit the magnificent house and to view a short film relating its history. Then it was outdoors to wander and enjoy the truly beautiful gardens. Before leaving, a visit to the fashion shop was a 'must' and some very attractive purchases were made!





On the return journey a stop was made at Bannville Hotel, near Banbridge, for a delicious meal - a fitting end to a lovely day thoroughly enjoyed by all!

The travellers arrived safe and sound in Belfast at 8 o'clock.

GIFT AID

If you have ever signed a Gift Aid Declaration with regard to your free will offering to St Peter's, please remember to review your tax status from time to time to make sure that Gift Aid is still legitimate for us to claim. Thank you!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

to the Rector whose birthday is in September: 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!





CAVE HILL CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN



on Friday 5th September, 8.30-10.30pm
to see the bats of Cave Hill
and on Saturday 27th September, 10am-1pm
for a fungal foray.
Meet at the castle
wearing suitable clothing and shoes.

Dogs must be kept on a lead and under 16s must be accompanied by an adult. Further information: cormachamill47@gmail.com tel 028 9029 1357

These walks are deemed easy.

Christian

We believe in life before death

We have an updated total for donations from parishioners for Christian Aid 2025. The amount now stands at £1095. Thank you again to all who contributed.

Exam success

Congratulations to
Daniel George and
Jack Webb on their
splendid A-level results!
We wish them both
every blessing in their
next endeavours.

Our Church Family

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





BREW BY THE CAVE

Mount Lennox, 683 Antrim Road

We serve expertly brewed coffee, delicious homemade soups, freshly baked scones, and much more, in a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

Our café is the perfect spot to soak up the scenery or stop in before exploring Cavehill. We are nestled in nature, offering stunning garden views and a peaceful escape.

Come by and see why we're a local favourite.



Tues 9-3, Wed-Fri 9-4 & Sat-Sun 10-3



TIMETABLE

Sunday

10.30am: Sunday Service and Sunday School

Monday

10.30am: Walking Group

6pm: Glandore Dog Training Club
7.30pm: Select Vestry (3rd Monday in month)

Tuesday

10.30am: Crafty Goodness 7.30pm: Priory Singers

Wednesday

10.30am: Holy Communion

11.30am: Bible Study (last Wednesday in month)

12noon Bereavement Group (2nd Wednesday in month)
12noon Prayer Group (3rd Wednesday in month)

2pm: Bridge Club
5pm: Unislim
6.30pm: PhysioPilates
7.45pm: Choir Practice

Thursday

10.30am: Chair PhysioPilates

6pm: Rainbows 7pm: Brownies

7.30pm Discipleship Group (1st Thursday in month)
7.30pm: Bible Fellowship (2nd & 4th Thursdays in month)
7.30pm: Historical Society (3rd Thursday in month)

8pm: Guides and Senior Guides

Friday

10.30am: PhysioPilates 4pm: Speech and Drama

For more information on the parish organisations (including start back dates for the new season) please contact the appropriate personnel listed on the back page.

If you would like to support the worship, mission, and ministries of St Peter's, please deposit your FWO envelope or loose money in the box at the back of the church. If you prefer to donate by Apple Pay, Google Pay, PayPal or by credit/debit card, please scan this QR code on your phone. Thank you.



SEPTEMBER FLOWER LIST

7TH KATHRYN HENNESSY

IN MEMORY OF CONOR AND EDWARD

14TH PATRICIA HOUSTON

IN MEMORY OF KEN HOUSTON

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

AFTER CHURCH REFRESHMENT—Thank you to all who provide light refreshments after services—it is much appreciated. If you would like to help sometimes please contact Sandra Hutchman.



Prayer

If you would like your name added to our prayer list, please get in touch with Rosemary Johnston, tel 028 90 840 534, or go to www.stpeterbelfast.org/prayer and fill out the form.

If your business would like to advertise in our Parish Notes please contact the Parish Administrator, Anne Cromie. Contact details on back cover.

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 addresses. Thank you.

Parish Notes On-line

The Parish Notes can be read on our website.

Visit

www.stpeterbelfast.org

Please send material for the October 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 September.

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Bereavement Group: Bible Study: Bridge: Brownies: Christian Aid Rep: Crafty Goodness: Glandore Dog Training Club: Guides: Historical Society: PhysioPilates: Priory Singers: Rainbows: Speech & Drama: Unislim: Walking Group:	Safeguarding Trust: Safeguarding Trust:	Rector's Churchwarden: People's Churchwarden: Rector's Glebewarden: People's Glebewarden: Honorary Secretary: Honorary Treasurer: Assistant FWO and Gift Aid Sec:	Parish Reader: Parish Reader: Co-ordinator for Intercessors: Co-ordinator for Flowers: Co-ordinator for Refreshments:	Parish Administrator: Organist and Choir Master: Ministry Apprentice:	Rector: Associate Minister:
Dora Hanna The Rev'd Brian Lacey Florrie Greer Lee Kennedy Jill Bradley Daphne McClements Ann Purse Lee Kennedy Daphne McClements Sandra Hutchman Philip Bolton Lee Kennedy Claire McGrogan Karen Flannery Jill Bradley	Clodagh Webb Philip Williamson	Daphne McClements Margaret McKenna-Black Victor Davis Michael Moore Clodagh Webb Ashlee McCune Margaret McKenna Black	David Cromie Dora Hanna Rosemary Johnston Sandra Davison Sandra Hutchman	Anne Cromie Robert Thompson Robert Long	The Rev'd Brian Lacey The Rev'd Andrew Irwin
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