

THE PARISH OF ST PETER & ST JAMES
BELFAST

PARISH NOTES

SEPTEMBER 2026

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



*Kevin and Paula Goddard,
renewing their wedding vows after 40 years*

GOD . LOVING . PEOPLE

PARISH CONTACTS

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PARISH CONTACTS

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Crafty Goodness: Daphne McClements	Tel: 07730 127350 Email: daphnemcclements@stpeterbelfast.org
Glandore Dog Training Club: Ann Purse	Tel: 07979 326041 Email: ann.purse@sky.com
Guides: Lee Kennedy	Tel: 07871 875985 Email: lee_kennedy@btinternet.com
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PhysioPilates: Sandra Hutchman	Tel: 028 9514 9564 Email: sehutchman@hotmail.com
Priory Singers: Philip Bolton	Tel: 07821 906920 Email: bolton390@btinternet.com
Rainbows: Lee Kennedy	Tel: 07871 875985 Email: lee_kennedy@btinternet.com
Speech & Drama: Claire McGrogan	Tel: 07793 045071 Email: clairekieran99@yahoo.co.uk
Unislim: Karen Flannery	Tel: 07773 758524 Email: flannery-karen@hotmail.com
Walking Group: Jill Bradley	Tel: 028 9084 2998 Email: jill.bradley1@btinternet.com



*Sunday School resumes
on 20th September.
Come along and bring
your friends.*

RECTOR'S NOTES



WORSHIP IN SEPTEMBER

On Sunday 6th September, which is the **Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity** (also known as Proper 18), there will be a celebration of Holy Communion at 10.30am. We will be taking a break from the lectionary, and in our first reading, from the Acts of the Apostles, we hear how the Spirit sends Philip to meet the Ethiopian traveller on the desert road, opening the Scriptures to him and welcoming him through the waters of baptism into the joy of new life in Christ. In our second reading, from the Gospel according to John, Jesus speaks of himself as the true vine, calling his disciples to abide in him, to draw their life from him, and to bear fruit that shows the work of God within them.

On Sunday 13th September, which is the **Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity** (also known as Proper 19), there will be a service of Family Matins at 10.30am. We will be learning about the Crossing of the Red Sea, in the Book of Exodus. In the afternoon, at 3.30pm, there will be a service of Choral Evensong.

On Sunday 20th September, which is the **Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity** (also known as Proper 20), there will be a choral celebration of Holy Communion at 10.30am. In our first reading, from the Book of Exodus, we hear the people grumble in the wilderness, yet God answers their need with manna from heaven, providing daily bread

and teaching them to trust his care. In our second reading, from the Gospel according to Matthew, Jesus tells the parable of the workers in the vineyard, revealing the generosity of God whose kingdom is governed not by human calculations but by divine grace.

On Sunday 27th September, which is the **Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity** (also known as Proper 21), there will be a choral service of Morning Prayer at 10.30am. In our first reading, from the Book of Exodus, the people thirst in the wilderness and quarrel with Moses, yet the Lord brings water from the rock and proves once more his faithfulness to those in need. In our second reading, from the Gospel according to Matthew, Jesus challenges the religious leaders to match their words with obedience, teaching that those who truly do the Father's will enter the kingdom before those who merely profess it.

There will be celebrations of Holy Communion at 10.30am on Wednesdays throughout the month. On the first Wednesday (2nd September) this will include the option for receiving anointing with oil. On the last Wednesday (30th September), we will use the traditional language form of the service.

PLEASE GET INVOLVED IN YOUR CHURCH

Our Christian community, like every other, depends upon volunteers to carry out the work of the Church. The more volunteers we have, the more we can do. Below are some of the ways in which you can become more involved in the life of our parish. Please read through them, and let me know if you would like to help, even just as a one-off to see how you get on.

The **Parish Choir** leads our congregation in singing at our Sunday services throughout the year (except just after Christmas and during the summer). You would need to commit to most Sunday mornings and rehearsals on Wednesday evenings. Ongoing training and support is given by the Choir Master.

The **Altar Guild** prepare the Holy Table before services of Holy Communion on Sundays and Wednesdays, and then clean up afterwards. Normally each person will appear on the rota once every two months. As a team, they also care for the silverware, candles, and linen. There is training for this about once every two years, but members of the Guild help each other learn the ropes.

Lectors read the first of the two Bible readings at our services on Sundays and Wednesdays. Normally each person will appear on the rota once every three months.

Intercessors prepare and lead the prayers at our Sunday and Wednesday services. There is training for this every couple of years, and I provide written guidance which is available at the back of the church. Normally each intercessor will lead the prayers about once every two months.

Greeters welcome the congregation at the door as they come into the church, and ensure that newcomers are introduced to the clergy and are given friendly assistance.

The **Hospitality Team** provide tea/coffee after our Sunday and Wednesday services. There is an open rota for the Sunday morning services at the back of the church, and members of the congregation are welcome to sign up for any dates they wish, as often as they like.

Lay Visitors call out with the housebound to read from the Bible and to pray with those who have difficulty coming to church. Each Visitor is asked to visit a minimum of one person each month. Training is provided by the Rector.

Prayer Ministers offer private prayer with individuals after our Sunday and Wednesday services. Training is provided by the Rector.

Sunday School Teachers prepare and deliver lessons to primary school age children during our Sunday morning services. There are many resources available online. Note that police vetting is required for this role.

SUPPORT THIS YEAR'S CHARITIES

Every year we support a number of both Christian and secular charities, including Christian Aid and the Poppy Appeal. Loose money collected at our Family Services goes towards a children's charity, which this year will be "Seeds of Hope" which supports children and young people across 45 rural schools in Argentina. They will learn essential skills in gardening, drip irrigation, and soil care.

In addition, the Select Vestry annually chooses a few other charities to support. This year, they are WAVE Trauma, Kids4Schools, Almost Home, and our parish's Benevolent Fund, which offers a little help to those in need with their shopping or bills from time to time.

WAVE Trauma is Northern Ireland's largest cross-community support organisation for people bereaved, injured, or traumatised by the Troubles. Founded in 1991, it provides counselling, welfare advice, physiotherapy, befriending, and social support across multiple centres, offering care to anyone affected regardless of background. It also supports survivors of Historical Institutional Abuse and works to promote understanding, healing, and respect for life in a society still living with the legacy of conflict.

Almost Home is an animal-rescue and rehoming charity in Northern Ireland dedicated to giving abandoned, unwanted, or vulnerable animals a safe place to recover and a chance at a new life. Their work includes rescue, rehabilitation, fostering, adoption, and public education on responsible pet care. They are known for taking in animals others cannot, providing a compassionate "second chance" for dogs, cats, and small animals across the region.

Kids4Schools is a local charity focused on supporting children's education in some of the world's poorest communities. Through school-building projects, classroom resources, sponsorship

programmes, and practical aid, they help create safe learning environments and expand access to education for children who would otherwise be excluded. Their work aims to break cycles of poverty by giving young people the tools and opportunities they need to thrive.

Much of the money we donate to our chosen charities comes from our Cavehill Community Choir concert in December, but we also ask parishioners to make private donations to support these very worthy causes. You can do this by placing cash or a cheque (made payable to “Parish of St Peter and St James, Belfast”) in the charity collection box at the back of the church. This should not be confused with the FWO collection box! Or if you would like to make a bank transfer, please ensure that your reference field says “Charity”. Please note that the total money raised will be divided equally between the four chosen charities.

Your generous support will be much appreciated, thank you.

PAROCHIAL ACTIVITIES

Our fortnightly **Bible Fellowship** meets at 7.30pm on Thursdays 10th and 24th September in the Minor Hall. We will be continuing our study of the Gospel according to St Luke. After tea/coffee, we read through the gospel, verse by verse, stopping every so often for discussion.

Our monthly **Bible Study Group** meets at 11.30am on Wednesday 30th September in the Minor Hall. In this group, we learn about a book of the Bible in its entirety: where, why, when, and by whom it was written. We then think about its major themes, and how they still apply to us today. This month we will be learning about St Paul's Letter to the Romans.

Our monthly **Prayer Group** meets at midday on Wednesday 16th September in the church. This is an informal group in which we sit

in a circle and pray either aloud or in silence. If you cannot attend, but would like us to pray for you or someone you know, please leave a note in the Prayer Request box at the back of the church.

Our monthly **Bereavement Group** meets at midday on Wednesday 9th September in the church. It doesn't matter if you've been bereaved for forty years or forty days, you will be most welcome to come along to this gentle gathering in which we offer prayers, light candles, and sensitively discuss matters relating to grief.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH FOR?

I'm sure you're familiar with the miracle of the Feeding of the Five Thousand. That's the one in which Jesus takes five loaves and two fish, and multiplies it so much that there's enough for everyone, and plenty left over. But did you notice anything happening in that Bible story which echoes something at our celebrations of Holy Communion?

We see Jesus taking bread, giving thanks for it, breaking it, and sharing it out. It is the exact same pattern we hear at Holy Communion: *"On the night that he was betrayed, Jesus took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take, eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'"*

There's something missing though from what Jesus does at the Feeding of the Five Thousand, compared to what we do during the service. Can you think what it is? Well, the difference is that at the feeding of the five thousand there is no mention of "do this in remembrance of me."

Now, hopefully you know this: The Last Supper was essentially a Jewish Passover meal, which was the yearly re-enactment of the last meal eaten by the Israelites in Egypt during the Exodus. It was a ritual which reminded the Jews that God had saved them and brought them to the Promised Land. So that's what Jesus is doing

with his disciples at the Last Supper. However, he changes the meaning of it: He tells them that from now on they are to eat and drink, not in remembrance of the Passover, but *in remembrance of him*. Because it is through Jesus himself that God's saving power is now to be seen, remembered, and celebrated.

But that ritual is not what's happening at the feeding of the five thousand. The actions that Jesus does with the bread are the same: taking, blessing, breaking, sharing, but the purpose is different: If the Last Supper was a theology lesson expressed through a ritual meal, the feeding of the five thousand was simply about Jesus satisfying the hunger of the people. It was not about teaching something or remembering something; it was about *giving* something. It was only later, with hindsight, that the disciples recognised deeper symbolism in the numbers that we read about in the story: the twelve baskets of leftovers representing the twelve tribes of Israel; the five loaves echoing the five books of the Torah. But none of that really mattered in the moment as the hungry people were fed. Jesus performed this miracle because, as Matthew tells us, "*he had compassion*" for the crowds. He saw people in need, and he addressed that need.

The Christian Church has followed that example for two thousand years, leading the way with education, healthcare, social care, and so on. And although the government has largely taken over such things, I reckon that the Christian Church today is still called to address the ongoing problems of society.

As the body of Christ on earth, we must meet people in need. Just as Jesus provided for the needs of the five thousand, we too must provide for the needs of those around us. Think for a moment about how you help other people in your own life? Are you a good neighbour to those who live near you? Are you kind to strangers? Do you support charities? Do you help someone who is struggling? These are all expressions of what Jesus wants us to be doing.

If you are being kind, considerate, and helpful to others (especially to strangers) then you are the living embodiment of what Jesus is doing in today's Gospel passage. But individual people helping individual people will only get us so far. There are such tremendous needs in our local community, and it will require a team of people to address those needs: physical, financial, emotional, social, and spiritual. That might mean providing food for low-income families... helping children who are struggling with homework... arranging social events for people who are lonely... or helping people deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Christian Gospel. These are just examples. I'm sure you could come up with many more.

So it's incumbent upon every Christian community to discern: *What needs do people have in this local area?* And one way to imagine this is to think: *If Jesus walked up and down these streets, asking people on their doorstep, "What can I do for you?" — what would they say?* So I want each of you to pray about this in the coming weeks. Keep your eyes open to the needs of people around you. (Given the various crises in this country, we won't need to look very far.) And don't be tempted to complain that organising social projects and community outreach requires time, effort, and often money. We can start small; we can start simple. But we need to do something. We are after all, here to serve. Without that, why are we here at all?

SEPTEMBER FLOWER LIST

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 6 TH | KATHRYN HENNESSY
IN MEMORY OF CONOR AND EDWARD |
| 20 TH | PATRICIA HOUSTON
IN MEMORY OF KEN HOUSTON |
| 27 TH | THE ANDERSON FAMILY
IN MEMORY OF LOVED ONES |



Thank you to all who beautify the church with flowers. If practical, flowers should be in keeping with the liturgical season, particularly during Advent and Lent.

ALTAR GUILD ROTA FOR SEPTEMBER

Date	Set-up	Wine Cruet	Wine Chalice	Colour	Location
Wednesday 2 nd Sept	Dora Hanna	Margaret McK Black	Dora Hanna	Green	Resurrection
Sunday 6 th Sept	Dora Hanna	Dora Hanna	David Cromie	Green	Chancel
Wednesday 9 th Sept	Margaret McK Black	Rosemary Johnston	Robert Long	Green	Resurrection
Wednesday 16 th Sept	Rosemary Johnston	Robert Long	Dora Hanna	Green	Resurrection
Sunday 20 th Sept	Neville Cobbe	David Cromie	Robert Long	Green	Chancel
Wednesday 23 rd Sept	Jill Bradley	Margaret McK Black	Robert Long	Green	Resurrection
Wednesday 30 th Sept	Neville Cobbe	Dora Hanna	Neville Cobbe	Green	St James

AFTER CHURCH REFRESHMENTS

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 (contact details on inside cover).



Physio Pilates

Gently regain fitness after the summer break by coming to my PhysioPilates classes.

They start again in September on Wednesday 2nd at 6.30pm, Thursday 3rd at 10.30am (Chair Pilates) and Friday 4th at 10.30am.

You would be very welcome to join one (or all) of our friendly groups.

Sandra Hutchman



PAUSE FOR THOUGHT AND PRAYER

by Rosemary Johnston

“All our hope on God is founded”

This past year has brought many natural/man-made disasters; much warfare on several fronts; drug dealing on a massive scale, such as in Ecuador. Many of the weather-related disasters, we are told, are caused mainly by ourselves through overuse of fossil fuels and through use of other toxins belching goodness knows what into our fragile atmosphere. We used to know the seasons but today it seems more difficult to forecast the weather. In recent weeks we have watched the catastrophic wildfires in France and Spain, and now they are erupting elsewhere in the Mediterranean with no certainty they won't start up again in the next dry spell, affecting especially farmers all over Europe and also travel plans for holidaymakers resulting in disastrous times for those involved in the holiday business. One of the saddest sights for me was seeing a camel in the desert, just skin and bone, shaking violently and the people trying to give it water—in a temperature of 50 degrees centigrade—too hot even for camels as the night-time temperature doesn't reduce enough to cool them down. How we resolve this nightmare I don't know but we need the best brains to collaborate urgently to slow the relentless rise in temperature. However, the one being so many seem to forget about or ignore, is Almighty God, our Heavenly Father. We have made such a

mess in the stewardship of our beautiful planet, with poor use of our resources and also all the modern weaponry we use trying to destroy those we don't like. What effect does the use of these powerful weapons have on the atmosphere? We have failed, and failed miserably, to acknowledge our lack of thought about how we use or misuse the Earth's finite resources. Have we, over the centuries, and especially over the past two or three centuries, completely lost the plot? We can now achieve so much through modern technology, and this has expanded and accelerated in recent years. In medicine in particular, lives can be saved and some health problems resolved through gene therapy—e.g. spina bifida —giving people hope where none existed. Modern technology can take us to places we never imagined, especially with AI. It is truly wonderful when used for our good, but, as with so many discoveries, in the wrong hands it is a danger, in the use of social media and in the many scams taking a huge amount of money from those caught up in its web—even experts being caught out.

We have trundled along, so often thinking about what *we* want. Perhaps it is time for us, like the prodigal son, to return to our Heavenly Father to find out what *He* wants. We know He will welcome us back with open arms. Can we, as a people gone so far astray, turn to Him, seek His forgiveness and ask for His help to sort out our mess? As St Peter says—“Lord, to whom should we go?”

*Heavenly Father:
Help us to take to heart
the words of Jesus in the Lord's Prayer—
“Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done”
Amen.*



If you're new to St Peter's and would like more information about our parish, or if you would like to register as a member, please contact the parish office.

If you would like to support the worship, mission, and ministries of St Peter's, your donations may be deposited in the box at the back of the church. If you have donations that you would like collected from your home, please call the parish office and we will gladly arrange this for you. We are also happy to provide information if you would like to donate by standing order.

Other ways to donate are by Apple Pay, Google Pay, PayPal or by credit/debit card, please scan this QR code on your phone.

If you need more free will offering envelopes, please contact the parish office and we will be happy to print a set for you.



**Many congratulations to chorister,
Lucas Todd, on his recent
engagement to Adrianne Moore.**

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



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!*

SERVICE SCHEDULE FOR SEPTEMBER

SERVICE	OFFICIANT	LECTOR	INTERCESSOR
Wednesday 2 nd September (Green)			
10.30am Holy Communion	Rector	Robert Long	Rosemary Johnston
Sunday 6 th September – The Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity (Green)			
10.30am Holy Communion	Rev'd Clifford Skillen	Ashlee McCune	David Cromie
Wednesday 9 th September (Green)			
10.30am Holy Communion	Rector	Alan Taggart	Daphne McClements
Sunday 13 th September – The Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity (Green)			
10.30am Family Matins	Rector	-	Neville Cobbe
3.30pm Choral Evensong	David Cromie	Neville Cobbe	David Cromie*
Wednesday 16 th September (Green)			
10.30am Holy Communion	Rector	Rosemary Patterson	Hazel Maguire
Sunday 20 th September – The Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity (Green)			
10.30am Choral Eucharist	Rector	David Cromie	Nigel Macauley
Wednesday 23 rd September (Green)			
10.30am Holy Communion	Rector	Heather Smith	Robert Long
Sunday 27 th September – The Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity (Green)			
10.30am Choral Matins	Robert Long	Neville Cobbe	Dora Hanna
Wednesday 30 th September (Green)			
10.30am Holy Communion 1662	Rector	Neville Cobbe	Neville Cobbe*

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

11am: Baby Sensory

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

7.30pm: 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 please contact the appropriate personnel listed on the front pages.

Save the Date!

— THE PRIORY SINGERS —

40th Anniversary CONCERT

THE PRIORY SINGERS
THROUGH THE DECADES



SATURDAY
17TH OCTOBER



ST MARK'S CHURCH
DUNDELA, BELFAST



8:00 PM



If you have *ever sung* with the Priory Singers at any stage and would like to join in some well known favourites like *I Was Glad*, then get in touch and we'll get the music to you!

WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

GET IN TOUCH THROUGH PRIORY SINGERS BELFAST ON FACEBOOK.

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT [PRIORY40.EVENTBRITE.CO.UK](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/priory40)



1980s



1990s



2000s



2010s



2020s

Another date for your diary ...
The Priory Singers
Christmas Concert
Saturday 5th December

North Belfast Historical Society

As we approach the autumn we are looking ahead to our forthcoming programme for the 2026/27 season.



We have some new speakers booked who will cover topics ranging from our own North Coast to China. All promise to be very interesting.

We meet in the minor hall at 7.30pm on the third Thursday of each month starting in September.

The annual membership subscription is £20.

Non-members pay £5 to attend a meeting. Everyone is very welcome so do come along and why not bring a friend too!

We look forward to seeing you.

Daphne McClements (Chairperson)

Parish Notes On-line

The Parish Notes
can be read on our website.
Visit: www.stpeterbelfast.org

PARISHIONER CONTACT DETAILS

To keep our records up to date, please don't forget to let us know if you move house, change your telephone number or email address. Please send changes to the Parish Office at:

annecromie@stpeterbelfast.org

Thank you.

**Next Bric-a-Brac Sale at St Peter's
Saturday 31st October at 10am**

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.

Do you have a food allergy?

When refreshments are being served at church, if you have a food allergy or a special dietary requirement, please inform a member of the hospitality team.

If your business would like to advertise in our Parish Notes please contact the Parish Administrator, Anne Cromie.



*Please join us for
Choral Evensong
Sunday, 13th September
at 3.30pm
followed by refreshments.*

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

*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 21st September.*

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

www.stpeterbelfast.org

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www.youtube.com/@stpeterbelfast

HMRC Charity Recognition No: XN45475

Charity Registration No: NIC101020

