

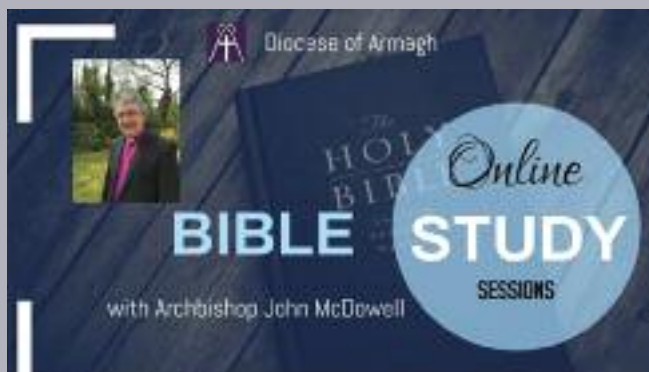
# THE Ambassador



'So we are ambassadors for Christ...' 2 Corinthians 5:20

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF IRELAND - DIOCESE OF ARMAGH

JUNE/JULY 2020



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# MRS HELEN McCLENAGHAN



On behalf of the Diocese, the Archbishop and Honorary Secretaries of the Diocesan Council and Synod record with much sadness the death of Mrs Helen McClenaghan on 4 June 2020 following a short illness.

Helen had a long history of service in the Diocese of Armagh, most recently in her role as a Lay Honorary Secretary since 2017. She was involved also in many aspects of wider Church life, particularly in her specialised field of education to which she brought much knowledge and experience. She will be remembered with great affection by all who admired her clarity of thought, quick wit and enduring pragmatism.

Deepest sympathy is sent to Helen's husband Stephen, her daughter Frances and the family circle.

## Beware: Church envelope doorstep scam

Please be aware of a current scam that involves the fraudulent doorstep collection of Freewill Offering envelopes.

If anyone calls to your house asking for weekly church envelopes, please do not give anything to them. Tell them you will check with your minister. Please also make sure to report anything suspicious to the police.

Older, vulnerable people are particularly susceptible to scams as well as those who are very trusting and easily persuaded to take a risk.

Please keep an eye on your elderly relatives and gently enquire about the phone calls they have been receiving and any strangers arriving at their door.

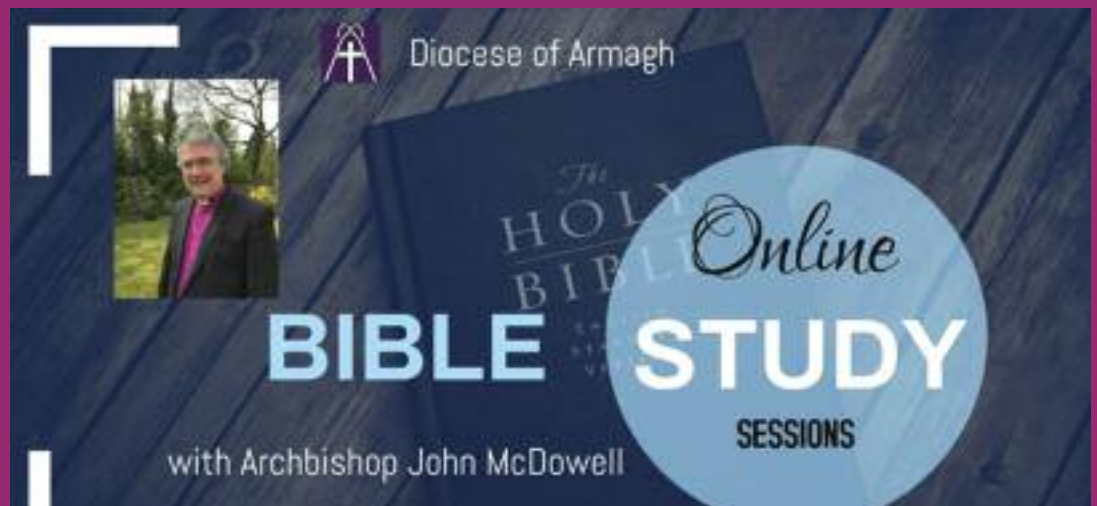
What is a scam?

Scams are when criminals use lies and deceit to fool you into parting with your cash. You usually get nothing in return and lose your money. As scams are getting more sophisticated and difficult to spot, it's important to know what to look for.

Please be aware and make others aware.

# Archbishop's Bible Studies

We continue to be grateful to Archbishop John for his weekly online Bible Studies which are posted at this link on a Wednesday afternoon:



<http://armagh.anglican.org/News/ArchbishopJohnBibleStudies.html>

Cover Photo:  
Institution of the  
Revd Naomi Quinn as  
rector of  
Erriglekeerogue,  
Ballygawley and  
Killeshill.

# THE Ambassador



## THE Ambassador

# Archbishop's Letter

Dear Friends,

To be honest I wasn't quite certain what form of greeting I should use to introduce my first contribution to the Armagh Diocesan Magazine. I opted for "Dear Friends" because, such contact as I have had with Armagh clergy and people (all virtual) has been more than friendly. I hope that in the years to come that virtual friendship will not only survive the first contact with reality, but deepen and widen into much more.

I'm writing these words on 5 May so what I say may well be redundant by the time you are reading them. So perhaps, after a quick reference to Covid-19, I'll move onto something a little less transient, but I will try and connect the two.

Even the most optimistic "road map" out of current restrictions and towards something that is even vaguely like what we were used to before the middle of March, is going to be very gradual long term. So, it is better to be honest about the medium term than to be unrealistic. Even when churches can open again for some kind of worshipping together, social distancing will have to be practised. It could be a very long time before we can sing together. The spray caused by singing (good, bad or indifferent) as you probably know is one of the most effective ways of spreading the infection. And if churches are to reopen we'll also need to take our responsibilities seriously in relation to hygiene requirements.

However, the fog around all of these matters has not lifted yet and it is very difficult to predict the future with any certainty or in any level of detail. In the meantime (at least in terms of "public" worship) I hope as many of you as possible continue to participate online, in the range of services being offered.

The one spiritual activity which we can all participate in is prayer. Perhaps there is nothing more fundamental to our spiritual well-being or nothing more revealing about our spiritual temperature than our prayer life. Of course there are any number of ways to pray and methods of prayer. Some of them are elaborate and some are of the utmost simplicity. But whatever they may be, all involve consciously bringing ourselves into the presence of God. And for most of us, prayer is being with God with other people on our hearts.

Many years ago I was on a sporting tour and was sharing a room with one of the alickadoos, a man in his early sixties (much like myself now). He hadn't been to church for many years,

probably since he was a teenager. Yet every night he knelt quite unselfconsciously by his bed and prayed. I've no idea what he prayed about or who he prayed for. I've no idea whether his prayers were deep and sophisticated or whether they had scarcely changed since he was a young man. But it was clear they weren't a mere formality; they were reverent and personal.

The habit of prayer is a most precious thing. As I say there is no right way or wrong way. If you prayed nothing but the Lords Prayer, in the same way that some Orthodox use only the Jesus Prayer (Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner) and moved further and further into its depths, then your life would be immeasurably enriched. I don't suppose any of us could manage that. Our prayers are usually a mixture of asking for help for those we love or for ourselves, and some reflection on God or on our lives. Often too our prayers are frustrating and distracted. When he was asked how long he prayed for each day, Archbishop Michael Ramsey replied that he was on his knees for half an hour but reckoned that he prayed for about five minutes.

One of the problems which we are now all aware of as we remain in a period of restrictions is how being enclosed affects our mental health. And psychotherapists tell us that maintaining or finding a routine in these very unusual circumstances is central to maintaining good mental health. Routine is always difficult in busy lives and I know that it's possible to be more busy at present even when we're at home. But the circumstances might also help us find a routine of prayer which has been lost over the years. There are literally hundreds of "prayer resources" online. And that in itself can be a problem. Which to choose.

Well, if you would like to try something that is quite familiar, varied and has everything you could need "packaged" for you, why not simply download the Church of Ireland Daily Prayer App which will provide you familiar prayers, daily readings and suggestions of topics and themes you might wish to pray for in your own words. In the Acts of the Apostles we are told that believers "continued in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in the prayers" words which we still use in the Confirmation Service. Fellowship is forbidden us and not save to do; holy communion is still possible in a spiritual but not a physical receiving; the apostles teaching is summed up for us in the Creed of that name. Why not continue also in "the prayers".

+John

### COPY DEADLINE

The deadline for the next edition of "The Ambassador" (August/September) will be **advised by email. No items will be accepted after this date.** Material will ONLY be accepted by e-mail to [magazine@armagh.anglican.org](mailto:magazine@armagh.anglican.org) as an attached 'Word' document.

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Views expressed in the Ambassador are those of the contributor and are not necessarily the views of the Editor or the magazine committee.

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# St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh

Having no parish, but with a tradition of daily worship, the Cathedral is unusual in the Church of Ireland. Its congregation comes from a radius of ten miles or more. At the heart of its life is its choral worship on Sundays, Sung Eucharist in the morning (preceded by a quiet celebration of Holy Communion One) and Evensong in the afternoon.

How to sustain both people and pattern? Our Easter Sunday video apart, I don't much care to celebrate when others cannot receive. I cannot celebrate alone. I have no skills with video, and twenty members of our

congregation have no computer. For each Sunday, therefore, I pre-circulate a service by post and email. It follows Holy Communion Two but, instead of the Prayer of Thanksgiving, has a 'Memorial of the Passion'. At the heart of this is the text (from Matthew, Mark or Paul (1 Corinthians 11)) of what Jesus did at the Last Supper to convey to us his dying for us. (His washing of his disciples' feet conveys the same thing.) I include a meditation or reflection on the Gospel of the day to encourage people to explore its meaning for them, and prepare prayers of intercession. For 11 a.m. on Sunday I go over to the Cathedral, robe, ring

the bell, and pray through the service, knowing that others are praying with me. At 5 p.m. I go back and say Evening Prayer (likewise pre-circulated) instead of Evensong.

I also continue to say Morning Prayer in the Cathedral daily, again, ringing the bell. While we are unable to use our churches for congregational worship, I include, by name, every parish in the Diocese and the clergy who are serving in them. God bless and be with you all.

Gregory Dunstan - Dean

## ACTON, DRUMBANAGHER & LOUGHGILLY

Rev'd Graham Spence  
Tel: 028) 3082 1848



### BURIAL:

18th April 2020 – Margaret Kathleen (Kay) Whiteside, (Drumbanagher).

21st April 2020 – Philip Barlow, (Loughgilly).

### REFLECTION - LIVING IN LOCKDOWN

Over the past ten weeks or so, we have been living with challenging, but necessary restrictions on our way of life, to protect us, our families, our health service and community. The constant coronavirus news and the worry about the health and safety of loved ones, has been perplexing and unsettling for everyone.

In the past, it has always been the case in times of crisis that people have sought the protection of the Church. For most of us, being present regularly with family, friends and neighbours in the local Parish Church on a Sunday morning is a very precious thing and to lose that privilege for any length of time is hard to accept. Nothing can substitute for it or replace it.

As we continue to live in lockdown, I want to take this opportunity to warmly commend parishioners who have stayed in regular contact with elderly neighbours and friends by phone, email and text and WhatsApp messages. It is important to be aware that while isolation feels manageable for some people, for others it can be really challenging and even painful.

I also wish to extend my appreciation to those of you who have shared some of your lockdown experiences with me. You have mentioned that people are taking more time to talk and to care. There is more kindness in the air.

Recently, Acton Village Volunteers delivered more than fifty 'Hug Bags' to senior citizens. The Bags were prepared by Poyntzpass Primary School children and each bag contained a message from the school, a letter and/or a drawing from a child and a selection of small gifts i.e. puzzle books, soap, shower gel, bed socks, chocolate etc.. This lovely initiative from the School supported by the Village Volunteers warmed many hearts. Our sincere thanks to all involved for making it happen. Your kindness and thoughtfulness were greatly appreciated by all the recipients. Well done. During lockdown we have been able to collectively slow down, and focus on the day-to-day, spend more time over meals and have the opportunity for regular exercise. We have also been blessed with

beautiful weather and we have been enjoying the countryside which is looking its absolute best with the forty shades of green very much in evidence. Our gardens are also in full bloom and a variety of birds are busy rearing their young. Please see below the 'Swan' family, (dad, mum and four cygnets), living happily close to the Rectory.



We have also marked important anniversaries in the history of the nation. Firstly, 75 years ago, on Friday, 8th May 1945, a tidal wave of euphoria swept over the nation following the unconditional surrender of Nazi Germany. The ascendancy of freedom's light over tyranny's darkness ushered in a new age of peace, democracy and prosperity. This harmonious future, however, was won at a terrible cost. The Second World War generation, displaying unimaginable courage and fortitude rose heroically to the challenge. On Friday afternoon, 8th May 2020, the church bells were rung at Acton, Drumbanagher and Loughgilly at 3pm in tribute to all those who made the supreme sacrifice to safeguard our freedom.

The second important anniversary was International Nurses Day which takes place on the 12th May each year. This date was chosen as the date to celebrate the occasion because it is the anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale who affectionately became known as, 'The Lady with the Lamp'. This year marks the 200th anniversary of her birth on 12th May 1820. In this special 200th anniversary year, 'The Lady with the Lamp', has helped to shine a light on the remarkable work all health and care staff, (several of whom are parishioners), are doing. We say a very sincere thank you to all of them.

As restrictions are gradually eased and lockdown ends, we will all have a much clearer understanding of what really matters in these short lives of ours. We already value our health care workers more; we might also value our teachers more, our farmers, our lorry-drivers, our supermarket workers...it is a long list.

## ST. MARK'S, ARMAGH

Rev'd Malcolm Kingston  
Telephone: 028 3752 2970



In every generation there are 'watershed' moments whereby life is referred to as

being 'pre' or 'post'. Certainly this is a period of time which will be a reference point for many of our lives. At present it feels as if everything has been affected and amidst all of this, new lessons are being learned. Whilst there has been and will be significant suffering, what has been lovely to observe is how we, as communities, have learned to appreciate one another, perhaps to degrees never reached before.

The reality of being a church community rests heavily upon relationship; relationship with the Lord Jesus and with one another. Whilst our relationship with the Lord is constant, how we have experienced and expressed relationship as a church community has been different. As a minister, the unusual reality we are in is felt most prominently on Sundays and in pastoral circumstances. Being unable to worship in the immediate presence of our church family, and physically alongside them in times of pastoral need feels very incomplete.

However, amidst the constraints of the current pandemic, we, like parishes all over our Diocese have had to adapt and seek to offer spiritual encouragement through online Sunday and midweek services, prayer meetings, house groups, as well as help build relationship through more social opportunities. Technology has allowed us to engage with people in new ways and the work of the Church continues, even in homes significantly unreached before. Also, like other parishes in our Diocese we have been involved in some local practical initiatives to bless health care staff and their patients, as well as assist people being supported by the Food Bank and ABC Council.

With regards to future programme, at present it is difficult to anticipate 'what' and 'when'. But we can have faith that the Lord will lead us to a 'post' Covid world. His Word shows us that the Lord will use faithful offerings, no matter how small. He will build his Church even amidst very testing times. By his Spirit he bypasses social distancing and ministers to us all. There is always hope. A verse that has recurred in my mind of late is "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer." (Romans 12:12)



Staff from Craigavon Ward 2N (Respiratory)

/ Covid Ward) who received a large donation of hand creams from parishioners and friends of St Mark's Armagh. These have been most helpful to staff members given the very frequent hand washing they require. Also received were used Baby Monitors which were requested to help attend to needs of patients when required.

### LAUGHTER & LAMENT

It's not easy walking past a car showroom - there's something very appealing about shiny new cars, especially when your own car needs a wash! As people we don't seek tears, we prefer laughter, and as followers of Christ the area of lament isn't exactly advertised in our social media platforms to draw in the crowds! Psalm 13 has tripped me up during lockdown, but that's a good thing because being floored means you can't fall any lower!

Psalm 13: 1. How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? 2. How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me? 3. Look on me and answer, Lord my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death, and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him," 4 and my foes will rejoice when I fall. 5. But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. 6. I will sing the Lord's praise, for he has been good to me.



If we're honest there are times when God seems distant. Well, when that happens, we're in good company. Out of the depths of his heart David repeats four times the haunting cry, "How long?" Psalm 13 gives us permission to wrestle with the topic of lament. It creates a way to navigate pain and suffering as we are called to worship God even in the midst of uncertainty. It gives us a language when words fail us. Lament is a part of life which allows for messiness. It dares us to place face up our cards of fear and anxiety on the table. Lament invites us to turn to God in troubled times. It's more than something that comes out of us. Lament is part of the process happening within us.

In the midst of Covid 19 may we grow in our awareness of God's gift of lament and trust in His unfailing love.

Titch

### BALLINDERRY, TAMLAGHT & ARDBOE

Rev'd Canon Barry Paine  
Tel: (028) 7941 8500



### JOURNEYS!

From a relatively early age I have had a fascination with maps. I would plan journeys exploring routes with my Thomas Cook Railway Timetable. Each year I longed for the new edition of the railway timetable book. Many of the journeys planned came to fruition! With rucksack, map and my trusted railway timetable I traveled! For me, it was all about the journey rather than the destination I had set myself. Journeys!

Now, we are on a journey that none of us planned and could never have imagined. The destination, effective medicine and a vaccine seem to be in the distant future. The coronavirus pandemic can be a different journey for many of us. Individuals, as well as families, are in strict lockdown for whatever reason and have not ventured beyond their garden. Shopping for not only themselves but for loved ones and neighbours has become the norm for many. For our NHS staff, residential care workers, community carers, home carers, and those providing essential services, the experience has been of a different journey during lockdown: we commend them to God for their heroic work.

It is difficult to visualise the journey of persons who have been in intensive care and subsequently died without family: thank God for the compassion of hospital staff. The number of persons having died in recent months enables us to reflect more about how people prepare for their final journey. What preparation/s do we truly make for the ultimate journey and destination, death itself?

For those persons who will die today, tomorrow, do they have the hope of eternal life? Do they along with ourselves believe in an afterlife that is much more fulfilling than what we experience here? Do we believe that we will meet our loved ones who have died in Christ? How many of us will be able to cry out, that our death is our coronation day! For then we will see our Lord! Happy days?

At this most of unusual of times it does give us the opportunity to question what kind of journey we are on and how prepared we are to meet our God. This is a destination I am looking forward too!

**BALLINDERRY VINTAGE RALLY - SATURDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2020 - CANCELLED DUE TO CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC.**

### BALLYMORE

Rev'd Canon Shane Forster  
Tel: 028 3884 0234



I am the 25th Rector of Ballymore Parish since the year 1622. The names of all my predecessors are recorded on a plaque on the wall within the porch of the church building. Yet, until now, across nearly 400 years, I don't think any Rector has been in the difficult situation of having to close the doors of the church building due to a pandemic. Even in the worst of times, the parishioners of Ballymore were still able to gather for worship on a Sunday on the hill in Tandragee. History will record that the doors of Ballymore Parish Church were closed during the covid-19 crisis in 2020, but what I hope and pray will be remembered is that the church was more open, active and visible than it has ever been before.



The church family has reached out in support of the older and more vulnerable members of the community, offering help with shopping and delivery of much needed medication.



The catering group with the assistance of friends, have baked buns and made traybakes on a weekly basis for the staff of our nursing and care homes, medical centre and pharmacy, as a token of our thanks and appreciation. An emergency Parish helpline has been available 24 hours a day with someone always available on the phone to offer support and advice. Bible readings and prayers have been shared via the internet every day along with activities at the weekend for our younger members in Sunday School. Weekly emails and phone calls have become part of Parish routine.

Sunday services on Facebook and the Parish website have allowed the church to literally enter the homes of thousands of people across these difficult weeks. We may have been physically apart to keep the community safe, yet we have been so very much together in every other way. The church – the people of God - at this time and in this place has been carried along on a wave of prayer. We have had time to reflect on what it truly means to be a family and church in the 21st century. Better days lie ahead and perhaps our 2020 vision is much clearer than we ever expected it to be!

With prayerful best wishes.  
Shane



## CAMLOUGH, MULLAGLASS, BALLYMOYER & BELLEEK UNION

Rev. Alan Synnott  
Telephone: 028 3083 0301



### IN MEMORIAM

Times of loss are made very much worse in our current climate and we have had two funerals held in very stark and bleak circumstances. Leevone Irwin late of Wakefield terrace, Bessbrook died in Avila nursing home on 8th April and was buried the next day with representatives of her family present. Margaret Nesbitt nee Irwin late of College square Bessbrook was better known as Reta and lived in Gilnahirk with family. Reta was also buried in Bessbrook on St George's day 23rd April with a small group of relatives present. I commend the two family run funeral directors in our village for the dignity and respect they afforded these ladies and their loved ones. Supported by my churchwarden, Mr Allen Kinnin, we ensured that they were afforded decent Christian burial in the best traditions of our church.

### LIFE LESSONS WHILE LOCKED IN.

On a recent midnight perambulation through the dangerous back alleys of YouTube I



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came across a live recording of Procol Harum performing A Whiter Shade of Pale with orchestra and choir in Denmark and for six minutes and forty seven seconds my feet left the ground and I was half way to heaven, you can find it here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=St6jyEF e5WM>

The Internet, YouTube and social media have really come into their own, we can chat, worship, study and learn new skills and I, like you have been doing all of these things. I've learned how to set up and use a camcorder, record a service or bible study and post it to YouTube. With the help of my tech department it is linked to the parish websites and we're learning some editing skills too. I say we, but you know what I mean.

These web platforms are morally ambiguous and can be used for good or evil, like all tools. In Judges 4 we read of how an otherwise innocent looking tent peg is turned into a murder weapon and I'm now a tad concerned about Amazon delivering tent pegs to the rectory. We know about people being trolled and bullied on digital platforms but we are equally aware of the great good that is achieved by being able to speak and pray together via these outlets and we are making the most of it.

Red Riding Hood was reworked in the 1984 film "The Company of Wolves" and Granny gives this sage advice: "- Never stray from the path in the woods, never eat a windfall apple, and never trust a man whose eyebrows meet." Fairy tales are moral stories to guide the young and when wandering the paths of hyperspace we do well to heed Granny's words.

**BRACKAVILLE, DONAGHENDRY & BALLYCLOG**  
Rev'd Andrew Rawding  
Tel: (028) 8774 0243



As the Rector of our Parochial Group I have tried from our first decision to not have church services, and following the Government's 'lockdown', to reassure parishioners that they are not isolated in isolation. Every week since Friday 20th March I have posted a letter and service sheets with Bible readings and prayers for each Sunday through 120 (now 122) letterboxes of parishioners. It takes two full afternoons and is a journey of 102 miles. But it is worth it for the opportunity to wave and give the thumbs up sign to someone through a window, or chat with someone through an open window, or at social distance from the driveway. I have been inspired by the perseverance and

strong faith of those I have visited, and by the mutual love and care shared between parishioners with phone calls.

On Good Friday this year we missed our annual 'Walk of Witness' in Stewartstown between St Mary's Chapel and St Patrick's Church, Donaghendry. So this year I completed a 'Ride of Witness' with a cross on the back of my motorbike. The people of Stewartstown, Coagh, Cookstown, Upper Kildress, Tullyhogue and Coalisland were reminded that: *'the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.'* (1 Corinthians 1:18)

I have not conducted any online services as it would exclude many parishioners who don't have access to the internet and smartphones. However, I want to personally thank Jonathan Hull and the Diocese for providing the weekly video service that some can access. It's much appreciated. God's steadfast loving kindness is stronger than coronavirus. Peace be with you.



A message for lockdown from Holy Trinity Church, Brackaville Parish.



The Rector sets off on Good Friday on a 'Ride of Witness' delivering a letter and service sheets to homes in Donaghendry & Ballyclog parishes

**CLONFEACLE, DERRYGORTREAVY AND EGLISH**

Rev'd Suzanne Cousins  
028 3754 8289



**Keeping Safe, Keeping Connected and Keeping Hopeful: Reflecting on Parish Life in Lockdown**

Parish life since the beginning of lockdown has been dominated here as elsewhere by the mid-pandemic preoccupation, of keeping safe, keeping connected and keeping hopeful.

There are difficulties for us all and distress for many. It has been strange to lose the freedom to gather as churches, to have our plans suspended and our parish diaries wiped. Yet as we develop new patterns and ways of gathering, worshipping and witnessing, by the grace of God there seems to be some budding of our corporate Christian spiritual life. This is evident, for example, first, in a healthy surge of commitment to praying and reading the Bible together, and second, in mutual care between us as brothers and sisters in Christ and in offering practical help and care to our neighbours in our communities.

Like others, we are taking courage in the Christian promise that, pandemic or no pandemic, God has not left us alone; as recent meditations on the Ascension and on the words of the liturgy have reminded us, "The Lord is here. His Spirit is with us".

The words of 2 Corinthians 3:17- 4:1 are also encouraging:

"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.... Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart."

Keeping more-than-superficially connected with each other is an ongoing challenge, but simultaneously there is also new freedom, and the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ and of Christian hope is undeniably being shared more widely than ever. Some of the specific new practices which are helping us keep connected as churches and to not lose heart include:

- regular online services (mainly pre-recorded)
- occasional online services (live and pre-recorded)
- a phone-in service with dedicated number
- pastoral phonecalls by the rector
- 'Love Thy Neighbour' friendly phonecalls to the elderly and isolated
- 'Love Thy Neighbour' delivery of essentials
- a weekly online prayer meeting by digital means (Zoom)
- coffee and catch-up Zoom meetings
- a weekly Sunday morning children's online

meeting, 'KidZoom'

- a Children's Day service
- a youth online meeting
- a 75th VE Weekend online coffee morning
- weekly bell-ringing at 'Clap for the NHS and frontline workers' time
- the prayers and support of our ecumenical colleagues
- other.

Thank-you for your interest and prayers.

Revd Suzanne Cousins, Rector

## BURIALS

**Holy Trinity Church, Eglis (Drumsallan)**  
Gwen Bloomer, 9th April 2020

**St Columba's Church, Derrygortreavy**  
Thomas Flemming, 22nd March  
Helen McGivern, 20th May 2020

## ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, CROSSDERNOTT

Sister Valerie Thom  
Telephone: 028 87 749920



The lockdown has been difficult but it is the same for everyone. We as a parish are supporting each other in whatever way we can. Technology had been useful but also has been problematic, interesting and at times challenging to learn new processes and find solutions, a task still in progress.

We hold hours of prayers and fasting for pastoral situations in our parish and we have seen God answer prayers in amazing way. We are also delighted to have welcomed a new addition to our family a baby boy born to Rachel and Paul.

There have also been funny moments as well. One of the schools set the children a series of questions one of which was - Who is the prime minister? To which one 5 year old answered Valerie.

We are so proud of our parishioners who are working on the front line and other key workers and all the families who are trying to keep normal.

We continue to worship as best we can and use various ways of keeping in contact with the parish. Each Sunday our hymns are picked by different members of the parish and the readings are read by the parish members.

On VE Day we had planned a party for the parish which had to be cancelled but that didn't stop some people holding their own in their gardens and the bells of the church rang out.

For our Sunday School, Jill Hamilton has produced a fantastic on line resource called all All Aboard, it well worth checking out. Our teachers love it.

As a parish we want to say a big welcome to Archbishop John and assure him of our prayers and look forward to him visiting the parish.



## DERRYLORAN

Canon Norman Porteus  
867 62261  
Canon Drew Dawson  
867 37151  
Website  
[www.derryloran.com](http://www.derryloran.com)



Life in the parish in these days of Coronavirus..

Who would have thought that life would be so adversely transformed in these past months? We had all sorts of events planned, which just couldn't take place. We learned new terms like Coronavirus, Covid 19, social distancing and self-isolating. Those initial days when people were busy panic-buying seem so long ago! Now they

form orderly queues and wait their turn to be admitted. Church life too has been transformed... Sundays, once so busy, are so quiet with a solitary service streamed live on Facebook. I could get used to that! Parish organisations have had to close early and other events have been cancelled. Community events like Christian Aid lunches and the house to house collection have also been cancelled.



People ask, "how do you spend your day?" The secret is finding a routine, and fortunately I've been able to do so! It begins in a devotional manner preparing posts for Derryloran Parish Facebook with a Verse for the Day, Morning Prayers, a devotional reading and Bible study and KIDZ KORNER, a Bible story for young people. In the afternoon there is a Just Thinking... spot and in the evening our Evening Prayers. Bible studies have included series on the "I am's of Jesus", a Holy Week series on "Matthew and Jesus", "The 7 churches of Revelation" and currently St Mark's Gospel chapter by chapter.

The afternoon is usually spent on exercise and combining the distribution through letter boxes of our Pandemic Parish Prayer, meeting people whilst always observing social distancing, waving at some our older parishioners through windows! The evening then is spent in preparation for the next day's articles on facebook and a walk before bedtime.

Each Sunday at 11am we have been able to stream live our short services of Holy Communion or Morning Prayer to a 'virtual congregation'. Our Easter Day Service for example reached over 1,700 people! It certainly is a different way of 'doing church'! In recognition of the dedicated service of NHS staff our church bell rings out each Thursday evening at 8pm, and also will mark VE Day, along with many other churches.. The Royal British Legion had planned a VE Service in Derryloran, followed by a Parade to Killymoon Castle in recognition of American Army personnel stationed there. That was marked by a "virtual Act of Remembrance" on Facebook. So despite "Lockdown", life has been surprisingly busy, but there has been time too for study and reading... The amazing thing for me is how, although our churches have been closed to the public, the message of the love of God in Christ Jesus

continues to reach out to all and sundry, especially in these needy days of Coronavirus when so many people are quarantined, isolated or locked down. In such times we need that message of Hope through which the Scriptures inspire and strengthen us daily!

Do join us by Googling Derryloran Parish Facebook....

## DESERTLYN (MONEYMORE) AND BALLYEGLISH

Rev. Dr. Adrian N. Stringer.  
028 8674 8200



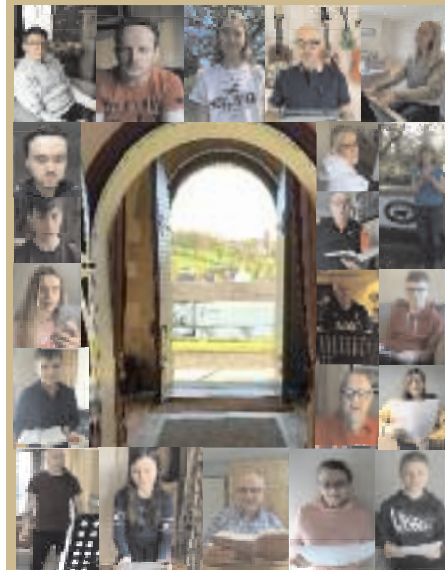
Along with all other clergy, at this period I would like to offer my condolences to those who have lost loved ones. Amongst them, our own Jack Seffen (79 years).

Church buildings won't be open for worship for some time. However, the body of Christ is the church – and the church is us! We, the members of Desertlyn and Ballyeglish are working hard for others. We have a G.P. with two surgeries, two pharmacists working very long hours, nurses, physios, phlebotomists and a whole army of carers who help the elderly and housebound. Alongside these on the frontline are others key workers, for example farmers and retail workers whom we are equally dependent upon. We are proud of them all!

As well as working within and for our community, parishioners have been working behind the scenes for our church. A 'Help' group (Ashley, David, Cathy and William) offer their time to collect and deliver groceries and medicines. Wilbert, Ernie and Ozzie are still keeping the churches and Rectory grounds tidy. Our Treasurers and Envelope Secretaries, Helen, Betty, Valerie, Stephen and Julie, are still working away in the background. As for worship, we have found an alternative. We have two WhatsApp groups totalling over 150 people. On these are posted a mini morning prayer Monday to Saturday and then on Sunday our service. For the latter, parishioners kindly video themselves reading lessons and singing (see collage of photos). The response has been terrific – and on behalf of everyone who listens and watches each Sunday, thank you so much!

These WhatsApp groups also provide us with a platform for members to share something of their daily lives: photos of their pets and even jokes. We have held our first digital parish quiz through WhatsApp. The weekly Bulletin has been delivered digitally and has grown from two to eighteen pages. Yes, at Desertlyn and Ballyeglish we are still the church!

The buildings are closed, but our church is still open and worshipping!



These are some of the people who, through our WhatsApp groups, lead our Sunday Worship at Ballyeglish and Desertlyn.

## DONAGHMORE & DONAGHMORE UPPER

Canon Peter Thompson  
Telephone: 028 8776 1214



St Paul wrote to the Romans that all things work together for good for those who love the Lord, who are called according to his purpose. These past nine weeks of "lockdown" have been the strangest of my life, and yet in the midst of all the difficulties and challenges, God is in control, and there is much that is good.

The biggest challenge has been to worship in an empty church, day after day, week after week. It's been a challenge to learn how to lead worship online, with no physical congregation to interact with. How long should the service be? What is the best camera angle? How to upload it to the internet? As the weeks have passed skills are being learned and refined, and hopefully the standard to presentation is improving.

The other big challenge is not being able to visit and interact with parishioners. Doing pastoral ministry over the phone and online is very strange and different. All of our training and experience revolves around 'the sacrament of presence', of being at a hospital bedside, of being in a family home, of attending a wake.

So much for the challenges - the blessings are many. First is time. Normally ministry is a flurry of activity, and much of that spent in the car - driving to hospitals and nursing homes, driving to vestry meetings, to Armagh, to Dublin. Life is suddenly at a much slower pace and there is more time to be still and listen to God. There is also quality time for the family, something which

is hard to balance in 'normality'.

The next blessing is being welcomed into so many homes 'electronically'. The number of people worshipping via the internet is far exceeding the number who would ever attend church.

It's also been a chance to look at every aspect of life and ask some big questions about priorities. When life is busy it's hard to be objective. Now we have time to see what really matters.

The biggest question is who can we turn to for help. Governments and scientists, doctors and researchers have found themselves helpless in the face of a Covid-19. Business and economy, travel and education have ground to a halt. Everything we put our faith in has been effected - except God. "When other helpers fail and comforts flee" the old hymn says, then we turn to God and say "abide with me." This is a moment of opportunity, for our world has nowhere to turn but to God. As the world looks for hope, we need to draw it to the cross.

## DROGHEDA AND ARDEE UNIONS AND KILSARAN UNION

Rev. Iain Jamieson  
00353 (0) 41 9838791  
Rev. Canon Joyce Moore  
00353 (0) 41 6851327



### THE LOCKDOWN IN LOUTH

Personally speaking, the lockdown has been a time of re-evaluation of our priorities. We are some of the fortunate ones: Richard and I have both passed the threescore-years-and-ten milestone, so, despite being healthy and active, we have been categorised as 'at risk'. We have not stirred outside our own garden from 3rd April until 5th May. Even now, our journeys are few and short; our son and daughter-in-law are still doing our shopping.

Initially, there was a great drive to clean and to tidy, to read, to learn something new. However, when there is no urgency about a job, it is easy to become side-tracked, to procrastinate, to practise inefficiency. In short, long after retiring from teaching, we have undergone another retirement. We have had to learn a little self-discipline!

Ministry is unsatisfactory. 'Visits' over the phone and Zoom meetings are equally unsatisfactory.

For the first time ever, I had to say to someone in the hospital that I would not visit. The family accepted my offer of prayers over the phone and I trust that God supplied what was lacking. Our deepest



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sympathy must go to all who are bereaved at this time.

For those in work, there is enormous stress in trying to balance child care and home-schooling with the demands of time-guzzling online presentations. It takes real strength of character to work conscientiously whilst caring for little, demanding dependents; the difficulty of the task is in inverse proportion to the size of the home space.

On the positive side, the weather has been wonderful and nature is preaching much more effective sermons than any I have ever delivered. God is faithful, and God is in charge. Following his commandments and trusting in his providence sounds like a good idea.

### DRUMCREE

Rev. Gary Galway  
Telephone: 028 3833 2503



As everyone is saying, we are indeed living in unprecedented times and certainly for anyone who knows me it was indeed "unprecedented" that I felt the need to join the millions who already engage with social media!!! Yes with much kicking and screaming, and out of necessity to get our church services accessible to as many as possible, I finally had to set up a Face book account!!!



Now before you all get excited and send me friend requests (as some already have), please don't be offended but I literally have one friend (out of necessity) and intent to keep it that way. I have no desire to know what everyone else is having for breakfast, daily activities or anything else!!! If COVID-19 and lock-down has taught us anything, it is that we have all been living life at an unsustainable pace and it is indeed time to slow down, concentrate on what's important and get back to basics. It quite literally has been a "RESET button" for us all.

I can look back over the last 9 weeks and reflect on both positives and negatives in these days of lockdown. The obvious negatives being the number of families who have been left bereft as COVID-19 has taken a loved one or threatened livelihoods, not worshiping corporately together in the Lords house and the coldness of social



distancing, especially when carrying out a funeral at a graveside. Our natural instinct is to comfort with a physical expression of a hug which often says more than many words could and yet that simple demonstration of love has been taken from us. But despite this, there have been many new forms of love being demonstrated, neighbourhoods getting to know and look out for each other, generous acts of kindness with food parcels, skilled seamstresses making medical scrubs for NHS workers and a small group of parishioners coming together (adhering to Social distancing rules) and singing Amazing Grace outside the home of a parishioner who had lost his beloved wife and the mother of his young boys. Google classrooms have provided lessons and activities for our children for Kids Church and whilst COVID-19 has delayed the start date of our new youth worker, Sid Burrows, our youth have been having Zoom meetings with Grace Family Church in Connecticut, doing youth fellowship together in a new innovative way.



Each week in the UK over 50,000 services are streamed online, with unprecedented numbers engaging and connecting with church as never before, people are seeking answers and turning to God in these days. It makes me think of a church sign which I saw many years ago and so resonated with me then and is even more relevant today, 'Church has now left the building'.

It is indeed a "RESET button" moment for Gods church; things should never be the same again. It is time for the church to be transformed from being inward looking to being once again a body of people who can make a difference; the work of the church is to seek the lost, we are after all called to be "Fishers of men, not keepers of an aquarium"!

### DRUMGLASS PARISH DUNGANNON & MOYGASHEL

Rector: VACANT  
Rev Elizabeth Stevenson  
Tel. 3885 1503  
Rev Graham Hare  
Tel. 8738 0360

### BURIALS:

- 22nd January 2020 - Annie Isobel Beatty
- 24th January 2020 - Eileen Cheevers
- 10th February 2020 - Margaret Letitia Turner
- 22nd March 2020 - Maureen Leckey
- 31st March 2020 - John McMenemy
- 1st April 2020 - Leslie Wilkinson
- 5th April 2020 - Elaine McClure
- 8th April 2020 - Elizabeth Burnside
- 16th April 2020 - Maureen Wright
- 21st April 2020 - Jean Crooks
- 26th April 2020 - Mervyn Mackay
- 17th May - Elma Wright

The ministry and mission of Drumglass Parish continues in this unusual time. Of course, like every other parish we have been thinking about how to most effectively reach out to our community, and offer opportunities for worship and fellowship.

The cessation of public worship, coupled with the inability to visit people has been the source of enormous personal heartache for me. These aspects of ministry are immensely important and give rhythm and routine in our normal lives. I have been reminded however, that I am not to find my identity in what I do, but in who I serve.

With daily Bible readings on-line, services every Sunday, zoom meetings, pastoral phone calls and plenty of parish administration, there is certainly no shortage of work still to be done. The challenge for all of us is to ensure that our worth is not found in how busy we are, but in how much Jesus loves us.



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At Drumglass Parish we have been responding to the current difficulties with compassion and creativity. There have been plenty of new opportunities to reach out, and I have been so encouraged by the willingness and energy that our parishioners have demonstrated and the support which they have shown.

Jesus said, "I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it". It is my earnest prayer that, despite the current challenges, Drumglass Parish will continue to be a faithful witness in our community and look to the future with a renewed confidence as we seek to extend the Kingdom of God through faithful Bible teaching and compassionate love for each other and our neighbours.

Elizabeth's ministry revolves mostly around pastoral care for elderly parishioners in their own homes and in Care Homes, as well as visiting the sick and those who have been recently bereaved.

Whilst she is saddened at the cessation of all her visits, none the less, she is so grateful to have the privilege of being in regular contact by telephone with those whom she would normally have visited.

Many of these 'phone visits' include Bible reading, prayer and singing favourite hymns which bring much comfort to everyone.

Elizabeth has been very touched by how members of Staff in Care Homes, amidst all the stress they are undergoing in this pandemic, have gone the extra mile to enable residents to receive her calls.



Some of the teams on our Big Drumglass Zoom Quiz



Rev'd Elizabeth Stevenson recording a Sunday service



Our on-going Lite Bite food collection, in association with BCM



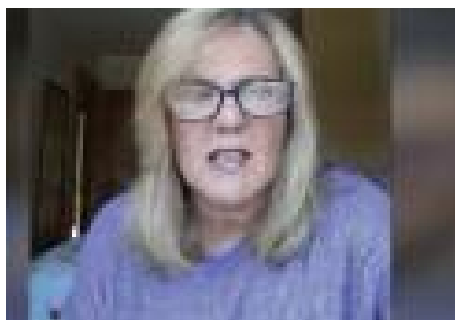
Rev'd Graham Hare recording an on-line assembly for local schools.



Our welcome to Church videos



Our "Weekend Winner" competition.



And our "Word at Home" daily reading.

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### MINISTRY IN LOCKDOWN

A few weeks ago, I along with 70 others, participated in a Webinar hosted by CPAS (Church Pastoral Aid Society). It was entitled Leadership in Lockdown, it really interested me, and it was definitely time well spent. This webinar was challenging and encouraging in equal measure with a presentation from James Lawrence and group discussions as well. We were invited to take part in small break-away groups sharing our own personal experience of lockdown.

When I got over the wonder of Zoom and all that could be done, I settled myself to share with another colleague and then we took part in a survey. The feedback was interesting but not unexpected – what transpired was a lot of shared experiences and feelings. This time together was a gift; sharing together, remembering that one is not alone in this journey. Being inspired and encouraged with the continued missional opportunities, but also the joy of just being together, talking and listening. It really was excellent and very much needed. So, for me this opportunity came at exactly the right time, right bang in the middle of these weeks of great change and opportunity. For this I am thankful.

When the lockdown began the changes to our lives were huge. Of course, those adjustments would have been slightly different in each family and circumstance, yet we all know that it was, and is, exhausting and difficult. I had to have a serious technological skills upgrade, and I am certainly not a primary school teacher that is for sure. I have a newfound respect for all who teach in our schools. Even so, I am glad to report a significant learning curve in many areas of our lockdown life.

It has been wonderful to have an online presence, (thank you one and all, for your lovely comments along the way). Of course, there were many tweaks having to be made as the weeks progressed and I am grateful to my husband Mark for all his hard work in this area. As with others I am sure, the feelings and emotions ranged from bewilderment to clarity and all sorts in between. The questions and observations just kept coming thick and fast from myself and rightly so, from others. How do I continue to help parishioners experience church at a distance? How can the church communicate better? How do I deal with the guilt of not being physically present with the really ill? How do I manage expectations

and hopes? In essence, how do I do my job, fulfil my calling in Lockdown?



I hope I have genuinely tried to do what I can do, given the restrictions. There have been many hard situations to face and discouragements along the way. Many heartaches felt, and shared, and countless prayers being prayed along the way, but also many joys felt and experienced too. It has been such a privilege and joy to be able to involve many people in our services, it is a particular joy to hear the voices of those who have not read in church before, this is brilliant. I love that our services, along with other church services, have reached so many more people outside our church family, and even across the world, that excites and thrills me – how amazing is this? I love that we can do our Bible Study, Vestry etc on Zoom and our prayer meeting by another tech method, fantastic! Above all, I am proud and thankful to have witnessed the love and care of others – indeed the best of humanity coming out more strongly and more intentionally than ever, well done everyone.

And so, in conclusion, my simple observation is this – yes, I probably would have done some things a little differently and better even. I acknowledge that I am not perfect, but I do love. I am also profoundly grateful for all the good things that have happened in these weeks. God is still on the throne; we praise him for his goodness and love, and we continue to pray for our world and especially for the heart that grieves.

The Lord Bless you  
Diane

## KILLYLEA, CALEDON AND BRANTRY

Rev. Bill Atkins  
Telephone: 028 3756 8874



## BAPTISM

Brantry 16th Feb Sarah-Louise McNeill, daughter of Stephen and Leanne, Caledon Road  
Killylea 7th March Evan James Foster, son of Kyle and Jenna, Tullycallidy  
Caledon 15th March Jude Austin David, Mill Lane

## FUNERALS

Killylea  
27th March Margaret Elizabeth Parkes aged 62  
11th May Stephen Gillespie aged 51 years  
19th May Doris Morgan aged 76



*Killylea Drive in Service.*

## KILLYMAN

Revd Mark Lennox  
Telephone: 028 8772 6635



Mission 2020- Come & Hear was planned from 15th-22nd March.

For months we prayed about and looked forward to our week of fun and fellowship with Bishop Fanta. On 13th March, the concerns about Covid-19 suddenly became very real and as a result all events were postponed. Church services took place on Sunday 15th and we had our Hymns of Praise service on the Sunday evening. This was our last service together in Church. From then on Mission 2020 took on a very new approach.

WIFI was extended to the Church from the Parish Hall, so services could initially be streamed Live. Like many others, we had the challenges of upload and download

speeds during Holy Week when services were put online each day but that was nothing to the suffering Jesus experienced on his journey to the cross.

Lockdown for Killyman has challenged us to think creatively, we quickly set up a team to support Rev. Mark and Rev. Chris with the way ahead. We've established a Parish Prayer Line, produced the Parish Magazine digitally and tried to be creative in how we've engaged with people online.

As well as morning and evening services online each Sunday, Rev. Mark provides a regular 'thought for the day' in his "Going Live" slots and has had regular "Chat in the Rector's Study" recordings with Parishioners. Sincere thanks to all the Parishioners who continue to help with online worship. In recent weeks the Praise Band have been recording themselves playing/singing at home and each piece has been edited together to provide the music for some of our services.

We've also tried to connect with as many people as possible, there's been the Killyman Rainbow Song, Sunday School talks each week and activities emailed to families, and not forgetting the popular Killyman Wave. The Church was lit up blue, showing support for the Key Workers, the Church Bells ring on a Thursday evening at 8pm and before normal services times each Sunday.

There is so much more we could tell, but the editor of Ambassador might not be happy – so instead visit our Facebook Page @KillymanParishChurch to see what all is

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happening.

Stay Safe and Keep Praying.



This is strange for all of us. It is an interesting time to serve as deacon intern, especially as I move towards my final Sunday 'in the parish' (though virtually, of late). The church and the world look vastly different than when I was made deacon in September, and we are learning what it

means to touch base with, and serve alongside, each other in the digital context as we go. Like everyone else, I am slowly becoming familiar with Zoom. It was not a word in my vocabulary until a few weeks ago. It is a way of touching base with each other as part of the rhythm of daily prayer, and it is something I continue to give thanks for. The margin between the church and the world is the site of diaconal ministry; the diaconal vision of ministry involves two-way traffic, as we welcome people in Christ's name, and send them out 'to love and serve the Lord'. We stand at this margin, keeping an eye out for people on the 'back row'. Covid-19 has not impacted the substance of this ministry, but how it is expressed: catching people on the margin, as best as we can, via telephone and WhatsApp; welcoming people, in Christ's name, through our non-anxious presence online; and 'sending people out', in the power of the Spirit, to be frontline evangelists in their own homes. We are all learning afresh what it means to witness to Christ in the everyday, to live lives shot through with God's glory in this 'new normal'. In the process, it is important to be gentle with ourselves. Even so, there have been huge opportunities for the church to shine brightly.

The Rev'd Christopher West  
Deacon Intern  
St Andrew's Church, Parish of Killyman

### LISSAN

Rev. Alan Cross  
Telephone:  
028 8676 6112



### HOLY BAPTISM

26th February - Mary Eliza  
Wensley - daughter of William and Donna  
Wensley, Dunnabraggy Road, Moneymore.  
9th February - Emily Alice Jordan - daughter  
of David and Linda Jordan, Mountainview,

Moneymore.

### CHRISTIAN BURIAL

15th May - Mrs Dorothy Watterson, Claggan  
Road, Cookstown

The last Service held in Church took place on Sunday 15th March. Since then, we've entered a challenging, and abnormal, if not surreal period in our history. Tens of thousands of families have been bereaved. Locked-down, self-isolated, or furloughed is the lived reality for many. Each day is much like any other - it seems as if time itself has assumed a different perspective. Coronavirus is now the subject of our conversations - which of course must now take place by telephone. Shadows of doubt are now flung over our previously assured life-styles. The economy has been battered, and the National Health Service lauded. The vicissitudes of these unprecedented, challenging times are experienced on a global scale, and many are asking when we will return to normal - however that may be defined. Everything has changed; nothing can be the same again. We are transitioning from past certainties to a future that is less certain than our expectations would have suggested. What then is the Christian response to the current dilemma? A good starting point is to acknowledge that God is Sovereign - indeed He is sovereign by definition. Paul writes the following in his letter to the believers in Ephesus (1:11), "In Him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of his will . . ." This is best understood to mean that every single event that happens - and that includes Coronavirus - is in some sense predestined by God. Everything happens because our Sovereign God permits it to happen. Paul also emphasizes the importance of human responsibility. He never infers blame on

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God, but understands God's Sovereignty to be a source of comfort, and an assurance that evil cannot triumph. God is not only Sovereign in Lissan, but also in Wuhan, and in the many Nightingale hospitals. In this crisis, as in all others, we can trust on God who is still, and will forever remain, on the throne.

## LOUGHGALL & GRANGE

Rev Pete Smith  
Telephone: 07816 881939



*'Life in Lockdown'* Rev Pete Smith, Rector at Parishes of Loughgall and Grange

On June 9th this year we will be celebrating one year from my appointment as incumbent and celebration is a word that I have chosen deliberately. We are thoroughly enjoying the people and the place and have established strong connections and fruitful relationships throughout the past year.

Everything was progressing nicely with attendances rising and with the establishing of a vibrant Youth Fellowship as well as the pioneering of Café Church in St. Luke's. To this we had enjoyed a significant increase in numbers attending as we met on a Sunday morning on a bi-monthly basis.

With the onset of Covid-19, everything has changed and life in lockdown looks considerably different to what was once deemed 'normal' in parish life. Contact with parishioners is via a 'team' of volunteers who commit to calling those on their given list of names, once each week with me, the Rector, working my way through the list also of those 'shielding', or, 'self-isolating'.

I'm happy to report that we have no cases of Covid-19 and all our folk are kept in regular contact and assured of any and every form of assistance if needed. Those living within our parishes who aren't parishioners have also received a 'Postcard' with my contact details should they also have or be in need. This has been very well received and will help folk see that the local church is ready and willing to help practically should a need arise.

Added to this I am a keen runner and fitness enthusiast and enjoy running 7-8 miles, twice each week. Loughgall is a beautiful area to go for a run with plenty of challenging hills and trails around the roads and through the Country Park. My wife and I have continued to make great progress in the rectory garden which had suffered neglect over decades with the addition now of more spare time. This we enjoy a lot.

More spare time has surely been one of the 'positive' impacts of the current pandemic with quality time enjoyed by families and spouses who were once perhaps driven by the demands of modern life and living. My wife and I, and we as a family, are certainly enjoying better quality of time together and a more relaxed pace of life. (Maybe that's just due to our age now!).



Each Tuesday I help deliver food parcels for Armagh Food Bank and in the greater Loughgall area which provides an opportunity to connect with folk and provides me with a great sense of purpose. With regard to our worship services, we, like many others, broadcast each Sunday, in simple format, with our organist, Trevor Sharpe, and myself. Although missing 'Church' as it once was, I embrace the challenge of the current situation and am delighted, like many others, to see the Gospel reaching further than ever before.

Life in Lockdown, although challenging, isn't all bad.

## MAGHERAFELT

Archdeacon Terry Scott  
Telephone 028 7963 2365



### "TOUCH"

If there's one word that has summed up the last couple of months for me it's that little word "touch". There's been the challenge of finding new ways of keeping "in touch". One that has been resulted, in equal measure, with intense frustration and almost unspeakable joy as I've grappled with "online Services" and Zoom conference calls! It's also been a time when the absence of "human touch" has never been more pronounced. No handshakes or hugs – their absence made especially difficult at those moments of heartbreak, pain and loss. And then, for those of us fortunate enough to have had other members of our immediate family sharing our home these last few weeks, there's a real sense that we've never been more "in touch". The extra time at home with less distraction has also enabled the "touch" of God to be felt in ways not heretofore experienced.

Stephen Cottrell, the next Archbishop of York, walked, a few years ago the Camino

de Santiago de Compostella across Northern Spain. On a particularly difficult day caused by fatigue and painful blisters, he saw on his phone that one of his sons had tried to call him. He writes:

"Switching on my phone, I saw you called me.

"Missed call" it said; then your name and time.

I cannot explain, even to myself, the joy it brings that knowing where you were

then, you were thinking of me. No, more than that.

And so I called you back, and chewed the fat

about this and that, a five minute chat..... "

There is nothing better than to know you are loved and to feel that love reach out. Thank God for all those "5 minute chats", many by the good old telephone, that have helped us all keep "in touch". As we begin to come out the other side let's continue to "make those calls".

## ZOOM QUIZ

The Screenshot below shows some of those who took part in a most enjoyable Quiz Night held over Zoom and organised by our curate David McComb.



## MILLTOWN VACANT

### FROM THE REGISTER

#### BURIAL

Thursday 9th April 2020  
Eileen Haugh

Monday 13th April 2020  
Elizabeth (Lily) Johnston

#### PARISH VACANCY

Together with a few other vacant parishes, we are presently in the always-unenviable position of being without someone to lead or authorize how we should conduct regular worship, and so we rely on other parishes in the diocese and beyond. Those parishioners who can access the Internet are most grateful to the Rural Dean, Canon W Adair and other clergy in the parishes they 'visit', although they still naturally feel somewhat detached from their own church family.

Clergy are now also restricted to their own

homes, and many of them are using social media for conducting weekday meetings and events as well as Sunday worship. We encourage our parishioners to continue to join in praise and worship of Almighty God in whatever way they can, especially every Sunday.

There are encouraging signs that more people than had previously attended in person are now 'visiting' online church services and events!

Thank you also to those who have been posting encouraging and suitable items on our own parish Facebook site.

Although many of us are in isolation or lockdown, we express our admiration and gratitude to all those who are out on the front line as doctors, nurses, carers, emergency workers and all others in essential work. We pray for their safety.

We also continue to remember all who are unwell and those from the parish and community who have recently been bereaved, especially the Haugh, Taylor and Johnston families.

We remember and pray for our mission partners from CMSI, Crosslinks and MAF, who now have to cope with the threat of Covid-19 on top of all their other difficulties. Please visit their websites to keep up-to-date with their work.

It is an unusual period of uncertainty at the moment, but at least we can be assured that Jesus has already won the victory!

Philippians 4:6

### UPDATE FROM LINDA ABWA OF CMSI ABOUT THE CCD PROJECT, (COMPASSION FOR CHILDREN IN DISTRESS).

The following is extracted from her email; "In the midst of all the worrying news right now, I am delighted to be able to share the good news that the resilient folks in N. Kivu Diocese have pushed on and finished the third building! I received these photos and a video from Bishop Isesomo last week, he tells me they officially did the opening the week before, so children are already using the building, even though it is not furnished yet.

The photos attached... show the joy of the opening programme, and also the number of children still receiving the love and care of Mama Mbambu and the other helpers. They did make progress in finding family homes for six of the children this year, but you can see that there are many still in need of ongoing care for now. The other encouragement from the photos is the corrugated iron fence around the site, this was put up in response to the Ebola epidemic, but will also serve well during the present C19 situation.

(The subtitled)... video of Bishop Isesomo's thank you speech will be posted on CMSI face-book page and website... , in it you can

see the new building much more clearly. In all of this, I hope most of all that you feel the sincerity of Bishop Isesomo's thanks to your parishes, and that all the folks who have worked hard to raise these funds will know the impact that their generosity has had on the lives of many little ones in N. Kivu.

With thanks,  
Linda Abwa"



Bishop Isesomo with Mama Dorcas Mbambu and some of the children at the official opening of the 3rd house at CCD

**MOY & CHARLEMONT**  
Rev. Aonghus Mayes  
Telephone 028 8778 4312



Since Covid-19 hit our shores a few months ago we've each become acquainted with some new and unfamiliar phrases: lockdown, self-isolation, social distancing. As space demands brevity, what follows are just a couple of thoughts on these current restrictions.

For me it's been both a positive and negative experience. Negatively, despite other means of communication, the inability to visit parishioners leaves a deep feeling of unease, of failure, of not being there for

people when needed. But this is as nothing compared to the feelings experienced by others, particularly those whose family members have been ill or tragically who have died during this period, the current funeral restrictions only compounding the pain.

As for the positives; one is the remarkable way communities can pull together in times of crisis. In Moy, for example, we instigated a 'buddy-system' whereby anyone who was self-isolating, and who agreed, is paired with a buddy, who contacts them to ensure they're okay and if there's anything they need. However, interestingly, reflecting the close-knit nature of a small rural community not one of the parishioners I paired with a 'buddy' has not also been contacted by both neighbours and other parishioners. Notwithstanding the need for reassurance which more formal initiatives deliver, and how greatly they are appreciated, for me it is these informal spontaneous out-workings of Christ's command to love which leave the most indelible impression.

The suspension of public worship presented a big challenge. I hope I'm not the only cleric who, in order to get ideas, scoured the internet to discover what other clergy are doing only to be impressed and intimidated in equal measure! As with pastoral care, nothing replaces physically worshipping together, but it is interesting that those watching the online services from Moy not only outnumber those who attend St James' on any given Sunday, but even registered parishioners highlighting the effectiveness of social media in communicating the Christian message.

If space is limited on these pages, time is not during lockdown. And that's my final positive, the gift of time in which I can hopefully learn to reevaluate what really matters most, that life is more than 'getting and spending', or as another poet, W.H. Davies, put it, 'what is this life is full of care, we have no time to stand and stare.'

**MULLAVILLY**  
Rev. Elizabeth Cairns  
Tel: 028 3884 0221  
Mob: 07719 857187



### LOCKDOWN - TO LOOKOUT!

Looking back to the beginning of March when the initial guidelines began to filter through, my first thoughts, naively in hindsight, was, this will all pass in a few weeks. How wrong could I be!

Then slight panic set in and I began to worry about how I was going to provide a 'service' on-line for those who may want to watch or

be part of it. After the first two 'live' Facebook services, I decided that if I wanted to include others, then I would have to move to plan B, and thankfully Jonathon Hull was able to advise me about using the Diocesan Vimeo link to upload pre-recorded services. This was invaluable, but only is so far in that my husband Eddie was able to learn a whole new programme called 'iMovie', and could edit and add various people into the weekly service. This takes hours each week to put together, but I know again that many have appreciated being part of the service and many have enjoyed the opportunity of joining with us from all across the world. Our 'reach' each week is around 4-5 times the number of our normal congregation. All this done with a simple iPhone, blu-tac'd to a microphone stand!

The next thing I had to learn was to calm down and relax. Facebook is great, but it does have the tendency to allow you to see what other Clergy / Parishes and Churches are doing, and all of a sudden a great wave of guilt comes on because we feel we should be doing more. With a good sharp talk to myself, I said I could only do what I could do, and do it to the best of my ability. So, let go and let God guide and equip. Also for the first time in more years that I care to remember or count, I began to take time to go for walk each day, take time for me, without the pressures of time or having to be at another meeting or event or service, and as I did so, pray for my community as I walked the roads around my parish boundary. Simply getting back to basics.

Very early on, I also began to post on Facebook each morning a Psalm with a short reflection which has been a good discipline for me, and I know from comments and conversations have been a great source of pastoral help to others.

Like many others there have been the regular runs to collect prescriptions, groceries, and provide Baby Basic Baskets and Packs a number of requests that have come in. We have joined in the Thursday 'clap' for Carers by ringing our church bell, and took part in the VE Day Celebrations, virtually, and with an Act of Remembrance on the Sunday.

I have had to date, eight funerals, which have been heart wrenching for all involved; families, friends, undertakers, and myself. There have been people in my own parish who have received bad news in relation to their own health, and I have felt at a loss not being able to be with them in person, to support and comfort them, or their family, with a hug or regular visit. This must for now be done my a regular phone calls.

We will also have our first Select Vestry

meeting by Zoom soon, and I have no idea how that will go. I am also hearing on a weekly basis of some of our much older generation being set up on the internet by their families, so that they can keep in touch, and joining our Parish Facebook so that they can watch and join in with the service. So, thank you to the families for doing that! What has also encouraged me, has been the support of the local community for each other, ringing around and helping each other, and trying their best to follow the guidelines and keep each other safe. God's love in action, by word and deed. Looking out for others in Lockdown!



new opportunities, new normal!



My name is Caroline Whitten and like many people I have different roles in my life that make me who I am.

I am a child of God, wife, mother, daughter, grandmother, sister, aunt, Registered nurse, friend and I'm sure there are other roles that I could slot in as the list goes on.

The pandemic for me has refocused or shifted some of these roles.

Time spent on bible reading and devotional prayers has increased. I see my parents, children and grandchildren at the door or through a window and my friends at 2 metres distance. I now shop for 3 of these people at the same time and must explain to the shop assistant at the till that there will be 3 separate transactions going through.

As a Registered nurse I still work at Portadown Health centre and provide the same care as I always have with the provision of extra personal protection

equipment. I am acutely aware of the stress patients feel on having to attend clinic and try my best to reassure them.

My personal skill base has increased as I now know how to use hair trimmers to cut my husband Colins hair and he is thinking of letting this continue in the future , so it must look alright and it doesn't cost any money. I have also repaired hearing aids for my parents having looked on you-tube for help, and I'm hoping to access the video conferencing app. Zoom so that I can join with my select vestry friends for a meeting. I miss being able to have coffee in the Faith Mission café in Portadown, dinner at a restaurant with family or friends or simply asking my neighbour to pop over for a coffee in the mornings. However, all these current restrictions must be complied with for the safety of all that I love.

I am very mindful that not everyone is in the same boat but that we are all bearing in the same storm. So please be watchful, kind, careful to all especially during this difficult time and may this positive change in attitudes towards each other continue after the storm has passed.

God bless Caroline

## TARTARAGHAN & DIAMOND

Rev. Canon David Hilliard  
Telephone: 028 3885 1289



*For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you. (Isaiah 41:13)*

I read this in the Newsletter recently (May 9th) – 'A recent UK nationwide survey has shown that more people have begun to pray since the coronavirus pandemic began. The poll reveals that about half the British population say they pray, with one in 20 saying they started praying for the first time during the lock-down. The poll was commissioned by Tearfund.'

We certainly live in unprecedented times, but I believe that despite the worry and concern, there will be some positive outcomes, not least a new determination to pray. Certainly, whenever restrictions are fully lifted, it will be a 'new normal', rather than 'the way things were'.

Clergy were asked recently to take part in a Queen's University survey, asking how things have changed for them during the pandemic.

One question was, 'What have been the most rewarding aspects of your ministry during the Covid-19 pandemic?'



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I said I am encouraged in many ways. Many of our parishioners, young and old, have been reaching out into our community, distributing food, shopping for the isolated, sewing 'scrubs', making worship videos for the congregation, and staying connected. Some parishioners are reading their bible and praying more often. Some are sending prayers or bible texts to others. Our men's group connects now via Zoom. What's app groups in the two churches are blossoming, and many of our children are producing videos or connecting online with, for example, Colin Tinsley or Boys' Brigade resources.

I thank all in our two churches for their positivity, their prayers, and their promotion of the mission of the church in imaginative ways.

The survey also asked: 'Looking towards the time when the pandemic has passed, what do you think are the most important lessons faith communities should learn from it?'

I replied that hopefully the value of 'being' rather than 'doing' will characterise church life. We are human 'beings' after all. 'Religious staff' are regarded by the government as key workers, but I suspect clergy will be called to a more prophetic role in future, emphasizing prayer, preaching and teaching, writing and reflecting. Numbers going to church on a Sunday may reduce in the foreseeable future, but online audiences, on sites such as Facebook, will be more significant. People will still need the church, and the church will be there; but the church needs to re-think its future and find new ways to call attention to its vital message.

God is faithful. His Spirit is with us. Whatever the future, we trust in Jesus Christ. Bishop Harold Miller recently wrote: Being locked down relocates our priorities, deepens our dependence on the Lord, strangely, if virtually, draws us closer to our brothers and sisters in Christ, and prepares us for an unknown future. Don't expect to step out into the world as it was before. But do expect to step out into a world where the Holy Spirit is working in new, fresh and powerful ways, where the church is transformed from being inward looking to being again a body of people who can change the world.

That certainly sounds like a positive outcome. I say Amen. I also take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to our new Archbishop, John.

May the Lord bless you all and grant you joy and hope and his perfect peace in these days.

Please note my email address, if needed: tartaraghan@armagh.anglican.org

Yours in Christ, David

## TYNAN, AGHAVILLY AND MIDDLETOWN

Rev'd Matthew Hagan  
Tel: 028 37568619  
mhhagan@hotmail.com



### CHRISTIAN BURIAL

#### Tynan:

12th April 2020 - Dr. John Fitzroy Gillespie  
Darton Ree, Tynan

#### Aghavilly:

19th April 2020 - William John Lyons,  
Kilcreevy Road, Armagh

Parish life has certainly been vastly different for us all since Coronavirus Covid-19 came into our lives so dramatically. Whoever would have thought that Churches would close and that our graveyards would be closed for a period of time.

Since Churches closed in March one of my first challenges was to keep some sort of normally in Parish life and how to bring Church services to the parishioners. Not having recorded anything before online this was a rather daunting task. However, with myself conducting the service and my wife Jennifer taking care of the recording, I have been recording a Sunday morning service each week.

Another initiative to keeping in contact with my parishioners was to set up a Parish WattsApp group for the three churches and for those not on WattsApp, I set up a text message group so that every family was able to be kept up to date with all information. Each week I send a link to all parishioners and details of how they can access the Sunday Service.

In addition to this I have phoned each family to see how they are coping with the restrictions that have been imposed on them and their family members whether young or old and to check that they are managing well and to assure them that they are very much in my thoughts and prayers in these unprecedented times.

Throughout the time of Coronavirus I have still been working as Chaplain at Southern Area Hospice in Newry. On my pastoral visits to patients throughout the hospice, I have been taking the required precautions of wearing a face mask, apron and gloves, discarding these and washing hands before leaving each patient's private room and using hand gel before and after each visit. I also wear scrubs while on duty and change into my own clothes before leaving and the scrubs are placed in hospice laundry for

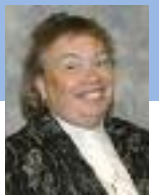
washing.

I trust that God will guide and see us through these very difficult times.

*Nahum 1:7 "The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him."*

## WOODSCHAPPEL

Rev. Ruth Murray  
Telephone: 028 7941 8311



Greetings to our new Archbishop from Woodschapel. We welcome Archbishop John and hope that he will soon be able to take up residence in the See House in Armagh.

There have been many difficulties regarding Church life since our Lenten journey was so abruptly interrupted in March. It has not been easy on many levels - especially being unable to be present with those who are ill or who have been bereaved.

But in all our recent communications we have tried to remain positive. Our parishioners are split roughly 50-50 when it comes to those with internet and those without. So we communicate by email, by Royal Mail and by telephone.

Some who have been able to see a recorded service on the internet have remarked how lovely it was to see inside the buildings. But whether online or not, as God's people we have continued to worship - apart, but together - all using the same Order of Service that is sent out each week to unite us.

Parents are being supplied with online resources for Sunday School children - this helps to provide the possibility of a different routine for Sundays. The young people also recently shared photos of their support of the NHS and this has been viewed over 600 times on our Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/woodschapelparish/>

I pray that we will continue to share our concerns AND our love with one another and with God. As we pray - and give thanks - we will receive his peace in our hearts.

*"... do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*

*And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

Philippians chapter 4 verses 6 - 7

God bless you as you continue to walk in the Way.



'So we are ambassadors for Christ...' 2 Corinthians 5:20

# Around the Diocese



The County Grand Royal Arch Purple Chapter of Armagh making a presentation of a £1,000 cheque to the Southern Area Hospice on 28th May 2020.

Left to Right:- Bernadette Byrne (Fund Raiser), Rev. Matthew Hagan (Hospice Chaplain) and C.G.R.A.P.C. members Ian Freeburn, Thomas Marshall and John Clarke.



The Revd Alan Synnott delivering online worship.



Some children from Drumcree Parish Church during lockdown.

# CLCGB During Lockdown



During lockdown, The Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigade NI has been exploring new ways of connecting with our members and leaders and helping them stay in touch with each other. We have been creating weekly challenge videos with a bible message which we are sharing on our Facebook page. We have been encouraging our leaders to share these with their groups and to get involved by sending in pictures and drawings. We have also been working with several of our groups to put together activity packs and videos to be sent out to our members. It has been so encouraging to see many churches and ministries sharing Jesus on social media and our prayer is that, through these difficult times, many would hear about Him and realise their need of Him.

We are very aware of the challenges which so many of our leaders and families are facing at the moment and so have set up a prayer group, made up of CLCGB Trustees and Chaplains. A phone number has been made available on our Facebook page to which those who need prayer support can send their prayer request. These requests are then circulated to the rest of the prayer group who commit to remembering that person in prayer over the coming weeks.



We feel very privileged to have the opportunity to stand with so many people in prayer and to serve them in this way.

As an organisation, we are using this time to seek God's will for the future of our work.

We are asking Him to show us the new ways of ministry and new places that he may be leading us to. We are praying and believing that through this crisis the Church would emerge closer to God and more in line with His will than ever before.

# CHURCH ARMY NOTES

## Sr Valerie Thom writes ...

Church army is forever changing, but at the heart of everything is the ethos of our founder Wilson Carlisle Sharing faith through word and action.



# Zacchaeus Outreach Project



*Gift to Care Workers*



*Mullabrack Accordian Flower Delivery*



*Mullabrack Accordian Flower Delivery*



*Zacchaeus Church Army 4 - Markethill Bands playing for NHS*

# Kildress Walled Garden - Part Two

It was an honour and privilege to be asked to pen a few words in the December/January issue regarding Kildress Walled Garden, and the article generated a good deal of interest which was most encouraging. Today, taking time out in late-Spring from the sowing, planting & weeding to write part two is very much a different challenge - 6 months on and the world has changed.

A seemingly mild early-Winter meant there were plenty of days to do what I call the 'garden gnome gardening' chores – laying woodchip paths, building trellises from wood found around the glebe land, creating raised beds & laying a few log steps to make access easier for getting around on the sloped land.

When the frosts came, I decided to supercharge the vegetable beds with layers of potash (a by-product from the Rectory log burner), and 4-5 year old manure kindly donated from cattle-owning parishioners. 'Black Gold' as my grandfather would have called it – I was so impressed, and given it was mid-December, that I exclaimed to the tractor driver he should be wearing a Santa costume.

When the frosts went I duly dug the beds over to make sure they had a head-start come the Spring.

Then the rain started. And seemed to go on for days and weeks at a time. Whoever sited the Walled Garden must have reckoned that, this being the island of Ireland, there was a good chance of a bit of rain. So it was created near the top of a hill, sloping away quite steeply. Even so, the ground was quickly saturated, and in places mud formed so deep it would remove a Welly boot if you so much as looked at it.

I'd made a few notes in the Summer of the direction of sun and shade caused by the biggest of the trees around the walls, and decided to move a few things around - the red, white & blackcurrants I moved into their own partially-shaded area to create a feature as you entered the garden. A Gooseberry 'Green' of some 20 bushes of various varieties, collated together in full



sun.

Big plans were made to finish off the top half-acre with the help of a digger-owning parishioner, more paths & repairing the walls. Even visits from people who had read Part One of this!

And then Lockdown. Readjusting to a new way of living: home-schooling, different demands on time, garden supplies curtailed. More determined than ever to create an inspirational space to be shared and enjoyed - even while maintaining social distancing - I threw myself into sowing seeds and preparing ground. And, of course, planting Spuds. The rain stopped and turned into the driest Spring I have ever known - unfortunately the Walled Garden has no water supply & lies some 500m from the Rectory. The singular rainwater barrel soon ran out & water had to be brought up by hand.

Nevertheless seeds, seedlings & plants are now thriving.

And always new plans, new dreams. Recently we've had the frame of a beautiful half-and-half greenhouse donated by a parishioner, and this will be put together in time for next year. Tentative discussions

about restoring the walls & adding a gate. A duckpond.

So if anyone is interested in the progress of this 'project', I've created a Facebook page 'Kildress Walled Garden' where I hope to post regular updates of our efforts. Your support is most welcome, and hopefully we'll see you up there sometime soon! Don't forget to bring your Wellies!

Mark Stuart – Rector's Husband



*'So we are ambassadors for Christ...' 2 Corinthians 5:20*

# THE Ambassador



# Church of Ireland Bishops' Appeal Supports Global Emergency Responses During Covid-19 Pandemic

In the light of the global Covid-19 pandemic, Bishops' Appeal – the Church of Ireland's World Aid and Development Programme – is releasing a total of €50,000 to five key partner mission and development agencies to support their efforts among the world's most vulnerable people.

The five agencies are Christian Aid, Tearfund Ireland, CMS Ireland, USPG, and Motivation. The emergency responses include distributing essential supplies such as food, soap, medicine and information to people whose markets have shut down and who have no access to supplies, people who live in informal settlements and in refugee camps, and people who are living with a disability.

The Rt Revd Patrick Rooke, Chair of Bishops' Appeal, said: 'Aware of the financial pressures parishes are currently experiencing, the Church of Ireland is not launching its own major appeal but asking dioceses, parishes and individuals to give what they can to the appeals launched by our partner agencies, with Bishops' Appeal acting as a conduit. In the midst of our own sufferings and fears at this time, it is vital that we remember those in countries with fewer resources and expertise.'

**Further donations can be sent to Bishops' Appeal through its website at [www.bishopsappeal.ireland.anglican.org/give](http://www.bishopsappeal.ireland.anglican.org/give)**

## Christian Aid

Christian Aid is using the lessons from the Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone to mitigate the impact of the coronavirus. The agency is already taking action in Rohingya refugee camps where 850,000 people live in cramped conditions. Working together with

partners, Christian Aid is informing people about the risks, offering hygiene and handwashing sessions, ensuring that health facilities in camps have triage and isolation spaces in order to receive suspected cases, and providing training to health personnel and key frontline aid workers.

## Tearfund Ireland

Tearfund is working in Ethiopia, Cambodia and Uganda and with Syrian refugees in Lebanon who are living in densely packed conditions in makeshift shelters, waiting for peace and the possibility to return home. Whereas people would have previously congregated to receive essential supplies, volunteers now knock on hundreds of doors delivering food and medicines. These are countries with much fewer resources than Ireland to face this pandemic – for example, in Uganda, it is estimated that there are more government ministers than ICU beds.

## CMS Ireland

CMS Ireland is working with partner churches which are distributing handwashing supplies in refugee camps in northern Uganda. Diocesan clinics in the region need assistance to upgrade their personal protection equipment and to upgrade their main hospital to be ready as a treatment and isolation centre.

In South Sudan, partner churches are requesting funds for bicycles to help to spread accurate information. The war has ensured that the vast majority of people living in the country have no financial reserves – so being unable to work their gardens or sell at market has left many in need of food and soap. Several dioceses wish to make packs available to the most vulnerable in their communities. The Mothers' Union in Maridi has been busy

making masks for the diocesan clinic and they need further supplies.

In eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kindu Diocese is also suffering the devastating impact of local floods at this time and their communities are displaced, already without food and basic supplies.

The Urban Development Programme in Kenya ministers to communities in informal settlements. The programme has identified many elderly residents who are without basic household supplies and would like to provide these for them.

## USPG

USPG is launching a new fund in solidarity with churches locally – across South and East Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, Oceania, the Middle East and Europe – as they provide care and support for their communities most in need, out of their faithful commitment to God's love.

USPG has already sent money to Guinea, in West Africa, for the distribution of sanitation kits, and emergency support to families of agricultural labourers in central Sri Lanka where coronavirus restrictions have severely exacerbated pre-existing difficulties created by unusually dry weather.

## Motivation

Motivation is working with disabled people in Africa and South Asia who have lost jobs and income, lack access to food and medicine and are struggling with pain and loss of dignity, due to a lack of urinary and sanitary products, which increases their risk of serious infection. These people are also often excluded from support so a network of communication and support is being utilised to keep them connected and informed.

# Rev Amelia McWilliams

# Revd Naomi Quinn Institution



The Archbishop of Armagh, the Most Rev'd John McDowell has appointed the Rev'd Amelia McWilliams as Non-Stipendiary Minister in charge of the Clogherny Group of Parishes with immediate effect.

The Rev'd Amelia had been serving in the Ballygawley Group until recently.

Archbishop John said "I am delighted that the Rev'd Amelia has agreed to be deployed in this way in the Clogherny Group where she will provide continuity of ministry in the strange circumstances under which all parish ministry is currently being carried out."



We welcome Revd Naomi Quinn to the Diocese of Armagh and the Parishes of Errigle Keerogue, Ballygawley & Killeshill to which she was Instituted as Rector on Friday 15th May 2020 via Zoom.

In this photo - Naomi is in the middle of the bottom row.

Welcome Revd Naomi and may God be with you and bless you richly as you minister here.



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# Friends

As I said in my "hello" video this extended period of lockdown has been inconvenient but so far not much worse than that for me. We've still not been able to move to The See House in Armagh, but as there is some painting to be done there, that's probably not a bad thing.

I've managed to ring round most, if not quite all, of the clergy. Apologies to those I haven't managed to get to yet. Your day will come.

Like all of you I've become accustomed to a huge variety of digital platforms- Zoom, MS Teams, GoToMeeting and (believe it or not) even Houseparty. Mostly these have been for meetings with the Bishops, the Executive Office, the Church Leaders Group (who have been meeting every fortnight) and other working groups I'm involved with. You'll be glad to hear that one such group based in Church House, Dublin is drawing up a Protocol to outline what parishes need to do to prepare for the reopening of churches for more "general" worship, whenever we reach that point on the "roadmaps" out of lockdown.

That document should be ready early in June to help rectors and Select Vestries consult and plan so that we're ready when the move to more general re-opening is reached, probably towards the end of July. The document is going through what everyone calls "various iterations" which I think means we need to have a few goes at it.

I suppose the other thing that's worthwhile noting is that my routine hasn't been this regular in years. Certainly for the first time since I became a bishop I'm now able to say where I will be at any hour of the day or

night. Usually in my study but for about three-quarters of an hour each day walking around a field in the company of some sheep and few docile heifers. They are quite good company but the conversation is limited. One sheep said "baa" and another one looked up as much as to say "Funny, I was just going to say that".

I'm also at the stage of thinking that there are some people in this household who are doing things deliberately to annoy me. That's a bad sign. Archbishop Michael Ramsey was a very saintly and other worldly man. He was very absentminded and of no use whatsoever around the house. He could be difficult to live with. Although obviously they'd never experienced lockdown, his wife was once asked if she'd ever contemplated divorce. She replied "Divorce never; murder occasionally". All in all I've very little to complain about.

Another bishop, Jeremy Taylor, this time of Down and Connor was deprived of his living for a number of years during the Civil War of the seventeenth century. He had live with friends for a during those years, and he wrote:

"They have taken everything from me: what now?...they have left me the sun and the moon, fire and water...many friends to pity me and some to relieve me, and I can still converse; and unless I am mistaken they have not taken away my merry countenance, and my cheerful spirit and a good conscience; they still have left me the providence of God, and all the promises of the Gospel, and my religion and my hopes of heaven, and my charity to them too; and still I eat and drink, I read and think, I can walk in my neighbours pleasant fields...and



delight in all that in which God delights, that is in virtue and wisdom, in the whole creation and in God himself. And he that has so many causes of joy, and so great, is very much in love with sorrow and peevishness, who loses all these pleasures and chooses to sit down upon his little handful of thorns".

So, this is the routine in my particular field on the border between Fermanagh and Tyrone. The Morning Office first thing, including prayer for a few of the parishes of Armagh each day. Then maybe a closer look at something that caught my attention in the Scripture readings. Emails, videoconferencing or making a video. Some phone calls. Writing a sermon or a contribution to something I've been asked to write on. A short conversation with a heifer. Family meals. More emails. Maybe joining a parish group by Zoom as I did with the Benburb Prayer Group last week. Deciding at what time to call it a day.

And, at the end of each day as I say the Evening Office I have great thankfulness to God for his care. I spread what I have done that day before his searching eyes to ask for forgiveness and for blessing. Holding those in need before his inexhaustible love and his comforting Spirit. Then, like old Samuel Pepys four hundred years ago, "And so to bed".



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