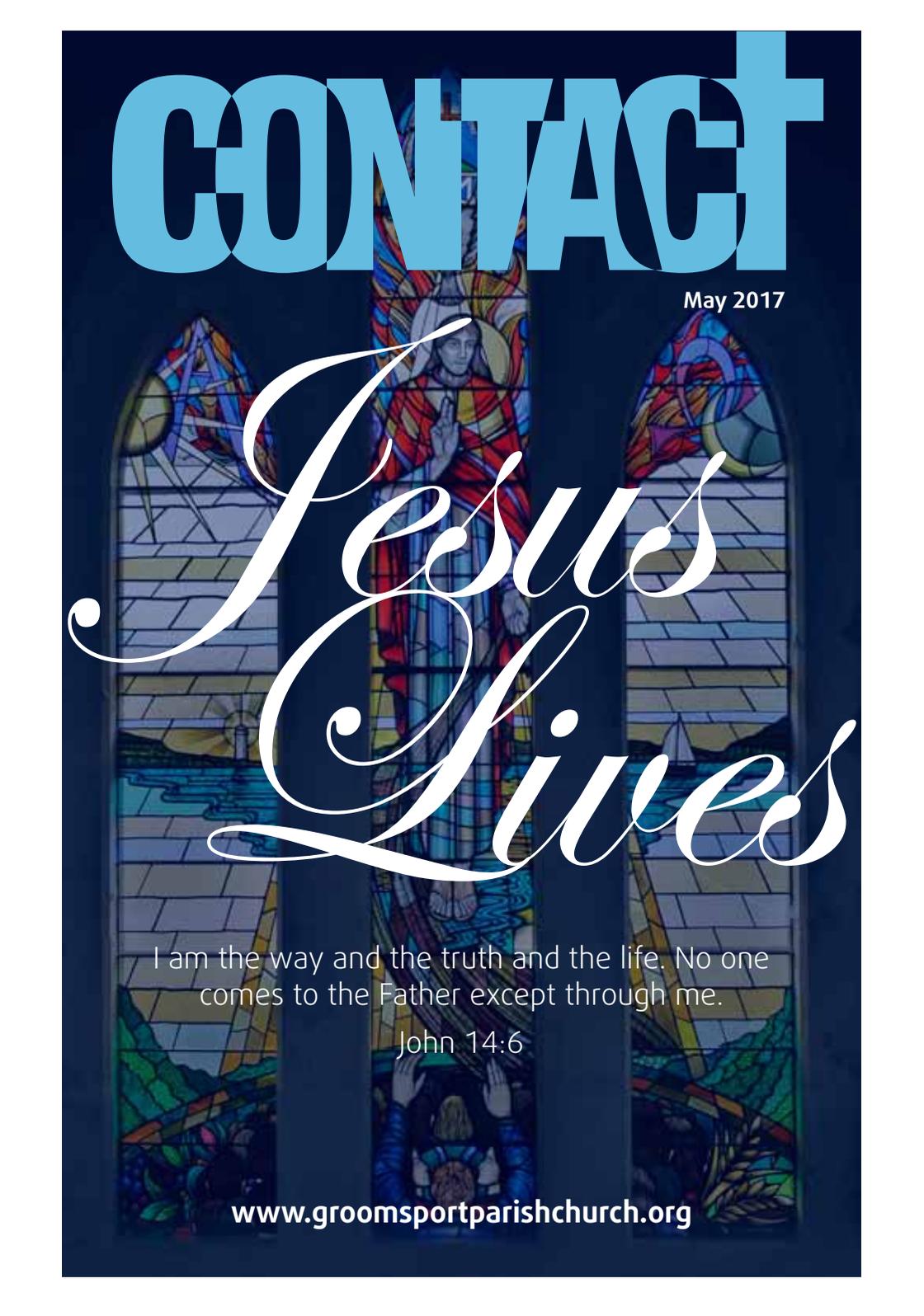


CONTACT

A large, colorful stained glass window is the background of the entire page. The central panel shows Jesus Christ with a halo, wearing a red and blue robe, with his hands raised in a gesture of blessing or teaching. To the left and right are smaller panels with abstract, colorful designs. The bottom section of the window depicts a landscape with a body of water, a lighthouse, and a sailboat.

May 2017

Jesus Lives

I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

John 14:6

www.groomsporthparishchurch.org



Parish Officials

The Rector	Revd Duncan Pollock	028 9146 4476
The Rector's Warden	Hester Kelly	028 9146 3541
The People's Warden	Helen Parkinson	028 9147 9984
R Glebe Warden	Walter Burke	028 9145 1768
P Glebe Warden	Tony Anderson	07803 282200
Treasurer	Wesley Quinn	028 9145 6472
Secretary to SV	Heather Pentland	07834 771075
Gift Aid Secretary	Ian Sloan	028 9145 7092
Youth Fellowship	Craig Lutton	07816 853373
Sunday School	Maggie Townsley & Helen Carter	07748 208649
Verger/Caretaker	Susan Moore	028 9185 7509
Organist	Stuart Tanner	028 9146 7052
Parish Office	Elaine Lester	028 9127 1311 07791 569432

Administrative enquiries please contact: Elaine 028 9127 1311 or gpcoffice@btinternet.com

Church Hall bookings please contact: David McKnight 028 9127 3130 or linden.lodge@btopenworld.com

For Hall problems, please contact: Walter (028 9145 1768) or Tony (07803 282200)

Rector's Hour

Please note that the Rector will be available in the Vestry office on Tuesdays from 6.00pm – 7.00pm, for short meetings to sign passports, driving licence documents etc., or to arrange a lengthier meeting for another time.

Rector's Recess

Whilst our Rector is always available to his congregation at all hours of every day, it is hoped that, where possible, the period between lunchtime Friday and Sunday Services may be void of contact so as to allow him family time, quiet reflection and preparation for the week ahead; emergency requirements and visits excepted.

From the Rector



It would be the height of bad manners, I suspect, to be invited to Great Grand Mama's ninetieth birthday party, only to inform the serried ranks of family and friends that Great Grand Mama was in truth only eighty-nine. Even if you had incontrovertible evidence that this was the case, that her actual birth date was still two weeks away, you wouldn't want to upset everybody by letting that particular cat out of the bag at that particular time. Why would anyone want to be such a party pooper? What kind of

Easter, were also puzzled. Read the end of St John's Gospel and feel their disbelief; it couldn't be true, could it? The disciples weren't stupid; they knew that dead people didn't come back to life. Yet here was their Teacher, their friend, their companion of some three years, who but three days before had been nailed to a cross and died. They had seen Him buried. They believed that bit alright, they'd seen it. But now they were seeing something that couldn't be true, could it? Well, yes, it was true; and the truth was, even for the first Christians, uncomfortable. But just because it didn't make sense, and just because it made

Was He the same, was He different?

pleasure might you get from being such a pedant? And what of the discomfort and downright pain of those others attending?

A week before Easter this year a poll of Christians in the UK, sponsored by the BBC, found that a quarter of them didn't believe that Jesus rose from the dead. I was astonished. Surely in this cynical, sceptical age, the headline should have been that three quarters of Christians polled did believe in the resurrection. But of course, there is no story in the stating of the obvious!

I don't know what form Jesus took after He rose from the dead. Was He the same, was He different? I don't know. But He was alive. The disciples, and those others who met him after that first

them feel uncomfortable didn't mean it wasn't true. Jesus lives. That's the truth; that is the headline story. And while we might discuss amongst ourselves what form He took, it doesn't take away from that truth.

Great Grand Mama is ninety, even if there is a bit of wriggle room about the date. Jesus lives, even if there is rightly a debate to be had about what form His new life takes, and years ago I discussed that question deep into the night with other earnest thinkers. I'm not sure it really matters. What matters is that Jesus lives. As Christians, let's not allow others to spoil our party.

Jesus lives! Alleluia!

Duncan





Church Services May

Sunday 7 May - Easter 4

Welcome Team: Betty McKinney and Maggie+Sean-William

Reader: Mae Burke

8.30am	Holy Communion
10.30am	A Family Service
6.00pm	Evening Prayer (said)
* Coffee after 10.30am service in Church Hall. All welcome! Hosted by Massie Taggart, Noel Taggerr, Mary Wright and Tom Russell.	

Sunday 14 May - Easter 5 (St Matthias)

Welcome Team: Susan and Freddie McNair

Reader: Peter Osborough

8.30am	Holy Communion
10.30am	Parish Communion
6.00pm	Compline

Sunday 21 May - Easter 6

Welcome Team: Susan and Freddie McNair

Reader: Joan Haddick

8.30am	Holy Communion
10.30am	Service of the Word
6.00pm	Evening Prayer (Sung)

Thursday 25 May - Ascension Day

7.30pm	A Service for Ascension Day
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Sunday 28 May - The Sunday after Ascension

Welcome Team: William and Florence McAneney

Reader: John Parkinson

8.30am	Holy Communion
10.30am	Morning Prayer
6.00pm	Holy Communion

Sunday 4 June - The Feast of Pentecost

Welcome Team: David and Dorothy McKnight

Reader: Colin Crozier

8.30am	Holy Communion
10.30am	A Family Service for Pentecost
6.00pm	Evening Prayer (said)
* Coffee after 10.30am service in Church Hall. All welcome! Hosted by Andrea Johnston, Tara Brown, Craig Lutton and Ian Sloan.	

Note:

Mid-week services

Tuesday evenings
7.30pm Compline

Thursday mornings
11.00am Holy
Communion

Please note the
Church is open
every day for
private prayer and
meditation.

Births, Deaths, Baptisms, Marriages & Announcements

Holy Matrimony

Aaron and Emma

8th April - Aaron Morrow and Emma Navan
Emma comes from Orlock and her mother and father are well known in our Parish Community. The weather smiled on Emma and Aaron on their wedding day and we wish them God's blessing on their life together.

Holy Rest

Roberta Nankivell - 7th April 2017

Roberta had a long association with our Church, especially through her husband, Bob, who was our Sexton for many years. Roberta was a terrific character and her infectious grin will be long remembered in Groomsport. Our thoughts and prayers are with Bob and Jacquie at this difficult time. May Roberta rest in peace and rise in glory.

Announcements

SELECT VESTRY 2017 – 2018

The Rector: Revd Duncan Pollock
Honorary Treasurer: Wesley Quinn
Honorary Secretary: Heather Pentland
Rector's Warden: Hester Kelly
People's Warden: Helen Parkinson
Rector's Glebe Warden: Walter Burke
People's Glebe Warden: Tony Anderson
Neil Adams
Dorothy Anne Crawford
Jenny Craythorne
Barry Greenaway
John Hand
William McAneneny
Freddie McNair
Kate Murray
Zandra Sloan
Shaun Townsley

Maundy Thursday's Service

The service held each Maundy Thursday is always a special occasion and this year was particularly notable. This year Duncan had the assistance of Faith Cully, who took a significant part in the service throughout. The service includes the washing of the feet of some members of the congregation in memory of Christ's washing of the disciples' feet at the Last Supper, enacted by Duncan and Faith, followed by Holy Communion. After the service, the Sanctuary is stripped of all furnishings and finally the candles are extinguished and the Sanctuary lights switched off. It is a particularly symbolic and moving act.

Faith has become familiar to us through her attendance at many events, not simply the services, but at the walking group and other social activities. It was good to see her by Duncan's side. We welcome her as a member of our congregation and as a support to Duncan and what a significant occasion for her first appearance. We look forward to seeing much more of her.

Carol

The Sunday School children worked hard collecting sponsorship pledges

for their Sponsored Prayer Walk on March 12th. The children collected over £200 for the walk which took them along the sea front to the children's play park. Along the way the children took turns to lead the group in prayers for local people and local things and to give thanks for our beautiful village.

Helen Carter



Confirmation

On Easter morning, a few brave souls met at dawn, on the beach below Groomsport Parish, to rejoice in the resurrection of Jesus and watch the sun rise. It was cloudy and a little wet but the rain did not dampen spirits and we sang with gusto (and a little out of tune).

Although we could not see the sun rise beyond the Copelands, Duncan assured us, it was definitely there.

Later that evening, five parishioners from our beloved Church (and one rather large balk Labrador), met together in Bangor Parish, to confirm our belief and undying love for our Lord.

That evening, in true April tradition, heavy showers and cloud filled the skies as I arrived at Bangor Parish. I have only been in Bangor Parish once in my lifetime but I, and all of us, were welcomed like old friends come to visit. We were treated with great kindness and any nerves I had just flew away.

As I sat to contemplate the forthcoming event I thought of that morning on the beach and what Duncan had said about the sunrise. "you cannot see it, but you know that it's there". As I was thinking about this very thing and how it reflected upon my faith, just for a few seconds the sun split through

the heavy rain clouds and filled Bangor Parish with coloured light. I knew then that God was with us and he was happy we were there to profess our belief and love in him.

It was a very moving experience for all of us and I must say I did feel different afterwards.

I felt safe and secure and loved. I cannot stop smiling this week.

And, just like the hidden sunrise, I know with all my heart that God is with us, shining upon us.

Helen Kennedy



Evergreens

March 9 was to the Tudor Cinema, unfortunately I was unable to attend due to illness. March 16 was a St Patrick's Party at Ballymacconnell Nursing Home, where we were entertained by a guitar man - all the old tunes that we could sing along too and he had been to all the dance halls that we used to frequent.

March 23 was Arts and Crafts - like "Blue Peter" - sticky backed coloured paper!! March 30 we had Armchair aerobics which was enjoyed by all.

April 6 was a shopping trip to the Abbey Center - some enjoyed and some did not!!!

Unfortunately we lost Roberta - our oldest member at 95 who had been in a home for sometime. Her cremation at Roselawn was well attended by the Evergreens. Reverend Duncan Pollock conducted the service with our one and only Stuart at the organ.

Valerie Boyd (91465103)

Wednesday 18 – Thursday 26 October 2017

Cost: £1,585 per person sharing

Single Supplement £365

Escorted by Rev Jim & Eppie Bates

This trip is organised from St Galls Church, Carnalea extends a warm invitation for others to join them. We are accompanied throughout by a local guide and travel in a modern air conditioned coach.

We will start in Tiberias (Galilee) and visit Sites in and around that area – including a boat trip across the Sea itself to the places where Jesus conducted his early ministry.

After four nights we head south to Jerusalem along the Mediterranean coast stopping at Meggido and the Roman sites at Ceasarea.

From our base in the city we will visit the places of Jesus final Passion, we will walk along the Via Dolorosa and the Holy Sepulchre and have a service at the Garden Tomb. We will make a visit to: Bethlehem; Qumran where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found; ascend to Masada by cable car; and have a float in the Dead Sea.

Everyone who visits finds their faith enriched just to be in the places Jesus knew and all come away with memories for a lifetime.

Please come and join us. For further information, a brochure and booking form contact

Aldor Escorted Holidays

Tel 028 9022 2240

www.orrstravel.com

joyce@orrstravel.co.uk

Dear Friends,

If you would like further information or for me to come and speak to your folk please contact me at Rev Jim Bates, 166 Donaghadee Road, BT20 4PB. Tel: 9147 3068 bates289@btinternet.com

Thank you and best wishes

Jim Bates



Storehouse

Dear friends,

We bring you Easter blessings along with our sincere thanks for your continued support; we wouldn't be able to do what we do at Storehouse North Down without you.

Thank you also for the Easter eggs which have come 'rolling' in during this past week. It will be a real joy for us to distribute these on your behalf.

We still have a few handbags left from the 'Handbags of Hope' Christmas appeal and

have set out lovely bright spring coloured bags for distribution.

Please continue to pray for the work of Storehouse North Down as prayer is fundamental in everything we do.

If you or a group from your church would like to come along for a visit to the Storehouse to learn more about our work and to see first-hand how we operate, please send me an email to arrange a date – helen@storehousenorthdown.com – you would be most welcome.

The items which we are in most need of are dry spaghetti, long grain rice, meals to serve with potatoes and shampoo.

Please visit our new website which will continually have the list of most needed items – www.storehousenorthdown.com.

Please note Storehouse will be closed on Easter Monday, 17th April and on Bank Holiday Monday, 1st May.

Many thanks,

Helen and the Storehouse team



Mothers Union

Our branch has a day's outing on Monday 15th May to Mount Stewart. Please contact Mae Burke if you need more information. There will be a bus. This is our final meeting as the branch will close then for the summer and opens with the Evening Service on Sunday 3rd September at 6.00pm. At this service we hope to enrol several new members. If you would like to join the MU please have a word with Elaine over the coming months. Have a wonderful summer!



Walking for Softies

A beautiful Spring morning on the 25th March for a walk along the Tow Path to the Lock-Keepers Cottage where we had refreshments. We had 12 members and 1 guest, a young Chinese Student, who enjoyed herself.

Our May walk will be to Antrim Castle, meeting at Groomsport Parish Church on Saturday 27 May at 9.30am and looking forward to your company again.

Ken Boyd (028 91 465103)



Annual Easter Vestry Notes

The Annual Easter Vestry was held on Sunday 2 April after Morning Service and was attended by 65 Vestry Men and Women

Duncan opened the meeting by reading from Colossians Chapter 3 and reminded us how we should conduct

ourselves as a church family. He also reminded us that we are not a golf club or an ordinary organisation – rather we are a church and our actions should be characterised by God's grace.

Wesley presented the annual accounts which were adopted unanimously

by those present and there were no questions. Wesley passed comment on how beneficial to the Church the fundraising had been and explained that irrelevant of whatever HLF funding we receive, we still need to focus on fundraising. He also passed comment on the both good and bad news in response to the Church Refurbishment Brochure. What has been donated or pledged to date has been very encouraging, but so far there have not been as many responses as had been hoped for. He urged those who have not yet pledged, to consider using building fund envelopes if they did not wish to use standing orders.

Barry Greenaway, Project Manager, gave a detailed update on the Church Refurbishment Project and there were no questions.

Before the change of office bearers, Duncan expressed thanks to all those who help make GPC work. He then introduced the Reverend Faith Cully, a retired Church of England Minister, now living at Seahaven in the Parish. Faith

was awaiting the Bishop's permission to officiate within the Diocese, which, once granted would allow her to take occasional services in Groomspout Parish Church.

Duncan named his Church Warden as Hester Kelly and his Glebe Warden as Walter Burke. Helen Parkinson was elected People's Warden and Tony Anderson was elected Glebe Warden.

The following were elected to Vestry

Heather Pentland, Dorothy Anne Crawford, Shaun Townsley, Fred McNair, Jenny Craythorne, Zandra Sloan, Barry Greenaway, William McAneney, Wesley Quinn, John Hand Kate Murray and Neil Adams.

Heather was elected as Vestry Secretary and Wesley was elected as Treasurer.

Thanks were extended to Shaun, Maggie and Shaun William Townsley for setting up the hall and providing such a delicious lunch.

GLUTEN FREE



To avoid the risk of mistakes or accidents, please note that this Parish does not provide glutenfree food at any of its events. However you are welcome to bring your own gf food if you wish. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

Magazine Sponsorship

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO THE MAGAZINE IS 17TH OF EACH MONTH.

THANK YOU

Contacts:

taranm@hotmail.co.uk

gpcoffice@btinternet.com

zandrasloan@hotmail.com

or via any of the Parish Officials.



CONTACT

Forthcoming Events



14th - 19th May

Door to door collections will be made in the village during this week as usual.

There will also be a **COFFEE MORNING on Saturday 27th May, 10am-12.30pm, in the Parish Hall.** This is a joint venture with the Presbyterian Church. Please come along and support this event



Dementia Friendly Day

Thursday 22TH June 2017 - Groomsport Parish Halls

9.30am

On this special day, Groomsport Parish Church is working with the Alzheimer's Society to help create a dementia friendly community in Groomsport, Ballyholme and Donaghadee. With support, it is possible for people to live well in their community for as long as possible.

Get involved by attending this Dementia Friendly Communities workshop.

The aim of the workshop will help you to:

- Develop your knowledge of dementia
- Increase your confidence and skills to help you relate, communicate and support someone with dementia
- Become a Dementia Friend

2.30pm

A short service of worship dedicated to those living with dementia, their carers, family and friends. We welcome anyone from the local Groomsport, Ballyholme and Donaghadee community who would like to attend. Afternoon tea and an opportunity for sharing and conversation will follow the service

If you have any queries regarding this event, please email gpcoffice@btinternet.com or telephone Mae Burke, phone 02891451768. If you are planning to bring a group from a Care Home then we would particularly like to hear from you in relation to meeting your needs.

Attendance is Free. Refreshments will be served on arrival and the workshop will finish at 12 noon



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Northern Ireland Charity Number: 103258

Groomsport Parish & Village



Family Fun Day



Saturday 3rd June 2017 at the
Meadow Playing Fields

The day will start with a treasure hunt around the village at 3pm, ending at the Meadow.

BBQ and disco will start at 4pm.

Cost will be £8 for adults £4 for children.

Tickets available from the following.

Billy McAneney 07812042833

Andrea Johnston 07780628622

John Hand. 07540375785

We have two Hyundai cars supplied by Mellons cars. They will be filled with balloons and you have to guess how many balloons. There will be a prize for the winner.

There will also be target football, bouncy castle, raffle prizes and a tea and traybake stall.

This is to raise funds for the new Church organ. Please ask everyone to support this worthy cause.



**Target
Football**



The Eagle Wing Festival returns to Groomsport Village on Saturday 19th August. We will be contributing to the Festival by providing a COFFEE DAY from 1pm – 4pm. We will be serving Tea, Coffee, biscuits and perhaps something for the kiddies, perhaps face painting. More details to follow closer to the time but for now keep the date for your diary.

Christmas Fair,
Saturday 2 December 1.30 – 3.30



Following a successful initial planning meeting, it was agreed it was useful to share the following information with you, so that you may perhaps keep items for the Fair you might otherwise have disposed of. Further details will follow in the September magazine.

Last year the new look Craft Stall and the Cake Stall showed what a creative and generous group of parishioners we have in our midst. From what I have heard, many of you are already beavering away. Obviously, we do not want to take away from the successful Craft Stall, but I would ask you to consider producing some silver and white items to be included on the Silver and white stall, which was such a success last year. This year I would also like to make a plea for Parishioners to think about what you could donate in the form of other silver and white items, rather than the stall organisers having to provide the bulk of the stall, as happened last year.

The Accessories Stall was so well supplied with handbags last year, there is still a supply for this year, so please only consider

donating handbags if you feel they are particularly special.

Likewise, so many of you made Chutneys and Jams, there was a lot left over. This year we are asking you to contact Zandra Sloan, the stall organiser, (07968 401 386) before you make things, so you can tell her what you are proposing to make and she has some control over the contents of the stall.

We are going to make a special effort for children this year, so as part of what we are providing, there will be a stall of Children's Toys (in pristine condition only please.) Another new stall this year will be Unused gifts.

I appreciate this is only May, but I know how early many of you start storing or making things. The Fair was our biggest fundraiser last year, and in light of the forthcoming Church Refurbishment programme, we want to try to repeat last year's success. If you have not already been allocated a job, and wish to help, please get in touch with me.

Likewise, if you have any queries, please feel free to contact me 07834 771075 or heather.pentland@hotmail.co.uk

Heather Pentland

Planned Events 2017

Save the Date!

MAY 27	Coffee Morning for Christian Week
JUN 03	Groomsport Family Fun Day & BBQ
JUN 22	Dementia Friendly Day
AUG 19	Coffee Day as part of the Eagle Wing Festival
OCT 06	Quiz
OCT 20	Fashion show
NOV 04	Book Fair and Coffee morning
NOV 17	Dinner (Bangor Golf Club)
DEC 02	Christmas Fair
DEC 03	Archbishops Visit

ALL proceeds from the above events will contribute to the Renovation Project.



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Northern Ireland Charity Number: 103258

Hall Usage - May

Sunday		
Every Sunday	10.30am	Sunday School Contact: Maggie Townsley & Helen Carter Mob. 07748 208649
Monday		
1st Monday of the month	7.30pm	Select Vestry Meeting Contact: Heather Pentland Mob. 07834 771075
2nd & 4th Mondays of the month	7.30pm	Chattering Needles Chattering Needles is a craft group whose interests include knitting, crochet, cross stitch card making etc. If you want to learn come along. £2 includes supper. For more info please contact me. Jenny 07748580541
3rd Monday of the month	8.00pm	Mothers Union (Maxwell Hall) Contact: Elaine Lester Mob. 07791 569432
Tuesday		
Every Tuesday	2.00pm	Choir Practice Choir practice in the Tyney Hall every Tuesday at 2pm. We are looking for new members, so please join us and have some fun and fellowship. Everyone welcome. Contact: Stuart Tanner Tel. 028 9146 7052
2nd Tuesday of the month	8.00pm	Groomsport & District Gardening Club Contact: Yvonne McIlmail Tel: 02891 469420 E. y.mcilmail@sky.com
Wednesday		
Every Wednesday	9.30am	You can with Ann Motivation & Exercise class Contact: Ann Parker Mob. 07854 787121
Every Wednesday	10.30am	Keep Fit Exercise Class Contact: Ann Parker Mob. 07854 787121
Every Wednesday	2.00pm	Scrabble Contact: Elaine Lester Mob. 07791 569432 E. elliewag57@yahoo.com

Every Wednesday	N/A	Tai Chi For Health Classes will resume in September. Contact: Janet Wilson Tel: 028 91077948 Mob: 07703360385
Every Wednesday	5.30pm	You can with Ann Motivation & Exercise class Contact: Ann Parker Mob. 07854 787121
Every Wednesday	6.30pm	Keep Fit Exercise Class Contact: Ann Parker Mob. 07854 787121
Every Wednesday	7.30pm	Bible Study (Avril Morley Room)
3rd Wednesday of the month	7.30pm	Cookery Club Contact: Heather Magill E. mag16ill@hotmail.co.uk
Thursday		
Every Thursday	2.00pm	Evergreens Open to all over fifty year olds and new members always welcome. Contact: Pearl Brown Mob. 07551 992841
Every Thursday	7.30pm - Late	Chess Club Contact: James O'Fee Tel. 028 9147 0232 E. jamesofee@gmx.com
Thursdays except 1st Thursday in the month	7.30pm	Youth Fellowship Contact: Craig Lutton Mob. 07816 853373
Every Thursday except 1st of the month	7.30pm	Table Tennis Club This is a game for everyone whatever your age so please join us. Contact: John Hand Tel. 028 9146 8061 Mob. 07540 375785
Saturday		
4th Saturday of the month	10.00am	Walking for Softies Venues vary. Meeting at 10.00am at chosen location. Contact: Ken Boyd Tel. 028 9146 5103

Thoughts of a Blow In...

Although the temperatures don't feel like we're well into spring, nature is telling us we are getting there! It's wonderful to see not only new leaves but also blossom on the trees. It really feels like the earth and the skies are truly waking up for the season with plants and flowers and birdcalls.

On that note, it's been a joy that the Walled Garden is open to visitors after the winter. It really is a carefully tended microcosm of the world waking up around us. Already, there are the most gorgeous flower beds ready for our admiration, as well as seeing the gardeners carefully weeding and preparing other parts of the garden ready for the summer months when everything will be in full bloom and full flow.

Not only are we so fortunate to have such lovely open spaces to enjoy, it's great to see people out of hibernation and taking pleasure in the longer days. Over Easter it has been so good to see families walking along the by the sea and even enjoying a little sunshine in between April showers!

Of course, in our parish, there has not only been outdoors to take pleasure in but also

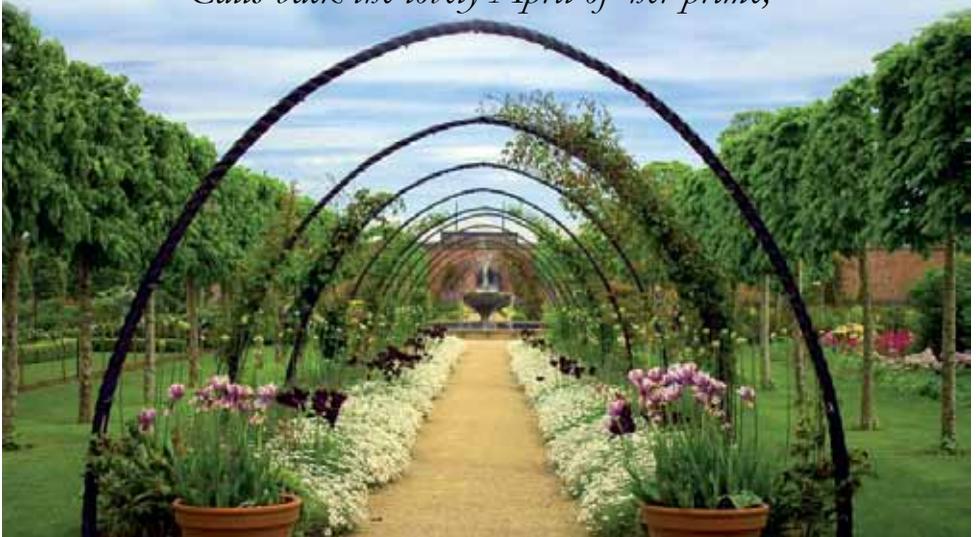
our annual Prayer Room in Holy Week. I always marvel at the care in which it is prepared for us to enjoy. It must take so much time to plan for the wonderful way the room is transformed and decorated, with so many thoughtful and creative ideas for meditation and prayer, which makes this a very precious space indeed. After an hour or two of inward thought in such special surroundings, one can emerge out all the more appreciative of the beauty of the world around us.

As well as our church services, Easter is a time for social gatherings as well. I was lucky enough to be invited to Easter Sunday supper with friends, with their extended family all home from university. It was wonderful to chat with the young ones and catch up on exam progress, dissertations and even new jobs; when they weren't too absorbed with checking their mobile phones that is!

In thinking of an appropriate few finishing words, here is a Shakespeare sonnet with some lovely words on the cycle of seasons and of life

Cynthia

*"Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee
Calls back the lovely April of her prime;"*



Prayer Room

Once again the Prayer Room which ran from Palm Sunday till Wednesday 12th April was widely welcomed and we now have a wealth of prayers and reflections to draw on for the next year.

The following thoughts caught my eye because they accord so closely with my own and they are followed by the prayer which provoked this response:

I have just read Seventeenth-century Nun's prayer. Page 70 in Carol's book "Favourite Prayers" – it's wonderful and I recommend it to all especially elderly people like myself.

Seventeenth Century Nun's Prayer

Lord, thou knowest better than I know myself that I am growing older and will someday be old. Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion. Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Make me thoughtful but not moody; helpful but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom it seems a pity not to use it all, but Thou knowest Lord, that I want a few friends at the end.

Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details; give me wings to get to the point. Seal my lips on my aches and pains. They are increasing and love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy the tales of other's pains, but help me to endure them with patience. I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility and a lessening cocksureness when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet; I do not want to be a saint-some of them are so hard to live with-but a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the Devil. Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places and talents in unexpected people. And, give me, O Lord, the grace to tell them so. Amen.

Here are one or two more short thoughts and prayers from the visitors' book

Lord,

Teach us to listen and thus to hear:

Teach us to look and thus to see:

Teach us to love and thus to speak

In quiet contemplation we can give God's love and grace our uninterrupted concentration.

Sitting in the peace and quiet of this delightful room listening to King's College Cambridge chanting psalms at this special time of the year – feeling the love of God surrounding us – what joy is ours!

Carol



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