



THE UNITED PARISH
Christ Church & St John's

Bulletin for Sunday 3rd May 2020

Thank you

In these unprecedented times we begin to recognise more clearly than ever what Church is meant to be. It is definitely not the buildings, and what we have proven in recent months is that the life of the Church, the people, continue to grow and exist for the witness of the Gospel outside of our Church buildings. Our use of technology has increased dramatically, our involvement in outreach into the community through Together Ballyclare has been extensive, and our conscience to stay in touch with people who are isolating and shielding has demonstrated the love we have in God for others. I'd like to thank everyone that is supporting the mission of the Church in these times, and like all of you, I pray for the day when it will be safe for us to be together worshipping in Christ Church and St John's. However, until that time comes, please keep praying, please find ways to go deeper in your devotions, and please wherever it is safe, find ways to reach out to those who are vulnerable at this time.

Revd Jonny.

Parish Finances

Some of our parishioners have been asking us how they should continue to support the church financially through these difficult times. The bills are still coming in, but we no longer have our weekly Freewill Offerings. There are alternative ways to donate, and these are available on our new website under the section "giving" or just click the following link:

<https://theunitedparish.org.uk/giving-during-covid-19/>

Please remember that this is in no way to be seen as putting pressure on our Church Family at this precarious time. Please pray for our families who have been affected financially as a result of the Coronavirus. If anybody is facing financial difficulty, please speak to Revd Jonny in confidence.

Online Services

During these times when we are not able to lead Church Services, we want to provide as many opportunities for people to worship. We are provided two opportunities – Weekly Sunday morning worship at 11am, and nightly Late Evening Office services at 8.30pm. To access these go to your internet browser and search for **YouTube**. Once YouTube is loaded, search for **The United Parish Ballyclare**. An alternative method is to simply go to the website www.theunitedparish.org.uk and click on the 'online worship' button on the front page. If you miss these, you can watch these at anytime. We also are running a Kids Online Church – details are provided below in this News Sheet.

Sunday Phone-in Services

We are trying to reach out to everyone in the Parish & Community. For those folks that don't have broadband and internet technology we have created a phone-in service. For the price of a local call they can phone 028 93 270020 anytime and enjoy an abridged version of the previous Sunday's Service. Please bring this to the attention of folk who might benefit from it.

1-hour Bible Study every Wednesday

During these times, we desire for people to become more connected with what God is saying. One way of doing this is to be part of our online weekly Bible Study. It is led by Revd Jonny, and each week we look at one of the Psalms. In order to join the study which is aimed at all levels please paste the following link into your web browser <https://zoom.us/join> or download the zoom app to your phone or tablet. You will need a meeting code which is **340-683-336**. Please join the group at 7.15pm to smooth out any technical glitches so we are ready to start at 7.30pm. Last week's notes can be found on the following link:

<https://theunitedparish.org.uk/29th-april-2020-bible-study-notes/>

If you want to see what these bible studies are like, we recorded this week's so you can have a sneak preview. Have a look at https://youtu.be/Y70_svTgCZs

Praying

The people of God must pray through these difficult times. Why not set aside 30 minutes each day, at the same time every day, to pray for those who are ill, all our key workers and for an end to this terrible virus.

Pastoral Care

Revd Jonny is presently trying to ring everyone in the Parish. Unfortunately, during this Covid 19 isolation period none of our pastoral visiting team are able to visit any homes but we are ensuring that those most vulnerable get a regular phone call. **Please remember that you do not have to wait until Revd Jonny phones you - contact him at any time on his mobile 07808 479649.**

UCB Bible Notes

This week our pastoral visiting team will be delivering the quarterly bible reading notes to housebound folk & to those self-isolating. If you know of anyone who might benefit, please email: david@theunitedparish.org.uk

Partner Links

Don't forget our partnership links during this crisis. It's worthwhile visiting the websites of CMSi, Release International, and SAMS. Many charities need our prayer and help at this time.

Prayer Line

Please remember our prayer line number is still in use. Please phone or text **07519 805789** if you need prayer or know someone who does.

Sadly, some of our Church family have died recently. Please pray for the families of the late Ken Bradbury, Daphne Gregg, and more recently the late Bertie Grissam who died last week. Please also pray for folk in the congregation who have recently lost loved ones. We also want to lift in prayer those families where relatives have suffered from Coronavirus, and we give thanks to God for those that are making good progress.

Pray for folk waiting delayed tests or operations, the anxious & depressed, the self-employed, unemployed, and furloughed employees that are facing an uncertain future.

Together!

Some of our local churches and community representatives have come together to help those in need at this difficult time. Volunteers help with the following:

- Phone calls to make sure everything is ok
- Supply of some essential provisions
- Connecting with your local Foodbank
- Collection of prescriptions
- Picking up shopping
- Weekly delivery of Government Food Parcels

The service is available Monday – Saturdays, 9am – 6pm. To contact the helpline please phone **07907 665885**. For those that would like to contribute to the Newtownabbey Foodbank, we have a large container outside the halls in St John's. This is emptied daily.

If you would like to volunteer in this rewarding outreach, please contact Revd Jonny on 07808 479649. Given the nature of the volunteer roles you must be available during the mornings and afternoons.

Young Families, Youth & Children.

Parents and children

- please check out our **FB page** “The united parish youth, children and families updates”. This page is full of resources and links to resources– both educational and faith based.
- Each week an email has also been going out to parents with some **Sunday School resources** – if you haven't been receiving this email please contact Dianne dianne@theunitedparish.org.uk
- **Online kids church** –all parents/carers of Sunday school children and our other children's organisations will receive an **email on Saturday** with a link to a non-listed YouTube video either via Dianne or your child's group leader. (This is to ensure safeguarding) **PLEASE DO NOT PASS THIS LINK ONTO ANYONE WHO IS NOT A MEMBER OF OUR CHILDREN'S WORK**

Youth

- please follow our **Instagram page: *unitedparishyouth*** - Here you will find links to our mini bible study, videos, encouraging bible verses and information about other ways to get connected!
- **I4+ teen bible study via Zoom.** This normally takes place on a Sunday morning but will now happen on Wednesday afternoons at 2.30pm. If you are I4+ and want to take part in this contact Dianne.
- **YF – We will be hosting another Zoom games evening on *Friday 1st May at 730pm***
Parents, if you haven't received a text message invited your child to join – please message Dianne.

(All Zoom meeting codes will be sent to parents to pass on to your youth – this is to ensure that we have adult consent for your teen to join the meeting).

CONNOR TAKES THE CASTLE

Connor Diocese is running a residential event on the **4th-6th September.** (We recognise that under the current circumstances this event may or may not take place – but they are allowing us to register now and pay on arrival) we would love to encourage our youth (secondary school aged children) to join us for this weekend!

VIP Access: The first young person from each parish will be entitled to VIP access. This will include a limited-edition branded t-shirt and VIP access across the weekend.

The cost of the weekend is £50 - The weekend will be in Castlewellaan Castle, with sessions, activities, great food and lots of fun. Further details of the weekend are available on <https://connor.anglican.org/children-youth/youth/whats-coming-up/>

If you have any questions, contact Christina Baillie on christinabaillie@connordiocese.org.

Please do sign up online at

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSchRmPVejiOIXYIOX7swOmFt0tnRF0f7gfv2-IJLaDX-cc39Q/viewform>

Families

Dianne will continue to send out information to links and resources via WhatsApp and the Facebook page. Please text Dianne if you haven't been receiving these, 07840 667183



- **Church Family Quiz** - Our first event is an online family friendly quiz via Zoom on **Saturday 2nd May at 6pm** (join us at 5:45pm to get yourself settled and make sure your technology works)
To access the quiz go to <https://zoom.us/j/97388987452> or go to zoom.us in your web browser, then join meeting and the meeting ID is 973-8898-7452 we look forward to seeing you!
YOU WILL NEED TO SIGN IN USING YOUR COMPUTER AND HAVE A MOBILE PHONE HANDY! ;)
- **BabyBasics** is still supporting new mums via the Northern Health & Social Care Trust. We also have **Emergency Care Packs** for babies – if you are a parent who is self-isolating and can't get nappies/baby wipes please do message Dianne for a free pack or contact Together Ballyclare on 07907665885, to have a free pack delivered to you.

Church family please do check out our blog – Over this period our youth have been taking it in turns to write a blog - updating us all and giving insight into their lives in lockdown.... We will hear about their challenges, their funny moments, and encouragements. **Check out Aimee's Blog this week** - You can find it at **unitedparishyouth.blogspot.com**