

Bulletin for Sunday 27th September 2020

Returning to in-Church Worship

Our church buildings have been adjusted to make coming back to worship as safe as possible, following all health & safety guidelines for coronavirus. We would love to see you back. One of the major differences will be the booking in for Services, numbers will be limited, and it is important to follow the instructions for attending worship on a Sunday. Bookings will open midday Mondays for the following Sunday services. Booking can be done via the website

<https://theunitedparish.org.uk/reopening-our-church-buildings/> or phoning **Revd Jonny** on **07808 479649** or **David** on **07732 763827** from 12 noon on Monday. We would prefer that where possible you book via our website

Sundays online

Morning Worship will still be available from 11am onwards through the YouTube Channel *The United Parish Ballyclare* or via www.theunitedparish.org.uk

Rural Deanery Harvest Drive-in 27th September 6.30pm- Tonight!!

This Sunday is a special opportunity to gather with the Church of Ireland congregations across the Rural Deanery celebrating Harvest. This service will be broadcast directly to your car radios. Come along to the Sixmile Leisure Centre carpark from 6pm to get your parking space. Worship will be led by musicians from the churches and the guest preacher will be **Bishop George Davison, Bishop of Connor**

Late Evening Office Services

As our church buildings have reopened, we have made a change to the Late Evening Office Service. It will now be only on a **Wednesday evening @ 8.30pm** being streamed on our YouTube Channel *The United Parish Ballyclare* or via www.theunitedparish.org.uk

Our Services are recorded on the phone

For parishioners that do not have the internet we have a great alternative! We have the phone ministry line for the price of a standard call you can phone **02893 270020 anytime** and listen to a Service. These are updated on Sunday mornings & Wednesday evenings.

Harvest Celebrations - 11th October

These are difficult times in our communities, but as Christians we can declare the faithful provision and presence of God. Whilst things will be different, we still believe it is important to celebrate harvest, and our services will take place on **Sunday 11th October**. The Newtownabbey Foodbank is receiving an increased number of referrals at this time, and therefore we would ask on **11th October** you consider bringing along a donation for the Foodbank. These should be non-perishable items. To find out what food is most needed at this time, go to Foodbank's website at <https://newtownabbey.foodbank.org.uk/> or have a look at their Facebook page for the latest information- <https://www.facebook.com/newtownabbey.foodbank.org.uk>

Annual General Meeting 14th October 7.30pm

Due to COVID-19, the Annual Easter Vestry meeting (our AGM) was postponed. It will now be held on **Wednesday 14th October in St John's at 7.30pm**. This meeting is open to everyone within the parish. Due to restrictions, the AGM will be brief, covering only an update from the Rector, the Financial Report, and nominations/voting for positions within the church. We would encourage as many people to attend this meeting. If you cannot attend but would be willing to have your name go forward for church positions, you must inform the **Rector by 13th October**.

Pastoral Visiting

Due to the new restrictions on being in homes, it will not be possible for the Pastoral Visiting team to come into homes. However, it is still possible to come to your doorstep for a chat, and to phone. Staff will still, where essential, carry out brief home visits. We regret these changes, but we must continue to adhere to the latest Government guidelines. Note also that Hospital visits are currently restricted but we are able to advise the Hospital Chaplains so they can provide pastoral care.

Weekly prayer meetings - Thursdays at 7.30pm

Even though social distancing restrictions have been tightened again, it is still permitted for churches to gather as they worship. More than ever in these difficult times, praying together is so so important. We would invite you to join us each Thursday at 7.30pm in St John's as we pray for our parish, our community, and our world. Our gatherings adhere to all guidelines for health & safety.

Please Pray For....

-**Margaret Scott** who is recovering at home.

-**Sharon Reid** & family.

-**Myrtle Evans** currently in hospital

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

Small groups and bible studies

Church is far more than Sunday; it is about communities of people gathering throughout the week to encourage and support each other. This is done through our small group programme. Even though the current restrictions prevent us from meeting in homes, our church buildings provide a safe space with social distancing. Small groups can also meet remotely through the internet. We are currently reviewing a schedule that would allow small groups and bible study groups to meet safely. If you would be interested in being part of a group, contact Revd Jonny on 07808 479649 for more details

Revd Alan McCracken - Deacon Intern

Alan McCracken and his wife Karen have now officially joined us in the United Parish, and Alan will serve over the coming year on a part time basis as a Deacon Intern whilst continuing with studies in the Theological Institute. This year, Alan embarks on writing his dissertation which considers the Anglican Communion's fifth mark of mission around safeguarding the integrity of creation, and the important role that churches must have in biblical stewardship of the environment. As part of this, Alan will be researching views across both Connor and Down & Dromore Dioceses. If you receive an invitation to take part in a survey in the coming weeks, please consider completing this as this will greatly help with Alan's research. Please take the opportunity to welcome Alan and Karen into the parish.

