



THE UNITED PARISH
Christ Church & St John's

Bulletin for Sunday 11th October 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

Midweek Evening Service

As our church buildings have reopened, we have made a change to Evening Services. 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.

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

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. The AGM will be brief, covering only the Financial Report, and nominations/voting for positions within the church.

It would be great to have a good attendance as we will also be holding triennium elections e.g. Diocesan representatives and parochial nominators. 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.**

To comply with COVID regulations if you plan to attend, we need you to either register by Tuesday by using the following link:

<https://theunitedparish.churchsuite.com/events/cgacpqzz> or by phoning David on **07732 763827.**

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 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 can advise the Hospital Chaplains so they can provide pastoral care.

Please Pray For....

Derek Moore in Hospital, Sharon Reid & family, Myrtle Evans, Alyson Stanford, and Kirsty Jess on the recent death of her granny.

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.

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. Details of our Groups are as follows, but more information can be found on our website -

Leigh & Clive Henderson Small Group	Monday's St John's Church 7.30pm
George Colclough's Small Group	Tuesday's Christ Church 7.30pm
Sophie & John's Small Group	Tuesday's St John's Hall 7.30pm
Campbell-Smyth's & Reid's	Tuesdays Via Zoom 8.00pm (Meets fortnightly starts 13 th Oct)
Mid-Week Bible Study	Wednesdays St John's Church (Starts 21 st October 11.00am)
Restored & Transformed Ladies' group	Wednesday's St John's Hall 7.30pm
Marion McCallion's Ladies Group	Thursdays St John's Hall 9.30am (Meets Fortnightly – 22 nd Oct)
Going Deeper in God's Word Group	Friday Christ Church 10.30am (Meets monthly 1 st Fri, - Fri 6th Nov.)

Why not sign up to one by either contacting the host or register at:

<https://theunitedparish.org.uk/ministries/growing-disciples/small-groups/>

We are happy to form new groups, just get in touch with the Revd Jonny.

Blythswood Christmas Shoe Box Appeal

Every year we fill shoeboxes with various items that are sent overseas. This year during the month of October we will collect boxes in both Christ Church & St John's. **They can be brought on a Sunday morning or as an alternative Alwyn & Trish will be in St John's Hall on a Wednesday morning from 10.00-10.45am & Christ Church Hall from 11.00-11.30am starting on Wednesday 14th October.** Due to the Global Pandemic it is so important to try and help vulnerable people overseas. Last year we collected 87 boxes. It would be wonderful if we could match or exceed this figure. A checklist can be found on the following link and is also attached with this weeks' notice sheet:

<https://blythswood.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/2020-SBA-checklist.pdf>

Collection of FWO Envelopes.

In the past we have collected FWO envelopes. We must be extremely careful of fraud and impersonation. If you would like your envelope collected please contact Revd Jonny or David.

Care for the family

Due to Covid it's particularly challenging for organisations to run conferences and courses. Most of you are familiar with Care for the Family. They have been running events for nearly 30 years, speaking to parents and couples all over the country to support and help those in all stages of family life. Our engaging, practical, and experienced speakers aim to share helpful insights to support you and those you love. This Autumn all their conferences are online and free - you just have to book the tickets. It is fair to say that we are spoilt for choice, Click on the link for more information:

<https://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/events/events-online>

Release International

A RELEASE INTERNATIONAL EVENING WITH REVD HASSAN JOHN FROM NIGERIA

Christians continue to suffer violent attack and slaughter in northern Nigeria, at the hands of radical Islamists. Join the team from Release to hear inspiring stories of responding to persecution with the gospel of God's grace.

We are delighted to confirm that the **Rev Hassan John** will be joining us for a speaker tour in early November 2020. These events will be held as ticket-only online events via Zoom conferencing and will be livestreamed to our social media channels Facebook and YouTube for one day on Thursday November 5th. For more information on Release please contact our Parish representative Lisa Willett on 07456 648380

Click on the following link to register:

<https://releaseinternational.org/violent-christian-persecution-in-nigeria/>

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. Alan is commencing work on his dissertation. The dissertation considers the Anglican Communion's Fifth Mark of Mission to safeguard the integrity of creation. Alan investigates ways in which Church Communities are living out a model of Biblical Stewardship: in their practices and intentions. As part of Alan's Dissertation, we can help by taking part in a short survey. You can participate by going to the following link: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/UMN2SQ/>

Improvements to Christ Church

COVID-19 has made all of us very aware of the risk of contamination and how easy the virus can spread. With Government and Church of Ireland guidance, many churches have removed the use of books. In doing so this reduces risks and provides an easier means of cleaning the church buildings after services

Within Christ Church, because we regularly use Prayer and Hymn books, it has meant that since reopening, a small screen and portable projector have been set up every Sunday to assist in worship. However the Select Vestry have recognised that this is far from ideal - there are trip hazards with cables on the floors, there is setting up and taking down involved, and as congregation numbers increase it is difficult to actually see the liturgy and hymns on such a small screen.

With no sense of how long the virus will be with us, the Select Vestry made the decision to look at a more permanent and safe solution for displaying liturgy and hymns but still retain the aesthetics of the building, and provide flexibility once the virus is gone as we can return to using books wherever possible. A solution which involves a remote screen that is housed within the rafters of the ceiling has now be installed. It has ensured that the aesthetics and beauty of the Church building are retained when it is not in use, but provides the safety and flexibility when it is needed and offers greater opportunities for the future use of the building.

David's back

David Brown has been recovering after recent surgery, but the good news is that he is back and doing really well. As with all staff, we continue to work from home and use the Parish Office only when necessary. Therefore should you wish to contact David during Office hours (9 – 1) please phone him on **07732 763827** or by email david@theunitedparish.org.uk

Youth & Family

The Pumpkin Project - Let your light shine.

This half term we would love you to take part in The Pumpkin Project. Many children in our town are disappointed that there is nothing happening over Halloween for them. In what still feels like an increasingly difficult time for some families, we would love to shine some hope into the community by carving pumpkins, placing a light in them, and setting them outside your front door.

WE WANT TO CARVE SOMETHING FUN, they can be in the shape of hearts, stars, written words, patterns, film themes-minions, Star Wars... Whatever you like this is fun and brings joy! Send a picture to Dianne of your pumpkin. We'd love to share them online and encourage people to go on a pumpkin walk this half term. Even in the darkness, God is always with us...His light shines!
(If you would like a battery-operated tea light for your pumpkin please contact Dianne)

Sunday School

We have begun meeting online **via zoom** with our Sunday school children across the United Parish. If you attend Christ Church Sunday school or JAM, or are in Primary school, we would love you to join us. We are currently meeting at **1015am on a Sunday morning**. For the zoom access codes, you should have received an email from Dianne via ChurchSuite. If you are not in our database or have opted to not receive emails, please contact Dianne for the codes. The access code is the same every week.

Youth Fellowship

Dianne will be in contact with parents regarding YF.

Youth Bible Study Small Groups

These will take place on Wednesday evenings at 7pm for those in 4th Year plus. They will continue to be via zoom for the next few months with the occasional gathering for a hot chocolate and catch up in a local café. We do hope that you will join us for a 45 min study and catch up. If you would like to be in the 1st-3rd Year Bible study group, please contact Dianne for further details.

Families/Parenting-Parent Talk

We know that raising children is a physically and emotional rollercoaster, especially in our current climate where it seems that parents and carers are under more pressure than ever before. Therefore, **after October half term** we would like to start a parenting course for those with children of primary school age. We are hoping to run it face to face in the church building (to enable social distancing). The course involves videos from Care for the Family facilitators as well as opportunities for you to discuss and learn with other parents and facilitators in the room.

If this is something you would be interested in, **please do contact Dianne via email: dianne@theunitedparish.org.uk**