Sunday 7th March 2021

WELCOME to the United Parish. We hope that you feel at home in our church family. It is our prayer that you will know the love that God has for you today as we join together in praise, hearing God speak to us, sending us out equipped for the week ahead. If you are new, please pick up one of our Welcome Packs.

Services during March will be online and via the telephone service due to government. Guidance.

Daily Online devotions available throughout Lent

Next Sunday is a special Mother's Day Service.

THE UNITED PARISH
Christ Church & St John's

THE UNITED PARISH IS REGISTERED WITH THE CHARITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND NIC 103558

For Your Attention

Annual Meeting

Our annual meeting had been scheduled for **10th March.** This has now been **postponed.** We have been instructed by the Diocese that we cannot have our Annual Easter Vestry until we can all meet in person rather than by virtual/electronic means. Further details will be communicated when the Diocese provide further instructions.

Gift Aid – are you a tax payer?

As a Church we are able to claim money back from the Government if you pay tax. However we must update our systems when this is not longer applicable to you. If you cease to become a taxpayer you **must let us know in writing**. Further information can be obtained from Peter Watson, our Gift Aid Secretary or David in the church office.

Holy Week & Easter Sunday.

Please join us for our Holy Week Services running from 29th March to 2nd April at 7.30pm each evening. Each night will include a guest from our partner organisations. Due to COVID these will be available online or via our phone line service. The Northern Ireland Executive are due to provide more information on 18th March about lockdown which will help us understand what we are permitted to do on Easter Sunday. We will keep you informed as soon as we know more.

'Patrick' live from St Anne's Belfast

The New Irish Choir & Orchestra are presenting live from St Anne's Cathedral on Sunday 13th March at 8pm a musical production called 'Patrick' narrating the story of the great Irish Saint with stories and music. This event is completely free. Members of the Parish will be involved in its production. Tickets can be booked from : https://www.newirisharts.com/events/2021/3/1/patrick-music-and-stories-celebrating-irelands-patron-saint

Pastoring

Remember our Prayer Line (phone or text) 07519 805789 to request prayer.

Please pray for:

The following members of our Church Family : Jayne, Jack & Emma Henry, & Tim Campbell on the very recent death of their father Bob - we will all miss this gentle godly man. Also pray for David Foster, Hilary Smylie, Ed Barton, Lesley & Margaret Parkinson, Cecil Millar, Sandra Stewart & Ann Irvine recovering at home after hospitalisation, Myrtle Evans, Margaret Scott's continued recovery, Lou & Bertie Cornett's daughter Lorraine, Errol Agnew, the Crothers family. Many in our Parish have suffered bereavement over the last year but especially the last few months- Lord be with them all at this time.

Please pray for our parishioners in Nursing Homes who do not receive visits at present.

The World Day of Prayer

Normally every year folk would have gathered in our churches for this special event which would have been held on **Friday 5th March.** Sadly, due to covid we can't have physical events but we can still donate, and pray.

This year the focus is on Vanuatu in the South Pacific. Please keep the community in your thoughts and prayers at this time. You can get further information and catch up on the various Services using the following links: https://www.wwdp.org.uk/

A service is being live streamed on Friday from Dungannon at 8pm if you miss it you can watch on catch up.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UblejrFlkjk&feature=youtu.be

Going deeper

Lent

Please try and join us daily for a time of daily reflection from the staff team. The daily devotion will be available every morning from 9.00am via our website & Facebook pages. Using the following links:
https://theunitedparish.org.uk/lent-2021-devotions/
https://www.facebook.com/theunitedparish/
We will also provide the devotion daily from 10am via our telephone service using the following local number: **028 93 270020.**

Small groups and Bible studies

Due to Covid restrictions all the groups are now meeting via the internet using Zoom. To find out more about when our groups meet, have a look at our Small Groups page on our website
https://theunitedparish.org.uk/ministries/growing-disciples/small-groups/
We now have a small groups resources page on our website. This is well worth a visit. The link can be found at: -
https://theunitedparish.org.uk/resources/small-group-resources/

Virtual Book Shop!

Our virtual bookstore has been updated with a new range classified into sections for Adults, Teenagers & Kids. Every order placed, the Parish receives 6% which we then use for the purchase of study guides and books for the congregation. Why not pay a visit?
https://www.thegoodbook.co.uk/bookstall/theunitedparish/
For young families we have a great Easter Book. This 15-door calendar works just like an advent calendar and means children can count down to Easter Sunday.
https://www.thegoodbook.co.uk/the-garden-the-curtain-and-the-cross-easter-cale?bsid=167

Shaping a new generation

Christ Church Easter Prayer Garden

Families have been working hard in producing some fabulous art depicting the Easter story that will become part of an Easter Prayer Garden on 29th March – 2nd April. We plan for the garden to be open daily to the public, but in order for this to be facilitated in these times we will need to have a booking system in place and therefore help is required each day to manage the space**. If you would be happy to volunteer for a 2 hour session or more, or for more information, please do contact Dianne or David.**

Final Ballyclare Boardgame Challenge

This week's game is the **Scattergories** game. It's not too late to join in – you have until Wednesday at 12pm to submit your entries. Please do check out the Ballyclare Boardgame Challenge FB page for details on how to play and to submit answers. Alternatively click on the link below which takes you to our website page giving details
https://theunitedparish.org.uk/board-game-challenge-5/?_thumbnail_id=3432
The winning family will get a Domino's Pizza Family Meal Deal.

CMSi LENT PROJECT (P7s - Yr10s)

Each year in Sunday school, 'Lighthouse' would have taken part in the CMS Ireland Lent project. This year with COVID, Lighthouse has not been meeting and instead have been invited to join a junior bible study group.
But if you are in P7 –Yr10 and would like to take part in the Lent project, and catch up with old friends and leaders - please do join us online for 45 mins, for 4 weeks, starting on the 7th March at 4pm. (The same time/Zoom codes as the junior bible study group) Please contact Dianne for zoom codes.

Reaching Out & Welcoming in

Stories through Lockdown

We have now reached one year since the initial lockdown to curb the pandemic. Through this past year in different ways we have all struggled – whether through bereavement, job loss, mental health, home schooling etc. However, through the struggles our God has been faithful and strong, an ever-present help in trouble. I therefore believe we have stories to tell, and I would like us to capture these formally through the writing of a book. I'd love for many of you to consider writing something of your story about how you have coped in this past year, but particularly what you believe God has been doing and what he has been saying to you. We will then gather all these and publish it, making it available for sale to friends, family, neighbours, and the community as a witness of God's faithfulness in tough times. If this is of interest to you, please let me know if you would be interested in writing a piece for the book. **Revd Jonny**

Together Ballyclare – Heating & Lighting Scheme

If you live in the greater Ballyclare area, and due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic you, or someone you know, is experiencing difficulty in covering the costs of heating & lighting, we may be able to provide assistance. This scheme opened on 1st March. Each case is assessed based on circumstances. Phone 07713 928775.

12 at 12- A call to pray for our Country.

Please remember to pray for our country in these times. Set a time every day that you will remember, for example 12pm, to ask God to reach into the many issues we face – our schools, our hospitals, unemployment, our politicians. You can find a helpful list of prayer points on our website at
https://theunitedparish.org.uk/12-at-12-a-call-to-pray/

Partnering

Christians Against Poverty

We are further developing our partnership with CAP. CAP's mission is to release thousands of families from grinding poverty through debt counselling and community groups. We are working hard to develop programmes for our community. After Easter we plan to run a short CAP Kick Start programme aimed at helping people in our community who have been affected financially and mentally because of the Pandemic. If you would like to know more about CAP, please contact Frances Wilson who is our new CAP Life Skills Manager on 07834 544802

Newtownabbey Foodbank

Collections are starting again from **Monday 1st March.** Items can be left in the tub outside St John's Hall. The items that are presently needed are **tins of fruit, vegetables & tomatoes, long life milk, jars of sauce and size 6 nappies.**

Supporting CMS Ireland

If God is moving you to show your personal support for Mission especially for the work of the Urban Development Programme and our dear brother Antony in Kenya, you can do by these methods: -

-Becoming a CMSI Star: this means committing to supporting CMSI through your prayers & active participation. You will get regular updates & invitations to events. Click on the link for info. https://cmsirelandforms.wufoo.com/forms/z1g4jwro0nwagpi/
-Making a one-off or regular financial donation to UDP at https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/3903#!/DonationDetails
-Becoming A CMSI Virtual Volunteer https://www.cmsireland.org/single-post/volunteer-virtually-with-cmsi

OUR VALUES

Jesus at the centre

Offering a **pastoral** heart

Going **deeper** with God

Shaping a new generation

Reaching out and welcoming in

Partnering in the Gospel

CONTACT US

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028 9335 4814/07732 763827(Office Hrs 9am-1.00pm Mon-Fri)

Prayer Line: **07519 805789**