

Sunday 7th January 2024

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 in praise, hearing God speak to us, sending us out equipped for the week ahead.

This Sunday

10.00am Christ Church
Morning Prayer

11.30am St John's
Morning Praise

Sunday 14th January 2024

10.00am Christ Church
Holy Communion

11.30am St John's
Holy Communion

For Your Attention

Week of Prayer- Starting this Monday-8th Jan

As you know every term, we ask the Holy Spirit to guide and direct us in our various ministries. Really important to give an hour of our time to join together in prayer. The times & venues are as follows: -

St John's Church Mon. 8th focus on **Compassion Ministries**

Christ Church Tue. 9th focus on **Pastoral Care**

St John's Church Wed. 10th focus on **Vestry & Governance**

Christ Church Thur. 11th focus on **Youth & Children's Ministries.**

All nights start at 7.30pm

It is hoped that church-based groups refrain from meeting and commit their normal night to attending.

Parish Weekend-Don't forget to book ASAP

We have our parish weekend in Rostrevor from 2nd-4th February 2024. This event is just not for families but for us all. Even if you can't make it for the whole weekend why not join the rest of your church family for the Saturday or the Sunday.

No Payment is required until February so please book your place now.

<https://theunitedparish.churchsuite.com/events/uzuq4yih>

We really need to have definite numbers soon so please consider booking to make the planning easier.

Exodus 2024 Tarragona Trip Information night

An information night for parents and young people will be held on **Wednesday 10th January 2024 at 8.30pm** in St John's Hall.

Investing in the Future

Presently we have had about 35 responses to the Vestry's request. Thank you to those parishioners who have already committed.

Without a significant increase in financial commitment, we will not be able to carry out the projects that will sustain our buildings and ministries for the future. For more details of how you can invest, have a look at the Investing in the Future document on our giving pages on website: <https://theunitedparish.org.uk/giving/>

Pastoring

Please pray for:

It is with deep sadness to us all that Bob Ferris died on 1st January. Please pray for Hilda, his brother Greg and all the family circles. **The thanksgiving Service will be St John's at 12.30pm on Tuesday 9th January.**

Please pray for the family of the late Steven Knox. Steven & family were regular members of St John's. Steven lived in Gainsborough after leaving Ballyclare; a Service of Thanksgiving was held in St John's last Wednesday 3rd January.

Pray for Robert Turkington recovering after hospitalisation.

Pray for Robina Stewart Anne Irvine & Bertha Haugh in hospital.

Continue to pray for Liz McConnell, Mervyn & Hilary Smylie, & Anna Mitchell.

Staff Holidays

Revd Jonny will be on leave from **Thursday 4th to Monday 8th January**. During this period of leave Ven. Stephen McBride will provide emergency pastoral cover. Stephen can be contacted on 07718 588191.

Going deeper

Mid-week Holy Communions

Mid- week Communions will recommence on **Wednesday 10th January 2024 at 12 noon.**

Small Groups – New Year New Start!

Many of us make New Year resolutions. Why not consider joining one of our small groups? We have groups that cover all age ranges and topics – its so important to support each other, have fellowship and grow spiritually.

We no longer meet via zoom instead joining together in various locations. Full details can be found at: -

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

Theology Ireland – event with John Ortland

Said or sung, memorised, or quoted, the Psalms universally have shaped Christian thinking, living, and devotion. They plumb the depths of humanity and reach the heights of God's sovereign faithfulness.

Theology Ireland are hosting a series of 4 sessions from 29th Jan – 9th Feb 2024 with speaker John Ortland, a prolific writer and theologian from the US. For more information go to

<http://www.theologyireland.com/>

Women Together Coffee Morning

Ballylinney Presbyterian Church are hosting a coffee morning starting 9.45am in their Church Halls on Saturday 13th January. Catherine Campbell is the guest speaker who has spoken at various international ladies' events on dealing with life's tough stuff through testimony and bible ministry. All welcome, for more information contact Lynne Brannigan on 07747181938

Shaping a new generation

Sunday Morning Childrens & Teenager Groups

All our groups in Christ Church & St John's start back this Sunday (7th) at normal times. New children & teenagers always welcome. If parents & grandparents could remember to register new young folk attending using the following link: -

<https://theunitedparish.churchsuite.com/forms/inuv4mrc> or by completing one of the forms in church or from one of the leaders, Thank You

Safeguarding Trust

Revd Jonny and the Select Vestry are committed to upholding good practice in the parish's ministry with children & young people. Safeguarding is overseen by the Select Vestry and the Safeguarding panel. Should you have any queries or concerns please contact the safeguarding panel immediately: Revd Jonny 07808 479649, Ms Ashleigh Reid 07732 053604 & Mrs Pat Craig 07584 929758.

Exodus 2024 to Spain – Booking is now open

The date of the mission team to Valls, near Tarragona is **19th-30th July**. Anyone who interested in going and aged 15 and over, can now book their place online at <https://www.exodusonline.org.uk/team-26-2024>

The Battles Young Christians Face Seminar

The date is a little downstream but good to get booked. Ray Ortlund from America will be talking and encouraging teenagers on how to deal with some of these battles. This is a free event on Friday 2nd February 2024 from 8-10pm at I Cadogan Park in Belfast BT9 6HG and is hosted by Theology Ireland. Booking via the link: <http://www.theologyireland.com/youth>

Friday Night Teenager Discipleship Group

The group starts back at Tim & Leah's home in Straid on Friday 18th January. If you are new to Parish and would like more info, please contact Tim on 07572 817429

Reaching Out & Welcoming in

Friday Fellowship- Help Required!

The next meeting of the fellowship is planned for Friday 26th January starting at 11.00am in Christ Church Hall. Sophie has been organising the meeting for well over a decade and now needs help and support to run it. Sadly, without support the group may not be able to meet. This would be a tragedy as it provides fellowship to many. If you could help on the last Friday of every month, please contact Sophie on 07745 828268 or David in the office.

Kintsugi Hope-New Course about to Start.

Kintsugi Hope is a Christian charity which runs well-being courses covering issues such as self-esteem, perfectionism, honesty, healthy relationships, etc. We plan to start a course in January. This will be very informal and relaxed. If you would be interested in joining us or would like more information, please have a chat with Liz McCabe (07779 333286) or Frances Wilson (07791 249025).

More information about Kintsugi can be found using the following link: - <https://kintsugihope.com/vision>

Register of Vestry Members & Easter Vestry

The Register of General Vestry members will be open for the month of February for review and addition. Anyone who would like to register as a new member of the church can use the forms at the back of church (Residents for those living inside the parish boundaries or accustomed for those living outside the parish boundaries) or from our website:

<https://theunitedparish.org.uk/resources/forms/> A useful guide to Vestries is also provided at the back of Church or website. A review of all amendments will be carried out at the March Select Vestry meeting.

Flower Rotas & Welcoming Wardens Rota

The new welcoming rotas for both churches are pinned up on notice boards. If you would like to put flowers in church, please see the wardens or add your name to list. Please remember the flowers don't need to be expensive a simple bunch⁶ is more than adequate.

Partnering

Baby Basics

Thank you to everyone's continuing generosity. During 2023 we have been able to support 90 families. Presently we are so well stocked that we cannot take any further donations at this time.

Mission Allocation 2023

During Christmas you will have seen on this page how the Parish has been able to bless the work of various groups who are always so appreciative. Over 2024 we will be inviting many of them to chat about the work that they do during our morning services.

Freewill Offering Envelopes 2024

Several sets of FWO envelopes are still awaiting collection in both Churches. The cost of posting these would be considerable. We really need these collected by Sunday 14th January. Since Covid we have seen a remarked decline in the use of envelopes as most parishioners now donate by standing order or other electronic means. If you would like to switch to this method, please contact David in the office. If envelopes are not collected, we have to assume that they are no longer needed.

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

Minister: Jonny Campbell-Smyth

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Administrator: David Brown

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Mobile 07732 763827

(Mon, Wed Fri. Office hours 9am-1pm

Tue & Thu working from home 9am-1pm.

St John's Music Lead: Chris McCabe

chris@theunitedparish.org.uk

Any items for publication in the News Sheet must be with David by **12.00 noon on Thursday.**

If you have a matter which requires the attention of the Select Vestry, you can contact them in the following way: - Lorraine Ogilby Hon. Secretary (logilby@gmail.com) or Mobile 07588 039093

