

Sunday 23rd February 2025



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

08:30 Christ Church
Holy Communion

10.00 Christ Church
Family Service

11.30 St John's
Family Service

Wednesday 26th

12.00 St John's
Holy Communion

Sunday 2nd March

10.00 Christ Church
Holy Communion

11.30 St John's
Holy Communion

For Your Attention

Serving the Lord

It's very rare for the church administrator to give his thoughts in writing! God requires our availability. It's important for us to use our gifts and our time to glorify him. Presently as a matter of urgency we need in St John's: JAM & Lighthouse Leaders on Sundays, 2 Church Wardens, and a Parish Treasurer. **What are the implications if we don't have them in situ? Please ponder, pray and serve.** David

Irish Men's Convention 2025- Last Few Tickets!

Men in the United Parish, this is your last chance to buy a ticket for the conference on **1st March from 10.00am-3.00pm** in Belfast. We have secured tickets, if you are interested contact Revd Jonny.

New Irish @ St John's Friday 14th March 8pm

Tickets are selling fast so please book asap. Members of the New Irish Choir & Orchestra will share the story of Patrick, Ireland's patron saint, and explore his beliefs and mission. To buy tickets use the link <https://bit.ly/newirish> or buy tickets @ £20 each via card machine in St John's and tell David how many you have purchased.

Register of Members & Easter AGM

The Register of members **will be open until Friday 28th** for review and addition. Forms are available in church or from our website under the forms section (Residents - living inside the parish or Accustomed- for those living outside the parish). A review of all amendments will be carried out at the March Vestry meeting. All members new and current, must demonstrate a recorded means of giving to the Church.

Free Will Offering Letters 2024

You will shortly be receiving confirmation of your giving for 2024. Please check carefully and if you notice any errors, please contact David in the church office.

Pastoring

Please pray for:

- **Albert Green and family.** Pray especially for Albert at this challenging time as he deals with the loss of his dear wife. May he know the comfort & peace of the Holy Spirit.
- **Hilary and Mervyn Smiley.** Hilary is seriously ill and being cared for at home.
- the family of the late **Betty Robinson.**
- **Wallace Fenton** seriously ill in hospital.
- **Hugh & Olive Spence**
- **Willie & William Magee,** both challenged by poor health.
- **Carrie Millar** returning back home to Ballyclare.
- **Sadie Wilson, Dorcus Forsythe, Marie Elliott, Noel Fryer, David Metcalfe, and Hazel Bingham** after hospitalisation.
- For **Betty Redfern** in Hospital & **Cynthia Banfield** supporting her mum.
- for **Anna Mitchell** who has ongoing health issues.
- for all in our Parish who will be undergoing further tests or surgery or awaiting results over the next few weeks.

Praying with people

The Evangelism Training with George Newell was so well attended. We continue with another aspect of training: – this will help with praying for others. **Prayer Ministry Training Day, Saturday 1st March @ St Ignatius, Carryduff, 9.30am- 4.00pm.** The charge for the day will be picked up by the Church. Let David in the Office know if you wish to attend.

Going deeper

CIEF Quarterly Newsletter.

The Church of Ireland Evangelical Fellowship are delighted to launch a new quarterly e-newsletter that will be featuring good news stories, events, resources and opinions aimed at evangelicals and others throughout the Church of Ireland. Sign up is simple (just name and email) and the newsletter will be emailed 4 times per year.

Attached with sheet a flyer to make sign up easy.

Shaping a new generation

Journey To The Tomb – Easter Event

Connor Children's Council are inviting Sunday School & Families to an event in St Stephen's Church, Belfast on Saturday 12th April from 4pm-6pm. Travel on Jesus's journey to the cross through sensory activities, crafts, storytelling and a BBQ to finish. It's a free event but please book using the following link or QR Code: - <https://bit.ly/4IoiU9l>



SPARK Ballyclare 2025 11TH – 17TH August

SPARK has been running in the town for several years and brings local churches together to reach out to their communities with the love of God and the Gospel. This involves kids' clubs, community clean-ups, drop-ins, and community events for the elderly. For more information and to register to be part of the Ballyclare team contact Rev Jonny or go to <https://www.sparknewtownabbey.com/>

Exciting news - Church Merchandise -Order Soon!

A request from our young people to provide Church labelled clothing has been considered. We will now be able to provide quarter zip fleeces and t-shirts. These provide a great witness of our faith and may open up conversations with friends and family. Fleeces will be approx. £30.00 & t-shirts at £11.00. Order forms are available at the rear of both churches. Please take a form and complete and return to David in the office.

Exodus Team – a new location - Hungary!

In a slight change of plan, the team this year will be travelling to Gárdonyi in Hungary. We have the biggest team of young people ever. Please be praying for them as they begin their preparations for Summer.

Reaching Out & Welcoming in

Welcome Training!

Are you in a role within our churches where you meet and talk to people? (e.g. Youth leader, Warden, Serving Tea & coffees etc) To help with the role of welcoming, Andrew Brannigan will be running a short evening course on **Thursday 20th March** - keep the date free, more details to follow.

Rural Deanery Services

It is hard to believe that Lent is almost here and the start of our Rural Deanery Services. These are always a fantastic opportunity to meet others, visit different churches and listen to weekly teaching as we journey towards Easter. Details below

Wed. 5 th March	St Patrick's Antrim	A Just God
Wed. 12 th March	Christ Church B'Nure	A Redeeming God
Wed. 19 th March	Gartree Parish	A Loving God
Wed. 26 th March	St Patrick's T'Patrick	A Humble God
Wed. 2 nd April	St Bride's Doagh	A Suffering God
Wed. 9 th April	All Saints Halls Antrim	A Calling God

All services start at **7.30pm**, this year's theme is '**What The Cross Tells Us about God**', refreshments after each Service. The retiring collection each evening will be split evenly between Scripture Union NI & the Antrim Parish Fire Damage Repair Fund.

Connor Connections

The Spring edition is now available for collection in both churches. It's a rather good one this quarter-full page article on young Isabel Scott. Please pick up a copy, its free and we don't want them to gather dust!

Partnering

Mothers' Union

Jenny Smyth from CMSI will be attending our next meeting on **Monday 24th February at 2.30pm in Christ Church Hall.**

Jenny visited Kenya last September and will give a presentation of her visit and bring us up to date with what is currently happening with our Parish Partners in the Tujisaidie Project. This is an opportunity for **all Parishioners** to come along and join in what will be a very informative afternoon on an important part of our Parish Life.

CMSi Tujisaidie Visitors 2025

Guess who is visiting us? We have Lucy Irungu & Dr Kathleen Anangwe coming to the parish in May. Information sheet about the ladies and what they have been up to in Kenya in church this morning. For further information please contact Bert Rea.

Hazaq Coffee

New Supplies of coffee have arrived at the office; £6.00 per bag with all the proceeds going to the work of Release International. Contact David or simply take a bag from the back of St John's and leave money in the office.

Care for the Family – Going the distance event

Care for the Family is a Christian organisation that we have supported for many years. They are hosting events in the Spring for couples who desire to invest further in their relationship together. Events are being held from 25th – 27th March in various locations at 7:30pm. To book your place, go to cff.org.uk/goingthedistance or phone 029 2081 0800.

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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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: - Rachel Wilson (Hon. Secretary)

honsec@theunitedparish.org.uk

