Groomsport Parish Church

From the vising of the sun ting the name of the to its setting is to be praised. Psalm 113:3

July - August 2021 groomsportparishchurch.org

Church Officials



Rev Duncan Pollock
Rector of Groomsport Parish Church

028 9146 4476

Rector's Hour

There is no Rector's hour at present due to social distancing rules. It will resume as soon as it is safe to do so.

Rector's Recess



Whilst our Rector is always available to his congregation at all hours of every day, it is hoped that, where possible, the period between lunchtime Friday and Sunday Services may be void of contact so as to allow him family time, quiet reflection and preparation for the week ahead; emergency requirements and visits excepted.

From the Rector

There were a couple of TV series a number of years ago, depicting the slippery world of contemporary politics — 'House of Cards' by Michael Dobbs and 'A Very British Coup' by Chris Mullin. Both authors had been members of parliament and so, I suppose, knew of what they wrote. Both novels (and subsequent TV series based on the novels) depicted a world of intrigue, plotting, Machiavellian scheming and, in one case, an act of murder. Naively, I've always thought that most people entered politics to serve the public. Alas, 'House of Cards' and 'A Very British Coup' portray

characters interested only in themselves and their pursuit of power. It's fiction, of course, and the real world is very different, isn't it? Or is it?

I have been watching the current drama of DUP politics with horrified fascination. The real-life drama of Northern Irish politics is so much more unbelievable than the books mentioned above. How can you act to ditch one leader only to be ditched within a month yourself? How can you promise to be a listening leader, and then turn your back on the majority of your

of your party MLAs? And, of course for reasons of balance, one has to ask how can you stand in front of the TV cameras and announce rules and restrictions for the people you represent and lead, only to blatantly break those rules and restrictions without blushing within weeks? You couldn't make it up. And, yes, If Stormont is in disarray, Westminster, Edinburgh and Cardiff are hardly paragons of public service at its best.

I despair of our politics and our politicians. Yes, 'our' politicians, for although I know I am a blow-in, this place is my home. I have been quoted as saying that there are only two things that would drive me out of Northern Ireland – the weather and the politics. I can't influence the weather, but I hope I might have some say over our politicians, if only (but most importantly) at the ballot box. I want to believe that our politicians, whatever their political party, are doing their best for all of us, green, orange, nationalist, unionist, republican, loyalist. I want to trust them and have faith that they will "get things done" for all who live in these six counties. But I also want to be forgiving of them. I want to fulfil my Lord's command to love them, however frustrating that that may be.

There is a wonderful picture by the old

master Honthorst, "Jesus before Caiaphas". Jesus seems to look at Caiaphas with pity, sorrow, love. He understands the problems Caiaphas has in accepting the truth of Jesus' gospel message; Jesus understands the pull of tradition and the beguiling spell of holding power. He understands that Caiaphas and his constituents have too much to lose if they follow him, Jesus. As Christians, we should be looking at the world through our Lord's eyes; we should see our politicians for the very real human beings that they are. We should accept their failings and their failures and we should, however hard it might seem, forgive them those failings and failures.

Maybe there is an artist out there who can depict recent events as powerfully as Honthorst did — "Arlene Foster/Edwin Poots/Paul Givan/Michelle O'Neill before the Electorate". Which of the subjects of such an illustration would be seen as depicting understanding, empathy, love? And who, like Caiaphas, would be wagging the finger, losing their temper and patronising the others?

God give us grace to pray for our politicians in this febrile atmosphere and accept their human-ness, their frailty, and if need be, their self-centredness.

Duncan

Your Magazine

Thank you to everyone for your very kind words about the last issue of our Contact Magazine. It was a brave step taking over from the great work of Tara and Mark, who previously put together the magazine.

However, despite the time and effort from the people who put the magazine together, it would not be what it is without the input from you – the readers and contributors. Please keep your articles coming, it is nice to see what you have all been doing the last few months. In this issue, we have a lovely photograph taken by Andrew Nicholson on a walk to Mount Stewart, a delicious recipe from Pauline Harrison, the Bookstall from Carol Walters and we get to explore some fascinating old churches with Zandra and Ian Sloan.

I hope you enjoy reading this magazine. I would love to hear from you with an idea for our next Contact, which we plan to have be out at the start of September.

amanda

The Rector's Warden

Mae Burke mae@groomsportparishchurch.org

The People's Warden

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The Rector's Glebe Warden

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Barry Greenaway barry@groomsportparishchurch.org

Hall Problems

Billy - billy@groomsportparishchurch.org Tony - tony@groomsportparishchurch







Marriages & Deaths

Holy Matrimony

Colin Taylor and Sarah-Louise Patterson 4th June 2021

Colin farms just outside Lisburn, and Louise lectures in Veterinary Nursing. They are a lovely couple and we were privileged to host their wedding.

May their relationship and marriage be blessed by God's ever living loving presence.

Holy Rest

Hazel Watt - 19 April 2021

Dear Hazel was a faithful member of our evening congregation, as well as being a stalwart of the Mothers' Union. She died very suddenly and peacefully at home.

John Parkinson – 8 May 2021

Dear John died tragically at home. John was a quiet presence around the Church. He had organised the counter rota for us as well as putting up the hymn numbers week by week. He was of course, a wonderful support to Helen as she carried out her duties as Church Warden.

Valerie Boyd – 21 May 2021

Valerie had battled very, very bravely with ill health for the past year. The last four months of her life were characterised by trips to and from the Ulster. She died peacefully in the Ulster Hospital with Ken and Neill at her bedside.

William McKee - 11 June 2021

Billy was the father of our caretaker, Susan. Susan does so much for us behind the scenes, it was a privilege to be with her and Billy's family at this sad time. Billy had been suffering from asbestosis for a number of years. He was well known to many, not least his many friends on the Churchill estate in Ballyholme.

Eileen Ryder – 16 June 2021

Dear Fileen had been a fixture of the 8.30 service of Holy Communion for years. Age and frailty had caught up with Eileen and she spent the last years of her life very peacefully as a resident of Movilla Lodge Nursing Home in Newtownards.

It has been a privilege knowing these wonderful people.

Our prayer must be:

"Rest eternal grant them Lord and let light perpetual shine upon them."

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Services For July & August



Trinity 5 Feast Of St Thomas

Trinity 6

Service of the Word/Compline

9:30 am Church 11:30 am Canon Tyney Hall 6.00 pm Canon Tyney Hall Holy Communion

9:30 am Canon Tyney Hall

11:30 am Church

6.00 pm Canon Tyney Hall

1:30 pm Holy Baptism, Church

Sunday

Trinity 7

9:30 am Church

11:30 am Canon Tyney Hall

6.00 pm Canon Tyney Hall

Trinity 8 St James the Apostle

Service of the Word/Compline

9:30 am Canon Tyney Hall 11:30 am Canon Tyney Hall

6.00 pm **Church**

1:30 pm Holy Baptism, Church

Sunday

Trinity 9

Trinity 10

Service of the Word/Compline

9:30 am Canon Tyney Hall

11:30 am **Church**

6.00 pm Canon Tyney Hall

Holy Communion

Morning Prayer/Evnening Prayer

9:30 am Canon Tyney Hall 11:30 am Canon Tyney Hall

6.00 pm Church

Wednesday 4 August, Compline will be said in the Canon Tyney Hall at 7:30 pm. Wednesday 4 August, Bible Study will resume in the Canon Tyney Hall at 8:15 pm. Thursday 5 August, Holy Communion will be celebrated in Church at 11:00 am.

Trinity 11

Trinity 12

Service of the Word/Compline

9:30 am Church

11:30 am Canon Tyney Hall

6.00 pm Canon Tyney Hall

Trinity 13

Morning Prayer/Evnening Prayer

9:30 am Canon Tyney Hall 11:30 am Canon Tyney Hall 6.00 pm Church

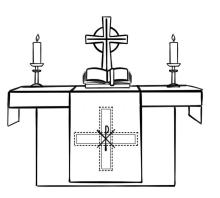
Morning Prayer/Evnening Prayer

9:30 am Canon Tyney Hall

11:30 am Church

6.00 pm Canon Tyney Hall

1:30 pm Holy Baptism, Church



It has been a joy to be able once again to conduct occasional services in Church weddings and funerals. During the next couple of months, there will be baptisms in Church as well. This is wonderful news for all of us and allows us to consider worshipping together in Church once more.

You will see from the above that we are going to begin a phased return to Church. We will still be governed by social distancing rules, the wearing of masks and, where appropriate, sitting in "bubbles". To make the system work, it is important for people to keep to their "time" for Church attendance, i.e. if you are a member of the 9.30 congregation, please stay at that time, whether your congregation is worshipping in Church or the Canon Tyney Hall. Hopefully, it will not be too long before we are all back in Church at the times we were used to, but for now the adage that half a loaf is better than no loaf at all applies!

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Vestry Minutes

At the first meeting of the new Select Vestry in May, Barry Greenaway was welcomed to the Vestry and Mae Burke was welcomed as Rector's Warden.

Thank you letters have been received from the five charities we had chosen to support. Thanks were expressed to Barry for the work he put in to help us successfully apply for a grant from the Department for Communities. This grant provided us with £21,000 and must only be used for what are deemed to be essential items.

Barry and William have been researching the costs of intruder alarms. William is securing three quotes to repair the roof problems in the Maxwell Hall. It was agreed the railings outside the Maxwell Hall should be rubbed down and painted. The Rector has set up two sub-committees. Mae has been asked to chair a committee which will discuss and explore the various roles of Vestry members and other parishioners, a report will be presented to the October meeting.

Dorothy McKnight has been asked to chair a committee to look at the suitability of our current Rectory. The committee will investigate the limitation on ownership of the land and how that might impact on our use of the present building.

Vestry members and parishioners generally, are asked to respect the workplace of Amanda, our Administrator. An open-door policy is to be used: If the to send our Gift Aid application details

office door is closed, it means Amanda is busy and should not be disturbed. If the door is open: those wishing to speak with her, should wait to be invited into the office. Groups of people should not linger in the office, should they wish to chat. Masks should be worn at all times in the office.

Unfortunately, live streaming of Sunday services has not happened as planned due to the weak internet connection in the Canon Tyney Hall. Tony Anderson, People's Warden, has been appointed as technical coordinator and has been authorised to explore the matter and report back to the Select Vestry. It was also agreed to purchase the necessary equipment to enable live streaming from the Church as well as the Halls.

Return to Sunday worship in Church will not happen as quickly as the Rector would have liked, although we are now allowed to use hymn books and prayer books. The Rector is in the process of trying to work out a rota system of returning to Sunday worship in Church from the month of July.

Permission was given to purchase a new laptop for the use of the Church Archivist. In response to Zandra's request for help with the OMA Foundation website, it was agreed that individual Vestry members will help fund it.

Amanda, our Administrator, has helped save us an annual £600 by not having

through Dublin.

To address the storage problems at the Halls, it was agreed to purchase a wooden shed to be placed at the rear of the hall.

The Rector has been in touch with Bishop David and the Rector of Downpatrick Cathedral to arrange for us to have a pilgrimage to Saul (the landing pace of St Patrick) on Advent Sunday this year with the purpose of us giving thanks for coming through lockdown. Further details to follow.

Mae was given permission to research the adjustment of some Church Hymn boards so that all numbers can be standardised.

William has suggested organising car washes on Saturday afternoons. This will only happen if enough volunteers can be found.

The Rector has arranged for valuation of the Church silver.

Heather

Car Wash

You'll see from the vestry notes that we plan to hold a car wash on Saturday mornings, during July and August, by way of raising funds for the church.

To make this happen, we require enthusiastic volunteers to help – the only qualification needed is the ability to wield a sponge!

If you would like to help please contact Billy McAneney and he'll fill you in on the details.



Petertide 1983

Thirty eight years ago I had more hair, which wasn't silvery grey; I was thin and had a moustache, grown to make me look older than my 28 years. It clearly didn't work! And those glasses! Hideous! A very dear friend of mine took this photo' just after I had been made deacon by Robert Runcie, then Archbishop of Canterbury. I remember it was a gloriously sunny day. The service lasted two hours, which was too much for my father, an ardent pipe smoker, who made his escape through a side entrance.

As the procession of bishops, archbishops, ordinands, deacons and other clerical dignitaries made its way from the great west door of the cathedral, opened especially for the occasion, the choir sang "The Breastplate" of St Patrick. My heart melted within me. Could I ever be fit enough for this sacred calling? What was I letting myself and my family in for and who were all these people who had come to support me?

I had never seen this photo' until February this year. Unsurprisingly, it brought back many memories. Standing behind me is my brother Campbell, who so sadly died last year; my big sister Jenifer, who died not long after I moved here. My father's grey hair is just visible.

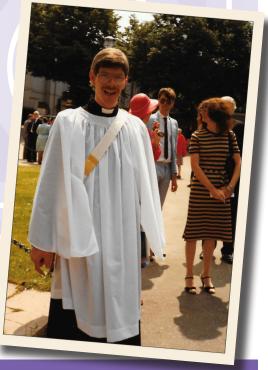
This time of year, Petertide (so named after St Peter, whose feast day falls on 29th June) is special for so many clergy.

It is a traditional time for the ordination of men and women, who have been deemed suitable for the sacred ministry. It always proves to be a life changing time. All that one has worked for, studied for, prayed for, comes to a point when the Bishop and his colleagues lay hands upon you.

"Pour out your Holy Spirit upon your servant for the office and work of a deacon in your Church."

Of course it's not an ending or culmination, rather it is a beginning. For me, the adventure began on Sunday 26th June 1983. Deo Gratias!

Duncan



Tales From The Archives July 2021

This time around we are featuring an interesting little document that was handwritten between 1856 and 1870. Part of it is a monthly attendance record (with names!) for Holy Communion and other statistics kept by the first rector, Rev. Abraham H. McCausland. Other parts are yearly estimates, reports to the rural dean and payments to the choir of the day. It appears to precede the preacher's book, which became the normal day to day record of a parish. The entries include such matters, as 18 pints of Communion wine required for the year 1865, two tons of fuel for the stove and fireplace at the

cost of £1-10-00. In 1859, the Sexton (John Waterson) was paid £4, the cost of lighting (candles) in 1865 was £3. In 1856 there were 69 children registered in the Parish. Further pages will be published in due course

This document and any other held in the parish Archives may be viewed by arrangement with the Archivist. I am normally in the Halls on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1030 to 1230.

Barry

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A Celtic Blessing

Read the blessing out three times; once for yourself, once for someone you care about, and once for someone you struggle with.

May the blessing of light be on you – light within and light without .

Amen

May the blessed sunlight shine on you like a great peat fire, so that stranger and friend may come and warm themselves at it.

Amen

May the light shine out of the two eyes of you, like a candle set in the window of a house, bidding the wanderer come in out of the storm.

Amen

May the blessing of the rain be on you, may it beat upon your Spirit and wash it fair and clean, and leave there a shining pool where the blue heaven shines, and sometimes a star.

Amen

May the blessing of the earth be on you, soft under your feet as you pass along the road, soft under you as you lie down upon it, tired at the end of the day; and may it rest easy over you when, at last, you lie under it.

Amen

May it rest so lightly over you that your soul may be out from under it quickly; up and off on its way to God.

And now may the Lord bless you, and bless you kindly.

Amen Amen Amen

(from the Tearfund Lent Devotional 2021)

What Will You Miss?

What will you miss about lockdown?

More than half of us admit that we will miss some aspects of the Covid-19 restrictions, especially spending more time at home with our family, and appreciating the quieter roads.

A recent study by King's College London and Ipsos Mori found that around one third of us feel the past year has been similar or better than normal, while 54 per cent of us say that we will miss some of the changes.

Three in ten of us feel closer to our immediate family than we did before the pandemic, while just one in six of us say that we have grown further apart. One in five of us say that our finances are better because of the pandemic.

Overall, it seems that while the public would rather the pandemic hadn't happened, that doesn't mean it's been all bad for everyone or that people see it as deeply affecting their future lives.



The Church Flowers

Last year, when Dorothy Anne stepped down from very capably organising and arranging the church flowers for many years, the Rector announced that a replacement would be needed.

I volunteered to undertake the position as I have a great interest in flowers and flower arranging and I have been attending classes for a number of years.

I enjoy both modern and traditional arrangements and I think, flowers in whatever form, should adorn the church.

In the past few weeks, Merab Opie has been assisting me and has come up with some interesting ideas.

hope everyone enjoys these arrangements as much as we enjoy doing them.

Patricia.



The Joy Of A Good Walk

When lockdown restrictions eased on Wednesday, 3rd June 2020, my first activity was visiting the formal gardens and lakeside grounds at Mount Stewart. I arrived with a printout of my 'golden ticket' when the gates reopened at 10:00

Over the last 12 months, I've visited Mount Stewart many times and have greatly enjoyed watching the four seasons unfold before my eyes. Autumn is my favourite season, and Mount Stewart is ideal for seeing the full array of autumn colours especially

In 2015 the National Trust acquired 900 acres of land surrounding the house and

Bury estate has resulted in 20 miles of walking trails being open to the public. So, I'm not likely to run out of options soon.

At the end of the walks, there is always some time to visit the tea-room or horsebox for refreshments.

As I write this short piece, Mount Stewart is closed to the public due to filming on site (things should be back to normal by 13th June). It is not a big problem for me; it just means more visits to Castle Ward or Rowallane. What a hardship!

andrew Micholson

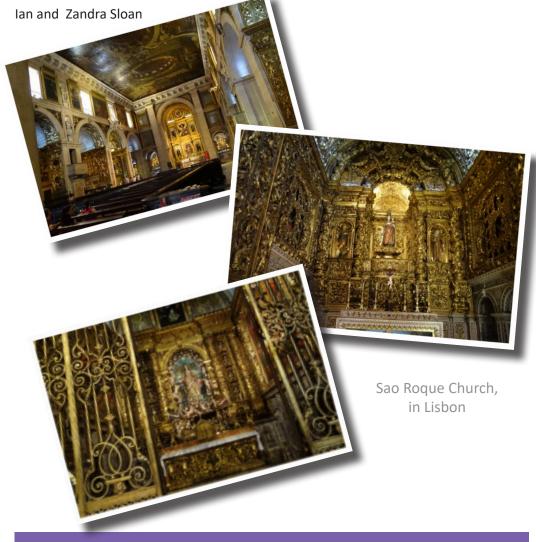


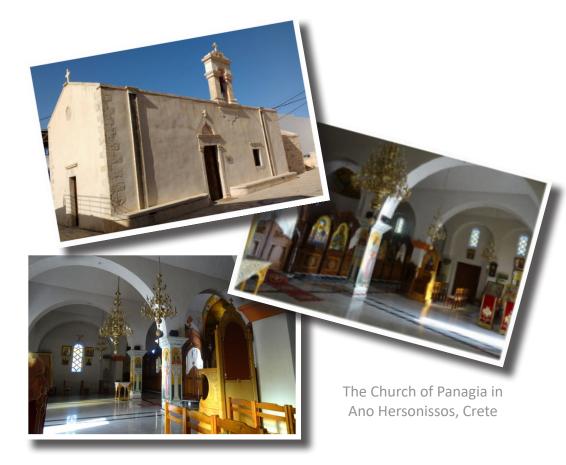
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Spanish & Greek Churches

In September 2016 while on holiday, we took the opportunity to visit a large and ornate Roman Catholic Church in the city of Lisbon. Later, in May 2018 we were able to visit a couple of smaller and iconic Greek Orthodox Chapels in Crete.

The contrast between the relative wealth of the two societies, their religious cultures and their different approaches to Divine Worship, particularly in their imagery of Christian Saints and Apostles, was striking as shown in the attached photos.





Memories

Memories are thoughts from deep down inside.
Peaceful, Harmonic, thoughts not to hide,
Some may be good, some may be bad,
Some make you happy but most make you sad.
Deep in my mind most memories are rotten,
The good ones cast out but never forgotten.
So when I remember the times that were great,
I use them for peace and true love...
Not hate.

Duncan Ruffle

Duncan Ruffle wrote this poem shortly before he died at the age of 29.

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God In The Arts

The Revd Michael Burgess continues his series on God in the Arts with 'The Peaceable Kingdom' by Edward Hicks. It now hangs in the National Gallery of Art in Washington DC.

When St Peter preached his first sermon on the day of Pentecost, he showed how the life, death and resurrection of Jesus had to be understood in the light of the Old Testament. The promise of the Old was granted fulfilment in the New. This is how we understand the unity of the two Testaments: the messianic hope in one finds full expression in the other. We read of the Suffering Servant in Isaiah and look to the life-giving sacrifice of Jesus. Earlier in that prophet we read of a wondrous Child who is granted the spirit of the Lord to bring Paradise once more to the world:

The Peaceable Kingdom



'The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.....They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.' (Isaiah 11:6,9)

That vision of peace and harmony inspired this month's painting, 'The Peaceable Kingdom' by Edward Hicks. He was born in Pennsylvania in 1780 and worked as a carriage and sign maker. After a rebellious adolescence, he became a Quaker, living as a preacher and minister before taking up his brushes. His fellow Quakers were uneasy with this pursuit of such a worldly profession, and so Edward Hicks tried his hand at farming. His efforts proved unsuccessful, and he returned to painting, creating a whole series of canvases on

this single theme. He painted almost a hundred versions of the Peaceable Kingdom of which over 60 still exist. This one is from 1834.

The foreground is occupied by not just one child, but several. They are innocent and free, playing with the animals around – lion, tiger, leopard, bear, wolf, cow and lamb. There is no sign of 'nature red in tooth and claw' here for all is peace and tranquillity. The bear and cow nudge each

other in the bottom corner with no fear and no assertion of strength. That vision of peace is being realised in the distant scene, where we see William Penn and his fellow Quakers working on a treaty of co-existence with the Indians. The animals in the foreground symbolise the human traits we see at work in the background: leadership and strength, sensitivity and gentleness.

As he worked on later versions of his painting, Edward Hicks knew that such peace was not an easy and simple achievement. Arguments and misunderstandings divided his own flock, and as a result, the animals he painted

look tired and anxious with sad eyes and white whiskers.

But here in 1834 there is a freshness and a promise of paradise restored. The cow and the calf, the bear and the bear cub, and the other animals are at one with the children playing. That harmony can be realised in human affairs also, the artist is saying. 'Follow the Inner Light' and Isaiah's prophecy can be fulfilled in our world. It needs both the innocence and strength we see here; it needs action and waiting, it needs wisdom and gentleness as we take counsel one with another. Follow those qualities to be channels of God's peace to make this world the Peaceable Kingdom.

Don't Stop Too Soon

The story is told of a university graduation where there were a large number of graduates waiting to receive their degrees. Speed was of the essence, and so as the Chancellor presented their diplomas, he simply smiled each time and whispered: "Congratulations, keep moving."

It's actually good advice for all of life, and for your Christian life as well. Discovering the reality of God's love for yourself is lifechanging, but – *keep moving!*

There is so much more that God has in store for you! Paul, in 2 Timothy, says "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day...."

So, wherever you have reached in your own faith pilgrimage, congratulations, but *keep moving!*



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Bookstall - July & August

I hope you have had the chance to look at the bookshelves; the books reviewed in the last magazine are on the top shelf as usual and those detailed below will be there once this magazine is distributed. This time, there is a very mixed selection, a fantasy, a double biography, a classic crime novel, an updated Greek Myth, and a piece of contemporary fiction. I hope you find something to enjoy in the rest of the shelves if not here.

Can I once again stress that we can accommodate no more books? There is simply not enough room to store what we have in a way I would like, so please find alternative ways of passing your books on for the time being.

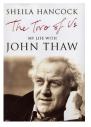
The Midnight Library Matt Haiq



The Midnight Library by Matt Haig. I confess to seldom responding to passionate promotion of a book but what I heard and read about this novel intrigued me. I had already read two books by this author and seen him

interviewed at a literary festival, so I was moved to try it. The first phrase is, to me. very off-putting: "Nineteen years before she decided to die...." and indeed, the first twenty or so pages may well make you feel that this book is not for you. However, I would urge you to persevere. It could be described as a fable, but it is ultimately encouraging, reassuring and uplifting. I know from the interview attended that Matt Haig has suffered from profound depression and I am sure this book is based on much he has learnt as he emerged from his condition. There is a great deal to enjoy in the story, as Nora learns about the possible consequences of the choices she might have made. As David Nicholls, a successful author himself, says, it is "An uplifting, poignant novel about regret, hope and second chances.

The Two Of Us Sheila Hancock



The Two of Us by Sheila Hancock. Subtitled My Life with John Thaw, this witty, intelligent book is a loving but clear-eyed double biography, both personal and professional. First the, structure is told in alternate chapters of his

of his and her early life; then, as they set up life together, the remaining twenty-nine vears are told, followed by Sheila Hancock trying to make sense of life without him. I read this because, although biography is not a genre I particularly enjoy, I am an enormous fan of Sheila Hancock and was and continue to be a fan of John Thaw. The book gives great insight into the lives of these two interesting people along with witty observations about theatre life and the idiosyncrasies of those around them; it is thoroughly enjoyable.

Before The Fact Frances Iles

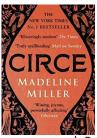


Before the Fact by Francis fles. I have had this book for many years and to be frank it does look rather "well loved" but having just reread it for about the third time, I decided to let it go and share it

with some other people. It belongs to the era of the blossoming of crime fiction and Iles was a key figure in its development. Lina is a rather naive young woman from

a wealthy family who chooses to marry a dashing, attractive young man against the wishes of her family and the concerns of friends. The reader learns from the first paragraph that she is to be murdered by him, nevertheless, this story is hard to put down as the impending doom gathers very slowly. There is no detection, no need for clues, simply the anatomy of a killer's mind and the inner reflections of a sadly deluded and infatuated woman. It's a good read! For those who enjoy classic cinema, this was made into a Hitchcock film in 1941 starring Joan Fontaine and called "Suspicion"; amazingly, it is currently available on BBC iPlayer.

Circe Madeline Millar



Circe by Madeline Miller. I was given this book by someone who knows me better than most and my first, silent reaction was "why?" Circe, I learnt, was, in Greek mythology, a daughter of Helios the

ocean nymph Perse. The book is a retelling of the story of Circe, who has inherited the power of witchcraft. When this power threatens the gods, she is banished to an uninhabited island for the rest of her life. It is there that she matures, hones her herbal skills and creates a rewarding life for herself. Thus it becomes a tribute to the indomitable nature of women. The bulk of the story deals with her life, her loves, as gradually people find the island and her growing ability to conquer all her challenges. I learnt much about Greek mythology and enjoyed the monsters, gods, heroes, magic and mortals, which all weave in and out of the tale.

Jumping The Queue Mary Wesley



MARY WESLEY Jumping the Queue by Mary Wesley. Sheila Hancock featured earlier in this page and I recall watching a memorable performance of hers as the main character in a BBC dramatisation of this story

in 1989. Matilda Poliport is recently widowed and has decided to end her life in a very calm, matter-of-fact way. She plans carefully for a graceful end, involving a bottle of Beaujolais, some rolls and Brie and peaches on the beach followed by a never-ending swim out to sea. Her plans come to nothing, thwarted by a group of young people deciding to party on "her" beach; when she observes another sad soul contemplating suicide, she just has to intervene. Their lives begin to start up again, giving Matilda the opportunity to reflect on her life with her late husband. The story is wittily told, despite its dark subject and darker revelations, easy to read and fascinating.

It is my earnest hope that before this year is out we will be able to have another Book Fair, but after the experiences of the last fifteen months, I won't hold my breath! In the meantime, do use the bookshelves, the hall is in use most mornings when Amanda is working and she will let you in. If the shelves start to be emptied. I have lots more books in the store to fill any gaps.

Carol

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It can be read in the Bible in 2 Samuel 11:1-12:25

A short story from the Bible

Kings normally led their armies to battles but David had sent his army with his commander, Joab, to fight the Ammonites.

David was strolling on his palace roof when he saw a beautiful woman.



the wife of Uriah.

brought to the palace!

She is Bathsheba.

Later, Bathsheba sent a message to King David.

I'm pregnant! B×

David tried to cover up what he had done. He sent a note to Joab.

Send Uriah to me <u>now</u> D

When Uriah came, David sent him to his home, but he didn't go.

Why didn't you go home?

How can I go home

Thow can I go home to my wife when my fellow soldiers can't? David had Uriah stay to dinner and got him drunk



So David wrote a letter to Joab

Put Uriah at the front of the fighting where he will be killed.



Bathsheba was now a widow and David married her:



But God was angry and He sent Nathan the prophet



You took Uriah's wife and then you murdered him by having him killed.



You certainly did!
You are forgiven, but
there will always be
trouble in your family.

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Cook's Corner

Balsamic Chicken (Serves 4)

This issue's recipe has been sent in by Pauline Harrison.

The night before, add the following ingredients into a polythene bag and seal.

4 tbs balsamic vinegar
6 tbs honey.
1 tbs olive oil.
2 crushed garlic cloves
1 teaspoon dried Thyme.
3/4 teaspoon Rosemary.
1/2 teaspoon red chilli flakes.
Salt and pepper.
Add 4 chicken breasts.

Leave in fridge overnight for the flavours to meld.

Preheat the oven to 175 C.

Prepare enough vegetables for four people. This recipe works well with carrots, parsnips, red and green peppers, red onion, but you can choose your own selection of vegetables.

Add a little olive oil to your vegetables, roast in the oven for 25 minutes.

Time saver tip: The vegtables can be also be prepared and cooked the night before.

After roasting your vegetables place the marinated chicken on top and cook for 30 minutes.

Place the leftover marinade in a saucepan and reduce, pour the sauce over the chicken when serving.



We would love to have a Cook's Corner in every issue of the magazine. Please forward your recipe and photographs to office @groomsportparishchrch.org.

Thoughts of a Blow In ...

So summer is here at last, or as much of a summer as we ever hope to get here! After a very chilly May, fingers crossed, we'll get at least a week or two of sunshine in the coming months. As spring has progressed, it's been such a relief to have things opening up cautiously. With the days growing longer, it's been great to see people and families out and about enjoying the fresh air. Here's hoping that life can carry on relaxing as the summer continues.

After a tough winter, a little relief from restrictions means a great deal. I have been relishing my regular seaside walks and enjoying the change of the seasons in the wildlife around us. I was lucky enough to spot a pair of guillemots capering about, skimming over the water and then splashing down headfirst, showing off their red feet. Rather than serious fishing, they looked full of the joys of spring, as though simply enjoying themselves for the sake of it. A lovely sight to watch!

In the same vein, it's been such fun to see the children next door out playing in the front garden as the weather has grown milder. The other day, a couple of older teenagers from a few doors up kindly came to help the two younger children with their rugby moves. The wee ones were so excited about this that Emma waved at me through the window, delighted to have an audience. The teenagers were very helpful and patient, gradually taking them through tackles and manoeuvres as the little ones scurried about happily. During one rather intense tackle, the young man seemed to slip and fall and from my viewpoint, it looked like the children scampered over him; they were so intent on chasing the ball. I did notice him get up a little later, so luckily, they didn't break him!

As we are a seaside parish, this lovely verse by Celia Thaxter seemed to describe the night sky at this time of year when the days are so long. I wish you all a safe and enjoyable summer, with lots of beautiful sunsets on view.

Cynthia

"Peacefully.
The quiet stars came out, one after one;
The holy twilight fell upon the sea,
The summer day was done."

Prayer Room

Looking through my file of Prayer Room material, I have noticed an exercise book that I haven't looked in for many months. It was one of those left on one of the tables where we invite you to write, draw, read or reflect during the time of the Prayer Room. I hope some of the following prayers from the book are of comfort and encouragement to you.

We gradually appear! We blossom and bloom just like the flowers and the butterfly but only stay on this, your beautiful planet Lord, until our number is up.



Thank you for each day and help us to appreciate that we are only here for a short time.

Amen.



Forgive us loving Father, for the ways we have ruined your earth, created with an abundance of love, meeting all our needs, spiritual, emotional, physical and mental. Help us to open our eyes to all this beauty and to learn to cherish it again.



Dear Lord, I thank you for the beauty of your creation, fresh and new, every morning to delight us.

Amen.



Dear God, I hold up my weakness to your strength. My failure to your faithfulness. My sinfulness to your perfection. My lovelessness to your compassion. My small pain to your agony on the cross.

Amen.



Dear Father in Heaven. Thank you for listening to our prayers. We are always asking some help from you. Please remind me to love you and obey.

Amen.

Prayer Room

A final thought. Many shops now stock colouring books for adults to aid mindfulness. They are also recommended for those suffering chronic pain; they can very effectively distract us if we allow ourselves to be thoroughly absorbed. I have been taken by the evocative outline images that we see each week in church on the leaflet that Amanda creates for us. They may be used as an aid to prayer by reflecting on the significance of the image as we colour it in.

The idea first came to me on Remembrance Sunday when we had an outline of poppies on the front of our order of service. I simply could not resist colouring in those poppies, and I did become thoroughly absorbed. Recently, 13th June to be precise, we had an image a little like the one below and I thought colouring that in we could reflect on many things, our spiritual growth, the development of our prayer life... I leave it to those who would like to try this to see if it would help. Perhaps there is an idea for a new addition to what we offer in the Prayer Room. I am sure that we would welcome any observations anyone may care to offer.



