

MAY - JUNE 2022

GROOMSPORT PARISH CHURCH

CONTACT

GROOMSPORTPARISHCHURCH.ORG



*Be strong and courageous; do
not be frightened or dismayed,
for the Lord your God is with
you wherever you go.*

Church Officials



Rev Duncan Pollock

Rector of Groomsport Parish Church
028 9146 4476

Rector's Hour

Rector's hour will recommence with effect Tuesday 3rd May. This is the best time to catch the Rector for signing of passports and driving licences.

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

It is hard to believe that, after over twenty-one years, my time as Rector is coming to an end. It has been an adventure, a pilgrimage, a living act of discipleship. There have been times when I would have, could have packed it in, in despair. But there have been other times, the majority of times, when it has been a privilege and a pleasure. But this is not a time for farewells and reflections. They should come in next month's issue of "Contact".

In the meantime, I haven't left and there is still so much to do.

We will be welcoming Bishop David into Church on May 1. He will be conducting a confirmation service, where we will be presenting six young people and three adults; I think that is remarkable for a small Church like ours. We will welcome Deborah Doherty into Church on May 15 as part of our thinking for Christian Aid Week. And we have Ascension Day and

then Pentecost. We will celebrate Trinity Sunday, when we will consider that most enigmatic of Christian Truths, that God is three and God is one. These great holy days are so important to me and, I hope, you.

High days and holy days give a structure to our faith and to our worship. Our Christian life is not just to be celebrated at Easter and Christmas. We should enjoy those other great days, like St Thomas's Day on 3rd July. I like St Thomas, because I can understand his very real doubts about his Lord's resurrection. I can empathise with St Peter, (29th June) – one minute vowing lifelong faithfulness to his best friend and then the next denying him three times. And of course, I admire (is that the right word?) St Paul (January 25); arrogant, humble, all knowing, and yet asking the questions I need answered. Paul, who walked all around the eastern Mediterranean telling anyone who cared to listen of the Good News of Christ, crucified and risen.

And of course, there is a great catalogue of others who kept the faith; some are listed on pages 20 and 21 of our Prayer Books. Then there are those peculiar to this island

of Ireland, listed on pages 22 and 23 of our Prayer Book. Their lives, their exploits, their faithfulness, sometimes in the most harrowing of times, bear examination for they are truly inspirational. I know that for some thinking of saints and martyrs seems a little close to another denomination, but as General Booth said about church music – "Why should the devil have all the good tunes?" Why do we shy away from feast days and saints' days just because we think they are too Roman? They are, or they should be, as much part of our worshipping life as they are for Roman Catholics. After all, do we not believe in one Catholic and Apostolic Church?

I have met many saints in my time as Rector of Groomsport. I wish we could celebrate their lives; I wish that they had their own special days. But perhaps the best honour we could do them is to walk in their footsteps. You will know of people who you would wish to call "saint". Be encouraged and inspired by them. You might not have to die for your faith; you might not have to undertake great evangelising journeys; but you can follow their examples and thereby touch the lives of others who in their turn will become unsung heroes of the Church.

Duncan

Contact Us

The Rector's Warden

Mae Burke
mae@groomsportparishchurch.org

The People's Warden

Bert Smith
bert@groomsportparishchurch.org

The Rector's Glebe Warden

Billy McAneney
billy@groomsportparishchurch.org

The People's Glebe Warden

Tony Anderson
tony@groomsportparishchurch.org

Treasurer

Florence McAneney
florence@groomsportparishchurch.org

Secretary to Select Vestry

Heather Pentland
heather@groomsportparishchurch.org

Parish Office

Amanda McWhinney
028 9127 1311
office@groomsportparishchurch.org

Sunday School

Maggie Townsley
maggie@groomsportparishchurch.org

Verger / Caretaker

Susan Moore
028 9127 1311

Gift Aid Secretary

Amanda McWhinney
028 9127 1311

Church Hall Bookings

David McKnight
David@groomsportparishchurch.org

Parish Archivist

Barry Greenaway
barry@groomsportparishchurch.org

Hall Problems

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



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Communities
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Department für
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Announcements

Christian Aid Week

Christian Aid Week
16th - 22nd May 2022

Shortly after it was founded, back in 1946, Christian Aid was very involved in helping repatriate displaced persons blasted out of their homes and countries following the end of the Second World War.

Sad to say, this year, 2022, will be similar following the return to war in Europe and the devastation and consequent homelessness in Ukraine and some of its neighbours.

Christian Aid is already involved in aiding those affected by the terrible events we see daily on our television screens. And together, with your help, we can enable Christian Aid to do even more.

The community in Groomsport has a very proud record of punching above its weight in raising funds for Christian Aid.

Hopefully, this year will be no different. However, the normal house to house collection will not happen. Instead, Christian Aid Envelopes will be distributed to all households in the village and surrounding area and they will be made available in the Parish and Presbyterian Churches. The Filled Envelopes can then be left in either the Parish or Presbyterian Churches or in the local SPAR shop in the middle of the village.

Last year the village raised in excess of £3500, a magnificent amount. This year we will be expecting more, as a COFFEE MORNING and BOOK SALE will be happening in the Walter Nelson Hall on Saturday 21st May, starting at 10.30 am.

Coffee, Tea, Scones and Tray Bakes will be available, not to mention the sale of more than 600 books, all in aid of Christian Aid.

Thank you for your help.

Mervyn Nelson



The Parish Office
The Parish Halls
Main Street
Groomsport
Co Down
BT19 6JR

office@groomsportparishchurch.org
028 9127 271311

Services For May and June

Sunday

01

May

Easter 3 SS Philip & James

8:30 am Holy Communion
10:30 am Morning Prayer (said)
4:00 pm A Service of Confirmation led
by our Bishop
There will be no evening
service.

Sunday

15

May

Easter 5

8:30 am Holy Communion
10:30 am A Service of the Word, guest
speaker Deborah Doherty of
Christian Aid
6:00 pm Evening Prayer

Thursday

26

May

Ascension Day

11:00 am Holy Communion

Sunday

05

June

The Day Of Pentecost

8:30 am Holy Communion
10:30 am A Service of Thanksgiving on
the occasion of Her Majesty's
Platinum Jubilee
6:00 pm Evening Prayer

Sunday

08

May

Easter 4

8:30 am Holy Communion
10:30 am Parish Communion
6:00 pm Compline

Sunday

22

May

Easter 6 Rogation Sunday

8:30 am Holy Communion
10:30 am Morning Prayer
6:00 pm Holy Communion

Sunday

29

May

The Sunday after Ascension

8:30 am Holy Communion
10:30 am Morning Prayer
6:00 pm Compline

Sunday

12

June

Trinity Sunday

8:30 am Holy Communion
10:30 am Parish Communion
6:00 pm Compline

Sunday

19

June

Trinity 1

8:30 am Holy Communion
10:30 am A Service of the Word
6:00 pm Evening Prayer

Sunday

26

June

Trinity 2

8:30 am Holy Communion
10:30 am A said service of Morning
Prayer
2:00 pm Evening Prayer – The Rector's
final service
There will be no evening
service

Sunday

03

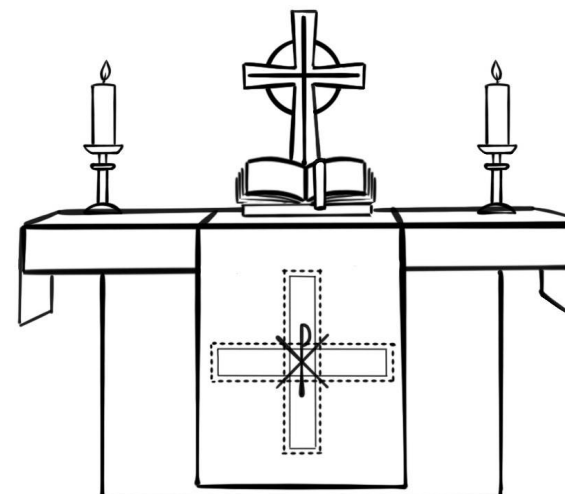
July

Trinity 3

8:30 am Holy Communion
10:30 am A Service of the Word
6:00 pm Evening Prayer

Mid-Week Services

Tuesday 7.30 pm – Compline
Wednesday 7:30 pm - Bible Study
Thursday 11.00 am – Holy Communion
The first Wednesday of the month, Holy Communion is celebrated in the
Chapel at Mount Stewart at 10:30 am.



From The Registers

Holy Rest

These past few weeks we have said farewell to two of our most loyal Parishioners’.

Hazel Steenson

Alas, Hazel had been house bound for the last years of her life. But she was very much alive and very keen to hear of Parish news. Her husband, Jack, had been a Trustee of the Church, and Hazel supported him, not just in his workaday life, but in the many functions he performed for the Church.

May she rest in peace and rise in glory.

June Walker

Dear June died a death that I suspect we would all wish for – at home with her family around her. June’s presence around the Church was always quiet, but dignified. A regular member of our evening service of Compline and a loyal member of our Bible Study Group. We will miss her. We pray God’s blessing on her daughters, Lynn, Leslie and Laurie, and of course on her dear sister, Helen.

*Bring us, Lord our God, at our last awakening,
into the house and gate of heaven,
to enter into that gate and dwell in that house,
where there shall be no darkness nor dazzling,
but one equal light;
no noise nor silence, but one equal music;
no fears nor hopes, but one equal possession;
no ends nor beginnings, but one equal eternity;
in the habitation of your glory and dominion,
world without end. Amen.*

*Loving God, your mighty power brings good out of evil,
joy out of grief and life out of death.
Look with mercy on all who mourn,
giving them a patient faith in times of darkness
and strengthening them with the knowledge of your love.*

Vestry Notes

Much of the first February meeting was taken up with two topics - alternative energy and the proposed sale of the Rectory. The proposed sale of the Rectory was discussed in full, including the process which must be followed – initially permission to be sought from the Diocese, and if successful, then from RCB in Dublin.

As the Rector was in hospital for the meeting at the end of the month, the meeting was chaired by the Rector’s Warden. At this meeting, alternative energy was discussed further, particularly the nature of the possible grants available.

On 14 March, a short meeting was held to agree the register of Vestry Members. This was followed by the regular monthly meeting, the last of this year’s Select Vestry. A large television screen is to be purchased and installed in the Canon Tyney Hall, so that any very large services can be relayed from the Church to the hall. The annual accounts were approved by the Select Vestry to be presented to the General Vestry for adoption. Kate was thanked for the successful Pancake party, the proceeds of which will go to Ukrainian children.

At the Annual Easter Vestry, the Rector announced that his Rector’s Warden will be Mae Burke and his Glebe Warden will be William McAneney. Bert Smith was elected as People’s Warden and Tony Anderson as People’s Glebe Warden. The following were elected to the Select Vestry: Dorothy Anne Crawford, Stephen McCullough, Heather Pentland, Gary Keenan, Barry Greenaway, Ken Boyd, Florence McAneney, Dorothy McKnight, Helen Parkinson, Jim Love, Kate Murray and Maureen Taggart. At the first meeting of the new Vestry Heather Pentland was

elected Vestry Secretary and Florence McAneney was elected treasurer. Also at the meeting the Rector announced his decision to retire on 30th June this year.

Canon Simon Doogan, the Area Dean, called into the regular monthly April meeting to introduce himself as he will be chairing Vestry meetings from August onwards during the interregnum. The Rector announced that Compline and Bible Study will resume after Easter. The original date stone of the Church is to be secured safely above the inner Church porch door. Barry reported a successful grant application of £10,000 towards the installation of solar panels. Research is ongoing on the possible provision of LED lighting in the halls.

The Rector will hold a planning meeting on 10 May with the Vestry office bearers to plan for the interregnum and will report back to the Select Vestry.

The decision was taken to continue using masks and hand sanitiser until the end of June. The common cup for communion will not be used before then. After Easter the Church will be open mornings and afternoon daily for Private Prayer.

The Bishop will be with us for a Confirmation Service on Sunday 1 May at 4.00 pm followed by a cup of tea. It is hoped as many parishioners as possible will make the effort to support these young people at such an important time in their Christian life. New hymn board numbers will be ready in time for the Confirmation Service.

It was agreed that the special candle in the Church, lit throughout Covid, should remain lit during the interregnum.

Select Vestry 2022/2023

At the Annual Vestry the following appointments were made:



Mae Burke
(Rector's Warden)



Billy McAneney
(Rector's Glebe Warden)



Heather Pentland
Vestry Secretary



Florence McAneney
Treasurer



Bert Smith
(People's Warden)



Tony Anderson
(People's Glebe Warden)



Maureen Taggart



Dorothy-Anne
Crawford



Stephen McCullough



Jim Love



Dorothy McKnight



Helen Parkinson



Kate Murray



Barry Greenaway



Gary Keenan



Ken Boyd

Mothers' Union

At long last, we have managed to meet in person. We have several new members, yet sadly some members were unable to join us due to illness and for other reasons. May God continue to bless them.

One member, who was unable to be with us was Christine, who had played the piano for us over the years. We wish Christine a healthier 2022.

Mary Cargill, one of our new members, happens to be a talented organist. On the very first night, Mary played without even having music in front of her; not only that, but she has upgraded our little hymn booklet; thank you, Mary.

We were very pleased that Bishop David asked our Rector to be the Diocesan Mothers' Union Chaplain. Elaine, who is a trustee, Duncan and I, drove to Dromore Cathedral for the commissioning service. It was a moving service to hear the remarks the Bishop made about our Rector.

Because of the Annual General Vestry

meeting and Duncan's admission to hospital, we had to juggle our programme. Rachel Sloan spoke at the February meeting. Rachel shared how God had led her to work in very primitive conditions in rural Brazil. Bless Rachel, she was able to step into the breach with part two, which was about the various houses she has lived in.

In April, we met in Church as part of the Holy Week services. Eventually the Rector will be able to meet with us on the 16th May, at our usual time of 7:30 pm, and that is good news, his talk will be, 'A trip around the Holy Table', instead of our annual outing.

We look forward to that evening in May, it will be the last opportunity of having Duncan at our Mothers' Union meeting as our Rector. Despite losing Duncan as the Rector, he will still be the Mothers' union Chaplain for the next three years, so we may have the pleasure of his company at future events.

Faith

Family Fun Day & BBQ



There will be a family fun day at the Meadow, Groomsport, on Saturday 11th June, 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm. There will be a BBQ, treasure hunt, stalls, face painting, bouncy castle, children's disco and more. £8.00 for an adult ticket, £4.00 for a child.

Please contact Billy McAneney for tickets on 0781 2042833.

A Meal To Remember



When we gather with other Christians to celebrate the Eucharist and to make our communion, we are remembering that special meal Jesus shared with His disciples on the eve of His arrest and death.

But do we always appreciate what we are doing? Sometimes the monotony of repetition and distractions will get in the way. We fail to recognise Christ's gift at communion for what it truly is.

In the 15th century, the prosperous burghers of the Flemish town of Louvain commissioned the artist Dirk Bouts to paint a special altarpiece devoted to the Eucharist for the church of St Peter. Dirk Bouts, with his imagination, portrayed the Last Supper in a room looking out to his own town of Louvain. The faces of the servers in the room and the cooks looking through the hatch were modelled on the burghers who commissioned the work. Other faces are modelled on theologians at the new university who visited the artist. They wanted to ensure he kept his theological feet on the ground while his imagination took flight. And so around the

scene of the Last Supper, Bouts has painted Old Testament scenes foreshadowing that holy communion: Melchizedek offering bread and wine in return for Abraham's offering, the eating of the first Passover, the gathering of the manna in the wilderness, and Elijah awakened by the angel to eat and drink before setting out for Horeb. Signs of sacrifice, the Passover of the old covenant, daily food and food for the journey – all key aspects of the communion we celebrate and share in.

Just as the theological faculty reminded Dirk Bouts of all these facets, so the artist is reminding us of the richness of the distinctive meal we have as Christians. When we see the bread and wine taken up and offered, we remember not only the Last Supper, when Jesus fed His disciples with the sacrifice of His life, but those occasions when God reached out to feed His people of old. We rejoice that the food our Lord gives us in the Eucharist feeds us now and enables us to make our journey through life to the eternal banquet offered in the heavenly kingdom.

The Revd Michael Burgess

Holy Communion

Reading Mr Burgess's article on the previous page, has made me think about my own view of Holy Communion. I have also been forced to reflect deeply about Communion as I have tried to communicate to our confirmation candidates just how important Communion is for Christians.

We all know the story. Jesus celebrates Passover with his friends, his disciples. The whole evening is punctuated by Jesus undertaking some radical actions. He washes the feet of his disciples, a task usually undertaken by the lowest servant in the household. Peter is shocked. How much more shocked must he have been when Jesus then breaks bread, hands it out and says "This is my body broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And then the equally shocking words over the cup, "This is my blood, shed for you and for many. Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me."

I am reminded that Jesus doesn't say

"Next time you are in Church, take bread, take wine..." He says, "do this as often as you eat the bread or drink the wine." In other words, every time you sit down to a meal together, and you break bread together, or you share a glass of wine, remember me.

When you next sit down with your family or your friends and you enjoy a glass of wine, remember Him, He who died on the cross to prove His love for us. And that most staple of food stuffs, bread! Now a symbol of His broken and resurrected body!

When I take the bread and the wine I am immediately transported back to that upper room, whether I am in Church or at home or in a café or in a restaurant. "Do this as often as you eat/drink, in remembrance of me" What a wise and wonderful Lord we have!

Duncan

*Almighty and everliving God,
whose Son Jesus Christ was crucified and rose again
to break the power of sin and death:
We give you thanks and praise for the gift of your Holy Spirit
by whom your servants have been born again
and made your children.
Grant that in the power of the same Holy Spirit
they may continue to grow
in the knowledge and likeness of Christ;
increase in them your gracious gifts,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of right judgment and inward strength,
the spirit of knowledge and godly living;
and fill them, O Lord, with the spirit of reverence for you.*

Walking For Softies

Lagan Towpath

Our February walk found us on the Lagan Towpath. We met at Shaw's Bridge and set off beside the river in the direction of Stranmillis. It was a calm but cloudy morning. Everyone enjoyed getting out in the fresh air and chatting as we walked along. It was a delight to hear the birds singing as well, seeing the new leaves and shoots making an appearance on the trees and along the riverbank. One highlight we will remember was when a little dog decided the white ball on the end of Christine's stick was something to chase!



As usual, everyone enjoyed the coffee at the Lock Keeper's Inn. One group member decided the breakfast was just too tempting and chose to sample it, but William asked to remain nameless.



Newtownards Flying Club

March saw our first visit to Londonderry Park in Newtownards. It was a glorious Saturday morning, with the sun blazing in the sky, the daffodils in bloom and the birds serenading us with their song. Everyone was smiling as we took ourselves around the park's perimeter.



The paths were flat and well surfaced, so it was an easy walk for everyone, occasionally stopping to watch the various soccer and hockey matches. Inevitably, our morning reached its highlight with coffee and scones at the nearby Cloud Nine restaurant.

Although we had reserved two tables in the Tee-Pee, the staff thoughtfully reserved two outdoor tables for us. It was lovely just basking in the late morning sun, enjoying the craic and viewing the small planes landing and taking off just across the field at the Ulster Flying Club airstrip.



Our April walk will be the coastal path at Crawfordsburn on Saturday morning, 30th April, followed in May by a walk around the Titanic Quarter. If you'd be interested in joining us, whether for the walk and later refreshments or just for a coffee afterwards, then give us a call. Zandra 0796 8401386.

High Flight

by John Gillespie Magee

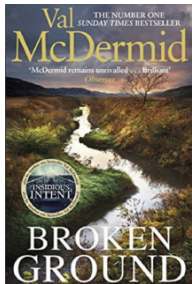
*Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds, – and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of – wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air...*

*Up, up the long, delirious burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace
Where never lark, or ever eagle flew –
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.*

Book Corner

What a joy to feel the warmth of the sun on our faces and see all the spring flowers emerging and leaves unfurling! This Spring feels especially hopeful as our lives begin to return to a modicum of normality. Now I am finally out of the hospital, I will get the books reviewed earlier this year on the shelves and hope that you find something to appeal to you from a fairly wide-ranging selection. During my prolonged hospital stay, I read no fewer than nineteen books! Many were on my Kindle, but quite a few were not, and some of them are included here.

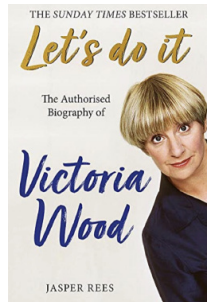
Broken Ground Val McDermid



I have enjoyed Val McDermid's writing for many years, but this is her best. Some of her earlier novels involved characters so disturbed and sadistic as to make very difficult reading. This, however, is a straightforward, though wonderfully constructed thriller involving greed, ambition, corruption and betrayal. The story's roots begin towards the end of the Second World War and involve Nazi loot and the training of potential field agents by an American agent in remote parts of Scotland. Forty-six years later, the granddaughter of the American determines to find what she believes her grandfather has hidden in the peatlands of Wester Ross. Some twenty-three years on again, in 2018, another granddaughter attempts to trace what she believes to be her rightful inheritance. It takes the discovery of a body to involve the services of the Historic Crimes Unit (a sort of "New Tricks" set up without the ageing retired policemen!) The HCU, led by DCI Karen Pirie, becomes involved when the body is revealed to belong

not to someone who died in 1944 but closer to 1995. Simultaneously Karen overhears a disturbing conversation in a café causing her to intervene in a totally different potential case with disturbing consequences. All this against a background of her battling to preserve the aims of her unit with a ruthless and unsympathetic new boss. For all crime and thriller aficionados, this will be a firm favourite I have no doubt.

Lets Do It (Authorised Biography of Victoria Wood) Jasper Rees



I don't read many biographies, but I have been a huge fan of Victoria Wood since she first appeared on our screens. Enormously multi-talented as a comedian, playwright, actor, musician and creator of endless situation comedies, her Northern humour always struck a chord with me as with many, many others and I mourned her early death. This biography pulls no punches about her complex personality. Like many comedians, she was a very different person when not performing. Shy, self-effacing and with a self-acknowledged eating disorder, she had a very isolating and difficult childhood. Her early years as an adult were difficult, too as she struggled to make a name for herself. Consequently, the early chapters of this long book do not make for a happy read. As her confidence grows and her name becomes known gradually, we are drawn into the stories of Acorn Antiques, Dinner Ladies, Julie Walters, Celia Imrie and all the other wonderful people with whom she worked. As I mentioned, this

is a long book; however, if like me, you enjoyed Victoria Wood's humour and appreciated her many talents, you will feel that it is worth the time to read this and relive some of her joyous humour. Several photographs are scattered within the book's pages, from her earliest childhood until her tremendous successes on stage and television.

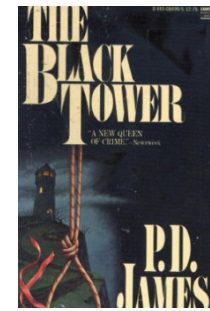
Everything is Beautiful Eleanor Ray



Friends sent me this book during my recent spell in hospital, aimed at cheering me up, and it certainly is uplifting as advertised. Believing herself to be abandoned by the love of her life, Amy starts to collect things to remind her of happier times. This seemingly harmless and useful move soon becomes a harmful obsession and Amy gradually becomes surrounded by things of little value but which she is completely unable to discard. This, in turn means that no one is allowed in her house and apart from work she becomes increasingly reclusive. A challenging neighbour on one side and new neighbours on the other side gradually make her life more and more difficult and a chance find among the detritus in her back garden adds to her confusion, gradually unravelling the previous eleven years and causing her to rethink her past. This book is all about second chances, letting go of the past and embracing new opportunities - a brave and challenging thing for Amy, but ultimately one which is rewarding and healing.

The Black Tower P D James

Recently you may remember I reviewed two of P D James books which I have enjoyed for many years and have now committed to electronic readers as I still



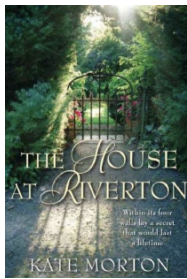
return to them from time to time. Here is another one. After a prolonged spell in hospital when it was thought that his life was in grave danger, Adam Dalglish is released from hospital with a clean bill of health but, inevitably, during his confinement,

he has sought to rethink his priorities, in particular his commitment to policing. During his hospital spell he had received a letter from a long-retired curate of his father, a Father Baddeley, now living in a sheltered community for the 'young disabled' as Chaplain. Released from hospital and keen to have a period of reflection and convalescence, Dalglish accepts the enclosed invitation to stay and offers his advice on a matter which Father Baddeley seeks help.

Chapter two begins with a sentence which, had I P D James' gift for writing, I could have written myself recently: Eleven days later, still weak and with his hospital pallor but euphoric with the deceptive well-being of convalescence... Adam sets out for Dorset and the community where Father Baddeley now lives. But he has arrived too late, discovering to his dismay that his old friend had died eleven days previously. As Adam tidies away what is left of Father Baddeley's life, further deaths ensue and it become increasingly clear that this seemingly caring community is deeply flawed at heart. Inevitably, despite his best intentions, his policing skills are brought to the fore. Another gripping and complex story from an undoubted master at the murder mystery genre.

The House at Riverton Kate Morton

Set both in the summer of 1924 and the winter of 1999 this historical novel will appeal to those who enjoyed Downton



Abbey when it was broadcast to great acclaim. Grace Bradley was a housemaid at Riverton Manor, now ninety-eight she is approached by a young film maker wanting to make a film about a young poet who took his life during the time that Grace Bradley was employed at the house. The mystery of what happened during that time, seemingly lost, remains in Grace's mind, albeit well hidden and gradually, we are drawn into that mystery. As Grace recollects, we pick up fragments of the story and we are drawn into Edwardian life as it gradually becomes the 1920s. This is a gripping story and one with which we have sympathy both with the very elderly Grace and she deals with her limited existence in a nursing home where Sylvia, one of the nurses is: One of the few people able to look beyond the lines on my face to see the twenty year-old who lives inside. - how many of us can relate to that, I wonder? I know I can! We also experience the youthful Grace as an inexperienced maid, learning her trade and thus far, only trusted in the nursery. At nearly six hundred pages long this is no quick read, but it is nevertheless thoroughly engrossing and enjoyable for those who enjoy a glimpse of a past life.

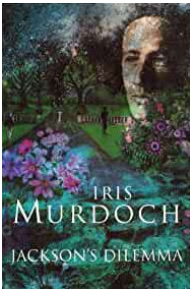
Jane Austen's Guide ...
Josephine Ross



Jane Austen's Guide to Good Manners. Compliments, Charades & Horrible Blunders For any fans of the novels of Miss Austen, this book is a delight. It is useful to be familiar with many of her books to really appreciate this little volume, only 128 pages long. Using extensive examples from all her books the author covers all

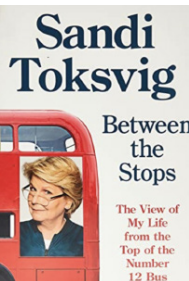
situations where good manners matter, from forms of introduction to conversation, dancing and dress, matrimony and the family circle and something which need not worry us too much in the 21st century, servants! There is, inevitably, humour in this book, how could there not be where Jane Austen is involved? But, I believe, although we live in a very different world from Regency England, where Miss Austen's books were set, there is much to be learnt from the examples in this book, not least that of putting the comfort of others beyond our own convenience, what nowadays might be referred to as "common decency". If you are a fan of Jane Austen's writing, this book is one which you may well enjoy.

Jackson's Dilemma
Iris Murdoch



A very different read this time by a highly respected author. Jackson is an enigmatic figure at one time a manservant, but one who periodically disappears and seems to have the ability to change the workings of destiny. We are in a world of the very wealthy where Benet, who has brought Marian Berran and Edward Lannion together is presiding over a pre-wedding party, only to discover that the bride has mysteriously disappeared. Everyone is affected in different ways and the erstwhile groom, Edward, retires entirely from society. Jackson, Benet's servant, discovers some extraordinary information which he uses to utterly transform the situation. This book is intriguing and quite unlike anything I have ever read but it is beautifully crafted and extraordinarily magnetic. Unlike the House at Riverton this is short at less than two hundred and fifty pages, but it is packed with intrigue and detail which will grip the reader.

Between The Stops
Sandi Toksvig



Sandi Toksvig is another woman for whom I have the greatest admiration and affection. I say affection because I have, albeit briefly, met her on the stage of the Grand Opera House in Belfast. (You will have to ask me about that. Suffice to say I was greeted with an enormous hug!) She is an enormously talented broadcaster, comic on stage, screen and radio, writer, presenter and activist with a seemingly insatiable appetite for unusual tidbits of history and information. This memoir or partial autobiography is different from what you would expect from such a multi-talented individual. Although the number 12 bus of the title is in London, a knowledge of the geography of London is by no means necessary to enjoy this book.

The reasoning behind the vehicle for her stories of 'between the stops' is that the bus stops outside Dulwich Library. Sandi lived near the library and often headed to the BBC's Broadcasting House. She developed a habit of getting off at many other stops when the opportunity arose and exploring the area to dredge up details of the history of the places she saw; London being of course, steeped in history. She didn't want to write "some kind of a printed version of a 'selfie' where people don't look like themselves at all", rather wanted to look out as much as in. Consequently she regards this book as a sort of love letter to the fact that some of the most fascinating travel is available from the nearest bus stop. Sitting in her favourite seat, on the top deck, preferably the right hand seat at the front, she looked at familiar places and found new pleasures, some curious, some macabre and some frankly unbelievable. She notes that as she passes near Lordship

Lane, in 1788, she might have seen Byron, as a schoolboy, prior to going to study at Cambridge, where he kept a tame bear which he used to take for walks like a dog. She reflects that if the Germans had been better at Geography, the people of the area might have escaped much death and destruction. During the Second World War, forty-one V1 and three V2 rockets fell on Dulwich, all down to human error. She also reflects on the fact that her three children have all experienced 'gap years'. When she found herself at Cambridge after sitting the Oxbridge exam with nine months to fill before term started it never occurred to her to 'bum around Bali or faff about Fiji', instead, she worked as a telephonist for a solicitor in Bedford Square. She found the job so boring that she took to answering every tenth call with a new accent!

I hope amongst this assortment, you may find something to your taste, don't forget on the top shelf you will now find lots of books that I have reviewed in the last three months. I have more in the pipeline for the next edition so happy reading.

Carol

Don't Forget To Laugh

David was driving down the street worried because he had an important meeting and couldn't find a parking place. So, looking up toward heaven, he said "Lord, take pity on me. If you find me a parking place I will go to church every Sunday for the rest of my life and give up whiskey." A moment later, miraculously, a parking place appeared. David looked up again and said, "Never mind. I found one."

Day by Day

Renewed and Restored

"Be glad, people of Zion, rejoice at what the Lord your God has done for you. He has given you the right amount of autumn rain; he has poured down the winter rain for you... I will give you back what you lost in the years when swarms of locusts ate your crops... You will praise the Lord your God, who has done wonderful things for you... you will know that I am among you, and that I, the Lord, am your God and there is no other". Joel 2 : 23-27

For some of us the years in our past seem to be wasted years. We were separated and cut off from the love of God. Or we felt as if we were. The reality was that the love was always there, pursuing us and

wooing us, but we had either separated ourselves from the relationship or else never entered into it. Yet in the providence of God those years are not wasted. He uses them in the making and remaking of us. When I first read "I will give you back the years which the locust has eaten", I believed that they were the words of God to me, and a promise of what He would do in the future. And he has done for me just what the words say. Other people I know have believed them in the same way and had the same experience. In the providence of God nothing is wasted – and whatever happened in our past can be used to enrich our present.

From
"Day by Day" with Shelagh Brown

A Prayer by Maggie Ingall

Dear Lord, you know I long for
A faith that's strong and sure,
That holds me when I'm anxious,
Or lost or insecure.
A faith which questions daily
Yet hankers not for proof,
A faith which seeks for answers
Yet knows its inner truth.

Dear Lord, I'm still imperfect,
My faith may sometimes fail,
I am not always trusting
When fears and doubts assail,
Yet hold me, if you will, Lord,
Whene'er my faith feels small,
For this I know for certain –
Your love won't let me fall.

Thoughts of A Blow In...

Here we are in April already, with Easter almost upon us! The clocks have been turned forwards, so we can relish the lighter mornings and evenings. Nevertheless, it can feel like one step forwards to the new season and two steps back toward winter. We might have been lulled into a false sense of security by that spell of glorious spring weather the other week, only to be followed by heavy rain, strong winds and chilly temperatures.

However, the daffodils are out, the birds are singing (if we can hear them over the wind), and spring is definitely on its way sooner or later, which we all need after another long and difficult winter. Now that outward circumstances are relaxing, regular activities are starting up again in earnest, and it is a real joy to connect with friends we haven't seen in an age, at long last.

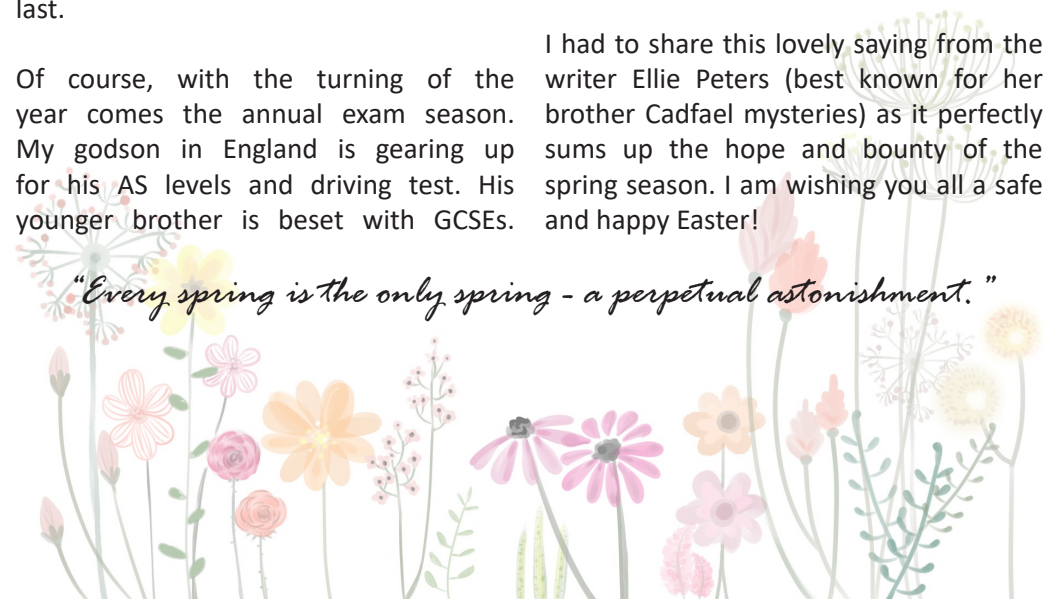
So that is a rather stressed-out household at present! Inevitably, it is a hectic time, but it does pass relatively quickly onto college, university and more enjoyable aspects of young adult life, so fingers crossed all goes smoothly for them both in May.

Thankfully the little ones next door are far too young for that stage as yet, although the years seem to be flying by. Leo next door celebrated his ninth birthday recently. It seems like no time since he was a toddler! He came to my door (complete with their puppy wriggling on the lead and delighted to throw herself at a new person) to thank me for his birthday gift, bless him. The children are all getting so tall and growing up so fast, and it is such fun to see them playing outdoors on the brighter evenings.

I had to share this lovely saying from the writer Ellie Peters (best known for her brother Cadfael mysteries) as it perfectly sums up the hope and bounty of the spring season. I am wishing you all a safe and happy Easter!

Of course, with the turning of the year comes the annual exam season. My godson in England is gearing up for his AS levels and driving test. His younger brother is beset with GCSEs.

"Every spring is the only spring - a perpetual astonishment."



Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Genesis chapter 1 to 2 verse 3.

This story is at the start of the
Bible, and the start of time...

When God first made
the universe it was
empty and shapeless.
God said...

Let there be
light!



God separated the
light and dark.

On the next day, God
separated the sky...



...from the sea.

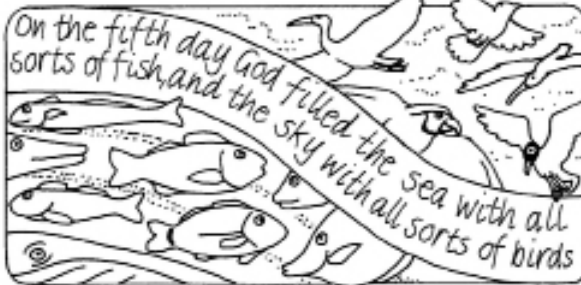
On the third day God
separated the sea...



..from the dry land. Then He made plants of
all kinds grow on the land.



On the fourth day God
made lights shine in the
sky for day and night.



On the fifth day God filled the sea with all
sorts of fish, and the sky with all sorts of birds



On the sixth day God made
all kinds of animals...



and then He made
people, men and women

God told the people....

Take care of all I have made.

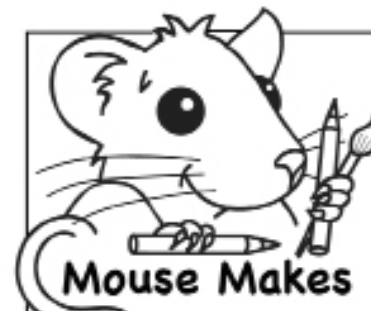


God saw that everything He
had made was very good.

On the seventh day God
rested...



and so did everyone else!



Mouse Makes

"Give thanks to the
Lord for He is good,
His love endures
forever"
Psalm 136:1

Jesus said,
"This, then, is how
you should pray:
Our

in _____
hallowed be your

your _____

come,
your _____ be
done, on

_____ as it

is in _____

Give us this day our

daily _____

And _____

us our _____

as we also have

forgiven our debtors.

And _____

us not into

temptation, but

us from the

_____ one."

Read Matthew 6:9-13

to fill in the words.



"Never stop praying."
1 Thessalonians 5:17



"Do not be anxious about
anything, but in every situation,
by prayer and petition,
with thanksgiving,
present your requests to God."
Philippians 4:6



Jesus said:

**I AM
THE VINE
YOU ARE THE
BRANCHES**

**The one who remains in me
- and I in him - bears much fruit,
because apart from me
you can accomplish nothing.**

CONTACT

groomsportparishchurch.org