

CONTACT



FATHER

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SPIRIT



Rev Duncan Pollock

Rector of Groomsport Parish Church
028 9146 4476

Rector's Hour

Please note that the Rector will be available in the Vestry office on Tuesdays from 6.00pm – 7.00pm, for short meetings to sign passports, driving licence documents etc., or to arrange a lengthier meeting for another time.

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.



The Rector's Warden

Helen Parkinson
helen@groomsportparishchurch.org

The People's Warden

Gary Keenan
gary@groomsportparishchurch.org

The Rector's Glebe Warden

Billy McAnnenev
billy@groomsportparishchurch.org

The People's Glebe Warden

Tony Anderson
tony@groomsportparishchurch.org

Treasurer

Wesley Quinn
wesley@groomsportparishchurch.org

Secretary to Select Vestry

Heather Pentland
heather@groomsportparishchurch.org

Church Hall Bookings

David McKnight
david@groomsportparishchurch.org

Gift Aid Secretary

Ian Sloan
ian@groomsportparishchurch.org

Parish Archivist

Barry Greenaway
barry@groomsportparishchurch.org

Varger / Caretaker

Susan Moore
208 9127 1311

Organist

Stuart Tanner
stuart@groomsportparishchurch.org

Parish Office

Elaine Lester
elaine@groomsportparishchurch.org

Hall Problems

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

Sunday School

Maggie Townsley
maggie@groomsportparishchurch.org

From the Rector

Around the corner from where we live, is the most beautiful Laburnum tree I've ever seen. We pass it every day as we walk our dogs. Most of the year it stands there not doing a lot, but then, from around the end of April until the middle of May, it is just a Niagara of yellow flowers; deep, vivid yellow and, around the base, great drifts of petals. It is the same with the Cherry Trees on the Ballyholme Road and of course there is the wide swath of oil seed rape in flower up the road at Ballymacormick. It really does take my breath away. It is just such a glorious sight.

But of course the sight, this beautiful breathtaking sight is far too temporary. Even now the Laburnum blossom is turning from vivid yellow to a kind of tired greyish primrose. The cherry blossom, of course, is long gone. Here am I at the height of Spring mourning the loss of the symbols of new life, as Spring morphs into Summer. Yes, there will be new blossom, new colours, but this year I've been struck by the transience of it all. The daffodils and tulips and narcissus and bluebells are just scruffy looking yellowing leaves. Their time is over.

Maybe it is a sign of age! I don't look back with rose tinted spectacles to a golden age when everything was wonderful. My life today is so much more comfortable than it was in the early sixties, but nothing seems to stand still. You buy yourself a new mobile 'phone and within a week it is obsolete. You invest in a 3D television to discover that you should have bought an HD4 model. And anyway, who needs a television set anymore, when you can "stream" everything through the internet. And even time itself seems to be flying.

How many times have I been asked the question, "Can you believe it's May? Where has the year gone?"

Some lines from the funeral service:

Our days are like the grass; we flourish like a flower of the field.

When the wind goes over it, it is gone, and its place shall know it no more.

It's not necessarily a cheering thought! But we are Christians. As human beings, we know that life can be short, impermanent. Indeed Benjamin Franklyn observed that in life, "Nothing is certain but death and taxes." But we are Christians. We might not know, but we believe, (another line from the funeral service), that, "The merciful goodness of the Lord endures for ever..."

The Easter season is approaching its end and the Church's Calendar swings into the long season of Trinity, and then it will be Harvest and before we know where we are it will be Advent, Christmas, Epiphany. Yes it comes around too quickly, perhaps, but faith tells us that the daffodils will be back next year and that wonderful Laburnum will blossom again.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Heaven, a place of permanence, a place where the Laburnum blossom never fails, the England cricket team never lose, Hancock's Half Hour is always on the radio and Arsenal always head the Premiership. Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief. Have a wonderful summer!

Duncan

Services for June, July & August

Sunday

02

June

The Sunday after Ascensiony
Welcome Team - David & Dorothy McKnight
Reader - Maureen Taggart

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am A Family Service*

6.00pm Evening Prayer. We will be joined by friends from Prest Church & light refreshments in the hall afterwards

*Coffee after 10.30am service in Church Hall. All welcome! Our hosts are Maureen & Noel Taggart, Ian & Zandra Sloan.

There will be no mid-week services the week after Easter!

Sunday

09

June

June - Pentecost (Whitsunday)
Welcome Team - David & Freda Scott
Reader - Peter Osborough

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am Parish Communion

6.00pm Compline

Please note the Church is open every day for private prayer and meditation.

Sunday

16

June

Trinity Sunday
Welcome Team - David & Dorothy McKnight
Reader - John Parkinson

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am Service of the Word

6.00pm Evening Prayer (Sung)

Note:

The Office of Compline is said every Tuesday at 7.30pm

Holy Communion is celebrated every Thursday at 11.00am

Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Wednesday of the month at 10.30am in the Chapel at Mt Stewart House.

Sunday

23

June

Trinity 1
Welcome Team - Dorothy Anne Crawford & Freda Conway
Reader - Marian Cinnamond

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am Morning Prayer

6.00pm Holy Communion

Sunday

30

June

Trinity 2 (St Peter)
Welcome Team - Dorothy Anne Crawford & Freda Conway
Reader - Colin Crozier

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am Parish Communion

6.00pm Compline

Sunday

07

July

Trinity 3 (St Thomas)
Welcome Team - Helen Hall & June Walker
Reader - Joan Haddick

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am A Family Service*

6.00pm Evening Prayer (said)

*Coffee after 10.30am service in Church Hall. All welcome! Our hosts are Maggie Townsley, Isa Higginson, Andy & Anne Craig.

Sunday

14

July

Trinity 4
Welcome Team - Helen Hall & June Walker
Reader - Carol Walters

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am Parish Communion

6.00pm Compline

Sunday

21

July

Trinity 5 (St Mary Magdalene)
Welcome Team - Andy & Ann Craig
Reader - Elaine Lester

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am Service of the Word

6.00pm Evening Prayer for St Mary
Magdalene (sung)

Sunday

28

July

Trinity 6
Welcome Team - Andy & Ann Craig
Reader - Norma Parsley

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am Morning Prayer

6.00pm Holy Communion

Sunday

04

August

Trinity 7 (The Transfiguration)
Welcome Team - Elaine Lester & Marian
Cinnamon
Reader - Ian Sloan

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am A Family Service*

6.00pm Evening Prayer (said)

*Coffee after 10.30am service in Church Hall. All
welcome! Our hosts are Colin & Sarah Crozier, Rosemary
Smith & Eleanor Anderson.

Sunday

11

August

Trinity 8
Welcome Team - Elaine Lester & Helen
Kennedy
Reader - Dorothy Anne Crawford

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am Parish Communion

6.00pm Compline

Sunday

18

August

Trinity 9
Welcome Team - Noel & Maureen Taggart
Reader - Barry Greenaway

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am Service of the Word

6.00pm Evening Prayer (Sung)

Sunday

25

August

Trinity 10 (St Bartholomew)
Welcome Team - Noel & Maureen Taggart
Reader - Valerie Boyd

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am Morning Prayer

6.00pm Holy Communion

Sunday

01

Sept

Trinity 11
Welcome Team - David & Freda Scott
Reader - TBC

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am A Family Service*

6.00pm Evening Prayer (said)

*Coffee after 10.30am service in Church Hall. All
welcome! Our hosts are Dorothy Anne Crawford, Norma
Parsley, Carl McClean & Jenny Craythorne.

Births, Marriages, Deaths & Announcements

Holy Baptism

7 April - Jacob Benjamin Daly

A third son for Philip and Dawn; it was a joy to welcome the whole family into Church for little Jacob's baptism.

Holy Rest

17 April - Theresa "Trixie" McNutt

Trixie was the mother of a much loved local GP, Charlie McNutt. Her funeral took place at Roselawn Crematorium, but it was a privilege for our Church to be involved.

27 April - "Rosie" Russell

Dear Rosie was known to many in the Church. She and her husband Tommy, sat up in the left hand transept. She and Tommy hadn't been well of late and were having some temporary respite care when Rosie passed away.

3 May - Gwen Kearney

Late of Charlesmount, but for the last few years Gwen was cared for at Edgewater in Donaghadee. Gwen had been a stalwart of our 8.30 service. She had been a keen golfer in her day and a member of a number of local societies. Her funeral took place in the Parish Church of St Philip and St James, Holywood, where Gwen had been a loyal member before moving to Bangor some thirty years ago.

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

And let us pray their families may find something of God's love and peace in these sad days.

Announcements

Bible Reading Fellowship

To help us rediscover our Bible, the BRF issue booklets 3 times a year – New Daylight – costing £4.60 per issue, total £13.80 annually.

Each booklet provides 4 months of daily Bible readings and comments from regular contributors, from differing church backgrounds.

We are all busy, but this is a great way to spend time reading God's Word.

Anyone interested, please contact Helen Hall : 028 91466878

Thank you.

Evergreens

We have had a varied year, so far, the Tudor Cinema, a talk by a Bank regarding security on the computer, "Birthday Girls" when we have cake instead of biscuits – it is much appreciated.

Last week we went to the Secret Garden at Dundonald, for a look around and then tea/coffee and a scone. Yesterday we had the Community Circus with us, having a mild warm up and doing little tricks with scarves and hats. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. Roll on the next event – I wonder who is doing the Story Telling? We are also looking forward to our day out in June, so if you are interested, come along and join in the fun. Even the "oldies" can have fun!!!

Hope to see you soon. Do come!

Valerie Boyd

Walking For Softies (More Like Strolling Really)

GROOMSPORT
PARISH CHURCH



Saturday 27th April was the date of the Softies walk along the North Down Coastal Path. We had been looking forward to walking from Marino station to the Transport Museum at Cultra to take a look at Tim Peake exhibition. However, Storm Hannah had other ideas, with the result, that we lived up to our Softies name and exited the train at Cultra. We had a very short walk to the

Museum, and were fortunate that there was an indoor venue where we could walk and see all the exhibits. Tim Peake's Spacesuit was on display as was the actual Space module he used. The Parachute which was the size of 2 tennis courts was also on view. Faith was the bravest of the group and opted for a virtual trip on the module. She thoroughly enjoyed it. As usual we enjoyed the coffee and scones along with lots of chat and laughter.



May Walk

For the last walk of the season, we took the train to Marino and walked to Holywood. We had coffee in First Holywood non subscribing Presbyterian Church. They were holding a fun day for Macmillan nurses, so we were able to support them. Our next walk will be in September. Before then we will have a planning meeting to decide on the walks we will take next year.

Contact Zandra or Ian mob. 07968401387



Join Us

Sunday

Sunday School

Maggie Townsley
maggie@groomsportparishchurch.org

Monday

Mothers' Union

Mae Burke - 07810 440492

Chattering Needles

Jenny Craythorne – 07748580541

Select Vestry Meeting

Heather Pentland
heather@groomsportparishchurch.org

Tuesday

Tai Chi For Health

Janet Wilson - 07703360385

Groomsport & District Gardening Club

Yvonne McIlmail - 028 9146 9420

Wednesday

Scrabble

Elaine Lester - 07791 569432
elaine@groomsportparishchurch.org

MoJo Club

Elaine Lester - 07791 569432
elaine@groomsportparishchurch.org

Bible Study

The Rector - 028 9146 4475

The Colander Girls

Maggie Townsley
maggie@groomsportparishchurch.org

Thursday

Evergreens

Valerie Boyd
valerie@groomsportparishchurch.org

Groomsport Parish Art Class

Stuart Tanner - 07411 178230
Carole Barbosa - 07473 939499

Table Tennis

John Hand - 07540 375785

Chess Club

Mark Seidman - 028 91467950
mark@patientendurance.co.uk

Masonic Lodge

Secretary Graham Eve
evega@talktalk.net

Saturday

Walking For Softies

Ian Sloan
ian@groomsportparishchurch.org
Zandra Sloan
zandra@groomsportparishchurch.org

If you would like to get involved please contact the person in charge of the activity for more information. Alternatively visit...

www.groomsportparishchurch.org

Planned Events 2019

AUG
17

Craft Fair

OCT
18

Raven Micks

NOV
02

Book Fair

NOV
30

Christmas Fair

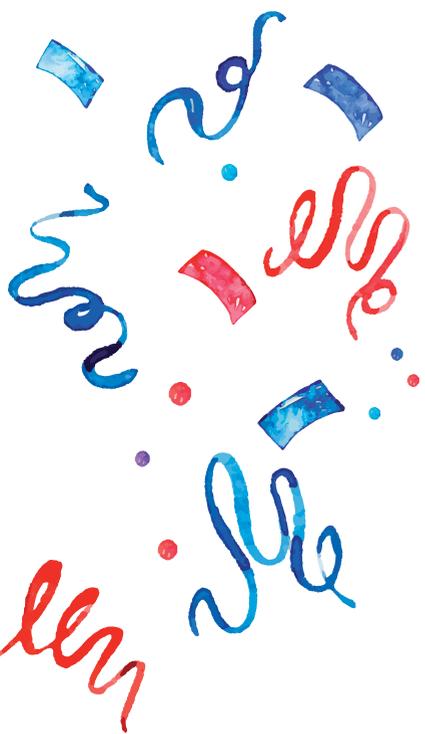


Northern Ireland Charity Number: 103258



WE WERE TOLD YOU WERE TAKING CREATURES
THAT CAME TO YOU IN PEARS





CRAFT FAIR

17 AUGUST 2019

1PM – 4PM

As part of the Eagle Wing Festival, we will again be running our Craft Fair.

The Presbyterian Church will also be running a Festival event at the same time, and we will be working with them to ensure everything runs smoothly.

We will have 24 different craft tables, including –

- Soaps
 - Candles
 - Cards
 - Pictures
 - Ceramics
 - Original Art Work
 - Bath Bombs
 - Cakes
 - Sweets
 - Wooden items
 - Painted Glass
 - Jewellery
 - Knitted items
 - Key-rings
 - Pebble Art
 - Raffle
- and many more...

Free Admission.

Teas and coffees will be available.

So put this date in your diary now, it will be a great day out for the whole family.

Contact Zandra 07968401386



The Church, like last year, is having the **CAKE STALL**. Please, please, would as many of you as possible, make cakes or traybakes for this. The Cakes were a huge success last year and very popular, so let's see if we can make it as big a success as last year.

50 new hymn books are now in circulation – provided by an anonymous donor and in memory of the late Gretta McCullough. The Rector is relieved to report that page numbers have not been changed in the new Book of Common Prayer – two new Morning and Evening Services have been added.

A permanent microphone base has been installed on the Holy Table and a third microphone is to be purchased. An inter Church Hall system has been installed.

The Rector has spoken with Mae Burke, Mothers' Union Branch Leader, about the feelings of the Vestry concerning funeral teas.

Our architect has received planning permission and Listed Building consent for a new store and tendering is underway. All snagging points except lighting have been addressed. Quotes for cleaning of the Church windows are required. William McAnaney is investigating a different drains problem at the Rectory. He wished to place on record an acknowledgement to Jim Love for the incredible amount of work he has done around the Church. Tony Anderson has sprayed the weeds around the Church and Halls.

The Rector and Barry Greenaway will attend a GDPR seminar in May. Vestry has authorised purchase of a new laptop for the office and a new stand-alone laptop for GDPR use. Only the Rector, Barry and Bert Smith will have access to the GDPR laptop. The Rector reminded Vestry members that GDPR prevents us giving out telephone

numbers and addresses of Parishioners.

The Vestry gave permission for two Healthy Eating self- help groups to meet weekly on Wednesday morning and evening. Vestry was also receptive to the request for our halls to be used on Friday mornings for a group called "Singing for the Brain," should the need arise.

At the Groomsport Village Association Big Lunch on 2 June, Colin Crozier has agreed to give three guided tours of the Church in the afternoon .that evening there will be a joint service with the Presbyterians in our Church when they will present their gift to us of two splendid silver candlesticks.

Zandra Sloan was thanked for her tremendous work on the Church website. The Rector will write to Ian Sloan to thank him for all his good work on Gift Aid. Dorothy Anne Crawford and her team were thanked for the beautiful floral arrangements at Easter. Kate Murray passed favourable comment on the lovely gifts for ladies leaving the Church on Mothering Sunday.

The Rector and Wesley will research an appropriate gift for Graeme Browne to thank him for his massive contribution in auditing church finances over the years and to mark his retirement.

The Mayor will open the forthcoming Art Exhibition in May and plans are well underway for the Duck Derby. Elaine will organise the Christian Aid Coffee Morning.

Vestry agreed to purchase a new cassock for Faith. The Rector will research new headed notepaper.



At the General Easter Vestry on Sunday 7 April the following were elected to Vestry:



Helen Parkinson
(Rector's Warden)



Gary Keenan
(Peoples' Warden)



Wesley Quinn
(Treasurer)



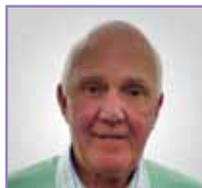
Heather Pentland
(Secretary)



William McAnenney
(Rector's Glebe Warden)



Tony Anderson
(Peoples' Glebe Warden)



Bert Smith



Barry Greenaway



*Dorothy Anne
Crawford*



Zandra Sloan



Andy Craig



Hester Kelly



Kate Murray



Jenny Craythorne



Shaun Townsley



Maureen Taggart



Do Not Repay Evil With Evil

“Do not raise your hand to strike. Do not open your mouth in anger, but remain still.

How can the one who wants to do evil things against you, hurt you? It does not hurt you: it hurts the other person. Suffering injustice does not hurt the Christian, but doing injustice does. Indeed, evil can do only one thing to you, namely, make you also become evil. If it does, then it wins.

Therefore, do not repay evil with evil. If you do, you will not hurt the other person; you will hurt yourself. You are not in danger when evil happens to you, but the person who does you wrong is in danger and will suffer for it, if you do not offer help. Therefore, for the sake of the other person and your responsibility for that person – do not repay evil with evil.

How does that happen? Not by giving nourishment to the other person’s evil, hate to the other person’s hate, but by letting evil strike out into empty space and find nothing that can inflame it.

How can we overcome evil? By our forgiving it endlessly. How does that happen? By our seeing enemies as they really are: as people for whom Christ died, as people Christ loves.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

WHAT ABOUT THE BIBLE

How was it written?

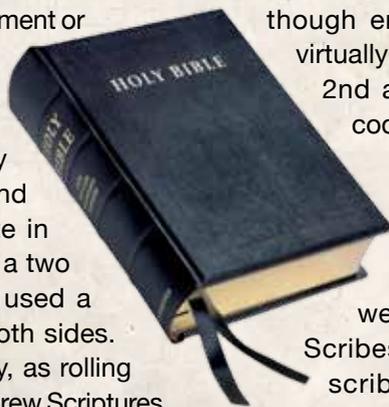
Parchment was invented in Pergamon. It is made from animal skins scraped into thin almost translucent strips. More practical and cheaper than papyrus, its surface could be wiped clean and reused. This happened a lot during the Middle Ages, when precious religious works were scraped to make way for the Abbey's accounts or shopping lists!

From around the 7th or 6th century BC, the most popular written media was the scroll. These were simply parchment or papyrus pieces, sewn together into long rolls. The writing would be on one side and normally in two columns. Around 600BC, Jeremiah wrote in ink made from soot, on a two column scroll. Ezekiel used a scroll with writing on both sides. Isaiah described the sky, as rolling up "like a scroll". The Hebrew Scriptures (our Old Testament), were all written on scrolls. That's why the Books of Kings, Samuel and Chronicles were each written in two parts – they were too big to fit onto one scroll. Phew! Our Lord himself, read from the scroll of Isaiah in the Synagogue.

Scrolls remained tops right up to the 2nd or 3rd century AD. But earlier in the 1st century AD, the book or codex became popular. Simple and handy, these initially were small parchments of a few sheets, bound together with leather bands like a loose-leaf file. Then some smart cookie invented the book – folded sheets of

papyrus sown through the spine with writing on both sides. These were called codices (plural) or a codex (singular) and were not too dissimilar from our books today.

By the 4th century the parchment codex was most used. The great Bibles of the 4th-5th centuries were all written on parchment or vellum. However not everyone liked the codex. Most writers in the Graeco-Roman world still preferred scrolls. Christians though embraced the codex, and virtually all their literature from the 2nd and 3rd centuries was on codices.



Because few people in the ancient world could read or write, nearly all the Old and New Testament writings were written by professional Scribes. Paul himself used the scribes Tertius and Silvanus because his own writing was poor.

When we refer to "the Bible" or Scriptures of the early Church or Israelites, we don't mean a single book but a collection of various codices and scrolls. Each Church would have had its own collection. The Bible did not become a single book until around 300AD.

Ultimately, decisions had to be made on what scriptures went into the Bible we have today. What we call the canon. That is another amazing and intriguing story. But more on that next time...

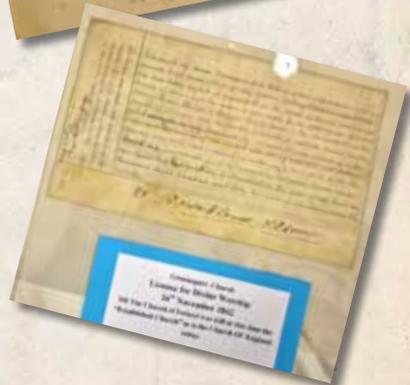
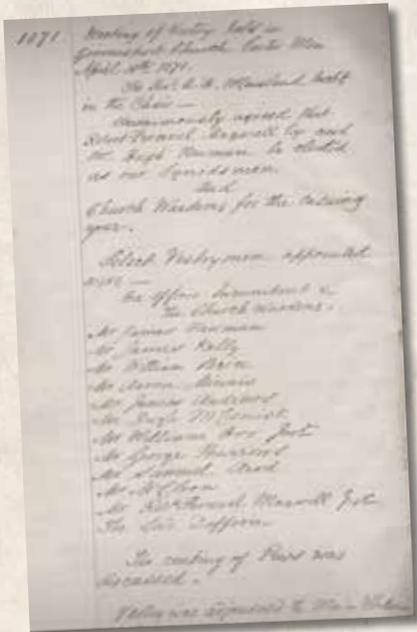
Groomspport Parish Church Archives

In my last piece for "Contact" I mentioned that an archive should enable the distant future to know from whence they come. Many items in our collection enable us to do just that and I thought readers might like to know about some of them. Our collection of Select Vestry Minute books goes back to 1871. Until relatively recently these were all hand written in their final form and give insights to pivotal moments in our Parish's history. Likewise we have Marriage and Baptismal Registers from 1869 to 2004 which can be viewed by arrangement. A new Parish establishment must prove itself worthy and we have proof of that in the original License to Conduct Divine Worship, dated 26th November 1842. This can be considered the date when Groomspport Church officially came into existence. We also possess the original License to Perform Marriages, dated 7th June 1869. But perhaps the most precious of our documents is the

Deed of Consecration, dated 1850. Nobody knows exactly why it was delayed from 1842 but we suspect that "politics" may have played a part since the Church of Ireland was then still an "established church". Two final items this time around are the original drawings for the design of the Elizabeth and Dorcas windows in the South Transept. These are beautiful miniatures in their own right and underline the importance of Groomspport Parish's windows in the story of Irish stained glass. Our windows were photographed just last year as part of a 25 year long survey of stained glass across these islands.

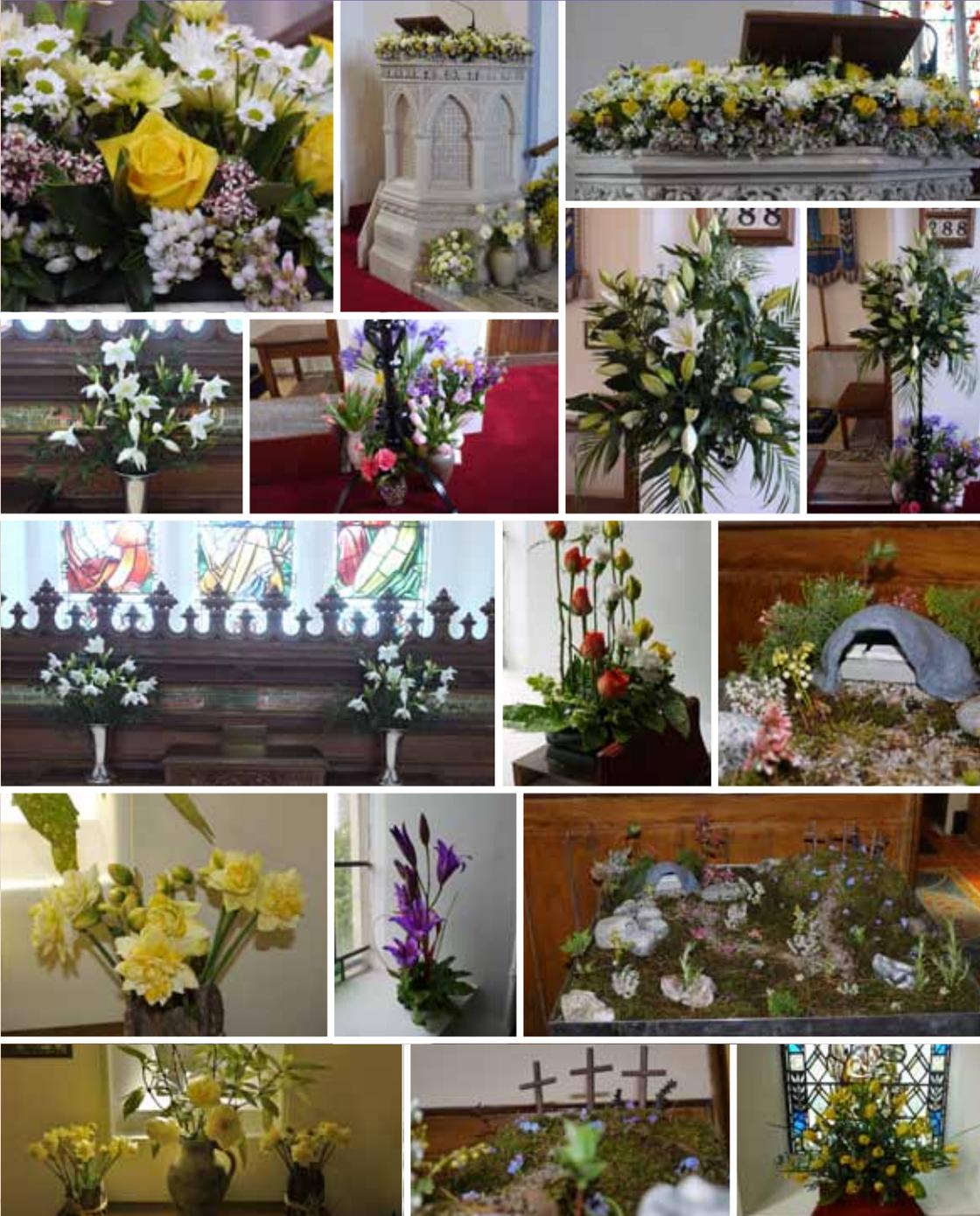
More in September: Have a wonderful summer.

Barry



Barry Greenaway - Groomspport Parish Church Archivist
12 Ballymacormick Road
07515699389 - barryg144@btinternet.com

Easter Flowers



Palm Sunday





The following poem was read as part of the Easter Service from Kings College Cambridge which was broadcast this Easter.

The Judas Tree.

In Hell there grew a Judas Tree
Where Judas hanged and died
Because he could not bear to see
His master crucified
Our Lord descended into Hell
And found his Judas there
For ever hanging on the tree
Grown from his own despair
So Jesus cut his Judas down
And took him in his arms
“It was for this I came” he said
“And not to do you harm
My Father gave me twelve good men
And all of them I kept
Though one betrayed and one denied
Some fled and others slept
In three days’ time I must return
To make the others glad
But first I had to come to Hell
And share the death you had
My tree will grow in place of yours
Its roots lie here as well
There is no final victory
Without this soul from Hell”
So when we all condemned him
As of every traitor worst
Remember that of all his men
Our Lord forgave him first

D. Ruth Etchells



Altea



Ronda

Life In Spain

We have always loved Spain, so in 2005 we took the plunge and bought a holiday home which we planned to visit more often when we retired in 2013. Our home is on the outskirts of a village called Quesada, less than an hour's drive south of Alicante. It was a new build within a community of 48 other homes occupied by a variety of nationalities including Belgians, English, Dutch and Spanish and one other family from Northern Ireland. Around half of the residents live there full time while the others, like ourselves, use it for holiday purposes.

Communities, such as ours, across Spain receive major services from the regional government paid for through a rates system. However, by law, we are also expected to take responsibility for our own locality and so we must elect a President and a Committee from among the 48 residents to manage our local affairs. We have agreed a set of standards in

relation to the upkeep of our properties and our interactions with one another. We pay a local tax to the community, which we set each year depending on works needed, for example to the communal pool. In our view this system works very well. Everyone takes responsibility for the area and has a pride in it and it has engendered a good community spirit.

We have many lovely areas around us which are within easy travel distance. The city of Alicante overlooked by the Castle of Santa Barbara and the city of Cartagena with its natural harbour and many ancient ruins, including an amazing Roman amphitheatre, are firm favourites. The lovely old villages of Altea and Guadalest up the coast from Alicante are stunning and of course the white beaches of the Costa Blanca are amongst the best. Every year we also try to take a few days away to visit other areas of the country. So, for example, we have been

to the beautiful cities of Granada, Seville and Madrid steeped in history, embracing many different cultures and showcasing magnificent architecture, not least their cathedrals and palaces.

The Spanish certainly love their fiestas and their processions. Many of them have religious and historical significance including the Holy Week processions and the Three King processions



Moors and Christians Parade

after Christmas. Some of the most spectacular we have seen are the Moors and Christians, which last for hours with fabulous costumes and drama and the Fallas of Valencia where locals across Valencia create massive towering paper mache figures, representing events and notable people which they set alight late in the evening. It is quite a scene. It certainly wouldn't happen here with Health and Safety regulations!

Despite all the beauty of the country and all the great experiences we have had, our biggest pleasure has been in the people we have met and the friendships we have made. We have a great circle of neighbours and friends who make us feel so welcome and with whom we have enjoyed holidays in and outside Spain, many BBQs and evenings out and great craic. We really do feel that Spain is our second home and our decision to buy the house there was absolutely the right one.

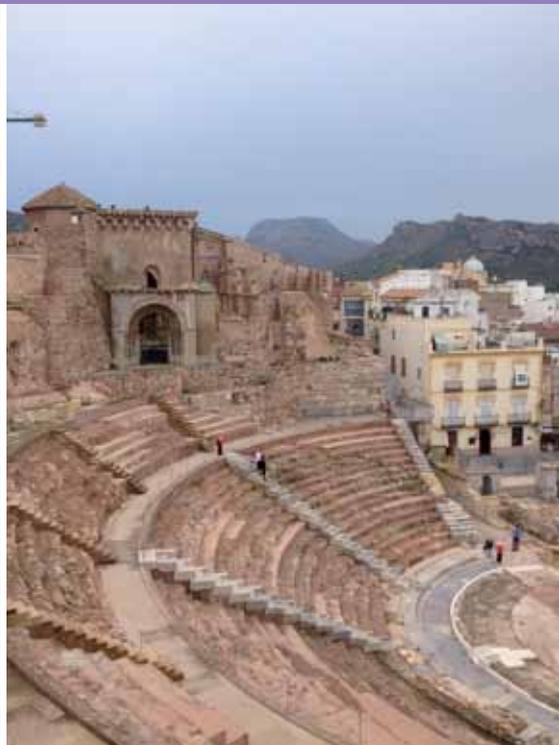
Maureen Taggart

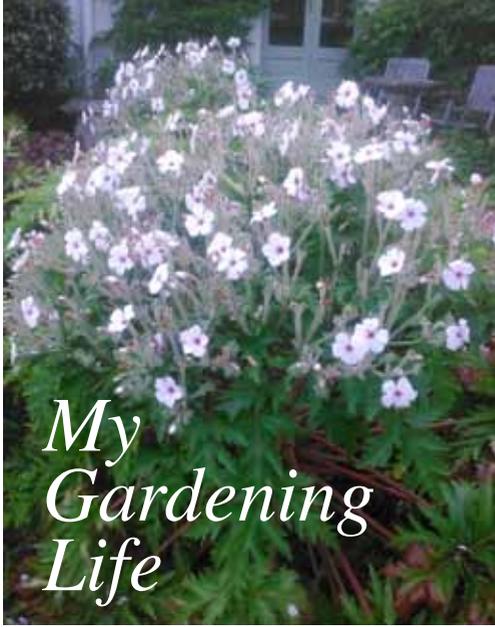
Seville



Groomspoint Parish Church

Roman ruins in Cartagena





My Gardening Life

I was asked to write an article for our Parish magazine about gardening and flower arranging. First, I know absolutely nothing about flower arranging. But I do know something about gardening. I'm entirely self-taught in it, with no professional qualifications. So here goes. I suppose my interest in gardening started off as a general interest in Nature, brought about by tree and wild flower identification for badges in the Brownies and by family weekend outings on bikes, to the countryside in and around Castleward.

My playgrounds as a child were the fields behind our house in Downpatrick, where apple blossom, primroses and wild violets grew in the bluebell and anemone woods around the Quoile River.

My first "proper" garden came with the purchase of our first bungalow in Bangor, where I laid the lawn and developed a few flowerbeds. However with the purchase of our present house and an even bigger garden, it became serious. I joined Bangor Horticultural Society, Groomsport Gardening Club and the Alpine Society. This is where I learned so much by talking to people who were real experts. Visits to other people's gardens were also a great inspiration.

I suppose you could say my style of gardening is high maintenance, successional planting –

multiple layers of trees, shrubs, perennials and bulbs interlaced with annuals. I love the contrast of white flowering plants with green, although a completely white garden such as Sissinghurst, is difficult to establish, so I do allow for blue, lavender and a little pink.

My favourite time of the year is from May onwards, when the garden really takes off. At the moment Lunaria "Corfu Blue" and white Hesperis are in bloom. I let them self seed so that I have a profusion of one type of plant. In June the roses take over, then the campanula and phlox.

My favourite plant at present is Geranium Maderense, "Guernsey White". It is very dramatic and needs a lot of space. After it flowers it dies (monocarpic), but it sets a lot of seed. I have some seedlings, if anyone would like to try it?

To conclude, there are few things more rewarding than growing something from a seed or watching a garden mature over the years. It is a very therapeutic pastime, both mentally and physically, and is very infectious when you are around people who are enthusiastic gardeners. You don't need to be an expert and you don't need a big garden. So if you haven't already, give it a try

Sandra Williams



BibleBuds

Paul and Barnabas Break the Code

Paul and Barnabas preached the Good News of Jesus in synagogues. Many Jews refused to listen and wanted them to leave town. Fill in the blanks with the letters matching the first letter of each picture below the line.

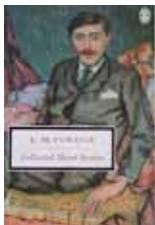
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Book Stall for June, July & August

As you may have seen, I have had to suspend further book contributions for the moment. A huge influx of books appeared during the winter and I can house no more I am afraid. This does not mean, however that no new books will appear as I will gradually bring books out from storage as spaces appear.

E.M.Forster Collected Short Stories



This is a collection of short stories all written before the First World War. Many are curious, and are described as masterpieces of fantasy. There is a distinctly spiritual air about them. For example the very short story entitled “Mr Andrews” deals with the curious

relationship developed between two souls, ascending towards the Judgement Seat. One the “beneficent and honourable” Mr Andrews, who though displaying appropriate humility was not doubtful of a favourable reception in Heaven, the other a Moslem who having been killed fighting “the infidel” confidently anticipated going straight “to those joys of which the Prophet speaks”. To their surprise the anticipated rewards do not fill them with the joy that they had anticipated. There is still learning to be accomplished....Another very well-known story “The Machine Stops” is a response to the writing of H.G. Wells. These are well worth a look and being a compact paperback the volume is ideal for travelling.

Agatha Christie 4.50 from Paddington



Many of us will be familiar with this story from the dramatization of it with the wonderful Joan Hickson as Miss Marple. Miss Marple’s friend Miss McGillicuddy travelling by train to visit her, witnesses a murder as another train draws level to her own. Only Miss Marple is inclined to believe the fantastic

story. There are the usual red herrings and the conclusion is as surprising as her novels usually are. This is another good book for travelling. I should add that although fully intact it is not in

the condition that I usually insist on for inclusion in the shelves, but I have made an exception because of the popularity of her work.

Jennifer Johnson Foolish Mortals.



This very popular Irish writer is renowned for her understanding of the human condition. In this book she is dealing with a somewhat dysfunctional family at Christmas. What better time for the cracks to appear? Henry wakes up in hospital after a serious road accident, caused,

we soon discover by his second wife who was driving. He is estranged from his first wife and children, widowed by his second wife, haunted by memories half remembered, and visited by them all in turn as he slowly recovers. His brother flies over from Canada to see him and gradually as Christmas approaches he picks up the pieces, only to realise just how complex they are. Filled with exasperating, funny, believable characters this is a story to cherish.

M. F. K. Fisher. Love in a Dish and Other Pieces

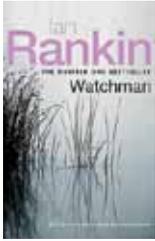


We may not be familiar with this name but she is regarded very highly in American literary circles. This is a book of culinary essays, amusing, insightful and fascinating. With titles such as “How not to cook an egg” which has some intriguing ideas in its ten pages and “Let the sky rain potatoes” with a little history

and background and a few ideas about the best and worst way to deal with this ever popular tuber.

Ian Rankin. Watchman.

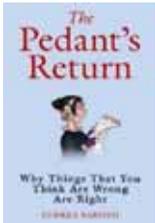
Written in 1988, this is a very early novel by Rankin. Although at this stage he had already written his first police novel this is a spy novel, following the mood of its predecessor in that the “spy” involved is also cynical and worldly wise. Rankin had been advised by a friend to make it “realistic”, not overdoing the perceived glamour and gadgetry of the trade. Rankin has



done just that. Miles Flint is spectacle wearing, passive and passionate only about his hobby – beetles. He has a small collection but mainly he studies their habits and habitats and has a rather endearing trait of assigning his friends and colleagues to a particular species of beetle according

to his perception of their appearance and character! One evening, rather than go home to his wife he tags along on an observation which goes spectacularly wrong and he is thoroughly implicated in the cardinal errors made in the operation. It's a good story, as might be expected extremely well told and with Rankin's astute ear for dialogue.

The Pedant's Return. Andrea Barham.



The Pedant's Return. Andrea Barham. Subtitled "Why Things That You Think Are Wrong Are Right". This is a book for those of you who are forever correcting family and friends about their declarations, and I hold my hand up here! From elucidating the commonly held

belief that Mozart was buried in a paupers' grave to informing us that the plant name 'fuschia' should in fact, be pronounced 'fooks-ia' as it commemorates the German botanist and professor of medicine Leonhard Fuchs. If you enjoy these little stories then this book is for you.

Jo Baker. Longbourn



Telling the story of the Bennet household from "Pride and Prejudice" from the perspective of the servants. Jo Baker's writing style is perfect as she reveals the creatures behind the images in Jane Austen's novel.

The young ladies might behave like they were smooth and sealed as alabaster statues underneath their clothes, but then they would drop their soiled shifts on the

bedchamber floor, to be whisked away and cleansed, and would thus reveal themselves to be the frail, leaking, forked bodily creatures that they really were.

The ladies of the household appear occasionally but incidentally; the action is always amongst those 'downstairs'; Mrs Hill the housekeeper, Sarah the older maid and young Polly. Mrs Hill rules with an iron will but a tender-heart towards the orphaned girls in her care. She has her own griefs which gradually appear as the novel progresses revealing Baker's interpretations of scenes in the original novel which are not explained there. A new footman brings disturbances and exposes hidden stories. Thoroughly enjoyable, readable and very worthwhile, I really enjoyed this story.

Next I am indebted to Barry, again, for providing his review of the following book.

The Tower. Simon Toyne



The third of a trilogy it features a former journalist, Liv Adamsen (the name is not without significance), this novel can be read in its own right. Some might regard it as far-fetched and lacking credibility but the book does offer a blend of fantasy and reality against

a plot which goes back to the beginnings of tribal memory and our human origins and forward to a vision of our future. Modern security services, astronomy, religious belief, concepts of Eden and ultimately the victory of good over evil all play a part. The concept of the Fall being equated to the destruction of a great Library of all knowledge is a particularly fascinating one. More information would only spoil the read: it must be allowed to speak for itself.

Barry Greenaway

Enjoy your summer reading!

Carol

Thoughts of a Blow In...

Even in late spring, the weather continues to be uncertain (which is no surprise). But somehow it has felt a good bit colder than it should be for the time of year, punctuated by a few lovely days before a return to chilliness.

Having said that, we were so lucky to get that gorgeous weather over Easter. The warmth and sunshine really added to the social rounds and meant that people could even enjoy family gatherings in their gardens, rather than being indoors looking out at the rain! It made such occasions even more special.

The family next door were home over the school holidays and so I got a visit from Leo. After the usual catch up, he politely pointed out that I hadn't done any baking in a while. I agreed with him on that and suggested I make a cake for Easter. I said the flavour was up to him. After giving the subject some serious consideration, he decided on a lemon cake and continued, "With some of those chocolate mini eggs on top!"

So, just before Easter weekend, the lemon cake was cooling in the oven when I saw Leo and Emma playing a rather desultory game of tennis out on the front lawn. When I asked them if they wanted to help to decorate the

cake, the tennis racquets were dropped straight away.

Although I had remembered to buy the mini-eggs, Leo insisted on fetching his own stash too! They thoroughly enjoyed the process of spooning the lemon drizzle over the cake (and the table), then there were animated discussions as to how the mini Easter eggs should be arranged on top (I kept out of that argument!)

We agreed to let the cake cool down altogether before it was sliced, and an hour or so later, back they came with their big sister Zoe in tow. They had already decided that it would only be fair to share their cake with all the neighbours in our block.

They decided between themselves (with minimal bickering,) which plates to take to which neighbours, before taking their own plate home with them. There was even enough left for seconds the next day!

In *The Trees*, Philip Larkin describes the greenery of May wonderfully.

Cynthia

*“Yet still the unresting castles thresh
In fullgrown thickness every May.
Last year is dead, they seem to say,
Begin afresh, afresh, afresh.”*

Prayer Room

We now have a wonderful, new collection of prayers, thoughts and reflections from our 2019 Prayer Room. Thank you in advance for all those of you who have contributed.

The flags contained prayers for places all over the world:-



North Korea, The Sudan, Northern Ireland, Chicago Sophie, Palestine Gaza, Syria, South Africa, Women in oppressive regimes like Saudi Arabia, Sara – very ill in Australia, Venezuela and three mentions of the terrible fire at Notre Dame in Paris

Here are a few thoughts left in the Visitors' book:-

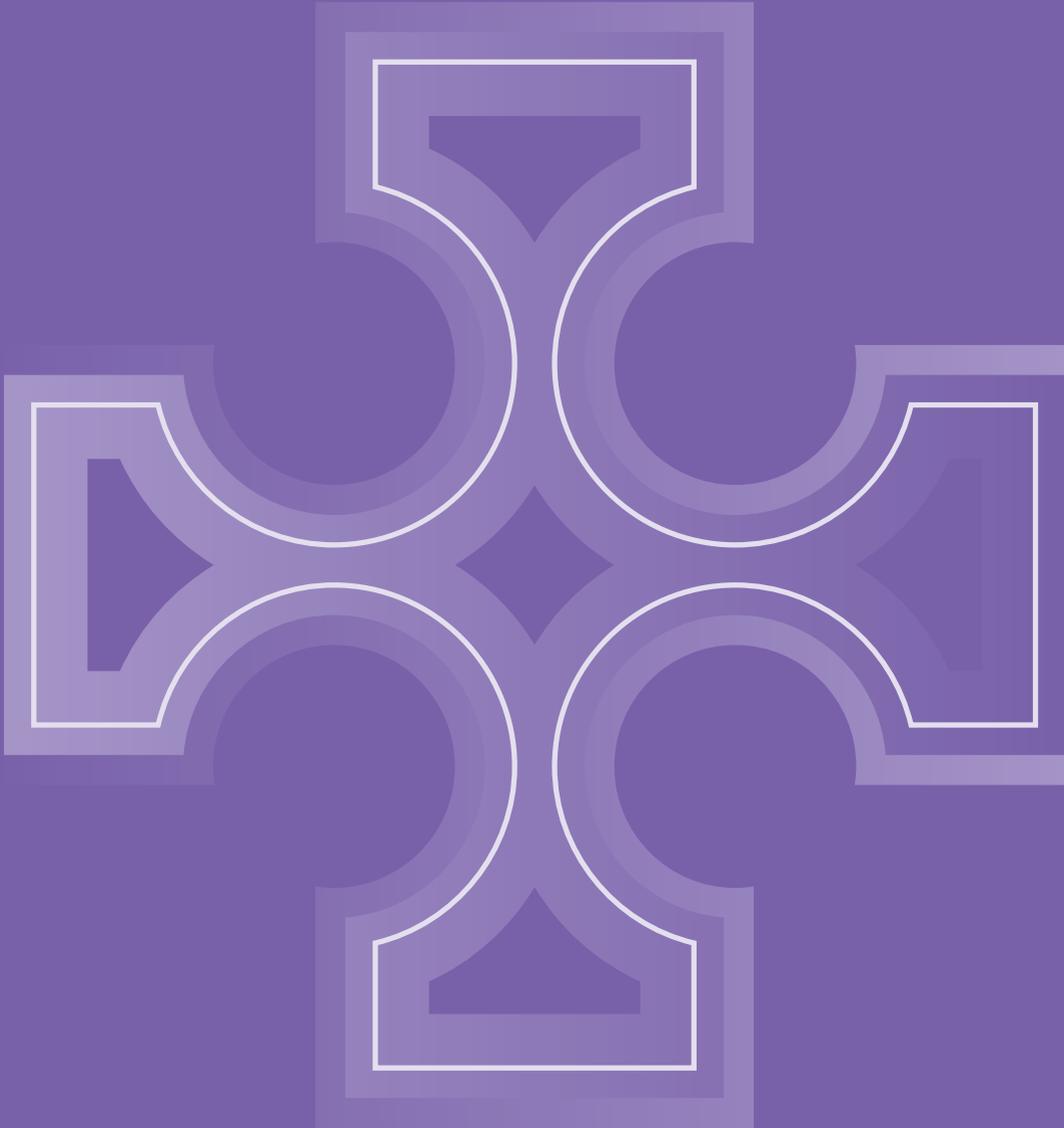
It is not work that wears us out but sadness, anxiety and worry. To God all our griefs are worthy of consideration.

A quote I read in one of the books – “We should always remember that we are spirits having a human experience – not humans having a spiritual one.”

Thank you Lord for the blessing of serving you. Give me the strength to continue to do your good works. Lord guide me to say and do everything to thy Glory. I ask this in Thy Holy Name.

Carol

Amen



Groomsport Parish Church

CONTACT

groomsportparishchurch.org