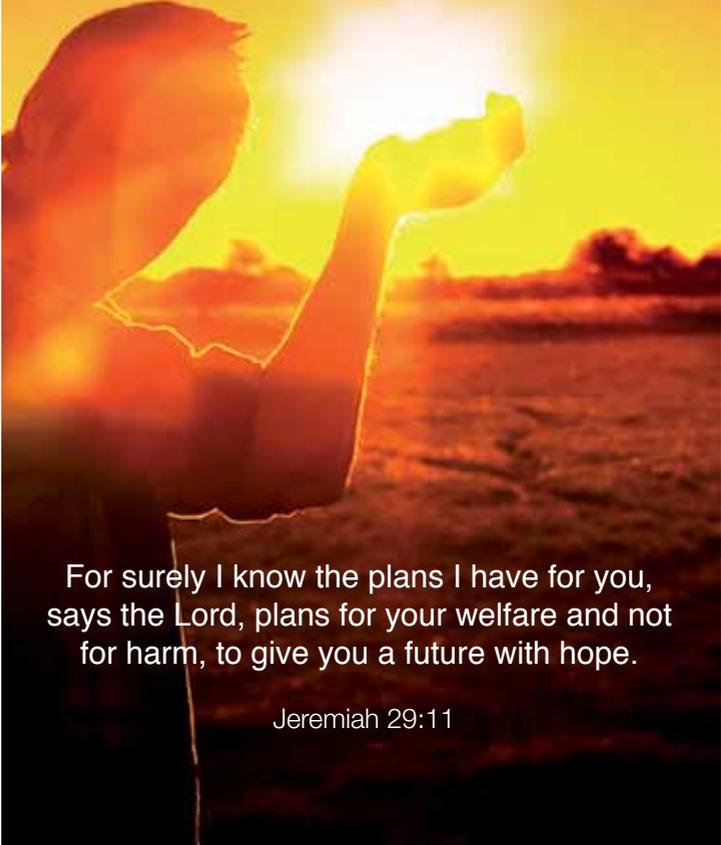


Groomsport Parish Church

CONTACT

Jan-Feb. 2021
groomsportparishchurch.org

God
BLESS *you*
IN THIS
New Year



For surely I know the plans I have for you,
says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not
for harm, to give you a future with hope.

Jeremiah 29:11

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.



The Rector's Warden

Gary Keenan
gary@groomsportparishchurch.org

The People's Warden

Ken Boyd
ken@groomsportparishchurch.org

The Rector's Glebe Warden

Billy McAnaney
billy@groomsportparishchurch.org

The People's Glebe Warden

Tony Anderson
tony@groomsportparishchurch.org

Treasurer

Florence McAnaney
florence@groomsportparishchurch.org

Secretary to Select Vestry

Heather Pentland
heather@groomsportparishchurch.org

Church Hall Bookings

David McKnight
david@groomsportparishchurch.org

Gift Aid Secretary

Amanda McWhinney
028 9127 1311
office@groomsportparishchurch.org

Parish Archivist

Barry Greenaway
barry@groomsportparishchurch.org

Verger / Caretaker

Susan Moore
028 9127 1311

Organist

Stuart Tanner
stuart@groomsportparishchurch.org

Parish Office

Amanda McWhinney
028 9127 1311
office@groomsportparishchurch.org

Hall Problems

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

Sunday School

Maggie Townsley
maggie@groomsportparishchurch.org

Worship in the Church Halls

From August 2nd, we have been worshipping in the Church Halls, at 9.30, 11.30 and 6.00. The response has been wonderful, with an average attendance of 85 attending services each Sunday.

The guidelines laid down by the Diocese and Public Health Authorities place upon Churches a whole raft of new responsibilities. Most of these are to do with cleaning and sanitising furniture. If you have attended the Halls for worship, you will have seen some of these procedures being carried out. For example, after the congregation has left the Canon Tyney Hall after each service, the Wardens and other volunteers, steam spray the chairs and clean the floor with antiseptic wipes. The loos are cleaned, the handrails are wiped down. Given the nature of our Church furniture, pews,

cushions and carpets, as well as the nature of the woodwork, this would have been next to impossible in Church. If we did meet in Church for worship, we could only have one service and that, because of social distancing, would limit our numbers. After that service, we would then have to “quarantine” the church building for 72 hours, which in turn would mean that we wouldn’t be able to open the building for private prayer and reflection.

Please be assured that we are closely monitoring all that we do and keeping this new situation under review. No-one is keener than the Rector to get back into Church. But nothing will be done until it is properly thought through and we can assure ourselves that all is being done to maintain your health and safety. Thank you.

Service Times

For the foreseeable future, services will be held on Sundays in the Canon Tyney Hall as follows:

9.30am A Service of the Word

11.30am A Service of the Word

6.00pm Compline

Numbers at each service are limited. Most members of the congregation will have had a letter indicating which service they could attend. After a few weeks of the system operating, it has become clear that there are a few places spare at each service. If you haven’t been told which service to attend, or you would like to change service times, do please contact either Gary or Ken, our Church Wardens, and they will do their best to accommodate you.

From the Rector

First of all, I must apologise for the disruption to this issue of our Parish magazine. Like many other failures of the past few months, it can be put down to covid-19. The virus has disrupted so much of our personal lives and with Christmas a fading memory, you will know just what an impact it has had on our church life and worship.

Throughout the last major lockdown, we tried so very hard to keep in touch with all of you. For this I must thank the members of the Select Vestry who bore the brunt of the ringing around. Maybe, you thought it unnecessary, but keeping in touch with one another is something that loving families do. St Paul reminds us that “we are the Body of Christ” for in the one Spirit “we were all baptised into the one body.” Not being able to see you regularly, be with you regularly, speak with you regularly has proved to be a real trial for me. Not being able to celebrate Holy Communion with you regularly has been the hardest thing to bear. Covid seemed to deny us our very reason for “being”; not being able to meet together, break bread together, worship together, made me for one wonder what it means to be a church going, worshipping Christian.

But with the help of the Select Vestry, we put together a plan that for a few brief months brought us back together again. Again with Vestry’s help, we were able to celebrate the Sacrament. But, once more, that has now been taken away from us. It is disheartening, dispiriting.

And yet, and yet. I have tried to live by the words that “we are closed but not shut”.

The prayer life of our Church goes on; the worship of our Church goes on; and in a strictly limited sense, the ministry of our Church goes on. Yes we are closed, but we are not shut. I am in Church every day praying with you and for you. If you would like me to pray for someone close to you, or a situation that puzzles you, do let me know: leave a message on the Parish website; leave a message on the Parish answering machine; fill in a prayer slip and leave it in the Parish post box. Join myself, Stuart and Amanda in our recorded services which are posted online each week. And when you are sitting and watching the services, know that you are joining so many more of us who are singing with you and praying with you. We might indeed be closed, but we are most certainly not shut.

Two more things: In this magazine you will find a Christmas Appeal envelope. Last year we were able to make a donation to the Children’s Hospice of £1,500 as a result of our Christmas Appeal. Many of you have already made a donation, I know, but there are others who have yet to have the opportunity to make their own contribution. The Appeal will close at the end of January.

Secondly, help us in our recorded services. Before this month is out, I would love to record another “Songs of Praise” type service. Tell me of your favourite hymn or hymns. Tell me why you particularly like the hymns you have chosen, and we will work them into a service.

Duncan

Births, Marriages, Deaths & Announcements

Holy Rest

Ronnie Sloan – 24 September 2020

Ronnie was a familiar character around the village. He was a staunch member of Cockle Island Boat Club, and his friendship and quiet help in the harbour was legendary. He bore his final illness with great stoicism.

Elisabeth Ferguson – 14 October 2020

Elisabeth lived to the great age of 97. She had been a larger than life character and even when illness took its toll on her mobility, she was still a force to be reckoned with! She had a very successful career in education and was honoured for services to education by being made OBE.

Gregor Manning – 21 October 2020

Gregor was the son of Harold and Hazel Manning, who lived at the village end of the Springwell Road. Gregor was a successful business man, taking over his father's bathroom business, which he expanded with his own particular style. Plagued by MS, Gregor was never without a smile or a kind word. He died a year after his mother, Hazel.

Berry Lyness – 5 November 2020

A lifetime in agribusiness, Berry had the air of a countryman. From farming he moved into sales, but never lost his love for the land. In recent years he had to put up with kidney dialysis; he became a much loved character in the renal unit at the Ulster Hospital. He was a joy to know and visiting Berry always left one uplifted.

Ernie Preece – 4 December

Ernie was a mariner and it was on a run ashore he met his beloved wife, Iona. Iona Niblock was a Groomsport girl, and she and

Ernie were married in Groomsport Church in the early fifties. Although Ernie and Iona moved north to Coleraine, they never lost their love of Groomsport or its Parish Church. Ernie followed the life of the Church from his nursing home in Coleraine, through the Parish Magazine and our online services.

Doris Mooney – 4 January 2021

Doris was a lovely, quiet member of our Parish community. She married Stanley, a stonemason and lived for many years on Dixon Road. After Stanley's death twelve years ago, Doris returned to her home in Kilkeel. She returned to Bangor and our Church to be closer to her son and daughter, Clive and Angela. For the past couple of years, Doris was a resident of Beverley Lodge in Newtownards.

Audrey McIlwrath – 9 January 2021

Audrey moved to the Groomsport area after the death of her beloved Ralph. A gentle, but very independent, woman, Audrey became a wonderfully active member of our Church and its Mothers' Union, not to mention Groomsport Evergreens. She had the humility to know when it was time to seek permanent care, and she lived out the last years of her life at Kingsland Nursing Home.

Our hearts go out to all those bereaved in these past few months, especially those denied the opportunity, by Covid restrictions, to be with their loved ones at the end. We pray that they will know they will be upheld in our prayers, just we believe their loved ones are upheld by the eternal love of God.

May they who have died rest in peace and rise in glory.

Announcements

The Select Vestry

I mention above how important the Select Vestry has been in helping me carry on the ministry of our Church despite all the restrictions placed upon us. Let me take this opportunity of thanking the Select Vestry publicly for their tireless work on your behalf. They have shifted furniture; prepared the Canon Tyney Hall to act as a vaccination clinic; stuffed envelopes; posted letters and rang around their own personal list of Parishioners. The two Church Wardens have been wonderful, hard working troopers and I thank them for all they have put into helping us gather for worship. I thank them too for their wise counsel and encouragement to me when I have flagged.

To Gary and Ken, Heather our Secretary, and Flo, our treasurer, William, Tony, Jim and their many helpers, especially David, and the rest of the Select Vestry, "thank you!"

Duncan

anticipated it will be held in Church, where social distancing can be more easily adhered to. Further details will be published in due course.

The Register of General Vestry Members is now available for inspection, in accordance with the Constitution of the Church of Ireland. If you wish to inspect the Register, (which is your right under the constitution), it can be viewed in the Parish Office during weekday mornings.

If you find you are not on the register, and feel you should be, application forms will also be available in the Parish Office. It is worth checking that you are on the register, either by inspecting the register yourself, or by asking the Parish Administrator to check (91 272311). If you are not on the register you will be unable to vote at the General Vestry or stand for election to the Select Vestry.

The General Vestry is our AGM and an important event in our Parish life and you are encouraged to keep the date free and attend the meeting.

Twenty years in Groomsport.

On 8 December the Rector celebrated twenty years of service to Groomsport Parish. To mark this special occasion and to say thank you for all he has done to lead us in our spiritual journey and touch so many lives, the Select Vestry presented him with a card and beautiful arrangement of flowers.

Annual General (Easter) Vestry Sunday 21 March 2021

The Annual General (Easter) Vestry will be held after worship on Sunday 21 March this year. In years past we have held the meeting in the Canon Tyney Hall, following the business with a light lunch. It is too hard to predict where we will be regarding the Covid-19 situation, but assuming we can hold a meeting, it is

"And it's goodbye from me and it's goodbye from her!"

Over the past six years we have been blessed in having Mark and Tara Brown as our "Contact" editors. They have brought a professionalism and flair to our Parish magazine that had been lacking. As a consequence, our little Parish was able to scoop first prize for the best Parish Magazine in the North of Ireland – a prestigious award of which we were rightly proud.

This is the last issue Mark and Tara will be producing for us. We thank them for all that they have given of themselves to our Parish over the years. We could never repay them for all their hard work, but let us assure them of our heartfelt thanks and our prayers for their future endeavours.

Announcements

The Three “Esses”!

Over the past few years, you have been so wonderfully responsive and generous toward the three “esses”.

Smarties

Over the past year, I have had to learn to go “cashless”. No hunting around for cash for my daily paper, or for petrol. A quick flash of the card, a healthy and welcoming bleep, and the transaction’s completed. It’s clean, safe and hygienic. It’s also having a devastating effect upon the filling of my “Smarties” tube with 20p pieces. No cash transactions means no change. It’s taking me forever to fill my present tube and after a brilliant response last year, I can’t help but notice that the number of filled “Smarties” tubes has suddenly declined.

We use the contents of the tubes to support CMSI in its work around the globe, especially in Uganda, Sudan and Nepal. Without our support and the support of others like us, their work will be severely curtailed. It is up to me to fill my tube. I’d dearly love to have it filled by Easter, which isn’t that far away. Will you have a bash at filling a tube by then as well?

Stamps

Another way we support CMSI is by collecting used stamps. Freddie and Susan collect your cast off stamps and send them on to CMSI, who then sell them to collectors. And here’s a surprise – well for me at least – in an average year our collecting of stamps raises about £70 to £80. It might not seem much, but if every parish in the Diocese did as well, that would mean over £5,600! From little acorns mighty oak trees grow.

Storehouse



I for one can be a bit grumpy about food banks, food parcels and free school meals. I come from a large family; including myself there were nine of us brothers and sisters. Ours was not an idyllic childhood in comparison to what’s on offer now. Among my memories of childhood, the one that features most strongly is one of being hungry. So when I hear of handouts and free food I can react like a grumpy old man. It really didn’t happen in my day. But of course, that didn’t make it right. Had there been a Marcus Rashford or food bank or housing benefit or universal credit, I’m pretty sure we would have been in the front of the queue. One of the many things that impressed me in India was the drive by the national and regional governments, with parental support, to ensure that every school child had a nutritious and hot lunch meal. If a country as chaotic and in places as dirt poor as India can arrange such a crusade, why can’t we?

Storehouse is still open for business and still in need of our donations of dried and tinned foodstuffs as well as toiletries and laundry goods. Your contribution can be left in the lobby of the Church Halls most weekday mornings. We will ensure that a weekly drop off is made to the Storehouse “depot”.

Announcements

GROOMSPORT
PARISH CHURCH



Walking For Softies (More Like Strolling Really)



With all the restrictions and lockdown this year, Walking For Softies had to take a back seat along with all the other Church clubs and groups.

We finally managed to have a walk in September and decided, under the circumstances, it was safer meeting on a Tuesday for the walk. The second lockdown was put in place in October, so we had to forego our October walk. We were hoping to meet in November on the fourth Saturday in the month. Crawfordsburn Country Park was to have been the venue.

Our September walk was at Castle Park Bangor. Eleven hardy walkers turned up to walk round the perimeter. Fortunately the rain stopped for us, so we enjoyed being together, albeit socially distanced. There was a lot of ground to cover, both physically and verbally! Afterwards we had a coffee in Coffee Cure at the Museum and we were delighted to be joined by Faith, who had earlier commitments that day, so was unable to join in the walk. As the sun was shining we were able to use the outdoor tables as well as inside the cafe.

For more information.

Ian – ian@groomsportparishchurch.org

Zandra – zandra@groomsportparishchurch.org



Keeping Contact



Back in 2014 we were invited to take over the Church Magazine and breathe new life into it. Did we realise what we were taking on? Probably not! But, it is something that we have felt very privileged to be a part of, and we are glad to be able to add to the Church Archives for future generations.

Groomspart Parish Church is a special place for me. My mother and father (Yvonne and Terry Montgomery) were married in Groomspart Parish Church 60 years ago. Both my siblings and myself were Baptised there (I am one of the first children to appear on the cradle roll in the Church). My sister was married there and Duncan Baptised our son Jamie on the same day that he blessed our Marriage in 2014. You might even have been there that day, we landed quite a shock on our family and friends!

With myself as Editor and Mark taking on the creative, over the last 6 and a bit

years we moved the Contact to a colour publication for the first time, created logos for the Church and Contact magazine as well as setting up the website. During this time we were welcomed with open arms and have made some wonderful friends in the Church community. We have felt fully supported, particularly by Duncan and the members of the Select Vestry. On one hand we are sorry to hand over the reigns but, on the other hand, the magazine deserves more time spent on it than we could truly afford it and I have no doubt that Amanda will take it to the next level, as she already has with the Website.

So to all of you who have read the Contact over the last number of years and all of you who have contributed to it, thank you, we couldn't have done it without you.

Tara & Mark Brown



Vestry Notes December 2020

Vestry meetings continue to be held in the Canon Tyney Hall because of social distancing.

The Select Vestry agreed that Ashley Medical Centre could use our Halls to administer the flu vaccine during the month of October. Parishioners were encouraged to provide tins and packets for Harvest this year.

Ian Sloan is to stand down as Gift Aid Secretary after five loyal years of service. He has agreed to help with a smooth handover to the Church Administrator Amanda McWhinney.

The Rector has sent invitations to some for the Service of the departed. Anyone wishing to attend will need to contact the Wardens to reserve a place. Vestry has agreed that our first Holy Communion Services (with appropriate changes) will be held in the Canon Tyney Hall on Advent Sunday. Plans are also underway for Church Services during the Christmas period. Depending on social distancing guidelines at the time, either one or two services will be held in Church on Christmas Day. To adhere to regulations, parishioners will have to apply for places at the service/s. The Church will be closed for Private Prayer the week after Christmas. However, because of difficulties with cleaning and sanitising between Services, Services will remain in the Canon Tyney Hall for the foreseeable future. The Rector will research Christmas trees for the Church and outside the Halls.

Following the turning back of the clocks the Church will be open for private prayer on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 10.00 – 1.00. Bible Study and Compline will begin in the Canon Tyney Hall on Wednesday evenings, with time in between to allow cleaning of the hall. Unfortunately, it is still not possible to allow lay organisations to meet in the halls.

Because online services have been so popular, Vestry agreed to purchase equipment to make it possible to live stream Sunday services from the beginning of January. This will mean that when Services return to Church, it will be possible to continue live streaming them.

A small number of the Events team met and has arranged an alternative Christmas Fair to both involve people in the Church and to raise much needed funds. There were further discussions about possible car washes and a Fireside Quiz in the New Year.

The Secretary wrote to Stuart, our organist to thank him for his contribution during online services and on Sundays.

With the purchase of our new printer/photocopier in the office, it seems we may now be able to print our magazine inhouse and possibly the annual Christmas card.

Our current tenants will be leaving the Rectory in November but our agent has found a new tenant so the property will not lie empty. Very little work has to be done to prepare for the new tenant who should be in residence at the beginning of December.

The Rector will launch a competition in the next magazine for Parishioners to design a new logo which will be used on Church notepaper and all paperwork associated with the Church.

The Harvest Appeal has brought in £863. Vestry made it up to £900– half to go to Women's Aid and the other half to go to a small young Mums' charity in Uganda.

Two benches have been donated for use outside the Church by Ken Boyd and Robert Watters in memory of loved ones. As these will have to be secured to the ground, it was decided to store them until the Spring. Glebe Wardens have been active sorting out

Vestry Notes December 2020

a range of problems from the fanlight in the Vestry to the drainpipe outside the Halls to damp in the disabled toilet and much more.

Because of the recent lockdown, the December meeting had to be held as an Extraordinary meeting on 23 November. Yet again, as at most of the meetings there was 100% attendance. The Glebe Warden reported that he was dealing with ongoing problems with the fire alarm system in the Church. The electrician will sort the kitchen extractor fan in the halls after lockdown. The Rector wished his thanks to be recorded to the Churchwardens for all their help and support.

Every five years Church buildings are inspected by the Deanery. Of the nine churches in the Deanery, ours was the only church building to receive "green status", meaning the building is in excellent order. The Surveyor was impressed with the refurbishment work, and astonished at the value for money we had obtained.

Because of lockdown, the Alternative Christmas Fair has had to be postponed for two weeks. This year's Christmas card, delivered to over 2,000 homes inside the Parish boundary, will not contain a list of Christmas services this year, in case of last minute changes.

There will be a bumper edition of the Contact in January rather than producing one before Christmas.

Proceeds of the Christmas Appeal will go to the Children's Hospice. Decisions about our annual charitable giving was postponed until January. Decisions were taken about annual Christmas gifts.

The Rector expressed thanks to Mae Burke for all her work as Branch Leader of the Mothers' Union over the last three years. He has appointed Faith Cully as the next Leader.

Nodding Heads

*The guns fall silent,
Also the birds
Fluttering, unseen, unheard.*

All sounds cease.

*Bright against the mud
A bud of crimson
Bursts into bloom*

The first poppy nods its head

*Then, one by one
And in twos and threes,
Swathes of red.*



*Each head nodding
Amongst mud and broken trees.
Tokens of blood, bone and flesh
Which lie beneath.*

*In triumph they rise again and again
This is no conquering symbol
Of war or peace.*

*Multitudinous against oppression,
Like dragon's teeth, they spring up,
But, in opposition to Cadmus' foes,
These flowers promise hope.*

Remembrance became their purpose.

The Alternative Christmas Fair & Twelve Days of Christmas Luxury Ballot



The best laid plans ! That's what it felt like when we had to shelve our parish events programme for 2020. We all look forward to getting together for the breakfasts, quizzes, concerts and Christmas Fair but it was not to be this year. As the year progressed with no respite from the restrictions the Coronavirus placed on us, we decided we should try to come up with something that would get us all working together again and allow us to raise some much needed funds for the Parish. After much head scratching and debate we settled on the idea of a food fair and luxury ballot.

As a first step we decided on the range of food we thought would be popular at Christmas and which we knew the bakers amongst us could produce. Heather, resourceful as ever, had a number of great ballot prizes already gathered in the hope that we could run a ballot at some stage.

From the outset, having advertised the event, everyone got behind it, placing orders and offering to bake, make jam, marmalade and

chutney. We were delighted with the response. Behind the scenes we did our best to match orders with those supplying the food. While there are too many who contributed to give a specific mention we want to give a special thanks to Pauline who baked around 600 mince pies and nearly 70 sponges.

As the food donations arrived in the halls on Thursday 17 December our band of workers set about trying to present it as festively as possible whilst taking all the precautions we needed to in respect of the health advice around the Coronavirus. In total, Parishioners made and we packed 530 shortbread, around 300 traybakes, 80 pots of jam, marmalades and chutneys and 33 Christmas puddings along with the mammoth number of mince pies and sponges made by Pauline. Now that's teamwork!

Around 1700 tickets were sold for the luxury ballot which was also drawn on Thursday by the Rector and ably filmed by Amanda. You can catch up with it on YouTube. Well done to



all those lucky enough to win one of the prizes .

Friday 18th December was delivery day for both the food and the ballot prizes. Many thanks to all those who gave their time to help with this task. Santa could not have done a better job!

We hope that you enjoyed your festive treats . As a result of your support we made over £3,000 for Parish funds. A tremendous and very worthwhile result.

A big thank you to everyone who helped us in any way . If you have any ideas for fundraising events let us know.

Events Team

Twelve Days of Christmas Luxury Draw Congratulations to the following winners: (all except two were Parishioners)

- Men's waterproof jacket – *Jean Dobbin*
- Women's Regatta Fleece – *Dorothy Anne Crawford*
 - Chanel perfume – *Ken Boyd*
- Yankee candle set – *Freda Conway*
 - Necklace – *Janice Pollock*
 - Salter multi2go – *Pearl Brown*
 - Jaeger handbag – *Susan McNair*
- Pair of Caledonian crystal glasses – *Helen Craythorne*
 - Lady's handknit sweater – *Helen Craythorne*
- Marks and Spencer food hamper – *Florence McAnaney*
- Katie Loxton diffuser set – *Helen Mann (a Mojo member)*
 - Digital Photo frame - *Karen Black (Heather's sister)*

Thank you Maureen.

The Events Team would like to thank Maureen Taggart, the coordinator, for the massive amount of work she put into this event to make it such a success. When we started out on this venture, it was never anticipated how well it would be supported, but consequently the organisation behind the scenes has been phenomenal. Maureen has done it all in her usual, quiet but very efficient way.

Thank you Maureen!

Lace Making



Coming from a family of talented handcrafters it was inevitable that we would both inherit some of their interests in crafting from an early age in knitting, embroidery, dressmaking etc whilst also developing some of our own interests in painting, and photography. Some 12 years ago we were both looking for new crafting challenges which we found during a visit to the Creative Craft Show in Belfast where we became intrigued by the delicacy, expertise and variety of work on the Lace Making stand. The enthusiastic exhibitors encouraged us to “give it a go” on their demonstration lace pillows with, “if you can count to four you can manage the stitches to make bobbin lace”.

After enrolling on Bobbin Lace classes, then run by S.E.R.C. to learn the basics we began to develop our resources which include a special firm lace pillow, household pins, a pattern known as a ‘pricking’, threads (mainly white but colour can also be used in some lace) and bobbins made from a variety of materials but ours are mainly wooden. At one end of the bobbin is a carved ‘thistle’ shape around which the thread is wound with often at the other end, a loop of wire holding some brightly coloured beads, known as ‘spangles’, to give tension to the thread while the lace is being made. Bobbins can be purchased ready to use but lace makers are always on the lookout for beads to spangle their own bobbins no matter where they are, at home or abroad often creating unique bobbins in the process to use in their lace making. Davina particularly enjoys spangling the bobbins, a very fiddly task!

We continue to attend weekly bobbin lace classes to further develop our skills and get help when we are stuck! We also joined Ards Bobbin Lace Enthusiasts (ABLE), a group that solely promote the skills of a wide variety of Bobbin Lace styles e.g. Torchon, Bedfordshire, Bruges etc. We are already working towards the 30th ABLE Anniversary Exhibition.

To include lace in our other craft activities we also joined ‘The Lace Guild of Northern Ireland

(LGNI) which is involved in the promotion and development of all types of lace making including needle lace e.g. Carrickmacross, Mountmellick, knitted laces e.g. from Shetland, crochet laces, e.g. Clones and Romanian, and also bobbin laces. The Guild meets regularly on the 2nd Saturday of each month at the Ulster Folk Museum with workshops and talks, except in July and August.

Although we have our own specific preferences in lace making we do occasionally work together to produce a piece of lace as we did when we made unique baby shawls using 1ply Shetland wool and traditional lace stitches to design shawls which will go through a wedding ring as is a Shetland tradition. These unique designs, we hope, will become family heirlooms for the babies. Our latest joint project was the making of seven poppies in Torchon bobbin lace which made the flower arrangement shown above for the Remembrance Day Service.

At ABLE and LGNI Exhibitions members lace pieces are widely appreciated with viewers often wishing to purchase them but few lace makers offer their work for sale. Certainly the lace that we make is simply for our own pleasure when a piece is completed after many hours, weeks, or even months of work on a pattern there is such a feeling of satisfaction and achievement that is reward enough. Lace making quite simply has us “hooked”

The ABLE 30th Anniversary Exhibition to be held in The Heritage Centre in Bangor 13-25 April 2021 – a date for your diary.

Davina and Janet Dunbar

BibleBuds



1 ~ yellow

2 ~ green

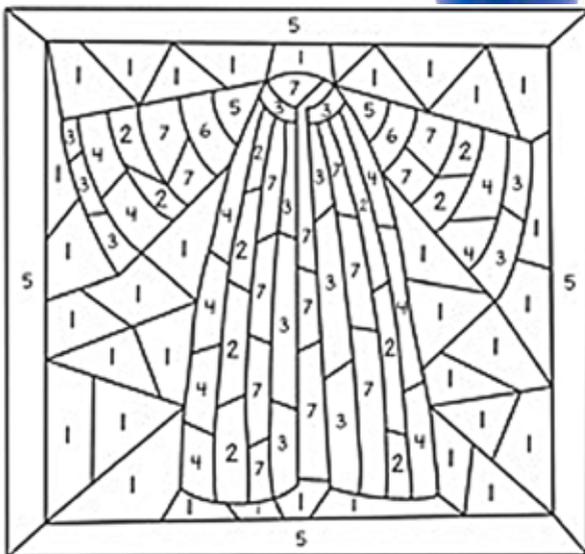
3 ~ pink

4 ~ blue

5 ~ orange

6 ~ red

7 ~ purple



Spot 8 differences between the two pictures.



BIBLE WORD SEARCH!

BASIC WORDS OF THE BIBLE

G	E	N	T	I	L	E	B	I	B	L	E	D
O	B	A	A	B	R	T	J	E	M	D	I	I
D	P	I	E	S	I	M	N	I	P	B	N	
T	E	M	P	T	A	T	I	O	N	J	A	H
H	R	P	S	H	L	H	R	P	I	E	P	O
E	S	R	A	L	V	E	A	N	S	R	T	L
F	E	A	C	E	A	H	C	A	T	U	I	Y
A	C	Y	R	H	T	O	L	Z	R	S	Z	S
T	U	E	I	E	I	L	E	A	Y	A	E	P
H	T	I	F	M	O	Y	J	R	H	L	N	I
E	E	S	I	N	N	A	J	E	W	E	H	R
R	W	E	C	L	F	A	I	T	H	M	L	I
B	S	J	E	S	U	S	C	H	R	I	S	T

JESUS CHRIST
SALVATION
JEW
GENTILE
HOLY SPIRIT
GOD THE FATHER
PERSECUTE

PRAY
TITHE
MINISTRY
BIBLE
HOLY
SACRIFICE
FAITH

MIRACLE
NAZARETH
BETHLEHEM
JERUSALEM
BAPTIZATE
TEMPTATION
SIN

Bookstall - January - February

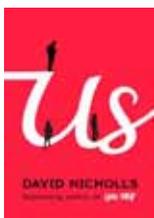
A Happy New Year to you all! Let us all fervently hope and pray that this year will bring opportunities for us to meet, unmasked as 'normal' whatever that is. I look forward, as I hope you do to our next book fair, where I will greet as many people as possible with a hug!

The Stone Diaries by Carol Shields



I have long felt that I should read this book, Pulitzer Prize winner as it is and certainly it is a very richly varied and beautifully crafted story. The story begins as Daisy Goodwill, the subject of the diaries, is born to her unknowing and grotesquely fat mother. Her mother is alone, her husband at work, neither of them aware that parenthood is upon them. From this inauspicious beginning starts a very long, complicated but wonderful life, brilliantly depicted and simultaneously ordinary and remarkable. Each of the characters is wonderfully real. A substantial read but well worth the effort.

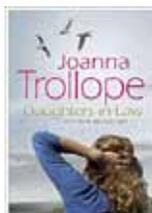
Us by David Nichol



You may have watched the dramatisation of this novel on television recently. I did and thoroughly enjoyed it, however, enjoyable though it was the novel is many times more enjoyable. The humour is simply glorious, I laughed out loud as I read it, yet it manages at the same time to be poignant. Ostensibly the story is sad, depicting as it does, the end of a marriage, complicated further by the difficulty the father has in relating to their teenage son. The plot details their final family holiday together. As an example of the humour that tickled me I offer the following. Attending one of his sister's ghastly supper parties (her culinary skills are extremely limited) he observes to himself of the salad, doused liberally with malt vinegar and cooking oil,

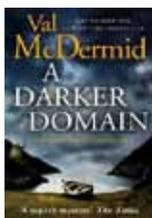
"it was my sister's rare culinary gift to make lettuce taste like a bag of chips". Again the characters are beautifully depicted and David Nicholls succeeds in making us love both the protagonists. Their first visit to France entranced him "All that cheese and none of it Cheddar, and nuts in the salad". Do read it, I feel sure you will love it.

Daughters-in-Law by Joanna Trollope



Few authors get under the skin of contemporary family life better than Joanna Trollope; it has to be said, however that her families are never less than professional, wealthy or arty people! Nevertheless, the human problems they encounter in her stories are universal. In this case a doting mother of three sons begins to lose her hold over them as her last, youngest son marries. Rachel has loved being the centre of the family and, more lately, the matriarch, it's a hard position to relinquish.... a good read.

A Darker Domain by Val McDermid

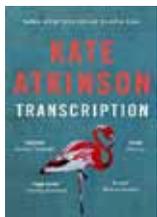


I am slightly hesitant to admit to being an enormous fan of Val McDermid's writing as some of her characters are so very twisted, debased and downright evil. This book recently was contributed to the book stall and I eagerly read it. Although concerned with mystery and indeed murder, this is much less dark than many of her others that I have read. I found it totally gripping. From the moment that the reader discovers that the young woman, anxious to find her father, missing for over 20 years, finally goes to the police for help because her young son is dying and needs a matching donor to save his life, the story grips. For those who enjoy the tv detective series featuring older policemen brought out of retirement - "New Tricks" - this

is a 'Cold Case'. Another cold case, that of a young boy, grandson of a wealthy Scottish businessman kidnapped around the same time is pressing as a result of new evidence. DI Karen Pirie is assigned to the latter case, but surreptitiously spends a good deal of time on the former, which intrigues her. Could there be a connection between a miner, missing during the miner's strike of 1984 and a child abduction? A really good murder mystery which I would strongly recommend to fans of the genre.

Now four books that I have reviewed before but I have decided, since they have been donated again to the book stall, that they are worth airing again.

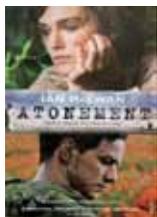
Transcription by Kate Atkinson



Set largely during the early days of the Second World War, but beginning in 1980, it is the story of Juliet Armstrong's life and career as a highly qualified typist. She is given the job of making transcriptions of conversations of British Fascist sympathisers,

overheard on listening devices set up by MI5. Much of the work is tedious, when she first went for an interview she was looking for an active job in the services but finds herself spending hours typing out endless overheard conversations. Many years later, in a job at the BBC, she encounters people from that past and realises that the now hazy events of that time have consequences. By turns intriguing, puzzling and very amusing, this is a worthwhile read.

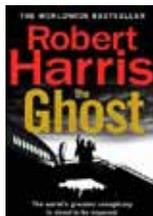
Atonement by Ian McEwan



I feel that this very atmospheric book deserves to be read. The story is entirely driven by the thirteen year old Briony who witnesses her sister in an incident with a childhood friend and in the fevered imagination of early adolescence almost wilfully misunderstands subsequent events and

interferes with tragic and wide ranging results. Although this begins in 1935, it takes us through the Second World War and to the end of the last century by which time Briony is an elderly, retired novelist with a diagnosis of vascular dementia. Beautifully written and haunting in its nature, and although the story works out over many years, it never drags, but carries the reader along. This is a wonderful book and one which has stayed with me, as only the best writing can.

The Ghost by Robert Harris



I read this book some time ago, very conscious that it was not my kind of book, as I believed. As it was chosen by my reading group I reluctantly settled down to read it. I was wrong! The story is gripping, fast paced and intriguing. The title refers to the role of the

Ghost Writer, much employed by people in the news who feel that the world needs to read their life story, but they have neither not got the time nor the ability to do it themselves. It begins with the death of a man, missing from a ferry taking him to Martha's Vineyard. He is engaged by a former British Prime Minister to assist him in writing his memoirs. The story tells us of a writer engaged to replace that now deceased "ghost writer". If you read this it will not take you long to decide that you know exactly who that ex-Prime Minister is! It is at once thrilling, cynical, reflective and wonderfully observant of the vanities of power.

As I write this, another lock-down has begun. I do not know how much access we will have to the hall and the book shelves, or even if we will still be able to hold services for the next few weeks. However, once this Contact has been distributed, I will try, if it is possible, to put the above titles in the centre of the top shelf where it says, "Recently reviewed titles". In the meantime, keep safe and enjoy your reading, it's one little pleasure not denied us - and there are many if we look for them.

Carol

Prayer Room

Train Lines And Return Tickets

*To be alert is right,
The end of COVID19 is in sight
So once again I gratefully say,
"I'm on the Translink bus and train today".
My senior bus pass in view, my ticket blue,
the platform clear, Staff smile and now, there is no queue.
Aren't we a happy and adventurous few?
We sit two metres apart, a start, to staying safe,
But that is OK,
Mindfully doing our bit, and
knowing our lives may well depend on it.*

*Now from my carriage window I can see the nests, finally built, birds sing,
and wings resting from their repetitious flights and feeding young.*

*Green leaves abound and sunshine too, that warm hug,
bringing hope into our fragile island isolation.
A longing and anticipation, of freedom once again.*

*Pandemics come and go we pray, and so,
transport is there for us, Our train, Our bus, on time.
Thank God for engines and propulsion,
Staff and drivers
and the resumption, of all we take for granted
and those whose energy and mind's ignition gets us started.*

*So let us make a Clapping fuss,
just one more time,
To value all afar and everywhere,
In one big earnest, Holy, Blessing, prayer.*

E Adeline Cully 18-9-20



Lord Jesus Christ

*Every morning I stop
And pray to the Lord
Jesus Christ every day
And he's my Lord and my Savior in life
And he's inside my heart day and night
And just listen to him beat
He's smiling away beating
Inside my heart every day
And I love the Lord Jesus Christ
So much in life
And he's forever inside my heart and
It's where he'll stay forever
Beating inside my heart every day.*

David P Carroll.

Amen

Thoughts of a Blow In...

We're finding ourselves in a very strange and difficult winter indeed. I do hope that the Christmas season, although much quieter than usual for us all, was a little bit of respite for most of us.

I normally spend part of Christmas Day with a big extended family. The dinner itself usually has three generations crammed in at a wonderfully overstretched and chatty table. This year, they had to change things and separated into their smaller family units. They were also aware that I wouldn't be joining them and very gracious about that.

Once I'd got used to the idea, I was content to have Christmas Day at home. However, they kindly insisted on bringing Christmas dinner to my door so I could at least be a part of their day. I was expecting a plate of something, for which I would have been extremely grateful.

I was surprised and overwhelmed to receive three full courses, complete with extras and a beautifully handwritten menu card. It was all

absolutely delicious, but it was the thoughtfulness and kindness which made it so special. I still have the menu card on my mantelpiece and it makes me smile every time I look at it. The other part of the same family sent me lots of photos during the evening, including some hilarious ones of a game of Charades, which made me feel part of their celebrations too.

Although Christmas shopping was necessarily limited this year, I did manage to get a few things for the children next door. Their mum sent them down to my door on Boxing Day so they could open the gifts in front of me in a socially distanced manner. They were so excited and delighted with their very modest presents, bless them and it was a joy to share that moment with them.

In looking for a suitable verse, I came across these lines entitled January Morn by Nelda Hartmann, which hold the promise of an easier springtime that we are all hoping for.

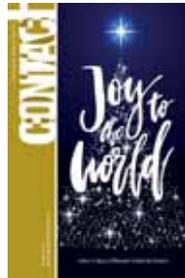
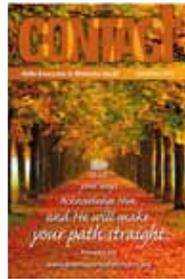
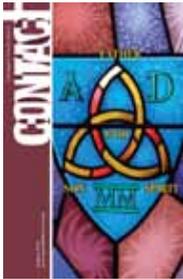
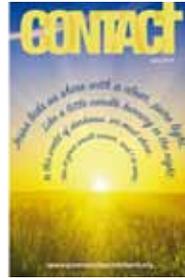
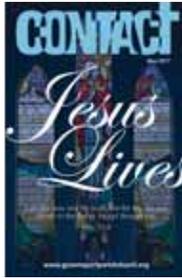
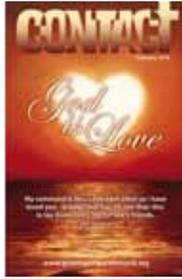
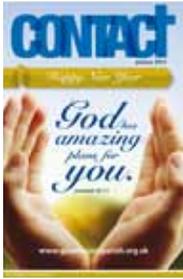
Cynthia

*"Bare branches of each tree
on this chilly January morn
look so cold so forlorn.*

*Gray skies dip ever so low
left from yesterday's dusting of snow.*

*Yet in the heart of each tree
waiting for each who wait to see
new life as warm sun and breeze will blow,
like magic, unlock springs sap to flow,
buds, new leaves, then blooms will grow."*





Contact through the years!

Groomsport Parish Church

CONTACT

groomsportparishchurch.org