

Groomsport Parish Church

CONTACT

May - June 2021
groomsportparishchurch.org



...by faith we might
receive the
promise of the Spirit

Galatians 3:14

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

Mae Burke
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The People's Warden

Gary Keenan
gary@groomsportparishchurch.org

The Rector's Glebe Warden

Billy McAnaney
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The People's Glebe Warden

Tony Anderson
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Treasurer

Florence McAnaney
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Secretary to Select Vestry

Heather Pentland
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Parish Office

Amanda McWhinney
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Sunday School

Maggie Townsley
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Vergar / Caretaker

Susan Moore
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Gift Aid Secretary

Amanda McWhinney
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Church Hall Bookings

David McKnight
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Parish Archivist

Barry Greenaway
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Hall Problems

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



From the Rector

Slowly, slowly we are beginning to see a return to something like the normality we had before lockdown. Of course, covid restrictions mean that we cannot, yet, return to worshipping in our lovely Church building. Still, over the next month or two, we will be considering how we might begin mid-week services and activities again. And of course, we will have to be mindful of the safety, health and welfare of all members of our Parish family. To this end, we will have to comply with the restrictions placed upon us by the Northern Ireland Executive.

But one of the questions uppermost in my mind is whether we want to return to what we were doing, or maybe now is the right time to reconsider what we do and how we do it. Before Covid-19 struck and we were placed under lockdown, a small group had started to meet to consider our strategy, our plan of action if you like, for the next few years ahead. The couple of meetings we had were really positive and I would like to see that group reformulated and once again start thinking about our future together. The easy thing would be to go back to where we were. There is comfort and warmth in the familiar and I know from experience that tradition is so very important to all of us. But at the same time, we have to acknowledge that we are living in fast-changing times and we have to ensure that the ministry of the Gospel is not left behind in all the hurry and change.

For example: I have been astonished at how enthusiastically our recorded services have been welcomed by so many. I realise that even if we were allowed to fully re-open tomorrow, there would still be a desire for these services to be continued. Yet, I know too that they are extremely expensive in terms of time and effort, and while we really enjoy our time together recording services, it is clear that we will not be able to sustain that level of activity for too much longer. The Select Vestry has already taken the decision to install cameras and the necessary technology to “live stream” our Sunday services. Recorded services will cease and friends will be able to tune in on Sundays to a “live” service. I realise, too, that there will be those who will be fearful for some time about returning to Church with all the worries about coming into contact with other people. How do we ensure that these friends of ours still feel part of our Church life?

Some of the challenges ahead must include our ministry to our young people. Maggie Townsley, our lead Sunday School teacher, has been heroic in keeping in touch with our young ones during lockdown. Maybe we can rethink how we ‘do’ Sunday School. Maybe we can all think how we might contribute to the care of our youngsters. We also have young people coming up to the age of confirmation. How can we keep them engaged in the life our Church, so that they will continue to remain faithful members of the Body of Christ in future years?

And what about our life together beyond

Sundays? Is there a place for a Parish coffee morning once a week? Should there be separate times and activities for women to meet together, other than the Mothers' Union? Is there any mileage in having a mid-week men's group? Should we be looking for deeper links with those groups and missionary societies that we support through our charitable giving?

And how do we engage with the wider Parish – Towerview, Orlock and Cove Bay in particular.

Part of me is breathing a huge sigh of relief that our Church life is slowly, slowly beginning to return to some kind of normality. But the nagging feeling I have in the back of my mind is this – Is this what God wants of us?

Duncan

Worship In The Church Halls

From April 4th, 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, pew 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.

Services For May And June

Sunday

02
May

Easter 5
St Philip and St James

9:30 am Service Of the Word - Canon
11:30 am Tyney Hall
Service Of The Word - Canon
6.00 pm Tyney Hall
Compline - Canon Tyney Hall

Sunday

09
May

Easter 6
Rogation Sunday

9:30 am Service Of the Word - Canon
Tyney Hall
11:30 am Holy Communion - Canon
Tyney Hall
6.00 pm Holy Communion - Canon
Tyney Hall

Thursday

13
May

Ascension
Day

11:30 am Holy Communion - Church

Sunday

16
May

Sunday After
Ascension

9:30 am Service Of the Word - Canon
Tyney Hall
11:30 am Service Of The Word - Canon
Tyney Hall
6.00 pm Compline - Canon Tyney Hall

Sunday

23
May

Pentecost

9:30 am Morning Prayer - Canon Tyney
Hall
11:30 am Morning Prayer - Canon Tyney
Hall
6.00 pm Evening Prayer - Canon Tyney
Hall

Sunday

30
May

Trinity Sunday

9:30 am Morning Prayer - Canon Tyney
Hall
11:30 am Morning Prayer - Canon Tyney
Hall
6.00 pm Compline - Canon Tyney Hall

Sunday
06
June

Trinity 1

- 9:30 am Service Of the Word - Canon Tyney Hall
11:30 am Service Of The Word - Canon Tyney Hall
6.00 pm Compline - Church

Sunday
20
June

Trinity 3

- 9:30 am Service Of the Word - Canon Tyney Hall
11:30 am Service Of The Word - Church
6.00 pm Compline - Canon Tyney Hall

Sunday
13
June

Trinity 2

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

Sunday
27
June

Trinity 4 St Peter

- 9:30 am Morning Prayer - Canon Tyney Hall
11:30 am Morning Prayer - Canon Tyney Hall
6.00 pm Evening Prayer - Church

OMA Foundation

Some of you will remember Lynsey McClean, (Proctor that was), the daughter of Richard and Lily Proctor. Lynsey over the past number of years, has been spending time in Uganda engaging with Christian families and groups. The Rector bumped into Lynsey a few months ago while he was out walking his dogs. Lynsey told him of the wonderful work being carried out by a husband and wife team who have set up a small charity in northern Uganda – a troubled part of God’s world. There is a further piece in this copy of “Contact” from Chris Dima, co-founder of the OMA foundation, in which he tells us of the work of his charity.

Having learned of OMA, the Select Vestry agreed to make a contribution from last year’s Harvest Appeal to OMA. Our contribution was joyfully received by Chris and he wrote us a wonderful letter of thanks. It is heart warming to know that Chris and his family in Gulu, Uganda tune in to our recorded services each week, and (more importantly) keep us in their prayers day by day. In a way, it makes me wonder, who are the true beneficiaries of this whole enterprise?!

The Select Vestry

Heather Pentland as secretary to the Select Vestry, has written elsewhere about the Annual (Easter) General Vestry held in Church on 18 May. I want to make a few personal comments.

Two people stood down as members of Vestry this year; Ken Boyd and Hester Kelly I cannot tell you what a joy it has been working with Ken over the past year as he has fulfilled the role of People's Warden. He has been a constant support to myself and the Select Vestry. He has stuffed envelopes, stuck labels and stamps on the same; he seemed to arrive in Church on a Sunday before I had even risen from my bed; he has kept in touch with those on his list and hasn't been afraid to gently nudge the Rector when he thought it was required! All this of course, whilst caring for his dear wife, Valerie, who has been hard put to it with her health.

Hester Kelly nobly (I thought) stood down from the Select Vestry to ensure we were not over our quota of 12 members (in addition to the Church Wardens and Glebe Wardens). Hester has in the past few years served as my Church Warden as well as People's Warden. Hester has a gentle prayerful presence and was at times a much needed listening ear when the Rector was at times struggling a wee bit. Hester still fulfils a number of behind the scenes roles.

Gary Keenan stood down as Rector's Warden but was promptly elected as People's Warden. In view of all that we have to do over the coming year, this was a wonderful appointment and will ensure both continuity and a great help to the new Rector's Warden.

Mae Burke has kindly agreed to be the Rector's Warden for this year. You will know that Mae brings a wealth of experience to the role in terms of organisational capability and initiative. It might seem a bit hard on Mae, who has only just handed over as the Branch Leader of our Mothers' Union, but I know she will be a wonderful asset to the Parish during the coming months.

Finally, one person who is never thanked enough. Our Vestry Secretary, Heather Pentland. There is a pile of work that has to be done before and after meetings of the Select Vestry. But perhaps the biggest and most important job, is keeping me "right". She has run a medium sized organisation of her own in years past and knows how gruelling that can be at times. She has an empathy for the Rector's calling and work, which is very rarely seen. Thank you, Heather.

Duncan

Vestry Notes

The last Select Vestry meeting of 2020 was the Extraordinary meeting on Monday 23 November.

At that meeting, Vestry was informed that the new camera had been purchased for recording live services and volunteers would be used to operate it after some training. The aim was to go live at the beginning of January but to continue online services for a while as well.

William reported problems with the fire alarm system. He has arranged for the electrician to sort the rusted kitchen extractor fan after lockdown. Minor work had to be done to the Rectory before the new tenants moved in on 1 December.

Every five years, the Church building is inspected by the Deanery. Groomsport Parish was the only one to receive a green light and those inspecting the Church passed comment on the excellent value for money we had had in our Church refurbishment.

Because of the latest Assembly announcement, Vestry had to rethink the Christmas arrangements, including the Christmas Fair. The hope was that Church would be able to open on Christmas Day.

It proved impossible to produce a Contact magazine before Christmas so there will be one in the New Year. Thanks were expressed to Mark and Tara for the extensive and hard work they had put into the magazine over the last number of years. The magazine will now be produced in-house. The Christmas Card will also be produced in-house and will be delivered to over 2,000 homes in the parish.

It was agreed that £900 raised from the Harvest Appeal would be split evenly between Women's Aid and a small charity in Uganda supporting unmarried Mums. The Rector thanked Mae Burke for all she had done over the last three years as Branch Leader of our Mothers' Union and said he would be appointing a new leader.

It was agreed Ashley Medical Centre could continue to use our halls for vaccinations.

Heather Pentland

Annual Easter Vestry

This was held in the Church after Morning Worship on Sunday 18 April. It was attended by 34 members of the congregation.

The Rector appointed Mae Burke as his Warden and William McAneney as his Glebe Warden. Gary Keenan was elected People's Warden and Tony Anderson People's Glebe Warden.

The following were elected to the Select Vestry:

Heather Pentland, Florence McAneney, Maureen Taggart, Dorothy Anne Crawford, Zandra Sloan, Jim Love, Dorothy McKnight, Helen Parkinson, Kate Murray, Barry Greenaway Bert Smith and Jenny Craythorne.

Heather Pentland was elected Vestry Secretary and Florence McAneney Treasurer.

Your Magazine

The Church Magazine has been running for many years, carefully put together it takes many hours of work. The magazine is now produced entirely from the Church office. We would like to thank Tara and Mark Brown for their long and faithful service in keeping the magazine both interesting and aesthetically pleasing. We appreciate everything they have done for us.

Over the next few months, you might see some minor changes to the magazine; we invite you to contribute new articles and ideas. If you would like to submit anything to the next issue of Contact Magazine, please email your article or ideas to office@groomsporthparishchurch.org. Please be sure to keep an eye on the pew leaflet, the Facebook page or the website for updates about future deadlines.

Amanda

Select Vestry 2021 / 22

At the Annual Vestry the following appointments were made:



Mae Burke
(Rector's Warden)



William McAneney
(Rector's Glebe Warden)



Heather Pentland
(Secretary)



Florence McAneney
(Treasurer)



Gary Keenan
(People's Warden)



Tony Anderson
(Peoples' Glebe Warden)



Maureen Taggart



*Dorothy Anne
Crawford*



Zandra Sloan



Jim Love



Dorothy McKnight



Helen Parkinson



Kate Murray



Barry Greenaway



Bert Smith



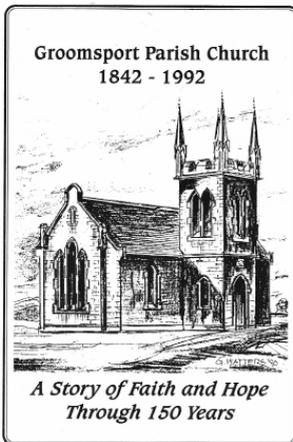
Jenny Craythorne

Tales From The Archives

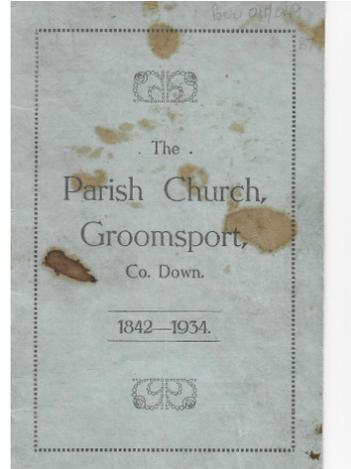
Spring 2021

The Tale this time around is about two Histories, both about Groomsport Parish Church. One was published in 1934 and the second in 1992. The Parish Archives are pleased to have two copies of each and we would very much like to hear from anyone who has further copies. The front cover of each is displayed below.

The author of the 1934 History was Mr C.D. Patterson, a member of the Select Vestry at the time. It provides a comprehensive account of Groomsport and the Parish from earliest times to 1934, written just eight years before the 100th anniversary. Two notable features of this little book are the significant series of photographs and the prolific collection of adverts at back and front for local tradesmen and companies active in 1934. These would have paid for the publication, which, modestly, Mr Patterson did not sign.



The person responsible for the 1992 History is



Raymond Mowat, a former parishioner and one-time Head of Geography in Bangor Grammar School. He also did not sign the book. Raymond (Ray to his friends, although his wife never calls him that!) completed his History of the Parish as part of its 150th anniversary. The front cover shows the Parish Church as it was shortly after it was built, complete with pinnacles. At that time, the Church would have faced east, the opposite to its present orientation. Apart from including material from the "Patterson History" and detailing the Parish history from 1934 to 1992, Ray provides a section on Groomsport House together with more recent photographs and information which does not appear in the earlier History. Together these histories are an invaluable record of Village and Parish.

If anyone wishes to consult these Histories please let me know and arrangements can be made.

Barry Greenaway - Parish Archivist

All In The Month Of May

200 years ago, on 5th May 1821 that Napoleon Bonaparte, Emperor of France (1804 – 1815) died of stomach cancer. He was in exile on the island of Saint Helena in the South Atlantic, aged 51.

175 years ago, on 30th May 1846 that Peter Carl Fabergé was born. This Russian goldsmith and jeweller was best known for his fabulously decorated Fabergé eggs.

150 years ago, on 11th May 1871 that John Herschel, British astronomer, mathematician, chemist and pioneering photographer died. Amongst other things, he named seven of Saturn's moons and investigated colour blindness. He was also President of the Royal Astronomical Society three times.

100 years ago, on 3rd May 1921 that Ireland was divided into Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland (now known as the Republic of Ireland).

Also 100 years ago, on 15th May, that the British Legion was founded.

90 years ago, on 1st May 1931 that the Empire State Building in New York City was officially opened.

80 years ago, on 1st–7th May 1941 that the German Blitz on Liverpool left nearly 3,000 dead and 70,000 homeless. Liverpool was the second most heavily targeted British city, after London.



Also 80 years ago, on 10th May 1941 that the last major attack on London during the Blitz caused heavy damage to many important buildings, including the Houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey, St James Palace and Lambeth Palace, several railway stations and hospitals, the British Museum and the Old Bailey. More than 1,300 people were killed on one night. At one point during the Blitz, London was bombed for 57 nights in a row.

75 years ago, on 11th May 1946 that the first CARE packages for Europe arrived in Le Havre to help people who were starving after WWII. The first CARE packages were actually surplus US Army rations.

70 years ago, on 3rd May 1951 that the Festival of Britain and the Royal Festival Hall in London were opened. The aim of the Festival was to lift the nation's spirits by celebrating British industry, arts and science.

Also 70 years ago, on 9th May 1951 that the Lake District National Park was established. It was Britain's second national park.

Also 70 years ago, on 25th May 1951 that the British spies Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean fled to Moscow. They were members of the infamous Cambridge spy ring, and their whereabouts remained unknown until 1956.

65 years ago, on 24th May 1956 that the first Eurovision Song Contest was held in Lugano, Switzerland. It was won by Switzerland.

60 years ago, on 1st May 1961 that betting away from racecourses was legalised in the UK and the first betting shops opened.

Also 60 years ago, on 28th May 1961 that Amnesty International was founded in London.

40 years ago, on 13th May 1981 that Pope John Paul II was shot and seriously wounded by a Turkish gunman in an assassination attempt in St Peter's Square, Vatican City.

30 years ago, on 16th May 1991 that Queen Elizabeth II became the first British monarch to address the US Congress.

25 years ago, on 30th May 1996 that Prince Andrew, Duke of York, and his wife Sarah, Duchess of York, were divorced.

20 years ago, on 7th May 2001 that Great Train Robber Ronnie Biggs returned to the UK from Brazil where he had lived as a fugitive for 36 years. He was immediately arrested and sent to prison to complete his sentence. Released on compassionate grounds in 2009, he died in 2013.

10 years ago, on 2nd May 2011 that Osama bin Laden, Saudi Arabian-born terrorist, died. Founder of al-Qaeda, he was thought to have masterminded the 9/11 attacks on the USA. Shot dead by US forces in Pakistan.



The Journey of OMA Foundation, Gulu City, Uganda.

OMA Meaning 'Opportunities Made Available', is a journey God called us to embark on in 2019. Before we got married, we had gone through our different kinds of experiences. Gloria had gone through school, but the job market was very competitive and made it very hard for her to get sustaining jobs. Despite all that, she was able to get short contracts here and there. One day, in 2011, after her work shift at 10 pm on her way home, she noticed young prostitutes standing on street corners and young street kids trying to get sleep shelter under buildings. It was at that point that she felt convicted to change lives. The kind of jobs she sought out to do next were those that were in the community, serving and doing the best she could to see the lives of people in those communities change.

challenging childhood that made it easy for him to relate with the young groups of people we work with and serve, but that story will be for another day. His turning point was in 2013 when he came across a 13 year old girl who came by his house looking for a job. She said since her mom got blind, she was forced to go out and look for jobs to make ends meet. This disturbed him and forced him to find out where she lived, so he could understand more about her situation. Indeed, what she said was true.





OMA Foundation is comprised of eight Board members, three full time staff and five part time staff. We keep getting volunteers depending on the need, project or outreach being done.

What sort of things do we do? Our vision is to see a dependable youth filled community and our mission is to create opportunities for self-growth and development among the youth. Through our opportunity creations program, we offer skills training, discipleship programs, financial literacy training, numeracy and literacy training, business mentorship, start-up and support, entrepreneurial-ship skills training, mentorship programs and school outreach programs to help keep those in school from dropping out. Having the ability to take care of and provide for yourself and those in your household as a young adult is an ultimate goal for most youths in our community.

He felt convicted at that point to keep paying them visits and whatever he had, he shared the little he made with them. He also had the opportunity of telling them about Jesus and they gave their lives to him. To cut a long story short, when we got married, it was then that everything finally came to play. We were both convicted to start OMA Foundation after praying about God's purpose for our marriage. Seeing many youths in our country, jobless, unskilled, undisciplined, unemployed and some uneducated also pushed us to start OMA foundation. Our love for Christ and ministry also motivated this journey.

Who set it up? It was set up by Chris and Gloria Ongeyowun Dima. They are the founders and vision bearers of OMA Foundation.

How many people are involved?



We do our best to help them achieve this. We work mainly with young adults between the ages of 15 and 30, especially those who have dropped out of school and those unable to go to school. We make and sell craft items like bags, accessories, clothes, house decor and kitchen items to mention but a few. Our products are consumed by people who appreciate craft both on the local market and international market. Under the vocational skills training, we offer tailoring classes, crocheting classes, weaving, soap making, and candle making. Hopefully, in due time, because it is in high demand, hair dressing

will be introduced. We are currently going through a 'sponsor a learner campaign' and this is supposed to cater for their learning requirements, graduation and business start-up so that they can have something to start with right after they are done with the class.

Chris and Gloria Dima

In November, Groomsport Parish made a donation to OMA Foundation from our Harvest Appeal. With the funds, OMA were able to purchase two sewing machines for use by local girls making clothing and crafts to sell in the OMA shop. We hope to provide further reports from Chris in OMA in the coming months.



The Delicate Miracle

He performs wonders that cannot be fathomed, miracles that cannot be counted Job 5:9

Miracles

It's not always the big miracles –
the thunderous, pulsating, ground-shaking ones –
but those that are small, delicate, unheralded:
like when the sobs finally stop,
or when the anxiety begins to fade,
or when the blackbird decides
that there is enough light
to begin praising the new day.

It's when your broken heart eventually accepts
that it can begin to heal,
or when the delicate stem pushes through the dirt
to discover that air and light are real.

It may just be to open your eyes
after a night at the end of your rope,
to find that your lungs are way ahead of you
and never stopped breathing in hope.

It's not the big miracles, not the ones that shout and shine,
it's the small miracles that are sent to show us
the loving hand of the divine.

Gideon Heugh

Extract from the Christian charity
Tearfund's Lent Devotional.
www.tearfund.org



100 years of the British Legion

One hundred years ago, on 15th May 1921, the British Legion was founded in the aftermath of the First World War to provide support to veterans of the British Armed Forces, their families and dependants.

It was created at a time when two million people were unemployed. More than six million had served in the war: of those who came back, 1.75 million had suffered some kind of disability, and half of those were disabled permanently.

Four organisations came together at the instigation of Lancastrian, Lance Bombardier Tom Lister, who was angered at the Government's unwillingness to help, and Field Marshal Earl Haig, who had been commander in Chief of the British Forces. The Legion campaigned for fair treatment of those who had given everything for their country, and it continues this work to this day.

In 1922, the Legion's poppy factory opened in the Old Kent Road, London, with 40 disabled men manufacturing 1000 poppies a week. The first Poppy Day was held that same year. The Festival of Remembrance began in 1927, and the Legion became 'Royal' in 1971 – 50 years ago – on its golden anniversary.

At first, membership of the Legion was confined to ex-Service personnel, but it was expanded to include serving members of the Forces in 1981.



Orkney's Italian Chapel



Over the past few years, we have been fortunate enough to visit the island of Orkney on two occasions. On the first visit, we were unable to visit the Italian Chapel which I had long wanted to see, but the last time we went, we were so impressed by it that we went for two lengthy visits.

The Chapel was built by Italian prisoners of war captured during the North African campaign. They were housed there towards the end of the war, having been sent to work on the Churchill Barriers, a massive series of concrete causeways effectively sealing off the eastern approaches to Scarpa Flow. Initially, the thirteen cheerless huts were all that the area consisted of but the Italians, presumably homesick and no doubt very cold, made concrete paths and planted flowers, transforming the whole area.

One of the artistic prisoners, Domenico Chiocchetti managed to create a statue of St George from a framework of barbed

wire, which he covered in cement. They built a theatre and scenery, a recreation hut, complete with a concrete billiard table and a "square" where they placed the statue. It should be noted that the materials used were mostly second hand and some of it apparently worthless scrap. They lacked one thing of great importance to them, a chapel, despite the fact that the War Office Inspector of POW camps had recommended that one be provided.

Fortunately a change of camp commandant and the arrival of an enthusiastic padre set in motion the ambitious idea of building their own Chapel, aided of course by the previously mentioned Chiocchetti. Also amongst the prisoners was a cement worker, a smith and electricians along with a number of others keen to assist. Late in 1943, two Nissan huts were made available to the prisoners. They joined them together end to end, and Chiocchetti set to work to create a sanctuary at one end.



For the walls, the corrugated iron was hidden by plaster board and an altar, altar rail and holy water stoop were beautifully designed and moulded in concrete. Chiocchetti created an altarpiece featuring the Madonna and Child based on a holy picture that he had carried with him throughout the war. The original painting is The Madonna of the Olives, painted by Nicolo Barabino and entitled Regina Pacis (Queen of Peace), particularly poignant under the circumstances of their presence there.



The altarpiece can be seen here (pictured below), flanked by painted glass, stained glass windows. The candlesticks were created by the prisoner who was a smith, from iron.



Not satisfied with this, the work continued. The rest of the Chapel contrasted singularly with the sanctuary. Palumbi, the smith, who had in his time worked as a wrought iron worker in America, created a wonderful rood-screen and gates which took him four months.

The helpful commandant managed to acquire enough plasterboard to line the whole building. Chiocchetti, with help from another artist, painted the walls to look like brickwork with a dado along the base, imitating carved stone in a trompe l'oeil (Picture left). The whole effect is quite extraordinary and we had to look very closely to see that it was in fact a flat surface, very cleverly painted. The atmosphere in the Chapel is powerful, there is a real sense of the presence of God. The love and care bestowed upon this Chapel by prisoners, far from home in what must have seemed a pretty inhospitable place is palpable. The picture at the start of this article illustrates just how beautiful the entire Chapel is. The woodwork was created from salvage from a wrecked ship.

Having achieved so much, the creators now set to improving the external appearance of their Chapel, as a Nissan hut is not a thing of beauty. Using largely concrete and cement, an archway and pillars were created as the main part of an impressive facade. Finally, a fresco of the head of Christ was created in red clay and placed above the entrance.

Duncan had suggested that I write this article well over a year ago now after our visit to Orkney, but I never quite got round to it; perhaps it is timely to bring it out now as we may well be enjoying more local holidays once indeed, that we can take holidays at all.

A footnote to all this is that my interest in this amazing place, was sparked by our much loved late parishioner Betty McIlwaine. She had been given a book about Chiochetti and his work on the Chapel by a friend of hers, Philip Paris. He in fact wrote the book and had signed it for her.

She very kindly lent it to me and as the above article testifies, it made a lasting impression on me. An impression which only deepened when I saw the real thing.

Perhaps some of you will be able to visit in the future. Orkney is a fascinating place, steeped in history going back to Neolithic times, Viking carvings, the Old Man of Hoy, a wonderful music and craft tradition, amazing coastal walks and delicious local food; there is much to enjoy.

Carol



God In The Arts



The Revd Michael Burgess writes about God in the Arts with 'May Morning on Magdalen Tower' by Holman Hunt. The painting hangs in the Lady Lever Art Gallery in Liverpool.

When Van Gogh painted 'The Raising of Lazarus', he turned to Rembrandt for inspiration. But in place of the figure of Jesus, he painted a warm, glowing sun, radiant in the sky, and shining out to bring renewal of life to Lazarus and his sisters.

From time immemorial people have placed the sun at the centre of life and worship. As Christianity grew and spread, it took over ceremonies and practices associated with that belief, but then moved the focus from the sun above to the Son, Jesus, on the earth below.

We can see that in the traditions and worship of Christmas and Easter. In May

we celebrate the goodness and fruitfulness of nature brought by the sun with Maypole dancing, the crowning of the May Queen, and games and sports, just as the Romans went dancing in the fields at this time, rejoicing in the gifts of Flora, the goddess of nature. In May the druids would greet the sun in the sky as they gathered on a high place.

That custom persisted for several centuries, particularly at Magdalen College in Oxford. In 1840 Dr John Bloxam revived the ceremony. Holman Hunt, one of that group of artists known as the Pre-Raphaelites, visited Oxford in 1851 and so enjoyed the Christmas festivities that he decided to honour the college life in one of his paintings. That decision took many years to reach the canvas: his painting of 'May Morning on Magdalen Tower' is one of his last complete works in 1890.

We can easily identify the choristers gathered to greet the rising sun in music and song. Amid the clouds and blue sky above, the birds are flying and the floor where the choir stand is bedecked with flowers. It is a glorious celebration of the fruitfulness of May and the summer: God's creation bringing so many gifts. The president of the college is the man with the dark beard at the right of the painting, and Dr Bloxam is beside him.

But there is an unusual character there also, at the side of the painting – a Parsee, an ancient worshipper of the sun from Persia, perhaps representing not just those who look to the light of the sun,

but are also searching for the light of truth. The young chorister in the middle looking out at us holds a lily, the symbol of Mary, the mother of God's Son.

All creation is gathered to greet the dawn and the rising sun of May – the birds above and people below, young and old, Christian and non-Christian - all united to proclaim the goodness and renewal promised by the sun.

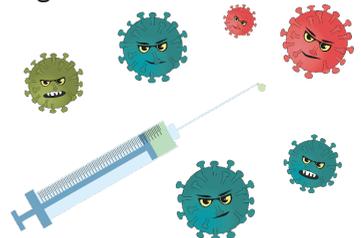
Holman Hunt said that he wanted to represent 'the spirit of a beautiful, primitive and in a large sense eternal service.' Here is a vivid reminder that the faith we profess opens our eyes to God's goodness and glory symbolised in the rising sun, and that He welcomes everyone to share in those gifts.

Meet The Medical Team



Dr Donnelly (R), Sofia - Practice nurse (Centre), Alex.

In recent weeks a dedicated team from Ashley Medical Centre have been in our halls on a Monday Afternoon. The clinic has been providing much-needed Covid-19 vaccinations to their patients. It's a big undertaking, as they try to get vaccinations administered to all of their patients. Keep up the good work!



Bookstall - May - June

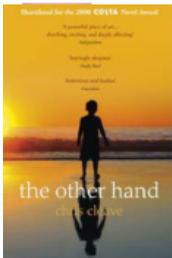
The days are getting longer, the nights lighter and many of us have had our vaccination, so things are looking up! I hope that this mixed bag of reviews will add to your joy.

The Goldfinch by Donna Tartt



I start with a substantial book, both in size; it is 864 pages long, so not for the faint-hearted, but also in worth and, I think, significance. It won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 2014 and is well worth the time spent in reading it. The story deals with the life of a fourteen-year-old boy, taking us through to his mid-thirties. His life is upended when as a teenager, he and his mother are caught up in a terrible event, his father is already absent and after the incident, his mother is no longer with him. From here, the stage is set for his mourning, searching, loss, although the family of a wealthy friend takes him in. One small painting of a goldfinch reminds him of his lost mother but also draws him into the criminal underworld. It is peopled by a Dickensian range of characters both in New York and Las Vegas. Donna Tartt manages a wonderful story, convincing dialogue and a deeply thoughtful conclusion to this quite amazing book.

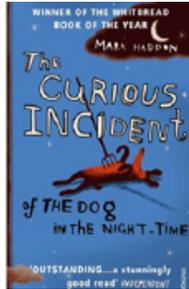
The Other Hand by Chris Cleave



Another, very different but utterly compelling story, this is the depiction of a friendship between two women from utterly different worlds whose lives connect on a beach in Nigeria. Little Bee is a young Nigerian girl, Sarah the wife of a journalist, living in Kingston Upon Thames, with a young son who only answers to the name of Batman. The dramatic events of their meeting and the long term fall out from those events make up the compelling foundation of this

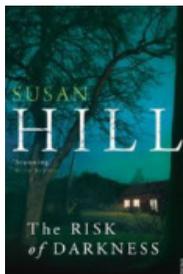
story. The initial encounter is only revealed gradually, which adds to the essential drive to keep on reading. I don't think anyone would ever regret reading this.

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time by Mark Haddon



Not your average murder mystery certainly, though this book could be rightly placed in that category. It deals with Christopher Boone, a fifteen-year-old boy who has Asperger's syndrome and is fascinated by Sherlock Holmes. He loves order, lists, and the truth, so

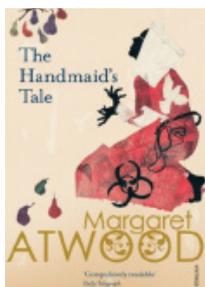
when a neighbour's dog is murdered, he is absolutely determined to solve the mystery. The investigation leads him well out of his comfort zone and the story deals sensitively with the anxieties that children and indeed adults like him experience. The story is dark, often funny, and, I must warn readers, peppered with strong language. Nevertheless, I am sure many of you will enjoy the straightforward logic of Christopher's thinking:- All the other children at my school are stupid. Except I'm not meant to call them stupid, even though that's what they are. I'm meant to say that they have learning difficulties or special needs. But this is stupid because everyone has learning difficulties. After all, learning to speak French or understanding Relativity is difficult, and also everyone has special needs, like Father who has to carry a little packet of artificial sweetening tablets around with him to put in his coffee to stop him getting fat, or Mrs Peters who wears a beige coloured hearing aid or Siobhan who has glassed so thick that they give you a headache if you borrow them, and none of these people are Special Needs, even if they have special needs.



I am a great fan of Susan Hill's Simon Serrailer series of detective stories and this doesn't disappoint. It deals with unsolved crimes of child abduction and is predictably chilling and gripping. As with all this series, they are set within the wider family unit, which exasperates and comforts

Simon variously, his GP sister Cat, his nephews Sam and Felix and the cathedral, which is always a part of these stories. A warning here, this is the third in a series of ten, I read this one first then simply had to look out the other nine, so good are they!

The Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood



I first read this about twenty years ago and was both fascinated and appalled by it. I then reread it when the recent dramatisations were televised, it definitely withstood another read, always a good sign in a book. The tale is set in a dystopian New England

in the near future. A strongly patriarchal, quasi Christian, totalitarian state, known as Gilead has overthrown the United States government. The story is told by Offred, who is one of the handmaids. These women, living originally in what to the patriarchy of Gilead was a corrupt, polluted, promiscuous society, were systematically robbed of their rights once the government was overthrown. They could no longer have a bank account, a job and freedom of movement; then, many of those of childbearing age were rounded up and brought into Gilead. The concept of a handmaiden is derived from the story of Rachel and her handmaiden Bilhah where Rachel says, "Behold my maid Bilhah, go into her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her" (Genesis 30: 1-3). This concept was deemed necessary by the people of Gilead because most women at that time

were infertile, rendered so by pollution and nuclear warfare. The people of Gilead needed to reproduce to continue their development. The process of control and domination of the handmaids form a major part of the story and it is chilling. Although I enjoyed watching the dramatised version, much of the power of the tale is in the novel itself. It has been thought of as a deeply feminist novel though Atwood denies this; it is in fact more about the use and particularly abuse of power, both by men and women.

The Summer that Never Was by Peter Robinson



I must confess that though I have put many Peter Robinson books on the shelves, donated over the years, I had never until now, read any. I did not have high expectations but have to say that I really enjoyed it, once I got into it. It is one of an extensive series of

Inspector Banks novels many of which were made into a television series. I notice on the front that a reviewer from The Independent says: "Any reader who still misses Morse should promptly resolve to go north with Banks". I am not sure that I would quite agree with that. Nevertheless, this story of discovering the remains of a school friend of Banks who disappeared at the age of fourteen coinciding with a teenager's disappearance creates a tense and emotional time for the detective as he recalls parts of his teenage life long dormant. For those who enjoy detective thrillers, this will be a good read.

Carol

No More Books Please

Despite the fact that at the time of writing we are still not using the hall on a regular basis, I see that people are occasionally visiting the book stall. Could I ask please for no more donations at the moment? We simply have no more room to store them. If you are anxious to be rid of some books, wait until we have another book fair, or please find an alternative way of recycling them.

christian aid week

10-16 MAY

In 2020, for the first time ever, as far as I am aware, there was no door to door collection by Christian Aid Volunteers in the village.

We have all been living through the strangest times that most of us have ever known, or can remember, for the past year. But that has not stopped some people from achieving great things, like Captain Tom. And what about all the scientists who in record time have invented and made available the vaccines?

However, life is still not as it used to be, so Christian Aid week in the village is going to be different too.

Please return your filled Christian Aid Envelope to either Groomspout Parish Church office, Monday to Friday 9:00 am - noon, or the Presbyterian Church or to the Spar shop in Groomspout before Sunday 16th May 2021. If you wish you can contribute online to www.justgiving.com/GroomspoutCAweek2021. Thank you for your continued help and support for Christian Aid, it is much appreciated.

Christian Aid envelopes will be distributed to every house in the village and available at the morning services in the Parish and Presbyterian Churches on the 9th of May.

Each envelope will contain details of how you can contribute and where you can leave your filled envelopes for collection between the 10th and 16th of May.

Christian Aid's groundbreaking work began in 1946 when founded by British and Irish churches to help refugees following the Second World War. Since then, and now in its 75th year, it continues to provide humanitarian relief and support for poor communities worldwide while highlighting suffering, tackling injustice and championing people's rights.

Your contributions will help continue that work.

Mervyn Nelson





Aubergine Bake

(from Carla Lane for National Vegetarian Week)

Serves 2 - Ingredients

- 2 large tomatoes
- 1 large onion
- Some grated cheese
- Small carton plain yoghurt
- Breadcrumbs
- Herbs
- Seasoning



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

Method

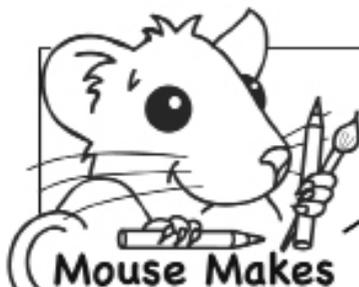
Grease dish using a little vegetable oil.
Place one layer of sliced tomatoes, covered by a layer of sliced onions, followed by a layer of aubergine slices. Repeat process, adding salt, pepper and herbs to taste.
Cover top with breadcrumbs and grated cheese.
Finally pour yoghurt over the top.
Bake in a hot oven for about 40 minutes.

I found this recipe in my late mother-in-law's recipe book.

Mushrooms, beans, peas etc may be added according to personal taste.
Or chicken, ham etc could be added to make it a non vegetarian dish.
I bake at 220C, but my oven is cool.
An easy tasty dish.

Zandra Sloan





Mouse Makes

Can you find these names of Jesus in the word search?

SON OF GOD

Matthew 3:16-17



KING OF KINGS

Revelation 17:14

PROPHET

Luke 24:19



PRIEST

1 Timothy 2:5

ROCK

1 Corinthians 10: 4

LORD

1 Corinthians 1:9

AMEN

Revelation 3:14

LIFE

John 11:25-27

MESSIAH

John 1:41

SHEPHERD

John 10:11

LIGHT

John 8:12



WORD

John 1:1-50



BREAD

John 6:35

CREATOR

1 John 1:3

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

CHRIST

Matthew 16:16

SAVIOUR

John 3:16-17

HOLY ONE

Mark 1:24

VINE

John 15:5



DOOR

John 10:9



WAY

John 14:6

LAMB

John 1:29



Thoughts of a Blow In...

After what has been a grim winter, we are more grateful than ever for the start of spring. A chorus of birdsong, those first snowdrops and crocuses and the occasional still, sunny day are all hopeful signs. The brighter mornings and especially the lengthening light in the evenings also lift the spirits.

As so many of us are still necessarily isolated, contact from family, friends and neighbours is more heartwarming than ever. It could be a message exchange from someone far away, or a quick text from a neighbour to say they have left some home-cooked food at the door. Even under normal circumstances, these gestures are appreciated, but they mean more than ever, currently. In the same vein, I know we all appreciate the phone calls from our diligent church team, not only as acts of individual kindness but as a welcome reminder that we are part of the parish family.

I've had glimpses of the children next door over the winter, usually after their homeschooling in the afternoons. The odd bit of interaction has been such a pleasure, whether to pass on some cake or a small

birthday gift at a safe social distance. Watching them at their games is also fun. The other afternoon, when they had their goalposts set up on the front lawn, I was highly amused to see the two younger children practising their goal kicks, taking it in turn to be the goalie.

Emma, now nine, relied on her straightforward athleticism. However, over a year younger, Leo had a series of fancy moves on running up to the ball that would be the envy of the Premier League. His resulting goal was no doubt claimed to be as a result of his undoubted style and not that his sister had slipped on the wet grass at the vital moment.

I would like to wish you all a safe and blessed Easter season, although our marking of these important dates in our Church calendar will again be very different this year. With the coming of spring, this lovely verse from Sunday in Spring by Marianne Poloskey seemed to show the beauty in nature we can find all around us.

Cynthia

Each leaf,
each blade of grass
vies for attention.
Even weeds
carry tiny blossoms
to astonish us.

Prayer Room

A Prayer For Him

Him!

You know him well.

Too well,

Yet sometimes hardly at all.

Always changing

This and that,

Never satisfied

Always complaining.

Right pain he is.

Bore for the Olympics he would.

Thinks he's smart,

Reads his Bible too.

Ready to give an opinion.

A Christian is he?

Likes a bit of gossip.

Loves to hear the worst.

Considers himself better than most.

Hard worker he thinks,

Like the path to Heaven

Is made of good works,

Proud of what he does,

Complains that others don't do half as much,

Lazy lot,

Always half-hearted he says,

Poor lot,

Move over and let new faces in.

Make this Parish a better place.

Get rid of the old wood.

Waste of space they are.

You know him well,

You encounter him every day,

Can't avoid him,

Closer than you think.

Sound familiar,

So who is he?

He is me!

Prayer Room

I light a candle to remind me of who I am,
of the light inside me inside each one of
us.

To remember those we love, In the past,
present and future
For in love time is meaningless

I light a candle to remember the light that
surrounds us and the gifts and miracles of
each day

We pray for:
Unity of Spirit in our Church.
Everyone receiving results of health tests
this week. Be with them.
Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.
All the people who use the boats in our
harbour.
Help the afflicted in our country and be
with the refugees in all countries because
of war

*Dear Heavenly Father - I give thanks to Duncan for all he does for
us. Lord bind us together. Amen.*



Amen

We Need A Parish 'LOGO'

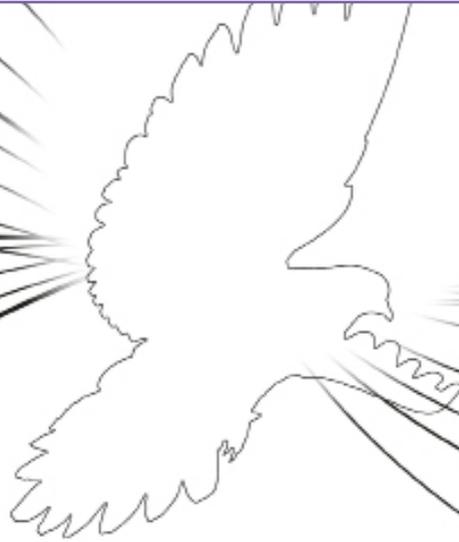
Time to dig out the felt tips and crayons, put on your artist's smock, and design a 'logo' for Groomsport Parish Church.

We're looking for a design that sums up who we are; a design that we can use for headed note paper, service sheets and programmes.

We're looking for entries from anyone in the congregation or wider parish.

A prize of £50 will go to the designer of the chosen logo. There will be a further prize of £25 to a selected design from one of our younger people (up to the age of 14). Who knows, our youngsters might produce the chosen logo!

Entries to be received at the Parish Office by 31st August.



...by faith we might
receive the promise of the Spirit

Galatians 3:14

Groomsport Parish Church

CONTACT

groomsportparishchurch.org