

# The Voice February - March Edition

## *The Rector writes .....*

"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."

This quotation is from the pen of Anne Frank who spent nearly two years in hiding with her family during World War II. During her time hiding she kept a diary chronicling what happened in the Secret Annex. What she wrote offers great quotes and sayings that reveal that she had a rich inner life and show that she never lost her faith in people even in one of modern history's darkest moments.

It is inspirational to look at a story, like Anne Frank, and see what can be achieved even under a 'lockdown' that went on for nearly two years. These dark days of winter and the continuing restrictions provides all of us with a 'lockdown' experience and an opportunity to discover new things about what it means to be the church.

"We are indeed the light of the world--but only if our switch is turned on". - John Hagee

It is a question worth asking... have the matters of faith and the questions of eternity found new answers during a time when the weekly coming together as a congregation has been stopped or brought on-line?

As Rector, I have noticed that for many the online services have filled the gap and kept parishioners connected and strong in faith. For some the online services have provided a regular worship when they were previously not weekly attenders. For some the online services have given opportunities to participate in worship through making recordings of readings, psalms and prayers.

In order that we might be "lights" in a dark world, the time of Lent beginning on Ash Wednesday will help us to retune deeper to the central light of our faith Jesus Christ. As we humbly come before Him we do so with a penitent heart and look forward to the victory of Easter Day.

As I write these words I am still unsure if the Easter Services will be in-church or continuing online. The decisions around the "when and how" of church opening changes weekly so we must prepare ourselves to greet the triumph of resurrection once again without a full congregation singing together those wonderful Easter Hymns.

Rather than being disappointed by the prospect of another Easter without a full church lets redouble our commitment to find a deeper relationship with God during the days of Lent knowing that in that new relationship God will bless us.

*Revd Malcolm*

## Parish Notices

### Harvest Appeal Update

The final total for the 2019 Harvest Appeal was £9000.00, including Gift Aid. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this excellent total. The full amount will be allocated to the 'Fields of Life' Project to build another Agherton Well allocating remaining funds to other, water related, Fields of Life projects.

### Organising your wedding

Weddings are very special occasions in the life of any family and in the life of the church. When considering getting married please check possible dates with the Rector **before** confirming arrangements. It is expected that couples will make a regular commitment to the life of the church in preparation for marriage.

account and the 'one cheque' means that it must be lodged then split between different accounts. This also has to be recorded in multiple places and so accounting can be hard to track.

### **Special Financial Information from the Select Vestry**

2020 was a year which challenged us all and a big thank you is due to, the parishioners of Agherton, for your continued generous financial support for the work of the church

While the 2020 accounts have yet be finalised, we are pleased to note that in the past year Freewill Offering contributions have increased significantly, thanks to the large number of parishioners who responded positively to the Giving in Grace Appeal and to those who set up standing orders to maintain their contributions while the church was closed. Well done to you all!

As restrictions on church opening and attendance due to the ongoing pandemic are likely to continue for some time, we would encourage those who still contribute through FWO envelopes to consider switching to Standing Order. Further details and a form to send to your bank or building society are available from Leisa in the parish office. (Tel 7083 3277)

Please note that the books for 2020 closed on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2021, so any 2020 donations received after that date will be added to your 2021 contributions.

Receipts for your 2020 Freewill Offering, Building Fund and Harvest Appeal contributions are now ready. Parishioners receiving their magazines by post will have their receipts included. Receipts for all other parishioners will be delivered with their April/May magazine, covid regulations permitting. Alternatively you can contact the office and get your receipt posted. Thank you again

### **Church of Ireland Synod: Video celebrates 30 years of women's ordination to priesthood.**

WOMEN clergy and ordinands in the Church of Ireland have celebrated 30 years since the ordination of women to the priesthood was introduced, in a video that was shown to the General Synod during its online meeting.

The short film was put together during the lockdown, and features clips of more than 60 women priests receiving a chalice or candle before passing it on off-screen. In the background, the Revd Dr Anne-Marie O'Farrell, a non-stipendiary minister in Dublin who is also a professional musician, plays her own composition on the harp.

Women now make up about 20 per cent of the Church of Ireland's 500 serving clergy. The Church's first female bishop, the Bishop of Meath & Kildare, the Most Revd Pat Storey, was elected in 2013.

Introducing the video to the Synod, **the Archbishop of Armagh**, the Most Revd John McDowell, urged members to reflect on how the ministry of women in Holy Orders had "enriched our witness" and could better shape the Church's mission.

Not enough women are serving in ministry or coming forward for ordination at present, he said: there are significantly fewer than had been hoped for 30 years ago, when the law was changed. "Perhaps the working group headed by the Bishop of Meath will soon help us shed some light on why that is the case," he suggested. "May God prosper the work."

### **Ministry to the Sick**

Please inform the rector if parishioners are in hospital, going into hospital, are being transferred or discharged. Please contact the office Tel: 028 7083 3277

## Lent – a good time to deepen your prayer life *By the Rev John Tyler.*

Lent is a time to take stock of ourselves spiritually. This includes setting aside extra time for prayer. Here are some helpful things to remember as you settle down to it:

People have been praying since Adam had a grandson named Enosh. The Bible tells us (Genesis 4:26) that it was during his days when 'men began to call on the name of the Lord'. They have been doing it ever since.

People have had their prayers answered by God since Genesis, too. But if you want to read some beautiful prayers – and answers to them, browse through the Psalms. Again and again the psalmist writes: "the Lord heard my cry".

So – what do you need to bring to prayer? Just the tiniest amount of faith that God is even there.... Jesus assures us that even faith as big as a tiny mustard seed will be effective.

What gives you the right to come before Almighty God? Jesus does. The Bible is clear that "there is one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ". (1 Timothy 2:5)

The Bible makes clear that God does not stand on ceremony – in fact, He prefers our personal, spontaneous prayers. Jesus was

very matter of fact about it: "When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." (Matthew 6:6)

The Bible assures us that prayer will bring us good things: "we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need". (Hebrews 4:16)

Above all, prayer must be made with a pure heart. "If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened." (Psalm 66:18) That simply means that if you know you are doing something wrong, and intend to keep right on doing it, don't waste your time praying.

Finally, what can be the results of your prayers this Lent? Well, here are seven, for starters....

1. Joy and deep happiness. (John 16:24)
2. Relief from your worry, stress and tension (Philippians 4:6,7)
3. Wisdom and more mental clarity (James 1:5,6)
4. Protection and deliverance from temptations (Matthew 26:41)
5. An ability to share the Good News of Jesus to other people (Matthew 9:38)
6. Strength to persevere when you feel under spiritual attack (Ephesians 6:18)

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## Nails

A father gave his bad-tempered son a bag of nails and a hammer and asked him to hammer a nail into the back of the fence every time he lost his temper.

Over the next few weeks he drove nails into the fence, often several times in a day. On each day when he did not lose his temper, his father asked him to pull out one nail.

Eventually the young boy was finally able to remove all the nails from the fence. He was excited to share this achievement with his father. As expected, the father was pleased and led the boy to the fence and pointed out the holes in the fence. They will remain there forever. Similarly, when you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like these.

A person who speaks words that build up and encourage is a tree of life, but a person who speaks words that overwhelm and depress crushes the spirit.

In other words, **kind words heal and help; cutting words wound and maim.** Prov 15v4



## Portstewart's Historical Link with the Royal Air Force

If you wrap up warm and take a walk along the coastal path beside the Old Town Golf Course, just beyond the pumping station and after the fourth hole look towards the sea and you will notice a big concrete arrow on the ground. You might wonder what is that and where did it come from?

Well, having spoken to Mr Harry Cullen who took the initiative to restore this piece of local history, he would like to outline the story.

During the second World War bomber aircraft would fly from the airbase at Aghanloo near Limavady and head out to the North Atlantic to protect the ships carrying people, food supplies, munitions and soldiers to and from Britain. German submarines targeted shipping coming along the North Coast and were sometimes successful in hitting supply ships, some of which remain off Malin Head today, one was loaded with tanks.

The convoys were very vulnerable to attack and the job of the RAF, often using intelligence gathered to locate their whereabouts, was to intercept and destroy the enemy's submarines using depth charges.

The skill of the pilots was paramount. When they left the airbase at Aghanloo in light bombers, they had to make a very steep climb to avoid crashing into Binevenagh mountain. Their course then took them along Portstewart Strand, continuing along the coast making their way to 'The Arrow' to pick up the correct course. The aircraft would have flown very low over the residences in Millbank Road and Portrush Road.

To help set the right path, pontoon barges

were moored off the coast, the planes would drop smoke bombs trying to hit the barges and this manoeuvre would confirm the direction they would need to take. The British Government was also mindful of Ireland's neutrality in the war and were also trying their best not to fly over Irish territorial waters, but in reality, it wasn't big a problem.

Whilst all of this was going on the 'Top Brass' were looking on with binoculars from a high point on the Portrush Road – possibly someone's home? These exercises called 'bomb range indicators' helped the pilots to adjust their sights and thereby give greater accuracy for the direction of flight. The Causeway Coast and Glens Council have agreed to provide an information board early in 2021.

So, with all this local history buried under the rocks and grass, Harry Cullen set about finding volunteers to clear the turf and boulders. Bernard Finlay and a few of the Golf Club greenkeepers set about this heavy, arduous work. 'The Arrow' was originally laid sometime between 1940 and 1942, so it was ready for a bit of TLC!

Having cleared the area to reveal the concrete arrow, it was cleaned and defined clearly with stones which members of the local Scout group brought up from the shore. Finally, Cathal Cunningham Chief Marshall from the NW200 team organized a few volunteers to paint the stones white, giving a clear representation of the shape and direction of the Arrow.

The Causeway Coast and Glens Council have agreed to provide an information board early in 2021.

**W.I. PAUL BDS (QUB)**

**Dental Surgeon**

19 Central Ave , Portstewart BT55 7BP

**Tel: 028 7083 4555**

**GIBSON  
CONSTRUCTION**



10 Kingariff Road, Ballymoney

**Tel: 028 2075 1118 Mob: 07780 683076**

### Flower Rota

Date	Donating Flowers	Arranging Flowers
7th Feb	Mary Sweetnam	Mary Sweetnam
14th Feb	Irene Heatley	Paul Girvan
21st Feb	TBC	Alice Black
28th Feb	TBC	Maureen Glover
7th Mar	Kim Gillan	Kim Gillan
14th Mar	TBC	Heather Lockhart
21st Mar	TBC	Maureen Glover
28th Mar	Handforth Family	Rosemary Ridge

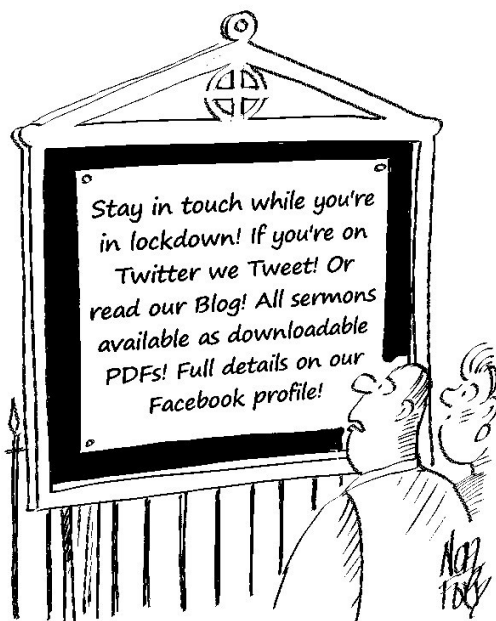


Revd Malcolm and Paul Girvan presenting a beautiful seascape painting to Alicean, on behalf of the Parish. This gift was made along with a pastel drawing of Lola (dog and fitness coach!) to mark her retirement as office administrator for the parish. Alicean was greatly touched by your generosity and extends her thanks for such lovely gifts and good wishes for the future.

### *Christian Burial ~ 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord'*

** Nov	Mr Tom McIlwainne, 2a Heathmount, Portstewart
25 Nov	Mrs Ethel Elizabeth Thomas, Madelayne Court, Portstewart
03 Dec	Mrs Maureen Mathes, Madelayne Court, Portstewart
03 Dec	Mr Johnny Loughery, 44, Lever Road, Portstewart
30 Dec	Mrs Jean McKirgan, 12, Carrickbeg Avenue, Portstewart
11 Jan	Mr Bert Wilson, 23 Movilla Road Portstewart
21 Jan	Mr Tommy Boyles, 95 Coleraine Road, Portrush

*Sympathy is extended to all who have lost loved ones in recent times.*



"...and we used to grumble about not understanding archaic church language!"

## A.P.C. Chuckle Box



Ryan was delighted with the cloak, but not so sure about the face mask

## Sunday Surfers News

Sunday Surfers ended 2020 celebrating Christmas with their home recordings of a Virtual Nativity. Parents and brothers and sisters acted as directors, producers, makeup artists and camera crew. It was great to see our young people on the Christmas Eve Broadcast Service and enjoy their acting talents.

We keep in touch with our Surfers online and we delivered 48 Christmas cards and goodie bags to our Surfers, crèche babies and toddlers and our seniors in confirmation class - our stars of Agherton.

As we welcome in 2021, Sunday Surfers start the new term by going online each week and completing a weekly activity sheet and watching a short storytelling video. We thank our parents for their constant support of our children's ministry as they encourage their Surfers to keep in touch by sending back their worksheets and taking part in the broadcast services.

Each Sunday Surfer received a Christingle Lockdown Kit to make a homemade Christingle for our service in January.

The Leaders and I wish all our Sunday Surfers and their families a healthy and happy 2021 and say a huge thank you for your good natured enthusiasm, participation and support of Agherton Sunday Surfers. We miss seeing you all.

Jacqui Clark, Leader in Charge

### **CG Electrical Services**

**Electrical Installation & Maintenance Contractors**

**Proprietor Campbell Guy**

**19b Kilmoyle Road, Ballymoney, BT53 6NR**

**Tel/Fax: 028 2074 1885**

**Mob: 07725 986 082**

## **Who's Who**

### **RECTOR**

Revd. Malcolm R. K. Ferry

The Rectory, 59 Strand Road, Portstewart

Phone: 7083 2538

E: [rector.agherton@connor.anglican.org](mailto:rector.agherton@connor.anglican.org)

Day Off: Monday

### **HONORARY ASSISTANT PRIESTS**

Canon H. Gough; Canon W. Quill;

Canon W. Lewis; Rev. G. Wilson

Canon M. Roemmele Rev. S. Jones

### **OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR**

Leisa Duffy 7083 3277

Mon-Thurs 9am-1pm

[aghertonparish@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:aghertonparish@hotmail.co.uk)

### **CHURCHWARDENS**

Rector's - Kim Gillan

People's - Ross McLaughlin

SACRISTAN - Mrs. D. Hall

### **HON. SECRETARY**

Maureen Glover 7083 3277

### **HON. TREASURER**

Rosemary Peters-Gallagher 7083 3277

### **GLEBEWARDENS**

Rector's - David Moore

People's - Danny Platt

### **SELECT VESTRY**

Rector, Churchwardens, Glebewardens, Frank Dobbs, Wendy Floyd, Rosemary Peters-Gallagher, Maureen Glover, Paul Girvan, Alicean Handforth, Garry Huffington, John Lindsay, Heather Lockhart, Noel Martin, Wilf Ridge, Rae Scott.

### **LAY PEOPLE WITH SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES**

Frank Dobbs, (Outreach, Diocesan Reader), Brian Shaw (Diocesan Reader), Rosemary Ridge, (Parish Reader) Wendy Floyd (Parish Reader & Parish Visitors), Wilf Ridge (Officer Manager), Jacqui Clark (Sunday Surfers

Co-ordinator).

### **PAROCHIAL NOMINATORS**

Frank Dobbs, Wendy Floyd, Paul Girvan, Rae Scott.

### **SUPPLEMENTAL NOMINATORS**

Kim Gillan, Rosemary Peters-Gallagher, David Moore, Danny Platt.

### **DIOCESAN SYNODSPEOPLE**

Frank Dobbs, Maureen Glover

### **SUPPLEMENTAL SYNODSPEOPLE**

Wendy Floyd, Noel Martin

## **Safeguarding Trust**

In accordance with the recommendations in 'Safeguarding Trust, The Church of Ireland Code of Good Practice for Ministry with Children' a Parish Panel has been appointed to implement some of the responsibilities identified in the Code. These include:

- interviewing persons willing to serve as workers in the parish
- advising workers on their responsibilities in respect of the Code
- being an immediate contact point for workers when a suspicion, complaint or allegation of child abuse is made about a worker with children on parish premises or in a parochial organisation, in accordance with the procedures set out in these guidelines.

**Agherton Parish Office, 19 Church St, Portstewart, BT55 7AH**

**Tel:** 7083 3277 **Email:** [aghertonparish@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:aghertonparish@hotmail.co.uk)

**Website:** <http://www.agherton.com>