



Puzzle Corner

Sudoku

	5					3	7	
			2	7	6			
7					1			
2		3		1				
		7				6		
				3		4		5
			1					9
			5	9	4			
	6	2						1

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Word Search

It's Advent, with Christmas fast approaching....

- Jesus
- Emmanuel
- Christmas
- Carol
- ivy
- Holly
- Mistletoe
- Mulled
- presents
- cards
- crackers
- tinsel
- wrapping
- tree
- decoration
- stocking
- nativity
- play
- excitement
- mary
- joseph
- shepherds
- angels
- baby

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

PASSWORDS



THE MAGAZINE FOR ST MARY MAGDALENE PARISH
DONEGALL PASS

Rev Terence P Kerr B.D., M.Phil. ☎ 028 9079 0977
Rev Adrian McCartney B.Ed., L.Th., B.Th. ☎ 07970626384
Rev Stewart Heaney B.A., B.Ed., B.D., M.Phil. ☎ 028 9446 1076

www.st-marymagdalene.org.uk

The star they had seen in the East
went ahead of them
until it stopped over the place
where the Child was





DECEMBER SERVICES



SERVICE	MINISTER	READER (Morning Service only)
Dec 5th—2nd Sunday of Advent 11.00 am Holy Communion 6.30 pm Holy Communion	Rev A McCartney Rev T P Kerr	Billy McDowell <i>Romans 15 –v– 4-13</i> (Page 154)
Dec 12th—3rd Sunday of Advent 11.00 am Morning Prayer 6.30 pm Holy Communion (<i>St Aidan's</i>)	Rev T P Kerr Rev T P Kerr	Jacqueline Stephenson <i>Isaiah 35 –v– 1-10</i> (Page 629)
Dec 19th—4th Sunday of Advent 11.00 am Christingle Service 6.30 pm 9 Lessons & Carols	Rev A McCartney Rev T P Kerr	Various
Dec 24th—Christmas Eve 11.30 pm The 1st Holy Communion of Christmas	Rev T P Kerr Rev A McCartney Rev S Heaney	Clergy
Dec 25th—Christmas Day 11.00 am Family Holy Communion (<i>St Aidan's</i>)	Rev T P Kerr	Clergy
Dec 26th—St Stephen's Day 11.00 am Morning Prayer 6.30 pm Evening Prayer (<i>St Aidan's</i>)	Rev T P Kerr Mr J Collins	Clergy

Thursday Lunchtime Services

..... will stop on Thursday 9th December 2010 and recommence on Thursday 13th January 2011

The Church of Ireland "Safeguarding Trust" Policy operates in this church. Panel Members are Rev Terence Kerr, Mr Cecil Dunwoody and Mrs Catherine Irving. Notices to this effect have been placed in the church and halls.



Flower Rota—December



- Dec 5th Mr & Mrs P Copley
Mr & Mrs J Taylor (*Pedestal*)
- Dec 12th Mr & Mrs C Dunwoody
Mrs P Johnston/Mrs K Narroway—in memory of their mother Mrs M Brannigan (*Pedestal*)
- Dec 19th Mrs Burns (*for the McAreavey families*)
The Winters family—in memory of their mother Kathleen (*Pedestal*)
- Dec 26th Miss E Ross—(*in memory of loved ones*)



We thank everyone who contributed to the Flower Fund in 2010 and of course our appreciation goes to Mrs Joan Rodgers who continues to arrange the flowers so beautifully week-by-week.

The rota for 2011 is currently being drawn up. If you would like to contribute flowers, please see Kate Irving as soon as possible.

HOLY BAPTISM



Darryl Mitchell
son of David and grandson of Yvonne and Jackie
8 Vernon Street
21 November 2010

'Suffer the little children to come unto me'



for our younger readers



A LIGHT TO WELCOME

Just 30 years ago all people had were decorated trees and a few paper-chains at Christmas, but now we have wreaths on the front door, outdoor lights in gardens; and the most recent addition, those arched candlesticks with 7 or more electric candles to stand on windowsills.

This custom came to us from Scandinavia. The story is that in weeks before Christmas, like that first Christmas nearly 2,000 years ago, Mary and Joseph wander the world looking for a place where they will be safe. They look for a welcome light in the window.



And that is why we put the lights in our window: to invite the Holy Family into our homes at the darkest and coldest part of the year. The candles say that Christ is welcome in our homes, to be born in our hearts and that we invite him to stay with us - not just for Christmas but for all time.

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SKY LIGHTS

Stars are another source of light and the wise men and shepherds followed a star to the baby Jesus.

The answers to this quiz all start with the letters STAR so can you say which Star...

1. is the right-hand side of a ship?
2. is a bird?
3. is used to stiffen things?
4. is to look with wide open eyes?
5. is the US flag?
6. is someone who sets a race off?
7. is suddenly surprised?



What carol is heard in the dessert?

Camel ye faithful.



What's impossible to overtake at Christmas?

The three wide men.



Answers: 1 starboard 2 starting 3 starch 4 stare 5 Stars & Stripes 6 starter 7 startled



The Rector writes ...

Dec 2010

Dear Parishioners

AN ADVENT PONDER

Advent is a time of preparation for the coming of Jesus, his birth into the world, and the fulfilling of his mission to redeem mankind. When the angel came to announce the good news of Jesus to the Virgin Mary, scripture tells us that she stored these things in her heart and pondered them.

I find advent a good time to ponder, to think about the most wonderful story ever told story and to engage afresh my friendship with Jesus. In one sense Advent is about waiting, it is the expectation that some extraordinary event will occur and change people's lives. The coming of Christ is, in my view the most important event the world has ever experience. It is for everyone potentially life changing.

Advent is also a season to ponder our own spiritual lives in the context of our Sunday attendance at church and our daily devotions. May God give you the grace to fully enter into the services at this Advent and Christmas.

I leave you with the Advent Collect that you might want to pray everyday in the Season of Preparation for the Birth of Jesus Christ.

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen" (Book of Common Prayer).

The Rector

Wishing all parishioners a happy and blessed Christmas

There will be no magazine in January. Articles for the February magazine should be with Kate Irving by Sunday 16th January 2010.

CLERGY UPDATE

Parishioners will be saddened to hear that both the Rev Adrian and the Rev Stewart have been in hospital. With their permission, I now bring you an update on their progress.

The Rev Adrian was taken ill on Tuesday 16 Nov. and was admitted to the Ulster Hospital for tests and subsequently went through surgery for an abscess in his bowel. Due to the swift intervention of his GP and the surgeon nothing more serious ensued.

As I write, he is still in hospital but hopes to be discharged shortly. This has obviously been a traumatic time for Rev Adrian and his family. He has asked me to encourage all of us to pray for his return to full health. Would you also remember his wife Janice, daughters Ruth and Rachel and son Joel.

The Rev Stewart has undergone knee replacement surgery. He is recuperating slowly but surely and hopes to take part in some of the services at Christmas.

Stewart was delighted by the phone calls and messages of best wishes he received. He would still covet your prayers, as he has a little way to go before he will be fully fit and able to resume his ministry with us.

*May God in His infinite love and care
raise the Rev Adrian and the
Rev Stewart back to full health.
Amen The Rector*

☞ We were all glad to hear that Mrs Carol Kerr has undergone her long awaited surgery for hip replacement. She is currently recuperating at home—under, no doubt, the excellent care of the Rector. We remember both of them at this trying time and send our very best wishes to Carol for a speedy recovery.



Remember Prayer

all who are ill or in need:

- Betty
- Bob
- Carol
- David M
- David S
- Lizzie
- Ronnie
- Rev A McCartney
- Rev S Heaney

Could you please make sure that you let the Rector know of anyone who is in hospital or feeling unwell.



THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

*The hinge of history is on
the door of a Bethlehem
stable*



"Do you think it's God's way of saying,
"Thou shalt not illegally copy the
carol service music?"

Cookery Class—are you interested?



After a really enjoyable evening at the last meeting of the Ladies' Guild, a few members expressed interest in forming a class to further explore culinary expertise! If you would be interested in attending such a class, please put your name and preferred day/time of attendance on the sheet at the back of the church. If numbers permit, an afternoon and an evening class may be offered.



For your
diary

Ladies' Guild	Wed 8th Dec	6.45 pm
Select Vestry	Mon 13th Dec	7.30 pm
Antiques Fair	Sat 18th Dec	12.30-4.00 pm <i>Teas rota: Jacqueline & Kate</i>
Snooker Club	Tuesdays	7.00 pm
Midweek Services	Thursdays	12.30 pm
BB	Thursdays	6.30 pm onwards

NEEDY CHILDREN AT CHRISTMAS

The Select Vestry has decided to join with the Rev Adrian's Missionary Organization "Boring Wells" in providing toys or some funds towards helping those on the fringes of our society at Christmas.

In particular we propose to assist families that have one or both parents addicted to alcohol or other drugs. The result of the addiction usually includes poverty as well as some other very bad results. The Vestry has agreed to donate a special collection on 5 December 2010 to the fund. There will also be an opportunity in donate toys for these needy children.

Details of age and gender will be on a sheet at the back of Church. Please give generously to this worthy cause.

The Rector

Fundraising appeals

Our recent fund-raising efforts were well supported and the Select Vestry thanks everyone who helped in any way. As you know, funds are desperately needed for all the essential restoration work required, so other efforts will be made in the New Year. Any ideas for fund-raising would be most welcome.

The amounts raised to date are:

- Concert with the Phoenix Choir £200 ✓
- Clothing Appeal £211 ✓
- Big Breakfast £880 ✓

Our next effort will be the Annual Gift Day appeal on Advent Sunday, marking our anniversary. It was on Advent Sunday 1839 that the original church of St Mary Magdalene was opened and dedicated. For over 170 years, this church has been present in Donegall Pass, signalling to all the glory and wonder of God. It is incumbent upon us to ensure that it remains here for another 170 years. A Gift Day envelope has been included in this magazine. Please try your best to give what you can and return it to the church over the next week or two. Don't forget to complete the Gift Aid declaration if you are an income tax payer. Remember this costs you nothing. Thanks for your ongoing support.

PRESENT AID

Inside this magazine, you will find a copy of Christian Aid's Present Aid catalogue. When you purchase a gift from Present Aid, you will be funding Christian Aid's work to end poverty around the world. Why not, this year, buy a present that will make a real difference to someone else's life?

CROSSLINKS MISSIONARY SOCIETY God's word to God's world

It would be greatly appreciated if all missionary boxes and subscriptions were returned by the beginning of December.

Please pray for the missionaries who are separated from friends and family at this Christmas time and also that the Lord will protect them and provide for their financial needs.

Thank you for your interest, prayers and donations.

Lena Lemon—Honorary Secretary



*Do you remember Christmas past when we were young and gay?
Oh! Sorry, shouldn't use that word, the meaning's gone astray.*

*The bus trip to the Co-Op to visit Santa's Grotto,
"We promise to be very good" that surely was our motto.
For if we weren't the warning came so grim and really shocking –
There'd be no sweets or orange, only coal left in our stocking!
If children of today were warned and left in such a fright,
Their case would go to Europe to the Court of Human Rights.*

*Yes, times have changed from Christmas past, that's plain for all to see,
The twinkling in the parlour of our lovely Christmas tree.
A Dan Dare jigsaw puzzle and a pair of roller skates,
They were such great presents to show to all our mates.
And now we've moved from Christmas trees to lights just everywhere,
From rooftops, windows, gardens they twinkle and they glare.
There are presents by the bucketful for every girl and boy,
Computer games and mobile phones and every kind of toy.*

*But one thing that will never change and that's the Christmas story
Of Jesus born in Bethlehem, to Him we give the glory.
The presents and the twinkling lights they come and go each year
But Jesus lives forever and we know He's always near.
From the stable bare in Bethlehem to the road to Calvary,
He came among the human race to save both you and me.
So that's the truth of Christmas and no matter what we say
The Lord is ever with us each and every single day.*

JS

The Boys' Brigade



HOUSE TO HOUSE COLLECTION

The annual House to House collection on behalf for the Institute of the Disabled took place at the end of October. The company raised £291.45p beating the previous year. A big thank you to the people of the Donegall Pass for their donations.

BB ENROLMENT

It was great to see the parents and grandparents family and friends of the boys in church for our BB enrolment service. By being at the enrolment service you supported your son(s) grandson(s) and the officers.

A special thanks to the boys for the bible readings and prayers, also to Miss Rachel McCartney for her address to the boys.

BB WEEK

BB week at present has raised over £400 and more money is still coming in.....well done boys.

MEELMORE LODGE WEEKEND

The picture below shows the boys of the 1st Irish and 8th Belfast at the summit of Slieve Bernagh (739m) or 2,425ft. My thanks to go to David, Chris and Sam. Without David this type of weekend would just not happen, as David is a fully qualified mountain leader, and of course the **stars** of the weekend.....the boys themselves.

William McMillan

Captain 1st Irish Company



Ladies' Guild



On behalf of the Guild, I would like to offer a sincere thank you to Mrs Jennifer Millar and Mr Raymond Moore for coming along to our November meeting and demonstrating Christmas floral arrangements and the decorating of Christmas cakes. With that and the napkin folding demonstration given by Kate there's no doubt that our Christmas tables will be works of art this year!

We're all looking forward to the Christmas Dinner being held at Rockmount Golf Club on Wednesday 8th December. Ladies are reminded to meet outside the church at 6.45 pm.

Joan Rodgers—President

Reflections on Christmas

The 5 Minute Meditation

Christmas: Why does it begin at midnight with Holy Communion?

The hour was first chosen at Rome in the 5th century to symbolise the idea that Christ was born at midnight – a mystical idea in no way hindered by historical evidence! No one knows the hour of his birth.

Christmas: Where did Christmas trees come from?

There are two early stories that mention fir trees. The first involves St Boniface, who went to Germany in the 8th century as a missionary and found people sacrificing a child to their god under an oak tree. Boniface was appalled, and rescued the child. He then chopped down the oak tree and found a tiny fir tree growing nearby. He gave this to the people and said: "This is a symbol of life. Whenever you look at this tree, remember the Christ-child who is the one who will give you life, because he gave his life for you." The second early fir tree story involves Martin Luther in the 16th century. One year he decided to drag a fir tree into his home and to decorate it with candles. He used it as a visual aid, telling people that the candles symbolised Jesus as the light of the world, and the evergreen tree symbolised the eternal life that Jesus gives to us. Followers of Luther were struck by the idea, and took up the custom.

Where did Christmas stockings come from?

No one is really sure, but a story is told of St Nicholas, a bishop who lived in the 4th century, who may have started the custom by accident. St Nicholas was of a wealthy family, and of a generous heart. As Christmas approached one year, he wanted to help a poor family whom he knew, but he did not want them to know it was him. So he climbed up on their roof on Christmas Eve and dropped some coins down the chimney.

The next morning the coins, to the great surprise of the family, were found in the stockings of the ladies, who had hung them

to dry by the fire the night before. Every year after that they put their stockings out, in the hope that some more money would fall into them.

We three kings of Orient are... what?

'The Journey of the Magi'. What a vivid picture – we can see it all! The camels' breath steaming in the night air as the kings, in their gorgeous robes of silk and cloth-of-gold and clutching their precious gifts, kneel to adore the baby in the manger.

Yet the Bible does not give us as much detail as some people think. Tradition down the centuries has added a great deal more. For instance, we know from St Matthew that the magi were 'wise', or learned men of some sort, but we do not know if they were kings or not. The Bible tells us there were several; tradition has decided upon three, and even named them: Balthassar, Melchior, and Gaspar. But the Bible does tell us that the magi gave baby Jesus three highly symbolic gifts: gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. Gold stands for kingship, frankincense for worship, and myrrh for anointing – anticipating his death.

Christmas and St Luke's Gospel

It is to St Luke's wonderful gospel that many Christians turn as the year draws to a close and Christmas approaches. Luke alone tells us the story of Mary and the angel's visit to her, and has thus given the Church the wonderful Magnificat of Mary.

Luke alone tells us the story of Simeon's hymn of praise, thus giving us the wonderful Nunc Dimittis. Luke alone tells us the story of how the angels appeared to the shepherds and how the shepherds then visited the infant Jesus. So – imagine Christmas cards and nativity scenes every year without the shepherds arriving to visit baby Jesus. Imagine school nativity plays without our children dressed as shepherds or sheep. So – thank you, Luke!