

Puzzle Corner

Sit down
after the
Christmas
pub and
find all the
words listed

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

- | | | | | |
|--------|---------|-----------|-----------|--------|
| BELL | BLITZEN | TOYLAND | NICHOLAS | DANCER |
| BOW | BOY | MISTLETOE | FIREPLACE | DASHER |
| DONDER | CANDY | CHRISTMAS | PRESENTS | SANTA |
| ELF | GIFTS | TREE | SNOWMAN | TOYS |
| CLAUS | COMET | VIXEN | WREATH | JOLLY |
| HOLLY | CUPID | SLEIGH | RUDOLPH | JOY |
| MERRY | PRANCER | JINGLE | | |



There will be no magazine in January.
Articles for the February magazine should be with
Kate Irving by Sunday 17th January 2016.
A very happy and blessed Christmas to all.

PASSWORDS



THE MAGAZINE FOR ST MARY MAGDALENE PARISH
DONEGALL PASS

Rector: Rev Bob Cotter tel: 07702495786 email: bobcotter56@icloud.com

Family Worker: Mrs Alison Shaw tel: 07547030451 (Mon, Wed, Fri)

www.st-marymagdalene.org.uk



December



Dec 2015



SERVICES ~ Dec/Jan



SERVICES	READER
6th Dec—2nd Sunday of Advent 11.00 am Holy Communion	David Stephenson <i>Philippians 1 –v- 3-11</i>
13th Dec—3rd Sunday of Advent 11.00 am Morning Prayer	Ann Sheppard <i>Zephaniah 3 –v- 14-20</i>
20th Dec—4th Sunday of Advent 11.00 am Christingle 7.00 pm Nine Lessons & Carols	Jennifer McMullan <i>John 1 –v- 1-9</i>
24th Dec—Christmas Eve 11.30 pm First Communion of Christmas	Naomi Riley <i>Hebrews 1 –v- 1-4</i>
27th Dec—1st Sunday of Christmas 11.00 am Service of the Word	Rector <i>Joshua 1 –v- 6-9</i>
3rd Jan—2nd Sunday of Christmas 11.00 am Holy Communion	tba <i>Ephesians 1 –v- 3-14</i>
10th Jan—1st Sunday after Epiphany 11.00 am Morning Prayer	tba <i>Isaiah 55 –v- 1-11</i>
17th Jan—2nd Sunday after Epiphany 11.00 am Healing Service	tba <i>Psalms 102 –v- 1-12</i>
24th Jan—3rd Sunday after Epiphany 11.00 am Family Service	—
31st Jan—4th Sunday after Epiphany 11.00 am Holy Communion I	tba <i>1 Corinthians 13 –v- 1-13</i>

The Church of Ireland “Safeguarding Trust” Policy operates in this church. Panel Members are the Rev Bob Cotter, Mr Cecil Dunwoody and Mr Peter Ainley. Notices to this effect have been placed in the church and halls.



Flower Rota ~ December



- Dec 6th Mr & Mrs P Copley
- Dec 13th Mr & Mrs J Taylor—in memory of loved ones
..... The Elliot Family
- Dec 20th Mr & Mrs C Dunwoody—in memory of loved ones
..... The Irvine Family—in memory of James & Agnes McCullough
- Dec 27th The Irvine Family—in memory of Charles & Agnes Irvine

~ Parish Prayer List ~

You are asked to include the following in your daily prayers. Take 4 or 5 names per day and ask for God’s blessing on each one. Some of our parishioners will remain on the list permanently, especially those who are in homes of one kind or another, housebound or suffering from chronic and ongoing conditions. If you know of someone whose name should be added, please inform the Rector or one of the church wardens. No name has been omitted intentionally.

- NH = Nursing Home; CH = Care Home; RH = residential home]**
- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| John Burns | David & Emily Mason |
| Ann Crawford | Brian & Jean Matthews |
| Martha Armstrong, <i>Masserene NH</i> | Tom Reilly |
| David Baird, <i>Fairhaven RH, North Rd</i> | Jim Shields |
| Ena Belton, <i>Hollygate NH</i> | Doreen Smyth (<i>RVH</i>) |
| Margaret Clarke, <i>Redburn, B’Hinch NH</i> | Laura Smyth |
| Mina Henry, <i>Arlington House, North Pde</i> | Stella Spackman |
| Annie Jenkins, <i>Carryduff NH</i> | David Stephenson |
| Mary Leslie, <i>Arlington House, North Pde</i> | Roy and Ena Taylor |
| Eileen Ross, <i>Beechill House CH</i> | Greta Wilson |
| Victor Gourley | |
| Martha Fitzsimmons | |
| Jim Garstang | |
| Gloria Graham | |
| Edna King (<i>Meadowlands</i>) | |
| Frances McClean | |
| Elizabeth Mark | |

★ Freewill Offering Returns for 2015 ★

In order to be included in the 2015 accounts, you are asked to ensure that any outstanding Freewill Offering envelopes for 2015 are placed in the church by Sunday 10th January 2016. Thank you for your continued and faithful giving.

Libby (*Honorary Treasurer*)

NORWEGIAN CHOIR CONCERT

We sincerely thank Lesja og Lesjaskog sangkor—(Norwegian Choir) for the inspiring recital performed in the church on Saturday 7th November. It was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who attended.

Big Breakfast'

Thank you to everyone who supported and contributed to the latest Big Breakfast effort.

We raised £730 ☺

Well done to all!!!



Family Worker update

Our Wednesday morning group has been meeting throughout November and this month we are continuing with a series of soup making sessions in December. Our last session for this year will be Wednesday 9th December. Our parent and toddlers will continue to meet in December until Thursday 17th, when we will have our final gathering for this year with a Christmas brunch. We will recommence on Thursday 7th January 2016 at 10 am.

On Wednesday 16th December SureStart has arranged an outing to Junction 1 for parents and children from Donegall Pass. Anyone interested should contact Elaine on 07713383943.

Best wishes to all for a very peaceful Christmas and a hopeful New Year.

Alison - 07547030451

CHRISTMAS WREATHS



Reconnect Ltd is an organisation focusing on improving the employment prospects of those who have suffered a serious brain injury. In order to raise funds, they are making and selling Christmas wreaths. These can be wreaths suitable for placing on graves or decorative ones to hang on doors etc. The cost is £10 per wreath and if you would like to support this charity by placing an order, please give your details to Linda Roberts. Orders must be with Linda by 13 December to meet Christmas delivery.



The Rector writes . . .

Dear Parishioner

Light and life

'In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a **formless void** and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good: and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day'. [Genesis 1: 1-5]

'Genesis' in Greek means the beginning of the creation of something, and here we see the first book of the Bible describing the birth of our planet. Although our understanding of Christmas seems a million miles away from the beginning of the world, in one sense they are part of the same moment in God's time: think of Jesus saying in John 8:58 that 'before Abraham was, I am'. The same God who was at work revealing himself as Creator was again at work in human history revealing himself in Jesus Christ.

The Genesis account tells us that the earth was formed out of chaos, out of darkness. It is interesting that the same two Hebrew words translated as 'formless' and 'void' recur in the Book of Jeremiah, 4: 22-23, when the prophet warns Israel of its sins: For my people are foolish, they do not know me; they are stupid children, they have no understanding. They are skilled in doing evil, but do not know how to do good.' I looked on the earth, and lo, it was **waste and void**; and to the heavens, and they had no light.

Jeremiah is telling the Israelites that if they do not repent and turn back to God, they are unleashing chaos into the world, which will bring destruction and, in effect, reverse the creative activity of God, undoing the very work of creation.

In the Genesis story we also read of the 'wind from God' sweeping across this void. This wind will reappear often throughout biblical history and, indeed, in our own lives. It is the very Spirit of God, active in creation. We also notice the boundaries and order within God's perfect new creation. This idea of boundaries and limits as part of the created order provides the basis for the Israelites and us to develop systems of law and morality.

For Christians, darkness is a metaphor for the absence of God, just as light is a symbol of his presence. In the Northern hemisphere, Advent is the season of winter darkness, which arrives like a heavy blanket weighing down the land. We turn back the clocks and the days become shorter. Yet the real darkness in our lives lies

within the tragedies, the disasters and the sorrows we have to bear. The times we live in can seem chaotic and dark, as recent events in Paris testify.

The Israelites waited many centuries for the Messiah to deliver them, and they longed passionately for his coming. There are people today who also long for the Messiah but do not know where to find him, and they too feel the void, the long wait and the darkness in between.

Yet the beginning of Genesis shows that we have light for the journey and an ordered framework in which to live. The lights and stars in the sky were the same lights, the same stars that would guide the wise men to Jesus. And if we set out this Advent in search of God, he will provide light for the journey too. Look for the light in the readings and hymns of the Christmas period and rejoice in it!

Rev Bob Cotter



Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

Our candlelight Carol Service will be held on Sunday 20th December at 7.30 pm. Tea will be served afterwards in the hall. This is always a lovely service and it gets us in the right frame of mind for celebrating the true meaning of Christmas—the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ.. Please come along.

Thursday Lunchtime Services

The Thursday services continue at 12.30 with lunch afterward in the hall. Christmas break will be announced in church

Everyone welcome

Gift Day Envelopes

Gift Day this year will be celebrated on Advent Sunday 29th November—the 176th anniversary of our church falling on 1st December. Gift Day envelopes will be distributed in church and we ask that you do your best in giving to this appeal. The much needed money collected from this special event goes towards maintaining and restoring our beautiful church.

Remember, if you are a tax payer, please consider Gift Aiding your donation. This costs you nothing and the church can gain additional funds. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. *The Select Vestry*



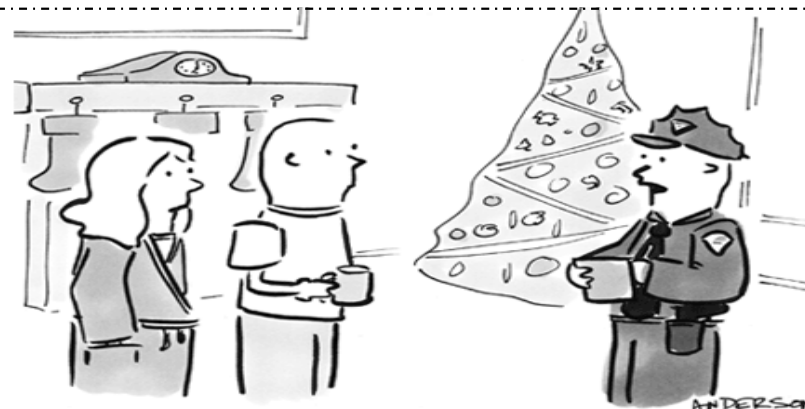
THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

The Son of God became a man to enable men to become the sons of God.
CS Lewis



For your diary

Ladies' Guild	Wed 9th Dec	7.30 pm
Christmas Concert with Class Act	Fri 11th Dec	7.30 pm
Select Vestry	Mon 14th Dec	7.30 pm
Nine Lessons & Carols	Sun 20th Dec	7.00 pm
Snooker Club	Tuesdays	7.00 pm
Midweek Services	Thursdays	12.30 pm
Parents and Toddlers	Thurs	10-12 noon
BB	Thurs	6.30 onwards



"Let me get this straight - he parked on your roof, entered through the chimney and ate all your cookies?"



for our younger readers



CHRISTMAS STAR

There are stars everywhere we look at Christmas time, on trees, cards or decorations. But the star only appears in one version of the Christmas story in St Matthew's Gospel (chapter 2, verses 1-12). Modern astronomers say that it wasn't a new star, or a meteor or comet. What was unusual in the heavens was that the planets Mars, Jupiter and Saturn were close together forming a triangle in the group of stars known as Pisces. The wise men who saw the 'star' and followed it would have interpreted this as the sign of a great event in the land of the Jews.

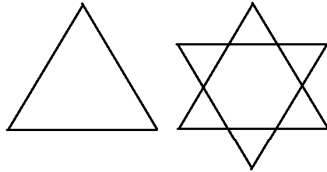


Many countries still celebrate the Christmas star in special ways. The 'Festival of the Star' is held in Poland after the evening meal on Christmas Eve, when the village priest, as the 'Star Man', asks the children questions about their religion. In Alaska, children carry a star-shaped figure around the houses and sing carols, hoping to be given Christmas treats.

STAR WRAPPING

Make some really smart wrapping paper for your presents this year. Use plain brown paper and print it with stars (cut a star shape out of half a potato and use yellow poster paint).

Or use a gold or silver pen to draw stars all over the brown paper. Can't draw stars? Yes, you can! Draw a triangle, and then draw another triangle upside down on top of the first triangle. Easy!



Knock, knock

Who's there?

Wenceslas.

Wenceslas who?

Wenceslas train home?



Knock knock

Who's there?

Wayne

Wayne who?

Wayne in a manger.



Christ the King

*Another year has passed us by since we did gladly sing
About the birth of Jesus Christ, the Holy infant king,
As in a lowly stable he came to us on earth
In Bethlehem, Judea, where Mary gave him birth.*

*The story is as old as time but still we love to hear
Of shepherds and of angels and wise men drawing near,
From men who had no learning to kings in their own right
They came to worship Jesus and take in that glorious sight.*

*It's very clear that nowadays our thoughts can be misled
To parties, food and presents which take precedence instead.
There are those who will not listen and who try for all their
worth*

To ignore the Christ in Christmas and dismiss the holy birth.

So let us all this Christmas time remember

Christ the King

As to why he came among us and pure selfless love did bring.

*Let's give him top priority as we celebrate the birth
Of Jesus Christ the Saviour who came to us on earth.*

JS



FLOWER LIST 2016



Another year has almost passed and it's time again to arrange the flower rota. We continue to be very grateful to everyone who contributes to this fund and especially to Mrs Joan Rodgers who faithfully arranges the flowers so beautifully week by week. Please see Kate as soon as possible if you would like to secure date(s) for 2016.

St Mary Magdalene Parish Church
invites you to an

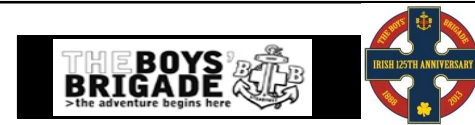
Evening of Christmas Music
with
Class Act
on
Friday 11th December
at 7.30 pm

Light refreshments will be served

Voluntary donations in aid of church funds

Christmas Tree Festival

In celebration of their 120th anniversary, St Aidan's Parish Church is organising a Christmas Tree Festival to run from 13th-20th December. Everyone is welcome to drop in to see the trees. There will be one decorated by some of our own parishioners under the theme of 'The Shepherds'.



A big thank you to all the boys who turned up on Sunday 15th November for our annual Enrolment Service and also to the parents, grandparents, members of the congregation and the Rev B Cotter.

Maurice Williamson M.B.E.

After a long and courageous battle against illness, it is with great sadness and deep regret that I share the sad news that our highly esteemed and much respected General Secretary, Maurice Williamson M.B.E. passed away in the early hours of Tuesday 17th November.

I am sure that you will share with me our deepest sympathy to the Williamson family at this very sad time and the Hope of a Joyful reunion in the heavenly places.

It can be said without fear of contradiction that Maurice was one whom was Sure and Stedfast.

Paul McCarrol
Chief Executive
The Boys Brigade (Belfast Battalion)

17th November 2015.

A thanksgiving service for the life of Maurice was held on Friday 20th November at Ganaway Activity Centre when over 600 people paid their respects. Mr Billy McDowell (Old Boy 80th BB) read the 23rd Psalm. This was a service that Maurice planned to the last detail, even the piper's lament "Farewell to The Captain". A Captain to all in this charge in the 80th Belfast Company and also the Belfast Battalion of The Boys' Brigade.

*William McMillan
Captain*

Ladies' Guild



We had a lovely evening in November filling the Christmas shoeboxes which will go to children in Africa and Eastern Europe. In all, we filled 34 boxes, many of which were donated by others in the congregation who are not guild members. Thank you most sincerely to everyone who contributed. It was a wonderful achievement and 'Team Hope Ireland' were delighted with our response.

In December, we will enjoy a Christmas Crafts evening, when we are set to make a snowman! It would be very helpful if everyone could bring a small pair of scissors if possible.

Saturday January 9th sees our annual return to 'La Mon House Hotel' for our New Year lunch. Members are reminded to bring their £20 lunch cost to the December meeting.

On behalf of the Guild, I wish all parishioners a happy and blessed Christmas.

Joan Rodgers—President