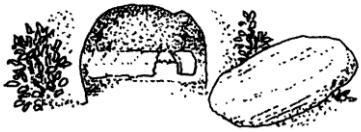
CHURCH NEWS



March
2013

Magheracross Parish Church

Message from the Rector

One of my favourite books as a child was Richard Scarry's Busytown. There were many adventures and stories but the one that I was reminded of this month was the tale of the Irish Pig that kissed the Blarney Stone. Little Patrick O'Swine couldn't talk, so his parents took him to Blarney Castle. There, he kissed the stone and became an incessant talker! You can watch the story on YouTube (Patrick Pig learns to talk) and hopefully you'll not be offended by the horrendous Irish stereotypes! Anyway, during our Christmas holiday in February (clergy have to do silly things like that), we went to Blarney Castle and I was able to follow in the footsteps of Patrick Pig and kiss the Blaney Stone. So far, there has been no noticeable effect.

However, I did learn something from the visit. The Church of Ireland in Blarney and Carrigohane had adopted a project to make closer links with the local community. It involved an intense fortnight last year of children's fun days, history classes, sports, dinners and a Dog's Tea Party. A scaled down version was happening this year when we were there and thus we found ourselves attending the Dogs' Tea Party on Sunday afternoon. We were awarded rosettes for the Prettiest Girl, the Smallest Dog, the best Kisser, the Most Handsome Boy and the Oldest Dog. Although this year's event had been scaled down, we were told that last year it had been chaotic – to the extent that they had to close the car park to prevent any more people coming in! "Connecting with community" is a very important part of church activity. We often take the instruction to be "not of the world" as an excuse to stand aloof from those who are outside our church clique or to look down on those who are on the church fringes.

I have been impressed by the way Magheracross reaches out into the local community through its youth organisations, senior's lunch club, badminton, bowls and other activities. Many individuals are also involved in local community groups and clubs. We also do well in making our Sunday worship "accessible" to new comers with a warm welcome and the use of technology to guide people through traditional Church of Ireland orders. Jesus' ministry was notable for the way in which he reached out to those who had become excluded from the traditional religious community – the poor, the "unclean", the weak and those whose sin had led them to be ostracised. This attitude did not please those who cherished their religion as a mark of superiority.

As a church community, and as individuals, we do not exist in an isolated bubble. We have a calling to connect with all those around us, to love every individual and to serve every individual. There are many imaginative ways in which we can demonstrate this (like the Dogs' Tea Party), but most importantly, it involves an attitude, a state of heart and mind, that allows to reach out with a loving and caring hand to all around us. The ground at the foot of the cross is level.

Our new Youth Worker

By the time you read this, David McIlroy will have taken up his post as Youth and Children's Minister in the Ballinamallard Methodist and Magheracross Parish youth ministry. David, from Kilkeel, will be living in Lisbellaw. He is a graduate in English and Film Studies with a post-graduate MA in Creative Writing (so watch this space). He has been a long-time volunteer with a youth project in Kilkeel and we look forward to benefitting from his gifts and experience. Do please make a special effort to welcome to the West (although he does have a romantic interest in the area!)

Mothers' Union

Thursday 7 March at 8.00 pm in the Archdale Hall. The speaker will be Laura Greenaway from Banbridge. She is the author of a children's book entitled " Phoenix." She was born in Ballintra, Co Donegal and her late husband was a Methodist Minister in Pettigo. We extend a warm welcome to everyone to come along.

Select Vestry

The Select Vestry will meet on Monday 11 March 2013 at 7.30 pm in the Parish Room.

Annual Easter Vestry

This year the Annual Easter Vestry will take place on Monday 8 April 2013 at 7.30 pm in the Archdale Hall. Please make every effort to attend.

Piano Lessons for beginners

Do you want to learn something new or improve your skills and music reading ability? If so please contact Hannah Gamble - 028 8956 1666.

Cross in my Pocket

I carry a cross in my pocket
a simple reminder to me
of the fact that I am a Christian
no matter where I may be.

This little cross is not magic
nor is it a good luck charm
it isn't meant to protect me
from every physical harm.

It's not for identification
for all the world to see
It's simply an understanding
between my Saviour and me.

When I put my hand in my pocket
to pull out a coin or a key
the cross is there to remind me
of the price He paid for me.

It reminds me to be thankful
for my blessings day by day
to strive to serve Him better
in all I do and say.

It's also a daily reminder
of the peace and comfort I share
with all who know my Master
and give themselves to His care.

So I carry a cross in my pocket
reminding no-one but me
that JESUS CHRIST is
LORD of my life
if only I'll let Him be.

Services for March 2013

Sun 3 March	9.30 11.00 7.00	Holy Communion Family Communion Youth Service with the Revd Malcolm Kingston
Wed 6 March	8.00	Lent Service
Sun 10 March (Mothering Sunday)	9.30 11.00 7.00	Morning Prayer Family Service including Holy Baptism Guest Evening Service in Methodist Church
Wed 13 March	8.00	Lent Service
Sun 17 March (Passion Sunday)	9.30 11.00 7.00	Morning Prayer Family Service Evening Service in Parish Room
Wed 20 March	8.00	Lent Service
Sun 24 March (Palm Sunday)	9.30 11.00 7.00	Morning Prayer Family Service followed by Parish Lunch United Palm Sunday worship in Parish Church

Sunday School
There will be no Sunday School on Sunday 24 March or Sunday 31 March.

Holy Week and Easter Day Services

Mon 24 March	8.00 Service in Methodist Church
Tue 25 March	8.00 Youth and Children's Service in Methodist Church with David McIlroy
Wed 26 March	8.00 Magheracross Parish Church with guest
Thu 27 March	8.00 Holy Communion in Magheracross Parish Church *Holy Communion will also be celebrated in the Methodist Church for the seniors and those who cannot normally attend church.*
Fri 28 March (Good Friday)	8.00 Good Friday in Magheracross Parish Church
Sun 31 March (Easter Sunday)	9.30 Holy Communion 11.00 Family Communion (children very welcome) 7.00 Easter Praise in Methodist Church

Can you find the 16 books of the Bible hidden in this passage?

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible (merely by fluke); it kept people looking so hard for the facts and for others it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the names of the books were not capitalized. But the truth finally struck home to various numbers of readers. To others it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. Yes, there will be some really difficult ones to spot. Others may require judges to help them. I will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one of them. There will be loud lamentations when it is found. A little lady says she brews a cup of tea so she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now, for there really are sixteen names of the Bible hidden in this paragraph. Once preacher found fifteen books in twenty minutes, but it took him three weeks to find the sixteenth one.

Flower Rota – March 2013
Mrs R Stewart/Mrs O Nixon

3 March – Mrs A Gamble
10 March – Mrs E Bradford
17 March – Mrs O Johnston
24 March – Mrs O Nixon
31 March

Multi-Media Operators – March 2013

3 March – Ryan Moffitt and Jamie Lee Guy
6 March – Henry Robinson
10 March – Ross Brimstone and Grace Verner
13 March – Ross Brimstone
17 March – Ross Brimstone and Grace Verner
20 March – Henry Robinson
24 March – Arthur McKinney and Danielle McKinney
27 March – Arthur McKinney
28 March – Henry Robinson
29 March – Henry Robinson
31 March – Arthur McKinney and Danielle McKinney

Who to Contact:

Rector:	Revd Brian Harper	☏ 028 6638 8238
		☏ 079 8974 3545
Assistant:	Revd Charlie Eames	☏ 077 9219 1565
Pastoral:	Olive Nixon	☏ 028 6638 8483
Sexton:	Raymond McBrien	☏ 028 6638 9761
Secretary:	Liane Armstrong	☏ 028 6638 8618
Churchwardens:	Norman Love	☏ 028 6638 8762
	Gordon Lee	☏ 028 6638 8810