



Douglas Union
with Frankfield
Advent
&
Christmas 2021
Parish Matters

From the Rector:

'How many more sleeps until Christmas?' When you were a child, do you remember asking that question? Or do you have young people in your home, opening Advent calendars each morning, and wondering if they can contain their excitement until the great day arrives! If you do, it is infectious. It is good to be able to look forward to something with a sense of excitement and anticipation.

In church we are reminded that the season of Advent, the four weeks before Christmas, is all about excitement and anticipation. It is wonderful when we are in control of events and enjoy planning future celebrations. This year again, unfortunately we are being

reminded that we are not in control of everything and that our plans for Christmas may be under review. This is frustrating and disappointing. There is the danger that we focus on the negative – the glass being half empty. Or we can make the decision to emphasise the positive and celebrate what we can organise and do. We can look out for one another and share joy and hope in any way we can with others, despite the challenge of the ongoing restrictions. While the Covid clouds may be gathering again, we need to remind ourselves that behind those clouds, the sun is still shining, that there is light and hope.

Have you ever wondered why we celebrate Christmas on 25th December? The early Christians did not pick the date to celebrate the birth of Jesus because they thought

it was the actual day Mary gave birth, but because that was the time when the pre-Christian people were celebrating the new birth of the sun. Christians, believing that Jesus was the true light of the world, thought this would be a perfect time to celebrate his birth. Our ancestors had ways to woo the sun god back. They would halt their normal activity, bring a wheel from the cart into their home and decorate it with greenery and candles (the origins of our Advent wreath). Then they would wait and pray for the return of the great light. So strong was their faith that, year after year, they succeeded in wooing it back! Today we know about planetary motion and the science behind the solar system, but they didn't.

Nevertheless, behind their simple faith and ours, there is a universal

truth. Light overcomes darkness and there is always hope. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus prepares the disciples for shadows. He prepares them, trying to help them understand that life in this broken world is going to be difficult at times. But in offering us a picture of deep shadows, he also offers a picture of hope – Jesus comes to us.

As we continue to confront the challenge of the Covid pandemic, we don't pretend that there isn't darkness. But we know that darkness does not exist in itself: it is the absence of something – of light. So, one light, one single light can make all the difference. It can shatter the deepest darkness.

May the message of the Christ child, born in humility and vulnerability 2000 years ago, in a remote part of the Roman Empire, give you encouragement and hope. The glass is not half empty, or even half full. But as the writer of Psalm 23 reminds us, in the end 'my cup shall be full.'

Yours in Christ,

Adrian Wilkinson

Turning Towards Advent

by Revd Hazel Minion

I write in the week before Advent... we Church of Ireland people notice such things.

Thinking about that has led me to ask myself: "Why am I an Anglican?"

I am first of all Christian, but why Anglican?

I was brought up in the Church of Ireland, and faith in Jesus Christ became real to me around the time of my confirmation. During my twenties, a restless time, I lived in five different towns, and explored at least five different denominations, spending nearly two years with a Methodist church in England. I eventually arrived in Cork. By then my faith was at a very low ebb, but the Hound of Heaven* had me spotted!

Now and then I would attend the local Church of Ireland. There was something about being Anglican that held me and I have come to the conclusion that it's the liturgy in both aspects: Sunday worship and the liturgical year.

I write with last Sunday's celebratory worship of Christ the King still ringing in my ears. The east window in Frankfield depicts Christ in glory seated above the busy world of the nine virtues, his work on earth finished, looking down with all the love that we can only begin to fathom. So our Church year ends.

Now with a rapid turn we begin Advent, the season of expectation. Like the natural world, the church too has its seasons. They will keep us on track, following Christ's incarnation, baptism, life, teachings, trial, death, resurrection, ascension and reign in glory. The structure ensures that no one aspect is omitted, or takes over. We will give attention to each person of the Holy Trinity: God our Creator, Jesus Christ our Redeemer and the Holy Spirit our Guide. Spread over a year, we can attend to all of these themes.

We begin with Advent, time to look forward, a season of hope as the

faith-year again renews. Let us, for now, hold Christmas at arm's length and enter fully into the time of expectation, anticipation, looking forward. This year, more than any other, we are being schooled in looking forward, in being patient with present circumstances and not jumping ahead. Children, as they write their letters to Santa, know about delayed gratification; we adults are now challenged to practise it in our everyday lives. Now is a time to prepare, to make ourselves ready for better times ahead, in the knowledge that we will celebrate God incarnate, he is still with us, and there will be joy.

"I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord...to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29: 11.

United Carol Service

Again, this year, we will not be able to hold carol services in our churches which involve congregational singing. Therefore, we hope to have an outdoor 'Carol Service' on Sunday 19th December at 4pm instead. This will be held in the carpark beside St Luke's School and the Canon Packham Hall. Worshippers will be provided with hot chocolate on arrival and are asked to bring their own seating if required. Festive lighting will add to the atmosphere and some shelter will be provided too. St Nicholas' Brass Band will be on hand to play a medley of favourite seasonal music before and after the service. At present there is no limit to the number of people who can congregate outdoors, so we hope for a large congregation. There is ample space for people to spread out and observe social distance as well as to enjoy one another's company

afterwards. The service will be about 45 minutes and obviously is somewhat weather dependent. If due to the public health restrictions, or extreme weather conditions on the day, this service must be cancelled, an email will be sent out in advance. Nevertheless, we press forward in confidence looking forward to a joy filled and meaningful outdoor service. I hope to see you there.

A. Wilkinson

Do you need confidential help or financial support?

If so don't hesitate to contact me. While the last 20 months have been difficult for us all, I know that for some there have been particular burdens. Some of these involve loss of income or unexpected expenses. If you are reading this and know that you fall into this category, give me a call or send me an email.

One of the frustrations of my role since the outbreak of Covid is that I am not able to casually call to see people in their homes and I no longer see some former regular worshippers in church because they are anxious in social settings. I therefore might be out of touch with your circumstances. If you are in need, please contact me and I will do what I can to provide help and support. *A. Wilkinson*

Bishop of Cork's Pastoral Care Fund: New Year Gifts

Dr Aoife Bhreatnach (Parish Link for the Bishop's Pastoral Care Fund) writes...

The Bishop of Cork Pastoral Care Fund was established by Bishop Paul Colton in 2020, with the aim of responding to human need by loving service. It will

- Relieve poverty and hardship
- Advance of education
- Advance community welfare
- Promote religious or racial harmony and harmonious community relations

The response to the call for donations was incredible. In just 14 weeks this year, the people of this diocese donated €123,242.88. All the monies raised have been invested but it will be a few years before any proceeds can be distributed. In the meantime, the Bishop would like to try to help necessitous people in the long, hard slog of early New Year and January with New Year Gifts. If you would like to contribute to this effort, please donate to the Pastoral Fund. You can donate, online, through a bank transfer or by cheque.

Donate online with this link:

<http://cork.anglican.org/charities/bishop-of-cork-pastoral-care-fund/>

Bank transfer details:
Bishop of Cork Pastoral Care Fund
Iban – IE05 BOFI 902768 35601121
Bic – BOFIE2D

If you wish to notify us that you have made such an online donation please email:
office@corkchurchofireland.com

You may also make a donation by cheque: Cheques, made out to 'Bishop of Cork Pastoral Care Fund' may be posted to: Bishop of Cork Pastoral Care Fund, Diocesan Office, St Nicholas House, 14 Cove Street, Cork, T12 RP40

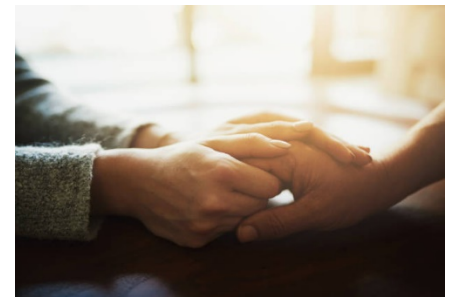
This year it has not been possible to distribute Bishops' Appeal envelopes.

If you would like to support their world aid and development programme please go to their website

www.bishopsappeal.ireland.anglican.org

and you can donate online or give by bank transfer.

Your support would be much appreciated.



Royal British Legion Earl Haig Poppy Appeal

Having organised the Poppy Collection in Douglas and Frankfield for many years, I would like to thank the parishioners for their generosity. It is much appreciated. The collections this year were Douglas €188.75, Frankfield €303 and Blackrock €77.14. Many thanks to David Wolfe and Keith Dawson for their help. *Cecil Locke*

Covid Guidance for Places of Worship

The Health Prevention Surveillance Centre (HSPC) guidelines for Places of Worship was updated most recently on 22 November. The full text can be consulted on the internet. However below are some of the most relevant sections which apply to our parish. I circulate them for your information. *A. Wilkinson*

Allow sufficient time for cleaning of contact surfaces before each service.

Congregants are advised not to gather immediately outside the door before or after the service.

Alcohol-based hand rub should be provided for use at entry, exit and other appropriate points within the space. Hand-washing facilities, including soap dispensers and disposable towels, should be well maintained.

All hard surfaces that are frequently touched, such as door handles, hand rails, seats, and taps should be cleaned regularly with a household detergent. Touching of surfaces should be minimised. It is recommended that congregants continue to wear cloth face coverings

or masks during indoor services and ceremonies. A mask provides better protection than a visor, which should not be used unless there are specific problems with using the face mask. Please note the use of surgical masks rather than face cloth coverings is now recommended to be worn by people who are in high risk and very high-risk cohorts when in confined community spaces.

Faith and religious leaders do not need to wear a cloth face covering if they are fully vaccinated and can optimise physical distancing from any participant and the area is adequately ventilated

Members of the congregation should avoid singing, shouting, chanting and raising of voices, as this may increase the risk of airborne transmission of the virus; if possible, encourage the use of microphones or similar equipment to minimise voice volume.

Ensure adequate ventilation of any indoor spaces, either through natural ventilation (i.e. opening windows and external doors) taking account of weather and comfort or mechanical means (e.g. central air-conditioning unit).

Public Health signage should be displayed at entrances to places of religious worship taking care not to cause obstruction or delay for those entering or leaving.

Alcohol-based hand rub should be provided. These should be placed outside of the place of worship for use prior to entry and after exit, and at appropriate points within the space where the religious service is held.

Members of the congregation should be told how the distribution of Communion is going to be managed

and of the potential risk so that they can make an informed choice. Communion should be distributed into the hands and NOT onto the tongue of congregants. The host should be placed in the hand of the recipient in such a way as to avoid hand contact. Use of communal vessels is suspended. All infection, prevention and control measures must be in place including face masks/coverings, social distancing and hand hygiene.

St Luke's School Notes

by Mrs. S. Colton

2021 was a very unusual year for the whole school community in St Luke's School. Despite Remote Learning for the first three months of the year, all our pupils and teachers were very engaged in various assignments, zoom classes, zoom assemblies and video making on Google Classroom for this lockdown period. Huge thanks is due to parents for their support during these very different times.

When we did return to school on a staggered basis in March we really began to embrace the "Great Outdoors" and appreciate the wonderful facilities we have in our neighbourhood. Ballybrack Woods became a very popular venue for studying nature, orienteering and walking. Our playground next door to the school was also an invaluable local amenity enjoyed by the children.

Regular outdoor Assemblies are now part of school life, many thanks Archdeacon Wilkinson for never failing to come to speak to the children whatever the weather!

We had an outdoor Dress Up Parade at Halloween this year when staff and

pupils modelled their wonderful colourful costumes!

All our pupils were delighted that they could safely go on school tours in the Summer term. Our various classes visited Fota Wildlife Park, Ballyhass Lakes, Cuskinny Adventure Centre, Leahy's Farm and Oysterhaven Adventure Park.

Many classes were able to take part in a range of very worthwhile workshops through Zoom and video links this year. These included a NASA Virtual Field Trip, Cell Explorers Workshop, Hysterical Histories Cork film, a Lifetime lab Workshop and listening to the author David Walliams.

We are very fortunate to have a very supportive Parents' Association in St Luke's and this year they still managed to organise an Easter Art Competition, an Easter Raffle, a Coffee to Go Morning, a Clothes Drive and a Halloween Door Competition. Thank you to all involved.

We also appreciate work that many volunteers do behind the scenes for us to improve the facilities in the school, Tom Chambers, David Shine, Jamie Dorgan and Mark Gallagher did a superb job replacing the steps, edging our garden and repairing our playhouse in Tir na nOg.

We now look forward to enjoying our Christmas Activities...a Zoom Santa, an on line Panto, a Christmas Jumper Day and a recording of our Carol Service in a happy and safe environment.

Happy Christmas to all and every good wish for 2022.

Home Communion at Christmas

Normally it is the practice for the clergy to celebrate holy communion with parishioners who are housebound in their homes at Christmas. Usually this involves multiple visits each day for the full week before Christmas. Clearly given the public health concerns, this will not be possible this year. However as many of our older parishioners are now triply vaccinated, it will be possible to bring communion by extension to the homes of those who request it.



St Michael's School News

By Ms Alison Quill

We have had a very busy first term so far at St Michael's. At the end of September, we were delighted to welcome Clare Crowley to our staff as an SNA.

We are enjoying recommencing activities that can take place outdoors. Robbie Carroll visits us from St Fin Barre's Cathedral Choir every Friday for singing. Ted Williamson has been teaching us cricket through Cork Sports Partnership and we have been delighted to be able to continue our outdoor assemblies with Archdeacon Wilkinson on Friday mornings.

We hope to have a pre planning meeting for our new build in the coming weeks.

Our classes have been very busy. The Rowan Room have just completed their Intel Mini Scientist projects. They presented their projects to their parents and to our other classes as an outdoor Science Exhibition for Science Week. Our Chestnut Room are making great progress with their STEPS Junior Engineers project. They have also been helping their teacher as we begin to work towards our first Green Flag. We are very proud of Abi Foley who has won her category for the third year in a row in the Credit Union Art competition.

Wedding Congratulations!



Congratulations to Samantha Williams and John Kent who were married in St Luke's Church on Thursday 2 December. We wish them every blessing and happiness.

Sun. 5 December <i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i>	8.30	Holy Communion	Blackrock
	9.45	Service of the Word	Passage
	10.00	Service of the Word	Frankfield
	11.15	Service of the Word	Douglas
	11.30	Service of the Word	Blackrock
Wed. 8 December	11.00	Holy Communion	Douglas
Sun. 12 December <i>3rd Sunday of Advent</i>	8.30	Holy Communion	Blackrock
	9.45	Holy Communion	Passage
	10.00	Holy Communion	Frankfield
	11.15	Holy Communion	Douglas
Wed. 15 December	11.00	Holy Communion	Douglas
Sun. 19 December <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i>	8.30	Holy Communion	Blackrock
	10.00	Morning Prayer	Frankfield
	11.30	Holy Communion	Blackrock
	4pm	'Carol Service' with Parish Choirs and St Nicholas Brass Band in Canon Packham Hall car park	
Wed. 22 December	11.00	Holy Communion	Douglas

Services for Christmas

Friday 24 December	3.00pm	Crib Service	St Luke's Douglas
<i>Christmas Eve</i>	10.00pm	Holy Communion	St Luke's Douglas
<i>Please note earlier times on Christmas Eve to allow for church cleaning between services.</i>			
Saturday 25 December	8.30	Holy Communion	St Michael's Blackrock
<i>Christmas Day</i>	9.45	Holy Communion	St Mary's Passage West
	10.00	Holy Communion	Holy Trinity Frankfield
	11.15	Holy Communion	St Luke's Douglas
	11.30	Holy Communion	St Michael's Blackrock
Sunday 26 December	11.15	Holy Communion	St Luke's Douglas
<i>St Stephen's Day</i>			