



Rector writes

Hello

We are now in Lisburn, lock stock and barrel as they say. It has been just over a month from the Institution and I have to say that we already are feeling at home here. Your warm welcome has been a big part in making that happen. Whether you have been involved in getting the Rectory ready for us, making a dinner or lifting furniture during the madness of the moving process, keeping an eye on the girls or simply remembering our names, it has meant a lot to us so we say THANK YOU.

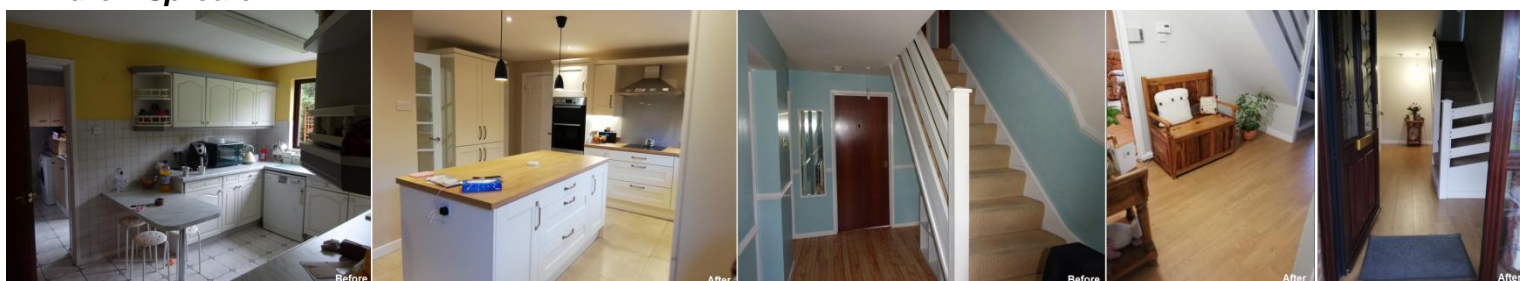
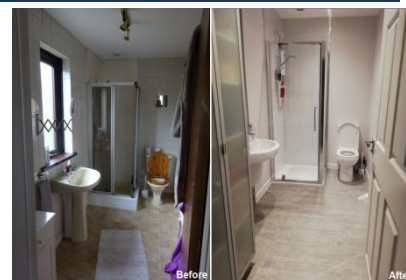
We arrive amongst you at a special time of the year – some would say the most wonderful time. A time of expectation and celebration. A time when good will and festive cheer is normally at heightened levels. Yet the hustle and bustle of Christmas also demands that we pause and revere the silence and stillness that comes with this season. The cosmic event that is EMMANUEL. The moment that God became one of us. He took on the elements of creation – the humanity that we call normal – to ensure that humanity could become eternal. So that you and I don't have to despair that this might be all that there is. Rather trusting in his saving grace and victorious death alone, we can proclaim with assurance our place in eternity with him. This is good news. This is exciting news. The shepherds might have been fearful – but we don't have to be. The inn-keeper might have been dismissive – but we shouldn't be. The Magi sought him out and so should we. If you let the silence and stillness of this cosmic event drown out the hustle and bustle of this festive season, you will not be disappointed.

This is a new season for all of us and my prayer is that as we get to know each other, as relationships grow and deepen we will continue to usher in the Kingdom of God in this very place. Just like that first Christmas in a stable in Bethlehem we would declare – EMMANUEL – God with us.

Every Blessing
James

As required by the Church of Ireland during a vacancy, a surveyor appointed by Connor Diocese, carried out an inspection of the Rectory in May this year as no major renovation had been done in the 30 years since the house was built. The house was found to be generally sound but needed some maintenance and modernisation. Recommendations for the major works included replacing the kitchen and knocking the wall through to the dining room, with the installation of a steel beam. The bathroom, En suite and downstairs toilet were to be refurbished and internal walls at the dormer window in the main bedroom should be replaced and insulated. Building Control subsequently directed that the electrical consumer unit should be upgraded. We were advised to redecorate from top to bottom and replace the internal doors. The opportunity was taken to replace the front windows and door; this had been previously approved by the Vestry but was postponed when the McElhinney family moved out about 3 years ago. The contract was given to a local builder who completed the work inside the house about a week after the Institution Service. Some minor snags and work to fencing has now been completed. Parishioners helped over two Saturdays to tidy the garden. The Rectory is now like a new house and we hope the Boyd family will be very happy in their new home for MANY years to come. The total expenditure totals nearly £42,000 which will be paid for by salary savings during the vacancy and from reserves held in Dublin.

Andrew Sproule





Christmas Craft Fair

After months in the planning we held our Christmas Craft Fair on the 25th November and our crafters didn't disappoint us! With 20 tables, including local crafters, both new and old, the church cake and raffle stall and our ladies group 'Cameo', we had a really successful day with visitors coming from not only the local area but Bangor, Dublin and Ballymena hey!

It was a day of great shopping and fellowship over a good old cuppa served by Margaret and her many glamorous assistants with many of us going home with beautiful handmade presents for our loved ones (and ourselves!)

A big thank you to Andy, Rhona, Stewarty, Nuala, Helen and Faith (The Hampers were fantastic!) to name but a few who helped, each in their own little way. It didn't go unnoticed and, if anything, it further highlighted our motto as a church "Together is better!" So thank you to everyone who ensured that it was as successful as last year!

Laura Coburn

Derryvolgie Choir

The Derryvolgie Choir was set up three years ago with the purpose of singing at the Christmas Carol Service. Last year, the choir members enjoyed it so much that they requested that the choir be made part of the Derryvolgie Institution, and as a result, they have performed several times during the year, with everyone enjoying their contribution. Always great fun, the choir challenges themselves with part singing, and even sings in other languages! This Christmas, the members have been rehearsing three lovely pieces which will be premiered at the carol service. We hope everyone is available to attend on Sunday 16th December at 5pm.

Kirsty Orr

Nativity!

Involving as much tinsel and as many tea towels as are available, the Sunday Club has been enjoying its annual preparations for the nativity service at 10.30am on Sunday 23rd December. Featuring Baby Jesus as the main event, this year's nativity will include songs - new and old, a story of a bat in the stable, and a beautifully choreographed angel dance. There will also be performance opportunities for our budding musicians and singers, along with our fabulous actors! Think "Derryvolgie's Got Talent meets Nativity". We've filled nearly all of the roles, but if you don't want a part, keep your head down!

Kirsty Orr

Christmas Celebration Dates

16 Dec	5.00pm	Carol Service
17 Dec	6.30pm	Community Carol Singing starting at Belsize Court then to Harmony Hill Fold
18 Dec	6.30pm	Community Carol Singing in the Foyer of Lagan Valley Hospital (Rev. Don Gamble)
23 Dec	10.30am	Nativity Play
24 Dec	11.30pm	Christmas Eve Late night Holy Communion (Festive Refreshments from 11.00pm)
25 Dec	10.30am	Christmas Day Family Communion



~~~ CAMEO ~~~

Our ladies group, Cameo, meet on the first Monday of each month at 7.30pm for an informal meeting which begins with our opening prayer, followed by planned activity and finishing with light refreshments. The past few meetings have been spent preparing for the Christmas Craft Fair, which was a great success, thanks to the very talented ladies from our Church who spent so much time preparing hand crafted items for the Church craft stall. A massive thank to everyone who contributed!

December saw the return of Ruby McElhinney for an inspiring and thought provoking insight into her recent trip to South Africa. It was lovely to hear Ruby talk in-depth about the positive impact Christianity, prayer and hope are having in the lives of those she met whilst on her travels. Our youngest member, Martha Pedlow also joined us for our December meeting with Ruby enjoying a cuddle before she left. We meet again on 7th January and look forward to seeing everyone then.

Wishing you all a very happy Christmas

Nuala & Lyn





My Day at the Synod



The Church of Ireland is divided into twelve dioceses. Derryvolgie is one of some 70 parishes in the Diocese of Connor. Each diocese holds an Annual Diocesan Synod. This year the Synod was held in Ballymena on 3rd October. The day began with Holy Communion in St Patrick's Church. St Patrick's has the most beautiful stained glass windows. At the Synod, the clergy of the diocese and lay representatives from each parish meet. The meeting is a kind of Annual General Meeting; those present hear reports on the activities of churches in the diocese. There is opportunity for some discussion.

The opening address was given by Bishop Alan, who was returning after a short period of leave. He referred to a book he has written and which is due for publication in the New Year. He said he had used his time off to reflect on a number of issues e.g. Brexit and the border; the plight of refugees in the world and the conflict between Christianity and culture in some countries. He complimented the work being done by the North Belfast Centre of Mission on the Shankill Road. The Bishop concluded by offering a challenge to each local church, namely, to continue their ministry as at present but also to find ways of being a source of help and relevance to those who don't belong to a church.

The Report produced by the Diocesan Council was gone through. It included information on diocesan finances, developments in parishes, youth work, the church in the world and the Mothers Union. The evening session of the day included stories from 4 different parishes: Greenisland and African Child Ministry; Ardoyne and Alpha Course; St Aidan, Belfast and Messy Church; Ballymoney and "Filling Station". There was an opportunity to view displays from a number of diocesan and wider church projects and activities.

While there is a lot of administrative detail given at the Synod, this year it was heartening to hear about some very positive developments in parishes. Attending the Synod also helps to remind us that we are not just a local church but we are part of a bigger whole. **Derek Shuter**



Invitation from Mayor of Lisburn

The Mayor of Lisburn and Castlereagh Council, Councillor Uel Mackin, has extended an invitation to all the churches in the Lisburn area to engage with an initiative which he has called Focus 7. The Mayor is a committed church member and a believer in the power of prayer. In the lead-up to Christmas, he has invited churches to identify seven members of their congregation who will commit to saying a daily prayer for the Lisburn community. In particular, he invites prayers to give thanks for the good that we enjoy and he asks for prayers to help with the difficulties and problems in the local area. Seven members of our congregation have accepted the Mayor's invitation; the prayers of others will be welcome and appreciated. Sample prayers, such as the one below, are available, should you wish to use. Please ask.

Sample prayer for the Lisburn community

Lord God, we bring to mind the local community in which we live and work. We are conscious of its good points and we appreciate the benefits it brings us. We give thanks for these. We acknowledge too that good is not spread evenly throughout the community and that there are deprived areas in Lisburn. We pray that the obstacles to a fair society can be lessened. May we, as individuals, do whatever we can to contribute to a peaceful and just community. May we be helped to keep to the fore the example of Jesus and the Christian values we hold.





Derryvolgie Men's Group

Members of the Men's group were taken back to the time of motorcycling heroes Geoff Duke and John Surtees at their October meeting. Guest speaker, David Crwaford, is a motorbike enthusiast. He delved into his extensive store of motor biking knowledge to give the Men's Group an interesting look at how motorcycles have developed. His talk was accompanied by a wide selection of memorabilia items, including photos, letters and a short video of some motorcycle races from the 1960s. David's talk was informative and different. In fact, it aroused a bit of nostalgia amongst some members who had once owned motorbikes themselves!.....and had imagined themselves as Geoff Duke or John Surtees! Our thanks to David.



In November, we had the opportunity to enjoy the hospitality of the Mayor of Lisburn and Castlereagh Council, Councillor Uel Mackin. A conducted tour of the exhibitions and workshops in the Island Arts Centre was followed by a very informative talk by the Mayor on the workings of the Council and on development plans which the Council has for the local area. We had the opportunity to take seats in the Council Chamber and to learn about the origin of Lisburn's coat of arms. The Mayor also referred to issues and problems in the Lisburn area. He outlined to us his Focus

Seven initiative, through which he hopes to engage the churches in the area in praying for the local community. Our thanks to Andy Sproule for arranging this visit.

Derek Shuter



Stamping OUT Leprosy

Ireland. Used stamps – 1st and 2nd class, are sold on to stamp collectors as kilo ware and this worthwhile charity receives around £10 - £15 per kilo. Stamp collections donated to The Leprosy Mission are purchased by collectors, who pay the market value for them. Over the course of a year £5,000 - £6,000 was raised in this way. Peter Hilton,

Church and Engagement Officer at Leprosy Mission NI, based at Queens Road in Lisburn said "It is an excellent supplement to the donations which we receive via collection boxes, regular gifts, annual collections etc., so please do collect your used stamps over Christmas for TLM! We are keen to make the most of every opportunity to raise funds that will help people suffering from leprosy to find healing and life in all its fullness."

Starting: 16th January 2019
Run by: Gordon McEvoy
Venue: Ballymacash Community Centre **Time:** 10:00

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