



ST. COLUMBA'S DERRYVOLGIE

TO KNOW CHRIST BETTER AND TO MAKE HIM BETTER KNOWN

CHURCH OF IRELAND

www.derryvolgie.com

FEBRUARY 2022



Rector's Letter

Its February, the time when many of the New Year's Resolutions have been forgotten and our minds turn to the season of love as we approach Valentine's Day. Why not resolve this month to LOVE more – why? Because you are loved by a God who knows you and desires your company. Love breaks down barriers and smashes walls, love conquers the impossible and breaks the silence, love brings hope, and love never fails. Let's show more LOVE, be more LOVING and resolve that LOVE will win in the battle for our hearts.

The person who refuses to love doesn't know the first thing about God, because God is love - so you can't know him if you don't love. This is how God showed his love for us: God sent his only Son into the world so we might live through him. This is the kind of love

we are talking about—not that we once upon a time loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to clear away our sins and the damage they've done to our relationship with God. 1 John 7-10

It doesn't always have to be a huge dramatic gesture often the simple text message, phone call or smile at the door is more than enough to break through the loneliness and isolation that so many feel. As we emerge from this COVID 19 pandemic, how we love each other has never been more important. It is the way we can look out for each other and serve our community. After all, that is how we will get 'to know Christ better and make him better known.' Faith, hope and love will remain, but the greatest of these is love.

Every Blessing

James

Praying for Derryvolgie

Prayer is vital to the life blood of the Christian and is key in the growth of God's kingdom. If you are like me, you can sometimes find it difficult to focus your prayers. By receiving a regular email, you could become part of a group of people who have signified that they would like to be kept up to date with things that will help to focus their prayers for this parish and the community we are a part of. Please contact James if you wish your name to be added to the list.

Activities in our buildings

Our buildings have always been used by a variety of organisations over many years. From Pilates to Singing, Dancing to Craft, the range is huge. If you can support these groups, it would be great to do so as they benefit the wider community. We will hopefully be running an awareness campaign of what organisations are currently available on our social media very soon, so keep an eye out and maybe something will spark your interest.

Community Garden

As you may be aware an idea was floated last year about establishing a Community Garden in Derryvolgie and received great interest in our Community Audit. It can be hard to know where to start with a project like this. It needs volunteers and momentum to get it germinated. We are hoping to have several small workshops/events over the next few months that will gauge interest and begin to establish a presence. This isn't just about growing things; it is about creating a community space where people can meet. A space that fills the voids of isolation with relationship, exclusion with community and uncertainty with purpose. Taking small steps to help others as we emerge from the restrictions of COVID 19.



The Name ABOVE ALL NAMES



The Christmas Lunch was an opportunity to join together in the festive spirit. We were pleased to be joined at the lunch by Maureen Atcheson. Maureen was making a first visit back from her new home in Comber. Over a long number of years, Maureen had made a substantial contribution to the life of St Columba's.

In welcoming Maureen to the lunch, Derek Shuter spoke about her service. He referred to her work as Churchwarden. In the porch every Sunday, Maureen provided a friendly welcome to everyone arriving for the service. She was also a longstanding member of the Select Vestry and also a committed support to her late husband, John, in his role as Honorary Secretary. Derek pointed out that Maureen's contribution to church activities covered practically every function or activity which took place during the church year. The Toddlers Club on a Tuesday and the weekend Fab Club were just two activities which

benefitted from her willingness to help. In fact, a toddler who was a regular attendee on a Tuesday used to refer to the church building as "Maureen's house". There is no doubt that Maureen enjoyed her involvement in the running of church and in working to keep the building clean and welcoming. Making teas, washing dishes, dusting and cleaning (especially communion vessels), supervising young people, welcoming parishioners, and so on were all activities undertaken by Maureen..... and usually undertaken without being asked. We were pleased to present Maureen with a garden shrub as a small acknowledgment of her contribution to St Columba's.

Little did we know that this visit was to be Maureen's last to the church. We were shocked and saddened to learn of her sudden death at home in Comber on 12th January. We had the opportunity to pay our respects at the funeral service in St Columba's on 18th January 2022. Maureen was a character who is impossible to forget. She was: a caring person; a busy person; a respectful person. She was a person whose beliefs were lived out through her willing and practical involvement in the everyday life of the church. We give thanks for Maureen's life and example.

Christmas 2021



The Christmas that has just passed remained in that category of 'being different.' Even though restrictions were not as severe as 2020 we were still far from what we would call normal.

Thankfully our Christmas dinner was able to go ahead in person. We also operated on a hybrid system of home delivery and in person. A great day was had, and we made a small presentation to Maureen Atcheson for many years of service to the life of Derryvolgie.

We planned and delivered our first Panto Trail. This was a great success with many families coming along on the Friday night to enjoy the mix of panto and nativity which was created by 'Play it by Ear.' Puppets and craft featured as well as food, it was a great night

and we have had many positive comments and conversations about it.

Our normal Christmas services continued both online and in person. Our children took part in Christmas around the world – showing us the way the good news of Jesus is celebrated in different countries and cultures across the world. Our Community Carols continued to build on the success of the previous years and was a special way to mark the season with input from parishioners online and in person.





DerryVolgeKids

Since October, the kids' programmes at Derryvolgie have been delivered in person. A welcome change for those who were "Zoomed out"! The kids' programmes have been rebranded and now come under the "DVK" (Derryvolgie Kids) umbrella. DVK meets most Sundays; please see timetable included.

On Sundays we follow the "All Aboard" programme which was developed by the Diocesan Children's Worker. Each month there is a different theme, such as Old Testament prophets or women in the Bible. Each lesson includes a Bible story followed by some activities such as a game or craft to help the children delve into the meaning of the story.

DVK also meet on the first Friday evening of the month during school term time. On Friday evenings, primary school aged children enjoy games, craft, a Bible-based talk and a snack. There is a different theme each month, the theme for February is (very appropriately!) LOVE.

Thanks to all the DVK leaders and helpers for their commitment and care, making God's word accessible to the children that attend. Thanks also to the children for taking part, for being willing to learn and have some fun!

All primary school aged children are welcome to Sundays and/or Fridays. There is a registration form online to complete, but no booking is required. We would love to see you there.

DATE	DVK?	THEME
6 Feb	No DVK	Family Service
13 Feb	DVK on	Good Shepherd
20 Feb	DVK on	Lost coin
27 Feb	DVK on	Big Spender (prodigal son)
6 March	No DVK	Family Service
13 March	DVK on	Ruth finds a home
20 March	DVK on	The helpful servant
27 March	DVK on	Esther was a star
3 April	DVK on	The last supper
10 April	DVK on	Jesus' sacrifice
17 April	No DVK	Family service (Easter Sunday)
24 April	No DVK	Easter break
1 May	No DVK	Family Service
8 May	DVK on	A brave and mighty man (Gideon)
15 May	DVK on	The wise king (Solomon)
22 May	DVK on	A time to build (Nehemiah)
29 May	DVK on	Dive in activity week (recap)
5 June	DVK on	On the road to Damascus
12 June	DVK on	The earth shakes
19 June	No DVK	Children's Day and prize giving
26 June	No DVK	Summer break



NAKURU - You might have thought that Covid would have affected our collection for Nakuru. After all, more people might be attending our services, but they aren't all in church in person. They aren't there to drop some loose change in the collection plate on the way in. But thankfully they got it into that plate somehow! As a result, we were able to send a collection of £275.52 (40,219.59 Kenyan shillings) to Nakuru. Our donation goes to support the Nakuru Diocese school for orphans and the diocesan small business start-up fund. All the children from that school go on to higher education and most of the start-ups are formed by women. We couldn't be investing more wisely! The money goes a long way. The cost of living in Kenya is some 3.5 times less than it is here so that £275.52 will buy some £964 worth of goods. Your loose change is being very well spent!





You may already know me; my name is Mark Hassard and I am a Health & Safety Advisor for local Government. The first time that I attended Derryvolgie was in 1966 where I was baptised, I have had many positive experiences and fond memories there since.

Health & Safety is the golden thread that runs through the planning of any leisure or work activity, it is to minimise the risk and keep us safe. It is so important to remember there is risk in everything we do. The risk assessment process should be a positive "can do" approach to get things done, to consider anything foreseeable that could be encountered and to put in place sensible reasonable controls in order to keep us safe.

There is no shortage of strange decisions being blamed on health and safety. Over the years, the Health and Safety Executive has tackled some quite incredible myths about what health and safety bans or orders people to do:

- Children being banned from playing conkers unless they are wearing goggles.
- Office workers being banned from putting up Christmas decorations.
- Trapeze artists being ordered to wear hard hats.
- Pin the tail on the donkey games being deemed a health and safety risk.
- Candy floss on a stick being banned in case people trip and impale themselves.
- Hanging baskets being banned in case people bump their heads on them.
- Schoolchildren being ordered to wear clip on ties in case they are choked by traditional neckwear.
- Park benches must be replaced because they are three inches too low.
- Graduates ordered not to throw their mortar boards in the air.



It is hard to tell where some of these ridiculous and baffling myths originate, but they all have one crucial thing in common - they are not required by health and safety law.

The HSE have launched a new Myth Busters Challenge Panel, they have published its top ten worst myths, and if you are interested in myth buster reviews go to: www.hse.gov.uk/myth/top10myths.htm . They believe that the time has come to end the madness of silly!

COVID-19 has affected all of us in profound ways over the last year. Our leaders in the Big House on Hill have come together to keep us safe so far as reasonably practicable, but there has been a personal cost. The virus itself, and the necessary health and safety controls to contain its spread, have triggered feelings of anxiety, distress or loneliness for many of us. COVID-19 has affected us all in different ways, and it has been a worrying time. As the situation changes, we might feel nervous about the future or frustrated by the way our life has changed.

It is important to remember it is okay to feel this way and that everyone reacts differently. For most of us, these difficult feelings will pass. There are simple things we can do to help manage the way we feel, and take care of our mental health and wellbeing. Do not avoid things entirely, discuss any changes with your family, your church family and others; remember to tell someone how you feel. It's important to make time to relax, take part in or plan social occasions you feel comfortable with.

If I could offer advice to any of you today, it is to try to stay positive and to stick by your faith. Know that our God is with us and will take care of us, all the way through.

Mark.



A Visit with Margaret Wilkinson

I was in England (Warwickshire) over Christmas with my son Iain and family. Before I left home, I heard that Margaret Wilkinson (our past Rector Noel's widow) had moved to England to live with her son John who is a Doctor in Solihull. A friend gave me her address and I discovered it was only 10 miles from my son. Margaret was very keen to see me so one afternoon Iain drove me to John's house. I spent a very pleasant afternoon catching up on all our family's news and bringing Margaret up to date with news from Derryvolgie.

Mary Donnelly.



Communicating Clearly in Derryvolgie

In January 2020 the Select Vestry had taken the decision to upgrade our AV system, which in of itself seemed like a simple enough task. However, the raising of funds and the arrival of lockdown during the COVID pandemic put a hold on the installation.

While the pause button was pressed on the physical installation of equipment a new and exciting phase of ministry was launched in Derryvolgie. Our presence online was suddenly increased. Thanks mainly due to a superb volunteer team we were able to livestream our services, produce inspirational videos, hold Facebook live sessions, and collaborate with parishioners as we created a space to hear people's stories of hope and comfort.

As lockdown eased that September, we set about the physical installation of the new equipment that would enable us to continue our online presence as well as enhancing our in-person services. It was recognised and agreed that as we raised funds for this project it could be an opportunity to help others, looking out to our world as well as resourcing the mission of our parish. In a



DIAL IN

You can now listen to our latest Sunday Service by calling

028 9227 0922

Calls should last approx 30 minutes and be charged at your standard network rate. For many calls to this will be included in their package.

walked more than that. A team of 49 people pledged several miles per day some as young as 5 walking with others as old as (best not to speculate). It was wonderful to see the pictures coming in daily as we walked and prayed for our community and the nation of Chile. This project will have an impact for generations to come. Thanks to all involved in the walking we have raised over £4700 before Gift Aid. A wonderful achievement for a worthy cause that is already impacting our community as the equipment has enabled us to establish Life groups, children's and youth ministries online, live streaming funerals for family who can't attend and so much more. This is all before we get to the impact in the nation of Chile the fruit of which will not be seen for a few years, but we know will be huge under God.

It is great to be able say that during a 12 months period we have raised all necessary funds for this project and the monies handed over to SAMS on Sunday 26 September 2021.

STILL HERE

We may be socially distancing but pastorally we still care and want to connect with you. Please contact us if you need someone to pray or talk things over with.

+44 (0) 28 92528242
info@derryvolgie.com





Life Groups - One of the frequent questions around a life group is what do you do? Is it a bible study? A discussion group? Who leads it and what form does it take? Well, the answer is it really depends on the parish. So, what happens in life groups in Derryvolgie? They are a place where you can learn more, grow more and build deeper relationships with others. We are operating a hybrid system with some people meeting in person and others online. Everyone gathers at the same time, Tuesdays at 8.00pm. The Rector leads us in a simple re-cap of what he spoke about on Sunday taking it that bit deeper. Then we break off into our groups to discuss what has been said using a series of questions devised specifically for the evening. We currently have three groups and usually stay in the same groups (2 are online and 1 is in person) as this allows us to deepen our relationships. We then return together for a conclusion and a chance to share any questions/comments that may have been raised. If you think this is something you would like to try, please get in touch with James.

Small things making a big difference

As you will be aware over the last number of months there have been several items in the porch ranging from jams and chutneys through to face masks. Each of these items have been snapped up with a simple donation which goes towards parish funds. This may seem like a small and simple thing yet over the months these items have raised hundreds of pounds for parish funds. A big thank you goes to those who make these items, to you for donating and in turn enjoying your purchase. If you think you could produce/make any items that might be included in this type of fundraising please speak to James or one of the wardens.



Parish Register

Baptisms:

JANUARY 2022

Matthew Patrick McDowell

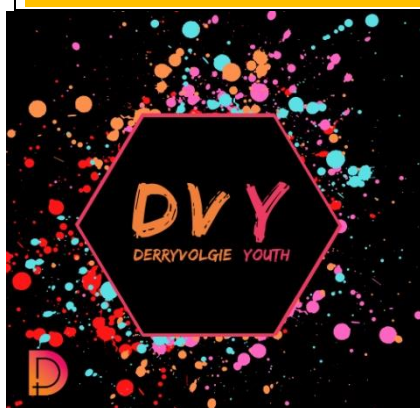
Deaths:

JULY 2021

Nigel Morton

JANUARY 2022

Maureen Atcheson



DVY – Derryvolgie Youth has been fortunate to meet in person this year. Happening each first and third Friday of the month, DVY has been doing Bible studies, such as going through 'The Big Questions of Faith' last term. This term we will be going through another series, 'The Big Picture of the Bible', seeing how all the stories in the Bible form one big picture of God's love for us, and to help understand the context of the events at the time.

DVY started 2022 with a bang at the Connor Takes the Castle event. This was a great opportunity for our youth to meet other young people in the Connor Diocese, and participate in activities such as laser tag and gladiator fights (safer than it sounds, we promise). We'd appreciate your prayers as we continue to meet, study the Bible, and have fun with mind bending games and competitions.

Jonny & Caryn.

SAMS Mission Partner – Claire Holmes



Thank you so much for the opportunity to write something for the magazine and for all your ongoing support and prayers which is most appreciated.

After waiting over two years, I will be returning to Paraguay D.V on 9th February and plan to spend 3 weeks there. It will be amazing to see and spend some time with everyone again and have the opportunity to pack up the house where I lived for many years. It is especially timely as Javier, one of the leaders in the church, a father of 3 young children died tragically in an accident in January. It will be good to be with the church and his family and to share with and support them in their grief. We would appreciate your prayers for Javier's wife and children and the church at this time. Thanks again for all your support and may God bless you. **Claire.**

Stamps and inkjet cartridges for charity

As you are aware we have been collecting used stamps for a number of years and bringing them to the Leprosy Mission office in Queen's Road. Joy Jamieson their office manager advised us that, from the end of 2021, they are winding down these collections as a fundraising activity. They are finding the large quantities of stamps required to raise any decent amount of money are no longer coming in. She passed on her sincere thanks to the Derryvolgie congregation for their support over many years. She did however say that they are able to raise funds by people recycling their used inkjet printer cartridges. Self-addressed envelopes are available for the cartridges in the hall of the church, these are posted free of charge and part of the proceeds are sent to The Leprosy Mission. Efforts are underway to identify other charities who will take used stamps. If any members of the congregation have any suggestions, please let the Rector of Churchwardens know. *Thanks Andy.*

