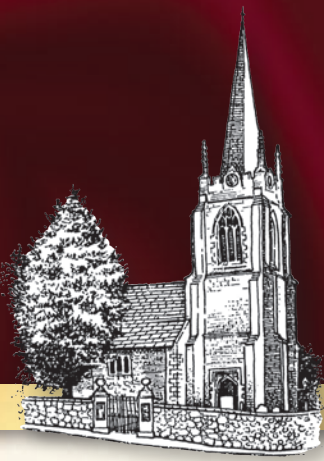


SPRING 2024

# SAINTS *Alive!*

[antrim.connor.anglican.org](http://antrim.connor.anglican.org)

THE MAGAZINE OF ALL SAINTS' PARISH, ANTRIM



## THE THIRSTING, SUFFERING GOD

In John's Gospel, just before he dies, Jesus cries out, 'I thirst'. The Soldiers soak a sponge in sour wine and hold it up to his lips on a branch of hyssop. Then when Jesus has drunk the wine, he bows his head and dies. 'It is finished' he says.

At first glance the meaning of the words 'I thirst' is quite obvious. It is a painful and poignant moment in a grim story: Jesus is dying on the cross; he is in agony; he longs for a drink to ease the pain. What more is there to say? It is a ghastly death. But scripture tells us there is much more. The Jesus we see thirsting on the cross is the one who, born in human likeness, has emptied himself of equality with God taking the form of a servant, and become obedient even to death. In Jesus we see God thirsting on the cross, sharing the world's suffering, sharing our humanity.

As Christians, we are sometimes guilty of rushing swiftly from the agony of the cross to the blessed relief of Easter morning. But there are times we need to stand at the foot of the cross and hear over and over again Jesus' words: 'I thirst'.

The story is told of the mother whose little girl is late home from school one day. As the minutes tick by the mother gets more and more worried. Five minutes go by, ten minutes go by, and the mother does not know where the little girl can be. As more time passes the mother starts to imagine the terrible things that may have befallen her daughter. The mother is distraught and is on the verge of calling the police when suddenly the little girl waltzes in through



the back door without a care in the world. The mother sweeps her daughter up in her arms, deeply relieved that her daughter is safe. But as is the way with parents, relief quickly turns to anger. 'Where have you been?' the mother cries. 'Didn't you realize how worried I would be about you?'

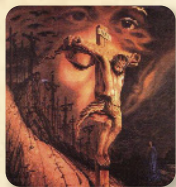
It becomes clear the little girl had been next door with their neighbour who had recently been

widowed. 'What have you been doing worrying that poor lady next door?' the mother asks crossly. 'I haven't been worrying her' said the little girl 'I have been comforting her'. 'Comforting her?' retorted the mother, 'what could you possibly do to comfort her?' The little girl replied, 'I climbed into her lap and cried with her'.

The supreme example of this in our relationship with God is the crucifixion. The God revealed to us in Jesus, the one who thirsts on the cross is also the one who climbs into our lap and cries with us. He shares all the most tremendous joys of human life. He also shares the most heart-breaking sorrows. On the cross when Jesus cries out in thirst, the misery and anguish he is going through are not just his, though the pain is very real: they resonate with every human cry and with all human suffering. Wherever there is pain in the world, wherever someone cries out, thirsty for water, afflicted with grief, tormented by pain, or craving love, we hear the cry of the one who has come to earth to show us what God is like. We discover that God is thirsting too. In the suffering, thirsting love of Christ we see the thirsting, suffering God.

*The Rev David Ferguson, Pastoral Administrator 2010*





## WHAT'S ON HOLY WEEK SERVICES

This year we are delighted to join with our neighbours in Antrim Methodist Church, High Street Presbyterian Church and Christian Fellowship Church, Lough Road (Royal British Legion complex).

### **Tuesday 26 March**

7.30pm in High Street Presbyterian Church

### **Wednesday 27 March**

7.30pm in Antrim Methodist Church

### **Maundy Thursday 28 March**

7.30pm in Christian Fellowship Church,  
Lough Road

### **Good Friday 29 March**

10.00am **Meditation Service** in All Saints'

7.30pm **Tenebrae Service** in All Saints'

### **Easter Sunday 31 March**

7.30am **Dawn Service** at Lough Shore

11.30am **Family Service &  
Holy Communion for Easter**  
in All Saints'

## ANTRIM CHURCHES 18th ANNUAL WALK OF WITNESS

We are looking forward to our eighteenth Walk of Witness on Good Friday 29 March. We will be joined by Councillor Mark Cooper BEM, Mayor of Antrim and Newtownabbey. We are encouraged to meet at High Street at 11.30am and we will be bussed to Antrim Methodist Church where the first service begins at 12.00 noon. We will then walk down the Greystone Road into the town, to All Saints, to Christian Fellowship Church at Lough Road, St Comgall's and then on to High Street Presbyterian for our concluding service at 2.00pm. We hope to see you join us in this very powerful affirmation of our unity in the Christian faith.



**EASTER GENERAL VESTRY**  
**Monday 8 April** at 7.00pm in the Parish Centre

## EASTER MORNING DAWN SERVICE



We are having our Dawn Service at 7.30am at the Lough Shore Car Park on Easter Sunday 31 March to celebrate our Lord's resurrection. This will take the form of a short service of Holy Communion followed by sausage baps back in the Parish Centre. These services have been moving and memorable occasions.

## SAGE WORDS

More electronic sage words  
As I hurtled through space, one  
thought kept crossing my mind  
- every part of this rocket was  
supplied by the lowest bidder.

*John Glenn*

When the white missionaries came  
to Africa they had the Bible and  
we had the land. They said 'Let us  
pray.' We closed our eyes. When we  
opened them we had the Bible and  
they had the land.

*Desmond Tutu*

America is the only country where  
a significant proportion of the  
population believes that professional  
wrestling is real but the moon  
landing was faked.

*David Letterman*





## THE ALPHA COURSE

The Alpha Course is the most famous and widely used introduction to the Christian faith in the world. Alpha started in 1977 at Holy Trinity Brompton London. In 1990 Nicky Gumbel repositioned Alpha as a course for people outside of the church to explore the Christian faith through a series of talks and through conversation with others.

Many of us will have seen posters for Alpha or even attended a course ourselves. The Vicar has decided that we will run Alpha as a way of gently sharing our Christian faith with those who would like to learn more about what following Jesus might mean for them. The Alpha course encourages us to engage in a conversation about life and faith where people feel listened to and respected rather than feeling preached at.

We all know how much our faith helps us through life and the hope we have because of it. Faith is a wonderful thing that sustains us all.

It isn't easy to share that faith with the people who matter to us – our children, our families, and our friends. Alpha is the perfect chance to do that, simply by asking them to come and see.

Would you believe that over 90% of people who attend an Alpha course do so because someone invited them to come? If you know anyone who has expressed an interest in your faith invite them to come along! You can trust your Clergy and fellow parishioners to welcome and encourage them.



**Our first session of the Alpha course will begin in the parish centre on Monday 22 April at 7.15 – 8.45pm and will run for 8 weeks.** It is free of charge and all we ask is that you compliment us on the good coffee and no doubt excellent tray bakes! We look forward to seeing you there.

## WOMEN'S AID HAMPER APPEAL

Just before Christmas, Lauren Blake told our morning congregation about a Women's Aid Hamper Appeal that was being organised in Wallace High School. All Saints' Parishioners, who had previously responded so generously in providing heating vouchers for Women's Aid, once again showed their generosity in packing Rev Peter's car with the assembled gifts. Lauren's teachers were delighted and impressed with the support from All Saints'.





# CHURCH TOWER UPDATE

We are most grateful to the National Churches Trust who have awarded us a Wolfson Grant of £10,000 and we received notification at Christmas 2023 that we will receive a further allocation of £19,000 from the NCT's Last Chance Churches Grant. We are hopeful that there will be another allocation from this fund in the near future.

**NATIONAL  
CHURCHES**  
TRUST

In the initial report on the tower that was published in the spring magazine of 2022, we noted that the total costs for the repairs including VAT and fees would be in the region of £250,000 for all three phases:

## **Immediate work required - £30,000**

This includes the costs of replacing all rainwater goods including down pipes and gutters. There is evidence of the failure of our guttering, downpipes and joints and this has resulted in water getting into the stonework of the building.



## **Necessary work - repairing stone to the tower £86,000**

Some of the stonework on the elevation of the tower at the front door, the north side, is showing signs of deterioration as is the stonework on the opposite elevation, the south side which is subjected to more weathering due to the prevailing winds.

## **Desirable work - further long term repairs £75,000**

A building as old as All Saints, dating back to 1596 for the main church building and 1816 for the tower needs constant attention. The survey shows where stones have been replaced over the years and this survey highlights the need to keep a constant watch on how our stones are weathering.

While the Select Vestry initially agreed that we would tackle the immediate and necessary work, we are now going to hopefully include the desirable work as well if we are successful in securing further grant aid from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Benefact Trust, the Garfield Weston Foundation and the Church of Ireland Church Fabric Fund. It is our hope that the work will begin in the summer months.

In order to raise funds at a parish level, we are organising a series of events in the coming months and the following are provisional dates the will be confirmed closer to the time.

**Friday 16 February**

**Parish Quiz** at Massereene Golf Club raised £500

**Friday 17 May at 8.00pm**

**Wine Tasting** in the Parish Centre  
£15 per ticket

**Friday 21 June**

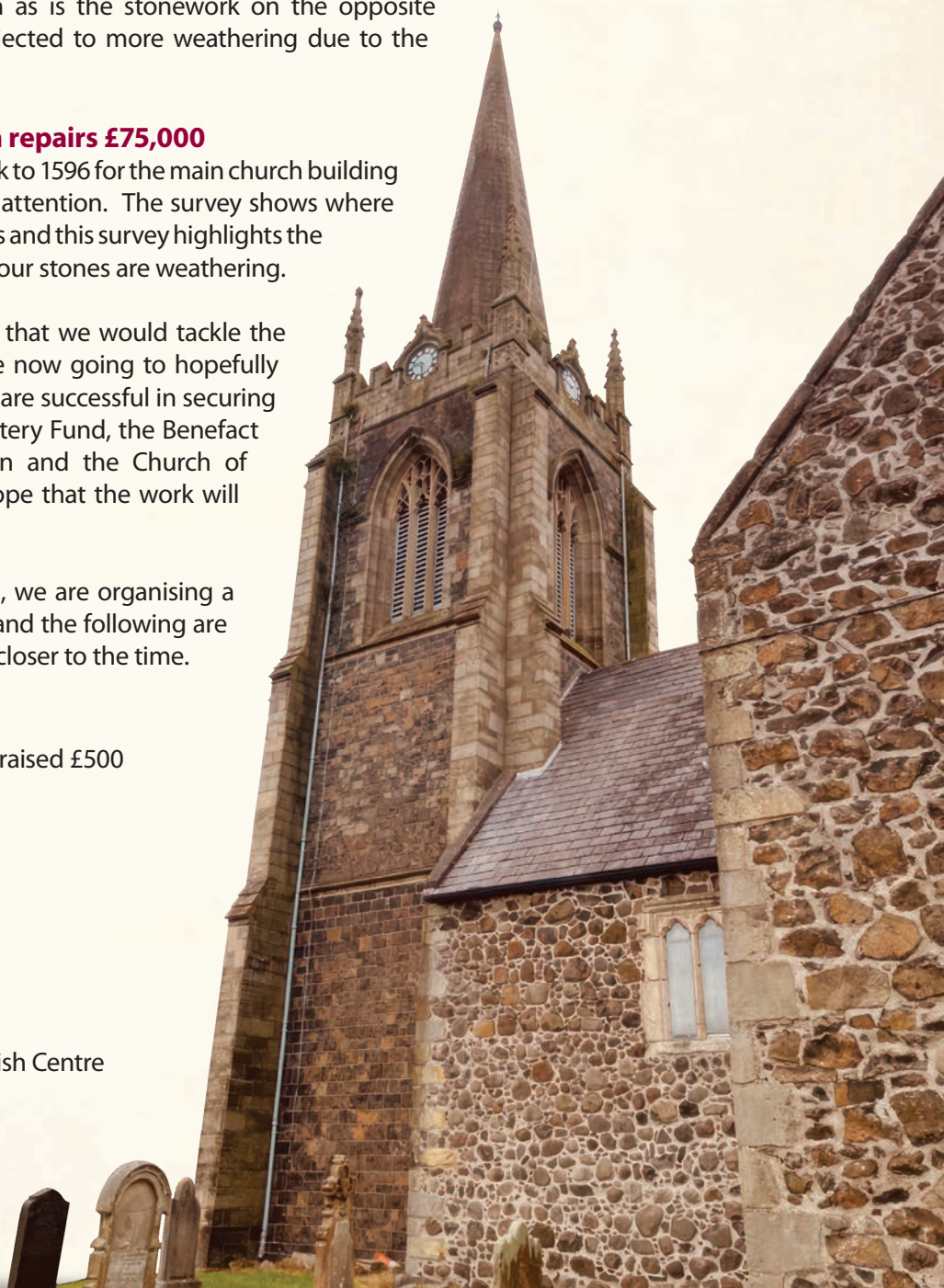
**Duck Race and BBQ**

**Sunday 8 September**

**Gift Day and Hog Roast** in the Parish Centre

**October**

**70s Nite** at Massereene Golf Club  
£15 per ticket with free refreshments



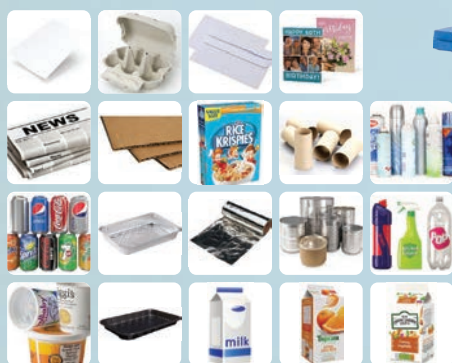
# #RECYCLERIGHT

**Did you know that almost half of the rubbish that goes into our black bins could have been recycled?**

Knowing which items go into which bin can be confusing. In order to help improve our environment hopefully the following information will encourage us to recycle more of the right items in the correct bin

## WHAT CAN GO IN YOUR BLUE BIN?

- ✓ **Plain Sheets of Paper** (remember to remove any staples or clips)
- ✓ **Egg Boxes** (cardboard)
- ✓ **Envelopes** (except for envelopes with a plastic lining or bubble wrap inner)
- ✓ **Plain Greetings Cards** (embellished or foiled cards should go in the black bin)
- ✓ **Newspapers**
- ✓ **Clean Cardboard** (flatten to make space)
- ✓ **Food Boxes** (flatten to make space)
- ✓ **Empty Aerosols**
- ✓ **Drinks Cans**
- ✓ **Foil Trays** (give them a quick rinse)
- ✓ **Tin Foil** (give it a quick rinse)
- ✓ **Food Cans, Biscuits Tins & Aluminium Sweet Tins** (give them a quick rinse)
- ✓ **Plastic Bottles and Empty Cleaning Bottles**
- ✓ **Plastic Pots and Tubs** (give them a quick rinse and stack to save space)
- ✓ **Plastic Food Trays** (give them a quick rinse)  
Polystyrene trays should be placed in black bin
- ✓ **Milk Cartons** (rinse and flatten to save space)
- ✓ **Juice Cartons** (rinse and flatten to save space)
- ✓ **Food Cartons** (rinse and flatten to save space)



**The following items are NOT PERMITTED in the blue bin**

- |                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| ✗ Glass             | ✗ Food / Garden Waste |
| ✗ Plastic Bags      | ✗ Nappies             |
| ✗ Plastic Film      | ✗ Syringes and Sharps |
| ✗ Plastic Packaging | ✗ Wrapping Paper      |
| ✗ Polystyrene       | ✗ Shredded Paper      |

## WHAT CAN GO IN YOUR BROWN BIN?

- ✓ **Cooked and Uncooked Food**
- ✓ **Meat, Fish and Bones**
- ✓ **Fruit and Vegetables**
- ✓ **Egg Shells**
- ✓ **Tea bags and Coffee Grounds**
- ✓ **Grass Cuttings**  
For grass treated by weedkiller, the cuttings should be left on the lawn to break down for the first 4 mowings after weedkiller has been applied - alternatively they should be placed in the black bin.
- ✓ **Hedge Trimmings**
- ✓ **Leaves and Twigs**
- ✓ **Untreated Weeds**  
Weeds treated with weedkiller should be placed in the black bin
- ✓ **Dead Plants and Flowers**  
Plants and flowers recently treated with weedkiller should be placed in the black bin
- ✓ **Cat Litter** (small amounts made from organic material e.g. shredded paper, paper/wood pellets)  
All other types of cat litter (mineral, clay, stone) must be placed in the black bin
- ✓ **Animal Bedding** (small amounts made from organic material e.g. shredded paper, straw)  
All other types of animal bedding must be placed in the black bin
- ✓ **Takeaway Pizza Boxes** (remember to remove any pots of dipping sauce)
- ✓ **Kitchen Roll**
- ✓ **Napkins**
- ✓ **Shredded Paper**
- ✓ **Cold Ashes** (small amounts)
- ✓ **Soil** (small amounts)



**The following items are NOT PERMITTED in the brown bin**

- ✗ Large amounts of soil
- ✗ Plastic bags
- ✗ Dry recyclables
- ✗ General waste,
- ✗ Garden waste that has been treated with weedkiller

For more information on recycling go to <https://antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/bins/>





*Funday Club Nativity Play on Christmas morning*



*Christingles lit at January's Family Service*



*Evergreen's Dinner at Moe's grill*



*Mothers' Union 90th anniversary dinner at the Dunadry Hotel*

## MORE SAGE WORDS

After the game, the King and the Pawn go into the same box.

*Italian proverb*

When a man opens a car door for his wife, it's either a new car or a new wife.

*Prince Philip*

A computer once beat me at chess, but it was no match for me at kickboxing.

*E Philips*

Wood burns faster when you have to cut and chop it yourself.

*Harrison Ford*

The best cure for sea sickness, is to sit under a tree.

*Spike Milligan*

Lawyers believe a man is innocent until proven broke.

*Robin Hall*

The first piece of luggage on the carousel never belongs to anyone.

*George Roberts*

If life were fair Elvis would still be alive today and all the impersonators would be dead.

*Johnny Carson*

If God had intended us to fly he would have made it easier to get to the airport.

*Jonathan Winters*

Having more money doesn't make you happier.

I have 50 million dollars but I'm just as happy as when I had 48 million.

*Arnold Schwarzenegger*

I have kleptomania, but when it gets bad, I take something for it.

*Robert Benchley*



# DEDICATION OF NEW PREACHING SCARF FOR MOTHERS' UNION ALL IRELAND CHAPLAIN

The Vicar was invited to preach at the first monthly Mothers' Union Holy Communion service in Armagh Cathedral on 10 January and he took 'Hope' as his theme for the service and sermon as this was the theme for the week in the Mothers' Union cycle of prayer. Having recently packed away all the Christmas decorations and with the prospect of the gloomy winter nights looming ahead of us, he said 'we need to be reminded of the age old promise that wherever our walk of faith takes us, God will not leave us alone, stranded and lost in darkness or misery, rather he will come to us to light up the path ahead and will help us discover joy and hope for our journey.'

Sheila Walker, in her Bible Reading Fellowship notes asks 'how do we have hope in hopeless situations' and explains that it can be hard to know how to pray, caught between the need to be willing to accept from God both the good times and bad, and the instinct, need and encouragement to ask for some relief. Archdeacon McBride found her suggestion helpful, that sometimes we can only hold our situation before God and wait, remaining open to receive whatever he may send and asking for grace to discern his gifts great or small but acknowledging that trust and hope in such circumstances is no easy task. Ultimately Christian hope is what gives us the strength to pray and carry on when all around us seems futile.

He concluded his address with reference to his late mother-in-law, Jean Clyde, who was an Armagh Diocesan Treasurer and enrolling member in Acton and Drumbanagher and then in Desertlyn and Ballyeglish until her husband The Rev Dr John Clyde retired. "When John went to the Divinity Hostel in 1970, he left Jean in Broughshane with five children under five. Jean simply got on with everything that came her way.



She was blessed with huge energy and strength and faith. She stood beside John in the 70s in parishes that were situated in some of Belfast's toughest spots - Sandy Row, Duncairn Gardens and the Oldpark Road. Towards the end of his ministry, when John's health deteriorated, Jean drove him round the parish, took occasional services and got him back into harness. When Helen, Rachael, Alex and I stayed at their various rectories, Jean was last to bed and first up in the morning and when I close my eyes I can hear her laugh."

"I never knew Jean to be ill, that is until she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. She was only 70 and when it was diagnosed, it had done its worst. In the nine or ten months that followed her diagnosis, Jean taught us all how to live and face death with hope and trust in God."

"Jean would be embarrassed that the All Ireland Mothers' Union preaching scarf is being dedicated in her memory such was her modesty." Archdeacon McBride concluded, 'I would not be here tonight as Jean and John and Helen, my wife, were the final piece in my vocational journey. When I wear the scarf, I will be reminded of Jean's zest for life and her faith which was grounded in the trust and hope that even death could not separate her from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord'."

Following the sermon, Archbishop John McDowell dedicated the scarf in memory of Jean.





# HOW IS YOUR PRAYER LIFE?

How is your prayer life? Do you pray at all? Have you given up because you feel it is a waste of time? We all have difficulties with saying our prayers - what am I going to say? Is God even bothered with my feeble efforts? He is, and he wants us to pray. We are not alone in feeling that prayers are difficult.

The Book of the prophet Habakkuk begins, God, how long do I have to cry out for help before you listen? Prayer is an aspect of discipleship that causes many runners and riders to fall at the first fence. Why does God not answer my prayer when the Bible appears to be the book of answered prayer? But on closer examination, it also includes many stories about unanswered petitions as well. There are records of people of great faith complaining that God doesn't seem to understand what they are going through.

So for those of us who get frustrated with our prayer life, we are not alone. But we can learn from the psalmist who doesn't give up easily. 'Day and night do I cry unto you.' Prayer is a discipline that has to be worked at.

Thomas Eddison tried many hundreds of different permutations before he perfected the light bulb. Most of us would have given up after two or three failures, but Eddison enjoyed a challenge and in the end succeeded. Sometimes we need to persist in prayer.

But then again, why do we need to bother to pray at all if God is all wise and all knowing? Why, through prayer do we urge upon him our sometimes selfish and limited desires? If God already knows what we need, why do we have to tell him what he already knows?

Well, prayer is not a means whereby we tell God something which may have slipped his mind. It is not our way of adding to God's information, it is however the means whereby we can open the way for God to do what he wants to do through us. Prayer cannot change God's purpose, but it can release it and change us. Knowing what to pray for is also important, as one of the collects in our prayer book helpfully suggests, 'make us to ask for such things that shall please you'.

Although God is all powerful, he is powerless to do something unless he finds a person who is willing to participate in his plans. He needs our co-operation. Someone once said that God has stored the hills with marble but never built a Parthenon; he filled the hills with ore but never made a locomotive. Through our intercessions God's will can be discerned and made a reality.

Sometimes when we pray, we have to be aware, that we can also provide the answer, it only we are willing to allow God to use us. We can't expect him to do all the hard work.

*A Thought for the Day broadcast by the Vicar on BBC Radio Ulster in February 2014*

## WHO'S WHO

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The Clergy will be grateful for any notification of serious illness in the Parish and for information regarding the admission and discharge of parishioners from hospitals outside Antrim.