



St. Mary's Parish Church, Comber

Outreach

**December
2019**

**Volume 52
Number 8**

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Spending Christmas Together

What is it that we love so much about the Christmas festivities? I'm sure as you read that question a number of things spring to mind. A children's website held a poll with more than ten thousand participants, revealing what they considered the 'best thing about Christmas' to be. Top of the list was, naturally enough, presents at 35%. Perhaps a little more surprising was second place - 'being with family and friends' with a whopping 32.5%. Time off school (12%) was followed by celebrating religion with 5% of the vote.

If we all got together to compare our favourite things about Christmas, we would find much in common, things we all love (who could bemoan twinkly lights, or a Christmas cracker?). Just like the children of the UK, I'm sure 'being together' would be right up at the top end of most of our lists. In the yuletide season, we enjoy spending time with our friends and families as we share the things we love.

Of course we don't always agree about some of the finer points of Christmas; there are areas that could divide us should we let them. Chief among these issues is that of the (ig)noble brussel sprout. Some people love them, some hate them and some put up with them for the sake of peace (for the record, I'll eat a few, but only if I have to). At Christmas, we make exceptions for one another. A grandmother enters into the joy of her grandson's new *Nerf Fortnite Blaster*, even if she's not quite sure what it actually is. A niece takes the time to greet and catch up with her uncle, even if she'd rather be playing with her new *Barbie Dream-plane*.

Of course Christmas can't be all *ho ho ho* and *fa la la*. There are some parts of the season that are more difficult than that. Perhaps it's the stress of finding presents, the financial burden, or even the tensions of having *that* relation over for dinner that we find a personal burden. Whilst Christmas is a time for being together, for many it is a time when we miss those who we are apart from. As we toast to 'absent friends' we remember those that we have shared with in the past, and we join in their memory. So Christmas is a time when we make a special effort to be with one another, to share, to serve, to put aside personal preference for the sake of togetherness.

When we think of being together, or even apart at Christmas, we think primarily of our family and friends; where does church fit into this? We don't meet as a church in the same way as we do in our homes at Christmas dinner, rather we come together at various services and events.

One of the most popular services of the year is the festival of nine lessons and carols. Towards the end of the final lesson John writes...

Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— "John 1:12 (NIV)

As we receive the true gift of Christmas (Jesus Christ), and we believe in his name, we become the children of God along with those around us in the congregation. Our church family *really is* our family because we are brothers and sisters in Christ.

Making our way through advent in the run up to Christmas, let's remember the joys of our church family. As we appreciate being together, let's make a special effort to connect to our brothers of all ages, types and preferences. Above all, let us rejoice together the very gift that makes us a family.

Have a very joyful Christmas.

Rev Sam





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Worship in December 2019

Worship in January 2020 Overleaf

1 DECEMBER	THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
9:00am 11:00am 6:30pm	Holy Communion One Parish Communion Two Carols by Candlelight with
8 DECEMBER	THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
9:00am 11:00am	Holy Communion Two Morning Prayer One
15 DECEMBER	THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
9:00am 11:00am 6:30pm	Holy Communion One Christingles Holy Communion One
22 DECEMBER	THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
9:00am 11:00am 6:30pm	Holy Communion Two Morning Prayer One Carols & Readings by Candlelight
24 DECEMBER	CHRISTMAS EVE
11.15pm	Christmas Eve Communion
25 DECEMBER	CHRISTMAS DAY
10.00am	Christmas Communion <i>And all children and those among us who may well still consider themselves "big children" can bring with them a toy they received this morning!!</i>
29 DECEMBER	THE FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS
9:00am 11:00am	Holy Communion Two Morning Prayer One

Please Note: The particular order followed at any given service may be subject to change.

Do remember our special
Midweek Holy Communion Services
on Wednesdays at 10.00am
except for this month none on Christmas Day



People Who Pray For People



Please remember the Prayer Chain in our parish, especially as we are coming up to Christmas and the New Year.

If you know of someone you wish to be prayed for, please phone Sylvia Taggart on 028 9181 6626.

Alternatively you can write your request using the Prayer Cards found at the west end of the church and placing them in the Box provided.

FLOWER ROTA

DECEMBER 2019

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | Mrs Gretta Greenaway |
| 8 | In memory of Julia McCullough & Harry McKnight |
| 15 | Mrs Rosemary Cooper |
| 22 | CHRISTMAS FLOWERS |
| 29 | CHRISTMAS FLOWERS |

JANUARY 2020

- | | |
|----|------------------------------|
| 5 | In memory: Mrs Zelda Haskins |
| 12 | Mrs Eveline Bell |
| 19 | Mrs Sadie Walker |
| 26 | Mrs Mary Tompsett |

FEBRUARY 2020

- | | |
|----|-------------------|
| 2 | Mrs Valerie Scott |
| 9 | Mrs Rosemary Jess |
| 16 | Mrs Heather Long |
| 23 | Mrs Helen Aneja |



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Time For A Fresh Start?

In January, as new decade begins, many people will be hoping to make a fresh start. New beginnings are special, whether it's a new year or a new job, a new home or a new friendship. Screenwriter Aaron Sorkin goes to great lengths for a new beginning, saying "I take anywhere between six to eight showers a day. I'm not exaggerating. I'm not a germaphobe: it's all about a fresh start"

Starting again feels like an opportunity to reset, to leave the problems of the past and set off on the right path, and it works... sometimes... for a while at least. We tend to find ourselves falling into the old traps and wanting to start again...again. Perhaps it's because we are concentrating on escaping our failure, rather than focusing on achieving a goal.

At the core of the Christian faith, is a longing for a fresh start; we realise that we have failed God and others and we cannot fix things ourselves. Jesus offers each one of us the opportunity:

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."
 2 Cor 5:17 (ESV)

But the old traps are still there, and so we can find ourselves falling again and again. Here too, we might be focusing on the wrong thing. The cross is not merely a vehicle for escaping sin, it is the gateway to life, life in all its fullness. A Christian is a new sort of creation and renewal is part of their DNA.

"... you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator."
 Col 3:9b-10a (NIV)

If you are looking for a fresh start in 2020 you may in fact be feeling the ancient call of Jesus Christ, the call to escape your mistakes and begin again. Will you follow Jesus in His way of renewal? Or perhaps your relationship with God feels like a never-ending cycle of fresh starts, a constant battle of sin and repentance. You need a jump start; so hear the words of Paul.

"... one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."
 Phil 3:13b-14 (ESV)



ST MARY'S MOTHERS' UNION

6th January 2020

Helen McCann talking on Vintage Compacts — their story and the ladies who use them.

3rd February 2020

June Richardson talking on Amish People Overseas Sale Table and Overseas Money Due

MEMBERS ARE REMINDED THAT MU FEES ARE DUE IN JANUARY 2020

If you would like to join us as a new member and would like further information then please do contact
 Valerie Green on 028 9187 2218.

Connect

Parochial Hall at 2.00pm

11th December 2019

Christmas Lunch & Carols with Comber Primary School ~ Meeting one week earlier than usual

15th January 2020

New Year Quiz

*Please do come along and join us!
 Good Company ~ Good Craic ~ Good Cup of Tea!!*



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We really do have a lot of people to thank for all that they have done during 2019 on behalf of St Mary's.

So many that we really cannot name any but hopefully they/you will know that the following is really is a heartfelt thank you, we truly do appreciate everything that has been done over the months!!

There are all those who head the catering team and all those who help by baking for every fundraising event, every Farmers' Market, every time catering is required. Their baking skills and the results of beautiful traybakes and biscuits etc are marvellous

and without them, where would we be!!
It cannot be said that all this would not be put to good use if it were not for those who organise each event, those who work in the kitchen and those who meet to discuss how things need to be run.
SO THE FIRST BIG THANK YOU.

There are the men and ladies who mend, repair, rebuild, repaint, and all the "re-else's" that is needed on an on-going basis. This year it has included the clean up and clear out and many repairs up at the Rectory. Teams of cheerful volunteers have helped in so many ways, and I know they have actually enjoyed themselves and maybe discovered skills they did not know they had!
A SECOND BIG THANK YOU.

What about all the volunteers who helped at the recent Christmas & Craft Fair. It really was a great success and very enjoyable. Lots of hard and tiring work for some, that cannot be argued, but everyone came together to help make it one of the best fairs in years. We have now hit over £2000!!
A THIRD BIG THANK YOU.

What about the great team of volunteers who so faithfully distribute your OUTREACH nearly each month, in all weathers, maybe stopping at times for a wee chat, passing onto the office any changes, for example letting me know if someone has moved. This faithful team of volunteers have been going for years, some only maybe having to stand down through ill health or because of moving homes. Again, behind the scenes are a small band of only three people who bundle the magazines together so that the distributors just need to lift their bundle of Outreach on distribution Sunday. This band of three start early and work for a couple of hours, but keep on top of any changes to delivery, and in fact will take on extra deliveries when and where needed!!
A FOURTH BIG THANK YOU.

And then there are the Flower Ladies, who decorate the church so beautifully at those special times of the year such as Easter, Harvest and Christmas. The likes of the Advent Wreath, the Easter White Lily Cross and the special display made for Remembrance Sunday and even the decorating of the Christmas Tree, are all so

expertly "put together". This year saw a great response from Parishioners who so kindly gave donations towards the Harvest flowers.
THANK YOU TO THEM AND THANK YOU TO YOU!!

There are so many many more who do things around the church and its grounds that we do not hear about. Those who help run groups such as the Parents and Tots, Connect, Mothers' Union or the Young Seekers, who are in the choir, the fire wardens, the Select Vestry. All these people give up time and energy.

To these and everyone else who have helped in any way, or

PLEASE DO KNOW WE REALLY ARE SO VERY GRATEFUL FOR ALL THAT YOU DO FOR THE CHURCH AND IT'S PARISHIONERS.

THANK YOU.

PS: If you feel you would like to volunteer in any of the areas mentioned above then please do, you will be made very welcome and all that you do will be so very much appreciated.

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I was given the following to use in Outreach. It comes from the Comber Historical Society and is called 'Comber in the 1950's', and is only a selection pulled at random. Maybe use more at a future date:

1950

- 1950 saw the closure of the Belfast and County Down Railway, apart from the section between Belfast and Bangor. The main line from Comber to Newcastle, including the branches to Ballinahinch and Ardglass, were closed on and from 16th January. Trains continued to run from Belfast through Comber to Newtownards and Donaghadee for a little while longer. However, despite a final protest meeting in the Andrews Hall on the 6th April to try and prevent closure of the line, the last train ran from Donaghadee to Belfast on Saturday 22nd April. It was crowded with people who wanted to share in the railway's last moments. At Queen's Quay Station in Belfast a mock funeral was held for the BCDR with a coffin carried in procession and this was then cremated. The return train to Donaghadee left to the accompaniment of cheers and exploding fog signals, and this was repeated at each of the stations along the route where large crowds had gathered.

- A large model of Comber's planned memorial and garden of remembrance to those who fell in the Second World War was on display at the Council meeting of 16th March. The

residents of Comber had to date raised £1,000 for the memorial.

- The clock of Comber Parish Church, the only public clock in the town, was out of action for three months. Repairs were carried out after an appeal to the townspeople, and the clock was restored to working order in September.

- On Saturday 24th December the Comber Welfare Committee gave the children of Comber a Christmas Party in the Andrews Hall. Each of the 600 children received a paper hat on arrival at the hall. Tea was served, and afterwards the children joined in singing carols and songs. On leaving the hall they received a gift from Santa Claus. They then marched to The Square, led by Santa Claus and the Comber Silver Band. On arrival at The Square Santa Claus switched on the lights of the Christmas Tree. During the day the Comber Silver Band and Dr Henry Memorial Pipe Band played, and later a selection of records were relayed from the hut lent by Mr Milling. On the Monday the Comber Pipe Band played, while Comber Temperance Flute Band provided music on the Wednesday evening, after which the Christmas tree was closed down!!

1951

- The Comber Produce Company started to kill pigs in Comber in what was formerly the Andrews Grain Store. It

now became known as the Piggery. It was run by two retired officers from the Indian army, one of whom was the father of Paddy Ashdown (later to become leader of the Liberal Democrat Party).

1953

- The Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II took place on Tuesday 2nd June, and Comber celebrated the occasion. The events commenced on Coronation Eve when four ladies toured the town in Comber's own "Coronation Wagon" to judge the competition for the best decorated street and house. High Street won the former, while Robert Simpson of Brownlow Street took the prize for best decorated house. On the big day itself the schoolchildren assembled in The Square at 1.15pm, and accompanied by bands paraded to the North Down Cricket Grounds for a monster sports meeting. Each boy and girl was given a tin of sweets as a special Coronation gift, and there were refreshments for all the children. Hundreds of people saw the bonfire lit at 10 o'clock and watched the grand fireworks display which followed. A special Coronation Service was held in Comber Primary School on Friday 5th June.

- The old Londonderry School building in the Square was demolished in December in readiness for work commencing on building the new Parochial Hall.

1954

- It was a momentous year at St Mary's Parish Church. A new organ was dedicated on 30th May by the Bishop of Down and Dromore, The Rt. Rev W S Kerr. The new Parochial Hall was opened on 3rd July by the Dowager Marchioness of Londonderry. In the absence of the Bishop due to illness, the dedication was carried out by the Archdeacon of Down, Venerable C I Peacocke. The hall was erected at a cost of £7,500. An electric clock was added to the front of the building in August. Canon Houston, Rector, had to retire in October due to illness. His replacement was Rev R C Stevenson, curate of St Comgall's in Bangor, who was instituted in Comber on 4th November by the Bishop of Down and Dromore, Rt. Rev W S Kerr.

Now, everyone, yes, everyone!! If you have anything which you feel could be included in future editions of Outreach then please, do not keep them hidden, or in a drawer. Sort them out, look in every nook or cranny, look in the loft or under the bed! Dust them down and give them into the Church Office. No Outreach now until February, so plenty of time to go hunting!!

Have a lovely Christmas and God's Blessings for the New Year. Maureen

Lauren Spence
MA (Hons), BA, MA, PGCE

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CHRISTMAS FOOD FOR THE BODY

ROLLED & STUFFED TURKEY BREAST & GRAVY

Serves 8

*2kg Skinless Boneless
Turkey Breast*

Stuffing:

*50g Dried Cranberries
25g Pecans
1 Onion
Zest 1 Orange
75g Sourdough
Breadcrumbs
500g Good Quality Pork
Sausagement
Salt & Pepper*

Topping

*4 Rashers Thin Cut
Smoked Streaky Bacon*

*25g Pecans
15g Dried Cranberries
50g Coarse Sourdough
Breadcrumbs
2 tbsp. Cranberry Jelly*

Gravy:

*1 litre Poultry Stock
2 tbsp. Plain Flour
150ml Port
2 tbsp. Cranberry Jelly*

To make the stuffing, place roughly chopped cranberries and pecans in a mixing bowl. Peel and finely chop the onion. Add to the bowl with finely grated zest of the orange. Add the breadcrumbs and sausage. Season with salt and pepper, mixing until well combined.

Place the turkey on a large sheet of cling film and slit it lengthways,

horizontally. Cut almost but not all the way through so that it remains joined on one side. Open it out and cover with another sheet of cling film. Flatten out using a rolling pin until the meat is an even thickness.

Spread about two-thirds of the stuffing mix down the length of the turkey breast. Roll the meat up and secure with string. Place on a rack over a large roasting tin. Pour 400ml boiling water into the roasting tin. Cover with a tent of foil and pinch the edges to the tin to seal. Cook in a pre-heated oven 200°C / Gas Mark 6 for 20 minutes then reduce the temperature to 150°C / Gas Mark 2. Cook for a further 2 hours.

To make the topping, finely chop the bacon and dry fry until crisp. Chop the pecans and cranberries and add to the pan with the breadcrumbs. Cook, stirring, until the bread is lightly toasted in places. Set to one side.

Roll the remaining stuffing into eight balls and place in a small lightly oiled baking tin.

Remove the turkey from the oven and transfer to a serving plate. Set to one side to rest. Increase the oven temperature to 190°C / Gas Mark 5 and place the stuffing balls in the oven to cook for 25 minutes.

To make the gravy, pour the juices from the roasting tin into a bowl. Spoon off the fat that floats to the surface. Place the roasting tin on a high heat, add flour and stir to scrape sediment from the tin. Cook for 1 minute. Pour in the port and stir well. Add the stock, bring to the boil and simmer for 5 minutes. Add the turkey juices, bring back to the boil and cook for a further 3 minutes. Add cranberry jelly and stir until dissolved. Strain into a serving jug.

Spread the top of the turkey with the cranberry jelly. Sprinkle and press the topping over the turkey and serve with the stuffing balls alongside.

*Taken from the 2014
Christmas edition of
Landscape.*

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*Please do ensure that the car park gates are locked on both entering and leaving the car park. Many of you are now aware of the difficulty of parking your car because of parking by the general public. **Also Note a new lock will be placed on the gates by mid January and new keys are to be issued.***

PUBLICATION PAYMENTS

DAILY BIBLE READING FELLOWSHIP (known as Daylight Readings) are £17.00 for the year.

CHURCH OF IRELAND GAZETTE are currently £40.00 for the year (which covers ten editions).

Again any cheques are to be made payable to St Mary's Parish Church and these or cash must be placed inside a sealed envelope along with your name and address and left back to the church office.

DATA PROTECTION FORMS

Please do remember to complete the Data Protection Forms which are available in the Church and Parochial Hall porches or can be obtained from the Church Office. As you are now all aware, this is a legal requirement.

There are actually still quite a large number of Parishioners who have not completed a form so do please treat this as a matter of urgency.

Once completed do place it inside a sealed envelope and then return to the church office. And remember it is one form per person, *not family!!*

SATURDAY CHURCH OPENING ROTA

DECEMBER 2019

7	DAVID BUCHANAN
14	MERVYN DAVISON
21	HERBIE ROGERS
28	HARRY COOPER

JANUARY 2020

4	MERVYN JESS
11	DAVID BUCHANAN
18	MERVYN DAVISON
25	HERBIE ROGERS

FEBRUARY 2020

1	HARRY COOPER
8	MERVYN JESS
15	DAVID BUCHANAN
22	MERVYN DAVISON
29	HERBIE ROGERS

FREEWILL OFFERING ENVELOPES FOR 2020

Parishioners are asked to note that their FWO Envelopes should either be distributed to them with this magazine or left on the porch table for those of you who collect your magazine directly from the Church Porch.

If anyone does not receive their envelope box or wishes to now receive one should contact Maureen Anderson in the Parish Office as soon as possible on telephone: 028 9187 3963.

FEES FOR CAR PARK KEYS ARE NOW DUE BUT DO NOTE THAT THESE HAVE ALSO NOW BEEN INCREASED!!

Car Park Key Fees for 2020 have been increased from £5.00 to £10.00 for each key. *This is the first increase in many, many years.*

If you do not wish to pay the increased fee then you **MUST RETURN YOUR KEY/KEYS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE** by returning them to the church office inside a sealed envelope along with your name and address so that church records can be amended. Otherwise please pay your fee at your earliest convenience. If paying by cheque then payment is to be made to St Mary's Parish Church. All cheques and cash payments must be placed inside a sealed envelope along with your name and address and must be left back to the church office.

NOTICES, REMINDERS AND IMPORTANT CHANGES FOR PARISHIONERS:

CUT OFF DATE

Please ensure that all donations or FWO contributions are received for Banking purposes **no later than MONDAY 30th DECEMBER 2019.**

Please can we ask that you either use a 2019 FWO envelope or if you are using a plain envelope ensure that it is marked: "FWO CONTRIBUTION 2019" and remember to include your name and FWO Number.

Please note any envelopes received after this date will not be included in the 2019 Accounts.

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Worship in January 2020

St Mary's is open all day every day for contemplation and prayer

5 JANUARY	THE SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS
9:00am	Holy Communion One
11:00am	Parish Communion Two
6.30pm	Evening Prayer One
12 JANUARY	THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY: THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD
9:00am	Holy Communion Two
11:00am	Morning Prayer Two
19 JANUARY	THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
9:00am	Holy Communion One
11:00am	Morning Prayer Two
6.30pm	Holy Communion One
26 JANUARY	THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
9:00am	Holy Communion Two
11:00am	Morning Prayer One
2 FEBRUARY	THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE
9:00am	Holy Communion One
11:00am	Morning Prayer Two
6.30pm	Evening Prayer One

Please Note:

*The particular order followed at any given service may
be subject to change.*

Do remember our special
Midweek Holy Communion Services
on Wednesdays at 10.00am



OUR SORROWS DEATHS

31ST | OCTOBER 2019
LEO JOHN MOFFITT LUCAS

18TH NOVEMBER 2019
ISOBEL CORKEN

22ND NOVEMBER 2019
JAMES ALEXANDER TAGGART

FOODBANK BASKET APPEAL

The Foodbank Basket is at the side of the table where the Prayer Cards sit just as you enter the main body of the church.

Can we ask that you remember over the busyness of Christmas shopping to maybe include a few items of dried or tinned foods so that you can put them into the basket next time you are in church.

Most of us are so fortunate to have all that we need and to look forward to a very happy and joyous time with family and friends at Christmas, but as we are now so very much aware this is not the same story for many in our community.

We are grateful for all past donations but please do continue to support this very worthwhile and needed cause.

We are also very thankful to Mervyn and Kim Davison who continue to check the basket and deliver any donations to the Newtownards Foodbank on our behalf.

HEARING LOSS COMPENSATION

If you worked in Donaghadee Carpets, Fisher Body
or ANY noisy factory, you may be entitled
to compensation.

Call us for advice and a free hearing test.

028 9049 3349

KEENAN SOLICITORS

2 SOUTH PARADE, BELFAST, BT7 2GR



Thompson Timber is an independent family run business in Comber, right beside the Household Recycling Centre! We provide a large range of quality timber, building supplies and timber products.
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