



BALLYMENA
METHODIST
CHURCH



CHURCH BULLETIN - Summer Edition

July and August 2021

Rev Dave Sweeney will conduct all Sunday 11am services during the summer months, with the exception of Sunday 1 August when Mrs Joan Parkinson will lead us.

THOUGHT FOR THE SUMMER

Many of us will have fond memories of our churches from years gone by. Now they have probably changed drastically. Yet there is reassurance in the verses from Haggai that ring true for us today.

Haggai 2:3-9 (CEV) we read: "Does anyone remember how glorious this temple used to be? Now it looks like nothing. But cheer up! Because I, the Lord All-Powerful will be here to help you with the work... My Spirit is here with you. ...and I promise that this new temple will be more glorious than the first one. I will also bless this city with peace."

We are not alone, the Lord All-Powerful will work with us to rebuild our churches into something even more glorious than before. Without doubt it has been a tough year, and many are tired and weary, and most definitely not bold. But being bold for God does not mean you have to do anything major, sometimes even the smallest change can bring new inspiration for the next steps in our mission.

As well as having the Lord All-Powerful working with us, do not forget as Methodists we are part of an amazing Connexion both across Ireland and Britain. So, let us be bold together, knowing that the Lord All-Powerful is with us each and every step of the way.

(Extract from Connexions July 2021)

Wherever you may be during the summer

May Christ walk before you
And guide you on your way.
May Christ walk behind you
To protect you come what may.
May Christ walk beside you
As your companion each day.

A CALL TO PRAYER

Prayer focus:

- ✝ Give thanks that our building and facilities which are open for worship and to those who prepare it for its use;
- ✝ Pray that all will continue to feel safe to return;
- ✝ Pray for our children and young people, especially those awaiting exam or assessment results;
- ✝ Pray for our young adults who will need to make decisions when they receive these results;
- ✝ Pray for all struggling for whatever reason;
- ✝ Give thanks for the summer months and the opportunities it brings to those who plan for a welcomed rest from work;
- ✝ Give thanks for those from our Church family who keep in touch with us, via phone calls and doorstep visits.



A WORD OF THANKS

A heartfelt thank you to all those who sent messages of sympathy and those who have given prayerful support to Elaine and the wider family on the death of her eldest sister Jacqueline.

They are all deeply appreciated and have been a peaceful comfort in the past few days.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR WORSHIP

We are open for in-person worship on Sunday mornings and it will be lovely to see you whenever you feel confident to come back.

Our risk-assessed Covid-safe number is 50 persons. Once our numbers exceed 50 we will have to operate a booking system. If this proves necessary, we will notify you through the bulletin or by email.

It is hoped that live recordings of the service will continue to be made available on our YouTube channel each week.



LETS GO WALKING

As restrictions have eased it continues to be important that we think of our health. So if you feel energetic, or indeed if you don't, just come along to the church on Monday night for 7.00pm, and enjoy a walk and a chat with like minded walkers such as yourself., as part of the Church Walking Club,

This will cater for all grades of walker, whether a Speedy Gonzalez or a Pleasant Plodder. The important thing is the fresh air and companionship, so come to the church on Monday and enjoy.



(Picture illustration of socially distanced walkers)



TAKEAWAY SERVICE

We are delighted to offer you a take-away refreshment from the Church Hall door prior and after the Sunday service. You may wish to bring your own travel cup although eco-friendly disposable ones will be available. We hope to make use of our garden space and on these brighter days, you could bring a picnic chair.



We are committed to adhering to government guidelines so it is important that we follow COVID restrictions and safe social distancing recommendations, as we protect each other. The relaxation of rules comes with caution so please do what feels comfortable for you.

PASTORAL CARE

We are thankful to all class leaders and others who regularly keep in touch with members of the congregation.

If you become aware of anyone who would appreciate a telephone call or socially distanced visit at the doorstep or garden from the minister, please let Rev Dave know.

(Note that in-home pastoral visiting is not advised under current guidelines except in the most urgent of circumstances).

SUNDAY PRAYER WALK

As we think and pray for our Church and community, you may wish to join us each Sunday morning at 9.25am for a Sunday Prayer Walk. We will walk in groups of no more than 2—3 around our town.

Each week we are encouraged to let the Holy Spirit lead us as we walk, at a gentle stroll. This may be a new way to get active in prayer and there will always be someone to walk with, as we encourage each other.

We will meet up at the end to share a cuppa in our Church garden before the service.



OUR OUTSIDE CHURCH GARDEN

Our Church's garden is blooming! Have a walk around at any time and enjoy God's beauty as you look around the plants

If you would like to get involved and water the plants during the sunnier days, please speak with Derek Cunningham or Elaine McDonald.

"He has made everything beautiful in it's time."

Ecclesiastes 3 v 11



CHURCH FLOWER ROTA

Some artificial floral arrangements have been very kindly donated to the Church. These can be used each Sunday, however, if anyone wishes to put flowers in the Church on a particular Sunday, such as for an anniversary etc, this is also very welcome.

If you wish to put flowers in the Church for a service, please inform Linda McClintock.



"BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER"

A new venture with is planned for our Church at the end of September.

This is a Creative Workshop which will be led by a professional artist. It is open to 12 people and will be held on a Tuesday from 2:00pm to 4:00pm, and will last for 6 -- 8 weeks, commencing at the end of September 2021.

It is planned that each participant will produce a small individual piece of art to bring home, and will also contribute to the creation of a large piece of art that will be given to the Church.

Although this project will hopefully stimulate creativity, the main purpose is to help those who have found lockdown difficult and who are looking forward to getting in to company again. The main emphasis will be on friendship, conversation and enjoyment.

If you wish to know more details on this, please speak to Elaine McDonald or Esther Cahoon.



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