


THE PARISH OF ST PETER AND ST JAMES
BELFAST

PARISH NOTES

APRIL 2022

Rector: The Rev'd Brian Lacey
St Peter's Rectory,
17 Waterloo Park South,
Belfast, BT15 5HX

A photograph of Marie Burrowes, an elderly woman with short, light-colored hair, wearing a dark blue jacket. She is standing in a church, arranging a bouquet of purple and white flowers in a glass vase on a stone ledge. The background shows a large, ornate stone altar with a white cloth covering it. To the left, there is a wooden altar table with a white cloth, a brass candlestick with a white candle, and a purple book. The church has high ceilings and stained glass windows. The text is overlaid on the bottom right of the image.

*Reredos covered up for Lent
while Marie Burrowes arranges
flowers for the Third Sunday in Lent.*

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RECTOR'S NOTES



SERVICES IN APRIL

The penitential season of Lent continues into the month of April, but the last two weeks before Easter are sub-seasons known as **Passiontide** (beginning on Passion Sunday, 3rd April) and **Holy Week** (beginning on Palm Sunday, 10th April). With the exception of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, the liturgical colour for these two weeks is red—which denotes the suffering (the “passion”) of our Lord Jesus in the final days of his earthly life.

On **Passion Sunday**, 3rd April, our Easter Vestry meeting will be held in the context of a short act of worship at 11am. As such, there will be no 10am service that day. Instead, there will be a Family Service at 10am on Easter Day.

On **Palm Sunday**, 10th April, there will be a celebration of Holy Communion at 10am, followed by a service of Morning Prayer at 11am.

In addition to the regular mid-week service on Wednesday mornings, there will be services at 7.30pm during Holy Week. On **Fig Monday** (11th April), **Holy Tuesday** (12th April), and **Spy Wednesday** (13th April) there will be a service of Compline. On **Maundy Thursday** (14th April) there will be a celebration of Holy Communion, which will include “the stripping of the altar”. On **Good Friday** (15th April) there will be a service of Tenebrae, in which the church will become progressively darker whilst we hear the events of Christ’s final hours re-told.

On **Easter Day**, 17th April, there will be a Family Service at 10am, followed by a celebration of Holy Communion at 11am. As Easter is the one of the three Principle Holy Days in the Christian calendar, please make every effort to attend worship in St Peter's (or indeed, in any church if you are away).

On the **Second Sunday of Easter**, 24th April, there will be services of Morning Prayer at 10am and 11am.

AID TO UKRAINE

Thank you to everyone who has either made a financial contribution to support victims of the war in Ukraine, or who has donated toiletries, clothing, bedding, etc, to be taken to the refugee camps at the Ukrainian border. Lorries full of supplies have left a warehouse in Mallusk every week, and will continue to do so until everything has been sent. With so many millions of refugees needing assistance, many of whom have little more than the clothes they wore when they fled from their homes, every item you send will be much appreciated by someone.



HOLY COMMUNION

As the Covid-19 Pandemic comes to an end, Bishop George has asked that all parishes prepare for a return to sharing the chalice at Holy Communion. This ancient practice was stopped because of the obvious risks of transmitting the virus, but—following scientific advice—the Bishop considers this to be the appropriate time for its re-introduction. Don't panic though—you will have

the option of the receiving the shared chalice or an individual glass for at least the next few months. You can read the letter from the Bishop explaining his decision elsewhere in these Parish Notes.

EASTER VESTRY MEETING

At 11am on Sunday 3rd April, following a short act of worship, there will be a meeting of the Registered Members of the parish. (Note that other members of the congregation are encouraged to attend the meeting, but they will not be permitted to participate.) The Easter Vestry has two purposes: (1) to receive a report on the parish finances during the previous calendar year, and (2) to elect a new Select Vestry to manage the resources of the parishes until Easter in the subsequent year.

The first election will be for the People's Churchwarden, who with the Rector's Churchwarden (who will be appointed by me) are ex-officio members of the Select Vestry, and are jointly responsible for:

- ◆ opening and preparing the church building for regular and occasional services of worship;
- ◆ ensuring that the officiant and congregation have everything needed for worship;
- ◆ preventing any disturbances during worship;
- ◆ ensuring that the church building is securely locked after services of worship;
- ◆ not permitting the use of the church for any common or profane purpose;
- ◆ deputising as chair of the Select Vestry if required to do so.

The second election will be for the People's Glebewarden, who with the Rector's Glebewarden (who will be appointed by me) are ex-officio members of the Select Vestry, and are jointly responsible for:

- ◆ working with the myself and representatives of the diocese to ensure that the rectory is kept in good repair, with an emphasis on gutters, downpipes, roof slates, flashing, wall ventilators, pointing, and paintwork.
- ◆ arranging for the exterior of the rectory to be painted at least once every five years;
- ◆ attending any vacancy/quinquennial inspections of the rectory;
- ◆ securing the rectory during a vacancy;
- ◆ generally overseeing the repairs and maintenance of all church property as ex-officio members of the Fabric Committee of the Select Vestry.

The third election will be for up to twelve further members of the Select Vestry, who will serve alongside the Churchwardens, Glebewardens, and myself. All members are jointly responsible for:

- ◆ managing parish finances;
- ◆ overseeing repairs, maintenance, and cleanliness of church property;
- ◆ managing church property;
- ◆ providing certain furnishings for the rectory;
- ◆ providing everything necessary for worship;
- ◆ overseeing custody of Church Plate and Registers;
- ◆ ensuring that buildings and contents are insured;
- ◆ managing Lay Employees and volunteers;
- ◆ ensuring the implementation of Safeguarding Trust;
- ◆ ensuring that the parish complies with all state legislation and Church regulations.

Once the new Select Vestry has been elected, its members will meet separately to appoint an Honorary Secretary, an Honorary Treasurer, a Finance Committee (to manage finance and administration), and a Fabric Committee (to manage property repairs and maintenance).

Meetings of the Select Vestry are held once a month (except December, July, and August) whereas the two subcommittees meet as often as their members deem necessary—perhaps a few times a year.

If you have the time, education/experience, and willingness to serve on the Select Vestry, then please let me know. Naturally, many of the current members of the committee will be seeking re-election, but there is an annual (and admirable) tradition in this parish of a few members stepping down in order to allow new faces to take their place. Please have a quiet word with me if you would like to learn more about what membership of the Select Vestry entails.

WHERE TO SEEK GOD?

In Isaiah 55:6, the Prophet wrote, “Seek the Lord while he may be found.”

It always strikes me as odd that we should talk about “seeking God” because the implication is that God has been lost. And it suggests we need to go looking for God in the hope that at some point we will find him. But doesn’t that sit at odds with one of the central beliefs about God, that he is everywhere?

If you listen to some preachers and theologians, whether they intend to do it or not, they suggest that God is not omnipresent (everywhere), despite that being one of his core characteristics. So, for example, you might hear that God cannot be in the presence of sin. Because God is pure and perfect, it is abhorrent to his very being for him to be in any situation where sin or evil is present, in case it would tarnish his holy character. And related to this, is the idea that (if you believe in hellfire and brimstone in the afterlife) then God cannot be present in hell. Now, you might think “that makes sense”. But think about it in the context of “God is everywhere”. Could there really be—whether in this

world or in the next—pockets of existence in which God is absent. Is it possible for God to create places which he cannot enter. Does that seem right to you? Are there places where God cannot be, lest he be stained by our sin?

I would argue “no” there aren’t, and that in fact such a belief is contrary to what we know about God. Think for a moment about Jesus. The Epistle to the Colossians describes him as “the image of the invisible God.” Meaning that although you cannot see God, if you want to know what he’s like, look to Jesus. And if Jesus—as God—were so holy that he cannot be in the presence of sin, then the stories recorded in the Gospels would be a lot different. The New Testament would be little more than a collection of stories about how Jesus kept his distance from people, and—when he did have to deal with them—preferred to spend time with the holier-than-thou religious elite.

Now, clearly, if you’ve ever read even one page of the Gospels, you will know that the opposite was true. Not only did Jesus want to spend time with sinners, he pro-actively went out to find them. And his reason for doing so was because—rather than worrying about whether their sins would taint him—he wanted to have a positive effect on their lives. He wanted his light to shine into their darkness. There was no worrying about whether he would be tainted by other people’s sinfulness. (Remember the opening chapter of John’s Gospel—the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.) So if the nature and behaviour of God is expressed through Jesus, then—quite the opposite of God removing himself from sinful people—it seems that he is drawn to them.

It’s interesting, then, that when Jesus describes the people (the sinners) that he wanted to befriend, he uses the idea of being “lost”. Think of the Prodigal Son, whose father in the parable (who represents God) proclaims, “My son was lost, and has been found.” At no point within that story, does the Prodigal Son ever think of his father as being the one who was lost. In fact, he

knows exactly where his father is, and he sets out to return to him. So, from the perspective of God, it is humanity which is lost, not God.

So the idea of seeking God, as if he were lost, is a strange one. But there is an alternative way of understanding why we often need to seek God, even though he is all around us. Not long ago, I told you about my little children being scared of the dark, and how I tried to show to them—by switching on and off the lights—that everything in their room was exactly the same, whether it was light or dark, and that the only difference was that they could not see anything when the lights were off. Well, if—as the Church teaches—God is everywhere, then when we are not aware of his presence, it is not because he is absent, but because the darkness is preventing us from seeing him. But what could that be? What could blind us from seeing God?

The answer, which you might not be surprised to hear during this penitential season of Lent, is sin. Look at what the Prophet wrote in Isaiah 59:1—“The Lord’s hand is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. Rather, your iniquities have been barriers between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you ...” Your iniquities. Your sins. If you joined me for our Lenten talks recently, you would have heard that at the heart of “SIN” is “I”.

Me. Self. Self-centred. Self-absorbed. Self-interested.

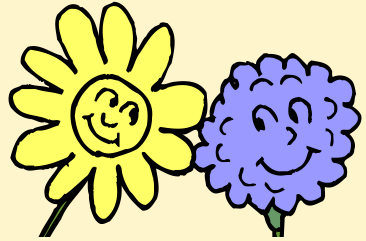
It is our focus on ourselves and our own needs, which make it difficult for us to see God. When we make our lives all about me, and what I want, and what I can get, and what I can achieve, all of that self-interest is like a spiritual veil that hangs over us, making it hard to see the God who calls us to love him and to love our neighbour as ourselves.

So, if you’re looking for God, go to places to find people who need your help—and help—with no interest in reward or glory for yourself, and that’s where God will be.

APRIL FLOWER LIST

10TH JILL BRADLEY IN MEMORY
OF HER MOTHER

17TH EASTER DAY



**Please come along on Saturday 16th April
from 10am-12noon
to help decorate the church for Easter.
All help greatly appreciated.
If you can help please get in touch with
Sandra Davison– either catch her at church
or ring her on 9443 9230.
Alternatively, just turn up on the morning!
Thank you.**

Thank you to all who give of their time and effort in beautifying the church with flowers. If practicable, flowers should be in keeping with the liturgical colour of the season, particularly during Advent and Lent.

PARISHIONER CONTACT DETAILS

For speed of communication and to keep our records up to date please send your email address to the Parish Office at:

annecromie@stpeterbelfast.org

Also please don't forget to let us know if you move house, change any of your telephone numbers or your email address. Thank you.

Is life getting you down? Would you like someone to talk to?

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Assistance requested for church grounds

by Noel Beattie

In recent times a number of parishioners have volunteered to keep a portion of the church grounds weeded and neat and tidy during the growing season. This has been undertaken at a time that suits individual volunteers—about once a fortnight—and probably not taking more than about 30-60 minutes a time. Not too onerous time-wise! Maybe just the same amount of time it would take to have a coffee and a sticky bun!

Needless to say, I am appealing for volunteers again this year. Peter and Quintin Mulligan have offered to cut the grass and we are so grateful to them for this because not only is it quite the mammoth task but one that saves the parish a good deal of money.

I am looking for a minimum of 8 other volunteers (and you can bring as many helpers as you like!) to help out. As the job is not too strenuous don't let your age be a reason for not offering help! At the end of the day, being out in the fresh air in our beautiful grounds will only do you the world of good.

Please, please put your name forward by ringing me (tel 9077 8428) or emailing (noel_innisfayle@msn.com) as soon as you can. If you have a preference for a particular area please just let me know (the area around the office is already covered by Anne).

Finally, please accept the parish's thanks in advance for assisting with this necessary work in keeping our grounds, right on the front of the Antrim Road, spick and span.

Switching horses on the banks of the Dnieper

by David Cromie

We have all been profoundly affected and challenged by what is happening in Ukraine. We watched the building crisis in January and February, moving from, “Putin won’t actually invade”, to “It’s about fifty-fifty”, and finally, “Good grief, he’s actually started a war”. Our televisions show us medieval tactics enhanced with thermobaric weapons and hypersonic technology battering a country not so very far away from us. The casualties are grim, on both sides, and the suffering is unimaginable. It seems too much to deal with, but as Christians, we have a duty to help and, as ever, our parish has risen to the challenge.

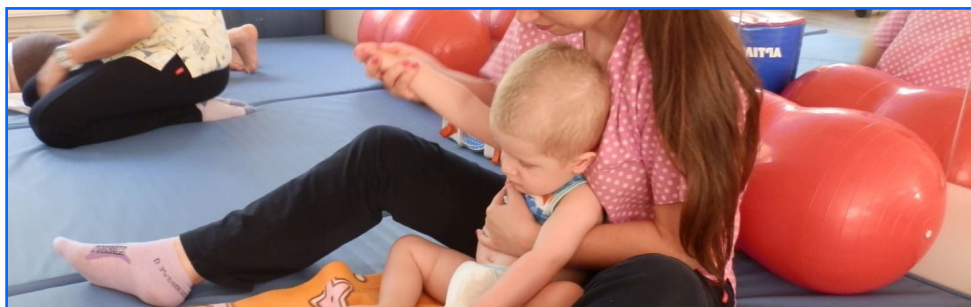
First we saw the back of the church piled up with bulging bags of clothing and other essentials, then cheques and cash started arriving and the Select Vestry has already authorised the transfer of funds to the Disasters Emergency Committee. As money and resources keep coming in, the parish will seek the best way to utilise them in the shortest possible timeframe.

The Charities Action Committee’s fund, which had been quietly building up money with the intention of supporting a project for needy children in Ukraine, became an irrelevance on 24th February, bombed out of its complacency by Russia. A series of telephone calls resulted in a decision immediately to switch focus from the children’s centre to helping those in extreme need, both refugees in neighbouring countries and those remaining in Ukraine. We had £2,385 in the kitty and Ashlee pinged it away in an instant. We can build a centre another day.

We split the money: £1,385 to Child Aid, which has deep roots

in Ukraine and an infrastructure there which, to this day, is helping abandoned babies, orphans and children in need and £1,000 to the Tony Hawks' Centre in Moldova. We still don't know if Moldova is next on Russia's shopping list, but this centre is doing a magnificent job as the only facility dealing with severely handicapped children in the country and is now in danger of being overwhelmed by similarly afflicted children pouring in from Ukraine. Look up the Tony Hawks' Centre on the web; founded by a comedian (the parallel with President Zelensky is interesting), the centre is such a blessing to all who use it.

Let us pray for peace in Ukraine and keep putting our shoulder to the wheel to help those in desperate need on the banks of the Dnieper.



Tony Hawks Rehabilitation Centre

The Tony Hawks Children's Health Centre improves the life quality of chronically ill children from socially vulnerable families.

By working with parents of young children, the Centre is able to give hope to the family and prevent the child being abandoned to a life locked away in an institution.

Through rehabilitation and parental education, the Centre facilitates the children's integration into society. The aim is to optimise the child's potential for the future through physical control and development of their young bodies.



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THE PARISH'S UKRANIAN APPEAL

CONCERT AT ST PETER'S

On Friday 8th April at 8.00pm the Priory Singers will present a concert entitled *A Sequence for Lent and Passiontide* at St Peter's. The concert will include the famous Miserere by Allegri and other wonderful music for this time of year by composers including Lauridsen, Byrd, Lotti, Sanders and Purcell. The conductor of the choir is Robert Thompson and this will be his last concert as their Musical Director. Robert is stepping down from this position after the choir's forthcoming Summer Residency in Lincoln Cathedral having spent ten years at the helm of this first rate choral group. Admission to the concert is free and there will be a retiring collection with all proceeds going to the Parish's Ukranian Appeal. Please do come along and support both this event and this very important cause.

WHAT SUITS YOU BEST?

Please don't forget to let us know how you would like to receive your Parish Notes in future:

- ◆ *by email, or*
- ◆ *by collecting a copy from church, or*
- ◆ *by having a copy delivered to your home.*

Please communicate your preference to Anne in the Parish Office:

email: annecromie@stpeterbelfast.org
or tel: 90 776 706

Thank you!

PLEASE NOTE

The Parish Office will be closed on Good Friday, 15th April
and during Easter week, 18th-23rd April.
The office will re-open on Monday 25th April.

The Common Cup in Holy Communion

Receiving the consecrated wine in the Holy Communion by means of the Common Cup (Chalice) is the norm in the teaching and tradition of the Church of Ireland and in the Anglican Communion in general. However, in light of public health advice issued at various times during the Covid-19 Pandemic, the House of Bishops circulated guidance, first on the spiritual efficacy of receiving Holy Communion in One Kind, and subsequently giving permission for the use of individual cups in strictly regulated circumstances.

Mindful of the unambiguous injunction contained in Article 30 of the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, we took these decisions reluctantly and with the stated intention of a return to the Anglican norm as soon as it was considered safe to do so, following independent advice, as has been our practice throughout the pandemic.

With the general phasing out of restrictions in most social settings, the House of Bishops has sought independent expert scientific advice on the return to the use of the Common Cup in Holy Communion. The advice we have received is that such a return would be reasonable now, especially in a vaccinated population and where anyone displaying symptoms of Covid-19 is encouraged to stay away from church services.

We have also been advised that wiping the rim of the chalice between each communicant (preferably with a linen cloth) will reduce the bacterial burden by up to 90%. Needless to say, great care should be taken in the cleansing of linens (purificators, corporals) and vessels (flagons, cruets, chalice, ciborium, lavabo etc.) before and after Holy Communion.

The Bishops received this scientific advice prior to the recent meeting of the House of Bishops and, with great joy, returned to the use of the Common Cup at our celebration of the Eucharist on that occasion.

We realise that a general return to the Common Cup in Holy Communion will take time to achieve. Many of us were taken by surprise at how rapidly most social restrictions were relaxed or completely removed and have continued to practice our own forms of mitigation and self-restraint, so there will be those who will be cautious about receiving communion from a chalice.

There will be local factors which will need to be taken into account, as there have been for other forms of Covid mitigations. At present there is no cut off point at which either Communion of one kind or using individual cups should be replaced by the use of the Common Cup. However, we would urge parishes to give some thought as to how the return to our norm, without undue delay, will be achieved in a manner that creates sufficient confidence to allow that moment to be genuinely joyful. In the meantime, no new permissions will be given for the use of individual cups.

Finally, we would emphasise that while no individual communicant should feel under immediate pressure to drink from a common vessel, the expert advice is clear in its implication that there is now no pressing reason to withhold the shared cup from faithful people who earnestly desire to partake of it.

*The Rt Rev'd George Davison
Bishop of Connor*

PAUSE FOR THOUGHT AND PRAYER FOR APRIL

by Rosemary Johnston

From Calvary to Easter ... From darkness to Light

Can any of us truly imagine what it was like for the Son of God to hang on a rough, wooden cross, already weakened so much by the beating he had suffered that he couldn't carry the cross beam himself?

How might it have been to be there, at the foot of the cross, knowing that the Son of God hung there in excruciating agony—for us? And what about the Temple curtain—might that have instilled fear in those nearby? The centurion was certainly in wonder and awe at what he witnessed.

Would we understand the behaviour of the disciples, utterly lost and in despair, their beloved teacher was dead—all hope seemed gone.

And so we come to Holy Week, the most solemn week of the year. Will I come to church and walk that last journey alongside Jesus, or will I get so caught up in the busyness of everyday life that I leave him to go on alone to face his trial and to be mocked, spat upon, whipped, and then crucified?

Would I desert him as most of the disciples did? This is the man who cared so much for us "miserable offenders" that he gave his life to save us. How can I not come to church each night to be with him in spirit, and especially on Good Friday. I feel it is the least I can do ...

And then ... on the Sunday morning, early, as we know, some women went to the tomb but found Jesus' body was gone and angels there telling them the Good News of Jesus' resurrection. They immediately ran to tell the disciples the wonderful news that "the Lord is risen!" He is alive! And from then on our lives would never be the same. Jesus had paid the supreme sacrifice for our sins. We could face the future as never before, knowing that through his death and resurrection, we are redeemed and can face the future in the knowledge that his Holy Spirit will be with us always.

In these days of uncertainty and fear, may we keep our eyes focussed on Jesus, trusting in him, the one constant in our life, and pray for his guidance and reassurances, through the power of the Holy Spirit, in the dark days to come.



Holy Week

10th-16th April
Services every
weekday evening
at 7.30pm

Details in centre pages

FLOWERS IN CHURCH

Don't forget to contact the Parish Office (90 776 706) to book your regular slot if you wish to continue doing the flowers. New contributors are also welcome—you may wish to donate flowers to mark a particular occasion or anniversary. It may be to celebrate a wedding anniversary, the birth of a child or grandchild, or to remember the death of a family member, or indeed as an act of thanksgiving for some notable blessing.



We very much appreciate all who contribute flowers Sunday by Sunday and also all those who devote so much time and energy in arranging them and looking after them mid-week.

For help and advice on floral arrangements please contact Sandra Davison—tel 9443 9230.

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Spread the word ...

We are trying to engage more with the local community and would like to leave copies of Parish Notes in some public spaces. If you have access to such places, eg, doctors' or dentists' surgeries, leisure centres, coffee shops etc, please let our parish administrator, Anne Cromie, know and she can provide you with as many extra copies as you like.

Let's not hide our light under a bushell!

Parish Notes On-line

There are full colour versions of Parish Notes on our website. Visit www.stpeters.connor.anglican.org and click "Parish Notes".

*Please send material for the May issue of Parish Notes to:
Anne Cromie, Parish Administrator, St Peter's Church,
Fortwilliam Drive, Belfast BT15 4EB
or email: annecromie@stpeterbelfast.org
by Monday 25th April. Thank you.*

SERVICES IN APRIL	OFFICIANT	LECTOR	PREACHER	INTERCESSOR
SUNDAY 3RD APRIL — PASSION SUNDAY — PASSIONTIDE (RED)				
11am Easter Vestry Service	Rector	Rector	Rector	Rector
WEDNESDAY 6TH APRIL — PASSIONTIDE (RED)				
10.30am Holy Communion	Rector	Rector	Rector	Marie Burrowes
SUNDAY 10TH APRIL — PALM SUNDAY — HOLY WEEK (RED)				
10am Holy Communion	Rector	Rector	Rector	Daphne McClements
11am Morning Prayer	David Cromie	David Cromie	Rector	David Cromie
MONDAY 11TH APRIL — FIG MONDAY — HOLY WEEK (RED)				
7.30pm Compline (traditional)	Rector	Daphne McClements	Rector	Rector
TUESDAY 12TH APRIL — HOLY TUESDAY — HOLY WEEK (RED)				
7.30pm Compline (traditional)	Graham Chipperfield	Dora Hanna	Graham Chipperfield	Graham Chipperfield
WEDNESDAY 13TH APRIL — SPY WEDNESDAY — HOLY WEEK (RED)				
10.30am Holy Communion	Rector	Rector	Rector	Rector
7.30pm Compline (traditional)	David Cromie	Rector	David Cromie	David Cromie
THURSDAY 14TH APRIL — MAUNDY THURSDAY — HOLY WEEK (WHITE)				
7.30pm Holy Communion (trad)	Rector	David Cromie	Rector	David Cromie
FRIDAY 15TH APRIL — GOOD FRIDAY — HOLY WEEK (NO COLOUR)				
7.30pm Tenebrae	Rector	David Cromie	Rector	David Cromie
SUNDAY 17TH APRIL — EASTER DAY — EASTERTIDE (WHITE)				
10am Family Service	Rector	Rector	Rector	Dora Hanna
11am Holy Communion	Rector	David Cromie	Rector	David Cromie
WEDNESDAY 20TH APRIL — EASTERTIDE (WHITE)				
10.30am Morning Prayer	Dora Hanna	Forde Patterson	-	Dora Hanna
SUNDAY 24TH APRIL — THE SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER — EASTERTIDE (WHITE)				
10am Morning Prayer	David Cromie	David Cromie	David Cromie	David Cromie
11am Morning Prayer	Graham Chipperfield	Graham Chipperfield	Graham Chipperfield	Graham Chipperfield
WEDNESDAY 27TH APRIL — EASTERTIDE (WHITE)				
10.30am Holy Communion	Rector	Rector	Rector	Timothy Wilson

PARISH CONTACTS

Rector: The Rev'd Brian Lacey 90 777 053 brianlacey@stpeterbelfast.org
Parish Administrator: Mrs Anne Cromie 90 776 706 annecromie@stpeterbelfast.org
Organist and Choir Master: Mr Robert Thompson 25 631 505 marlaghodge@gmail.com
Honorary Assistant Priest: Rev'd Dr Ken Houston 90 771 830 skhouston43@gmail.com
Ministry Assistant: Mr David Cromie 90 775 669 davidcromie@stpeterbelfast.org
Ministry Assistant (TLG): Mrs Laura Lacey 90 777 053 lauralacey@stpeterbelfast.org

Rector's Churchwarden: Miss Daphne McClements 07730 127350 daphnemcclements@stpeterbelfast.org
People's Churchwarden: Mrs Dora Hanna 95 733 374 dorahanna@stpeterbelfast.org
Co-ordinator for Intercessors: Mrs Rosemary Johnston 90 840 534 sehutchman@hotmail.com
Co-ordinator for Lectors: Mrs Sandra Hutchman 95 149 564 sbdavison@hotmail.com
Co-ordinator for Flowers: Mrs Sandra Davison 94 439 230

Rector's Glebewarden: Mr Victor Davis 90 771 197 davisvictor9@aol.com
People's Glebewarden: Mr Quintin Mulligan 07597 136805 yvonnecrozler@stpeterbelfast.org
Honorary Secretary: Mrs Yvonne Crozier 07525 134947 asheemcune@hotmail.com
Honorary Treasurer: Mrs Ashlee McCune 07801 556386 noelbeatie@stpeterbelfast.org
FWO & Gift Aid Secretary: Mr Noel Beatie 90 778 428

Badminton: Mr Harold Jacobs 90 779 945 harold.jacobs@btinternet.com
Bridges: Mrs Florrie Greer 90 776 812 florriegrer@gmail.com
Brownie Guides: Ms Lee Kennedy 90 772 023 lee_kennedy@btinternet.com
Crafty Goodness: Miss Daphne McClements 07730 127350 daffersmcclements@btinternet.com
Guides & Senior Guides: Ms Lee Kennedy 90 772 023 lee_kennedy@btinternet.com
Rainbow Guides: Ms Lee Kennedy 90 772 023 lee_kennedy@btinternet.com
Walking Group: Mrs Jill Bradley 90 842 998 jill.bradley1@btinternet.com

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