

CALENDAR

Downpatrick, Ballee & Clough Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Churches

March and April 2015

From the Minister:

Along with many members of our churches I took part in the march in Downpatrick on 14th February in support of the Downe Hospital. It was a very well supported rally and it was encouraging to see so many people there. When I was first minister in charge of the Downpatrick congregation – about 23 years ago in fact – one of the first things I took part in was a candlelit procession from the Cathedral to St Patrick's church. The aim of this was to try and save the Downe hospital, which, with the subsequent building of the new hospital, we might have thought had been successful. It is very strange and rather sad to think that we are now struggling to maintain the modern hospital that has been built since then. I have personal reasons for being glad of the presence of the Downe hospital and we can only hope that the clear evidence of the massive local support has some influence on those who make such decisions.

The Presbyterian Church in Downpatrick is currently trying to set up a food bank in the locality for those in need. News of the meeting to set this up came to us late and I am not sure if anyone from our churches was able to attend but details are available for anyone who would like to support this worthwhile project.

David Steers

Forthcoming Dates:

Friday, 6th March

7.30 pm Service for the Women's World Day of Prayer, St Patrick's Church Downpatrick. All welcome.

Saturday, 7th March

2.00 pm for a prompt 2.30 pm start, NSPCI Sunday School Games, Trinity Methodist Church & Community Venue, Knockmore Road, Lisburn, BT28 2EA.

Wednesday, 18th March

7.30 pm Clough Church Committee meeting. 7.45 pm Clough Special Congregational Meeting for the appointment of new treasurer.

Saturday, 21st March and Saturday 28th March

10.00 am – 3.00 pm
Ballee & District Community Group
Easter activities
Full details inside this Calendar.
Saturday, 28th March - 2.00 pm Easter Fayre, Ballee Hall.

Thursday, 8th April

7.30 pm meeting of the Presbytery of Antrim at Raloo.

Saturday, 11th April

2.00 pm opening of Ballee Outdoor Bowling Club. New members very welcome.

Date	Downpatrick	Ballee	Clough
1 st March	11:15 am Rev William Haslett	9:45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11:15 am Rev Dr David Steers
8 th March	11:15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9:45 am Sue Steers	9:45 am Rev Dr David Steers
15 th March	11:15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9:45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11:15 am Rev Dr William Patterson
22 nd March	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9:45 am Sue Steers	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers
29th March Palm Sunday	<i>11.15 am Joint Service</i>	11.15 am Joint Service Very Rev William McMillan	<i>11.15 am Joint Service</i>
5 th April Easter	11.15 am Rev Dr William Patterson	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers
12 th April	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Very Rev William McMillan
19 th April	11.15 am Rev Dr William Patterson	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers
26 th April	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Rev Dr William Patterson	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers

Important Commission

Let this day be calm and confident
because I have an important
commission. I need to do my best
for others without anxiety, rush or panic.
Keep me focused.
Keep me open-minded.
Keep me in mind.
Remain in my thoughts, close to my
pulse.

Let me breathe deeply.
Let me enjoy each moment as it passes
and hold me back when I begin
to try to do, or say, or achieve too much.

May today be a good day.

From *Barefoot Prayers* by Stephen Cherry

Around the Fellowship

Our prayers and good wishes go to Daphne Hughes and Martha McMullan who are both in the Ulster Hospital at the moment. We wish them both a speedy recovery. Our deepest sympathy also goes out to Raymond Hodges on the death of his sister Kathleen and to Rosemary Neill following the death of her father.

Ballee Outdoor Bowling Club

The Club will open its 2015 season on Saturday, 11th April at 2.00 pm. New members will be very welcome. This year's lady president is Avril Thompson and the gentleman president is Peter Kelly.

Downpatrick Elders

Congratulations to Margaret Ferguson and Carol Nixon who were ordained as elders of the Downpatrick congregation by a commission of the Presbytery of Antrim in a well attended service on Sunday, 11th January. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped with the refreshments afterwards and to Alfie McClelland who played the organ and all the visitors from the Presbytery who attended including Rev Rosalind Taggart, Rev Lena Cockroft and Rev Dr John Nelson who led the service.

Clough Finance Committee

Thank you to all the members of the Finance Committee at Clough who have worked so hard to sort out all the finances of the church following the sad and untimely death of George Hay, our highly regarded treasurer. The committee have achieved a lot over a series of meetings and have planned a way ahead to be presented to the congregation at a meeting on Wednesday, 18th March.

Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Among the local services to mark this Week we hosted a special service at Downpatrick on Wednesday evening 21st January. Despite terrible weather there was a really good attendance. With thanks to Marion Moffett, Mary Stewart and Sue Steers who all gave readings in the service and to Alfie McClelland who played the organ.

Christmas Events

Christmas seems quite a long time ago now but we had a lot of very effective services in our churches including the Candlelight Carol Service at Downpatrick when Betty Taylor played the organ and readings were given by Elsie Nelson, Ken Taylor, Annabel Cleland, Robert Neill, Amanda Ramsey, Kayla Ramsey, Avril Burgess and Tierna Kelly; the Christmas Day service at Ballee, when John Strain played the organ; and the congregational carol services at each church which were all well supported and enjoyed. A big thank you to everyone who took part in and arranged the services. All these events were reported, with pictures, in the *Non-Subscribing Presbyterian* magazine and the local press. Thanks also goes to Annabel Cleland and Marion Moffett for organising the Christmas party at Downpatrick and to Doreen Chambers and Donna Lightbody for arranging the Ballee outing to the see the Studio Theatre at the Waterfront Hall and the dinner at Downpatrick Cricket Club.

Ballee Grounds

Much thanks goes to Allan Chambers, David Chambers and Jim Kelly for planting the new hedges around the old tennis court field and for arranging the new fences around

the grounds. Thanks also goes to all those who work so hard at maintaining all the grounds and property and who keep everything in such good order.

Ballee & District Community Group

The Ballee & District Community Group is organising Easter activities for P1 – P7 pupils between 10.00 am and 3.00 pm on Saturday, 21st and Saturday, 28th March in Ballee Church Hall. On Saturday 21st March there will be Easter Crafts and on Saturday 28th March Easter Cookery (followed by an Easter Fayre at 2.00 pm).

Everyone is more than welcome. The cost is £12 for both sessions.

To register, email balleeanddistrictcommunitygroup@yahoo.co.uk with two contact numbers, child's name, and any additional needs. Leave payment to Marie, 37 Ballybrannagh Road, Ardglass.

Ballee & District Community Group Easter Fayre

This will be held on Saturday, 28th March at 2pm at Ballee Hall. Everyone is welcome! Get to know your neighbours better! Tea, coffee and buns, a raffle and bun sale. (All buns will be made by the kids at the cookery club). Further details are available in posters in the church.

Funerals

Frances Strain died on Sunday, 11th January. She was in her 91st year and Ballee's oldest member. Born in Rathowen, county Meath, Frances joined Ballee when she married her husband, David, and gave many years of loyal service to the congregation, being much involved in organising sales and other events, and never missed a service so long as she was well enough to attend, taking great delight in all of John's accomplishments as church organist. Her funeral took place at Ballee on Wednesday, 14th January, followed by burial in the church graveyard, and was conducted by the Rev Dr David Steers and the Rev Cecil Wilson, minister in charge of Bright Church of Ireland congregation. Our deepest sympathy is with all her family, including her children, Colin, Doreen and John, as well as all her grandchildren and their partners – including Esme and Ryan, Gemma and Calum, Jennifer and John, Richard and Liz, Charles and Lyndsey, David and Michelle, and all her great grandchildren Alfie, Freddie, Dylan, Jenna, Clare, Elana, Carson, Sarah, Ava, and Aimee. Our sympathy also goes out to Frances's extended family, to Lillian Strain in Canada and to Mona Strain and Leslie and Ann Strain and family in county Down.

Ruby Law died on Sunday, 11th January in Antrim hospital. Although she had been unwell her passing was quite sudden at the end. Ruby was in her 95th year and was born at Aughlisnafin where she grew up on the family farm. She joined Downpatrick when she married Tom and remained a loyal member of the church for the rest of her life. Some years ago, after Tom's death, Ruby moved in to the Fold on Market Street where she was a valued member of that community and continued to be active in many charitable activities. Her funeral took place at Downpatrick on Thursday, 15th January and was conducted by Rev Dr David Steers including poems chosen by her daughter Norma and granddaughter Natasha. The service was followed by committal in the church grave yard. Our deepest sympathy goes out to all her family, especially to Norma and Tom and to her grandchildren, Simon, Darryl and Natasha.