

CALENDAR

Downpatrick, Ballee & Clough Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Churches

March and April 2016

From the Minister:

This Calendar is due out for the start of March and we are already well on the way to Easter. Time really does fly by, although Easter is early this year. As ever we owe a big debt to all our visiting preachers and over the next couple of months look forward to welcoming Rev Dr Will Patterson, Rev Bill Haslett, Sue Steers and David McCord. If anyone in any of our churches would like to conduct a service please let me know. We can arrange a course in preaching for anyone who is interested, or a course in taking readings and leading worship if anyone would like to play more part in this side of things.

At the end of March I have to go to Birmingham as one of the speakers at the annual meeting of the Unitarian Historical Society. The Society is celebrating its centenary (a little bit late actually since it was founded in 1915, but better late than never) and as the current editor of the *Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society* I have to say something about the origins of the Society and the history of its journal – the *Transactions*.

Thank you to those who supported the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity services in January. There were a number of services across

the churches in the area which perhaps didn't help overall attendance and so next year we will go back to one big service. Another big ecumenical service which we always participate in comes at the start of March. This is the Women's World Day of Prayer, the service is open to anyone and it is very much hoped that as many that can will go along to support the service which this year is being held in Down Cathedral. Fuller details can be found in the Calendar.

David Steers

Forthcoming Dates:

Friday, 4th March

Women's World Day of Prayer
Service, Down Cathedral at 7.30 pm.
All welcome.

Saturday, 5th March

Sunday School Games at Trinity
Community Venue and Methodist
Church, Lisburn at 1.15 pm for 1.45
pm start.

Thursday, 7th April

Presbytery of Antrim meeting at
Cairncastle at 7.30 pm.

Saturday, 16th April

Ballee Bowling Club re-opens at 2.00
pm.

Date	Downpatrick	Ballee	Clough
6 th March <i>Mothers' Day</i>	11:15 am Sue Steers	9:45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11:15 am Rev Dr David Steers
13 th March	11:15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9:45 am David McCord	9:45 am Rev Dr David Steers
20 th March <i>Palm Sunday</i>	11:15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9:45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11:15 am Rev Dr William Patterson
27 th March <i>Easter</i>	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Sue Steers	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers
3rd April	11.15 am Rev William Haslett	9.45 am David McCord	11.15 am David McCord
10 th April	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Sue Steers
17 th April	11.15 am Rev Dr William Patterson	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers
24 th April	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Sue Steers	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers

For the freshness of this new day
 thanks be to you, O God.
 For morning's gift of clarity
 its light like the first day's dawn
 thanks be to you.
 In this newborn light
 let us see afresh.
 In this gateway onto what has never been before
 let our soul breathe hope
 for the earth
 for the creatures
 for the human family.
 Let our soul breathe hope.

-from *Praying with the Earth: A Prayerbook for Peace*
 John Philip Newell

Around the Fellowship

Our thoughts and prayers are with everyone who has been unwell, or undergoing treatment or in hospital. Especially with Renee Cleland, Pearl Shaw, Adam Brown and George Strain who were all in hospital recently. Although Adam is still in the Downe at the moment it is good to be able to report that Renee and Pearl are now home and George has moved into his new home, we wish him every happiness there.

Church Lights Ballee

Our thanks go to Colin Brown for fixing up the replacement globe in the church and to Craig Caven for sourcing it. It is nice to see all the lights matching so well. We are also grateful to Colin for fixing the light in the church vestibule.

Ballee Outdoor Bowling Club

Ballee Outdoor Bowling Club will officially open the 2016 Season on Saturday, 16th April at 2.00 pm. New Members are very welcome. Isamay McFadden (lady president), Gerald Bryce (gentleman president).

Planning application Downpatrick

Planning permission has been granted for a developer to build nine dwellings on the site of the former clinic on Pound Lane on the land next to Downpatrick Church. On our behalf Mary Stewart has done an excellent job of making the planning office aware of our concerns about this, not least with regard to our status as a listed building and the dangers of building too close to the ancient wall that is the boundary to our property, as well as concern about the lowering of the former clinic site by over a metre. A direct result of this has been that the site of the proposed properties has been moved back to not interfere with the sightlines of the Church. The details can be consulted online at Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Planning Office and also in the Church. We are grateful to Mary for keeping an eye on this.

Women's League

This year the denominational Women's League is organising its ballot in aid of charities connected with Motor Neurone disease and all three churches are supporting this. Tickets are available in the churches priced £1 each, £5 for a book of five if you would like to support it.

Fireside Quiz

Downpatrick Sunday School have organised a Fireside Quiz based on 25 Bible questions. Priced £1 per sheet the quizzes have been available in each of our churches and have been well supported. The closing date for this is Sunday, 28th February and sheets need to be returned to Marion Moffett by that date. Thank you to everyone who supported this project. All the money raised will go to the Sunday School.

Women's World Day of Prayer

Every year the Women's World Day of Prayer is celebrated by an ecumenical service in the locality. This year it will be held on Friday, 4th March in Down Cathedral at 7.30 pm. All are welcome. Our thanks goes to Annabel Cleland for representing us on the organising committee.

Downpatrick Sunday School Beetle Drive

The Sunday School are organising a special Beetle Drive this year, full details will be available soon.

Aberdeen

Sue and I were very pleased to be invited to Aberdeen in January where we stayed with John and Margaret Robinson and I preached in Aberdeen Unitarian Church. We were made very welcome indeed and shown round the locality by Noel and Judith McCullough from Northern Ireland, seeing Donald Trump's notorious golf course and a large group of seals among other things. Judith is a former organist at Clough and we were pleased to welcome Noel and Judith and Judith's father Bob to a service in Clough in February.

Sunday School Games

The Sunday School Games will again take place in Trinity Community Venue and Methodist Church, Knockmore Road, Lisburn and will be held on Saturday 5th March at 1.15 pm for a 1.45 pm start. The children will take part in games organised in three age groups - 6 years and under, 7 – 10 years and 11+ years. There is also an appeal for assistance and for help with catering. The afternoon is expected to be over by about 4.30 pm.

Ballee Committee

The committee meeting that was scheduled for Wednesday 24th February had to be postponed but a new date will be announced shortly.

Clough Gift Aid

All members (of all churches) are invited to sign up for gift aid. However, Clough has new forms that are available in the Church and everyone who would like to join the scheme is urged to do so. Anyone who pays tax is invited to sign one of these forms which means that of everything you pay to the church in a year one quarter can be claimed in the form of gift aid. It doesn't cost you a penny more in direct giving but it diverts money that would have gone to the Exchequer in tax to the Church instead. There are new forms and we do need everyone who wants to help in this way to sign a form, even if you have signed one in the past.

Downpatrick Fountain Foodbank

Downpatrick Presbyterian Church organises this foodbank if anyone would like to donate any items to it, or if you know of anyone who might need a donation of food from it, details can be supplied.