

CALENDAR

Downpatrick, Ballee & Clough

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Churches

March and April 2017

From the Minister:

Thank you again for all your support and patience at the present time. I have now embarked on the rehabilitation programme and seem to be improving. All being well, depending on progress and medical advice, I am hoping to be able to gradually return to work as circumstances permit.

Again I would like to thank everyone for their help especially to Sue and my family and especially to Sue for all her considerable help with preaching and leading worship. I would also like to thank Rev Dr Will Patterson, Rev Sam Peden, Keith Parke and David McCord who have preached over the last couple of months. They are all due back in the next period and I thank them and Rev Ernie Boggs who also will be returning to preach for us.

My special thanks also go to Rev Dr John Nelson and Rev Norman Hutton for their great pastoral help in recent times and to all my colleagues who have offered support.

I am very thankful for the treatment that I have been given, I realise how fortunate I am to live in this day and age when this level of medical attention is available. I am also grateful for all the ongoing care I have received, the rehabilitation programme at Musgrave Park Hospital is very good indeed. Generally I seem to be doing well, the main part of the operation seems to have been a

success. Much more hassle seems to attach to what was done to my leg and problems related to that have impeded my progress somewhat. But I am looking forward to getting back to full fitness and back to normal again.

David Steers

Forthcoming Dates:

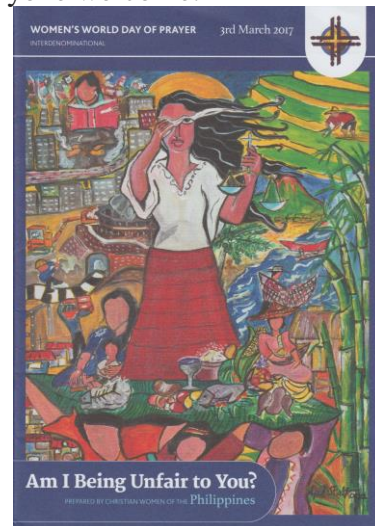
Tuesday, 28th February

Meeting of the Presbytery of Bangor at Dromore at 7.30 pm.

Friday, 3rd March

Service for the Women's World Day of Prayer at Downpatrick at 7.30 pm.

Everyone welcome.



Thursday, 6th April

Meeting of the Presbytery of Antrim at 7.30 pm (venue to be announced).

Wednesday, 12th April

Ballee congregational AGM. (date to be confirmed).

	Downpatrick	Ballee	Clough
5 th March	11.15 am David McCord	9.45am Sue Steers	11.15 am Sue Steers
12 th March	11.15 am Sue Steers	9.45am Keith Parke	9.45am Sue Steers
19 th March	11.15 am Rev Dr William Patterson	9.45am David McCord	11.15 am David McCord
26 th March	11.15 am Sue Steers	9.45am Rev Sam Peden	9.45am Sue Steers
2 nd April	11.15 am Rev Dr William Patterson	9.45am Sue Steers	11.15 am Sue Steers
9 th April Palm Sunday	11.15 am Sue Steers	9.45am Sue Steers	9.45am Rev Dr William Patterson
16 th April Easter	11.15 am Rev Sam Peden	9.45am Sue Steers	11.15 am Sue Steers
23 rd April	11.15 am Rev Ernie Boggs	9.45am Rev Dr William Patterson	9.45am Rev Sam Peden
30 th April	11.15 am Joint Service at Downpatrick Sue Steers	<i>Joint Service at</i> <i>Downpatrick</i>	<i>Joint Service at</i> <i>Downpatrick</i>

O God whose voice is softer than the gentlest rain, but whose word can never be broken, help us to know that only when we do Thy will can our hearts contain Thy peace.

Amen

(from A. Powell Davies, *The Language of the Heart*).

Around the Fellowship

Our thoughts and prayers are with Robert Neill who is now home following his hip operation, we wish him a speedy and full recovery. Our prayers and best wishes also go to Irene Morrison who broke her wrist recently. Our thoughts are with everyone in our churches who has been unwell. If you know of anyone who would appreciate a pastoral visit at the moment please contact the minister directly and he will arrange for one of his colleagues to visit.

Ross Kelly – Fundraising

Ross would like to thank everyone in our three churches who supported his fund raising coffee morning at Ballee on Saturday, 11th February. Ross is helping to raise funds towards stem cell treatment for local mother Nicola Feenan who has MS and is unable to walk. Nicola is trying to raise £50,000 for the treatment in Mexico. So far Ross has raised the considerable sum of £725 from the coffee morning including donations which is an excellent result. In addition back in November Ross and his friend Ellie Edgar also raised £895 for the same cause through a sponsored fast. Well done Ross.

Christmas Services and Events

These all went very well and were well supported. Most of them have been reported in the *Non-Subscribing Presbyterian* magazine but all the Sunday School events - including a party at Downpatrick (on 22nd December) visited by Father Christmas no less, a visit from Downpatrick to the Belvoir Players pantomime *Sleeping Beautys*, an outing from Clough to see *Old Mother Hubbard's Crazy Christmas* at the Down Arts Centre and Ballee Sunday School trips to the Ice Bowl and 'AJ's' at Crossgar were successful. Thank you to all who helped organise these events and to everyone who supported them. All the Christmas services went very well. At the congregational Carol Service at Downpatrick a special presentation was made to Myrtle McBride to mark her almost thirty years of exceptional service as the congregational treasurer.



Presentation to Myrtle at Downpatrick

Women's World Day of Prayer

This year the Women's World Day of Prayer service will be hosted by us in Downpatrick on Friday, 3rd March at 7.30 pm. Everyone will be very welcome. Thank you also to everyone who supported this year's service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity which was at Downpatrick Methodist Church on Wednesday, 25th January.

Gift Aid

All members (of all churches) are invited to sign up for gift aid. Forms are available in the churches 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.

Funerals

Margaret Jane (Peggy) Brown died on 4th January. A life-long member of the Downpatrick congregation Peggy married her husband Ernie in the church in 1955. Sadly Ernie died in 2003. Her funeral took place at Downpatrick on Saturday, 7th January followed by burial in the church grave yard and was conducted by the Rev Dr John Nelson. Peggy had been born on the family farm at Ballykilbeg which she and Ernie managed until their retirement in 1977. More recently Peggy had lived in the Fold in Downpatrick. Peggy's obituary appeared in the February issue of the *Non-Subscribing Presbyterian* magazine. Our deepest sympathy goes to her children Betty, Robert and Barbara and to the whole family circle.

George Strain died on 8th January. At the age of 96 George was the oldest member of Downpatrick and was a much respected Elder of the congregation held in high regard by everyone in the local community, not least through his many years of work in the Downshire Hospital, ultimately as Nursing Officer. George married Betty in 1949 whom he sadly lost in 2005. His funeral took place at Ballee followed by burial in the adjoining graveyard on Wednesday, 11th January and was conducted by Rev Dr John Nelson who spoke of the positive influence George had on the many patients who were in his care over forty years of service. George's obituary also appears in the February issue of the *Non-Subscribing Presbyterian* magazine. Our deepest sympathy goes to all of George's family especially to his children, Vivien, Alan and Alison, to their families, to his grandchildren and great-grandchildren and the whole family circle.

Margaret (Rita) Kilpatrick died in Spain where she had lived for many years. Her remains were brought home to Ballee where the funeral service followed by committal in the church grave yard were conducted by the Rev Norman Hutton on Monday, 20th February. Our deepest sympathy is with all of Rita's family, especially her sisters Elsie and Joan, brother Alan and the whole family circle.