

CALENDAR

Downpatrick, Ballee & Clough

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Churches

March and April 2018

From the Minister:

I have spoken in the churches about my visit to Romania and there is a bit more inside this Calendar, particularly about the Church in Torockó with which we are establishing a partnership. But the main reason for my visit was to attend the 450th anniversary celebrations of the Edict of Torda. Put simply this was a very early expression – in 1568 – of the principles of religious toleration. As such it does deserve to be far more widely known. We still see all around the world so many instances of intolerance and repression but the Edict, promulgated by the diet (or parliament) of King John II Sigismund, said simply: “No one shall be reviled for his religion by anyone, for faith is the gift of God.” These words are inscribed on the new memorial unveiled on 13th January in the small town of Torda. I was very pleased to be present for its unveiling.

There are a number of important events coming up in the churches in the forthcoming period of Lent and Easter please make a note of them and give them your support.

A big thank you also to all our visiting preachers over the last few months which has included Rev Dr Will Patterson, Rev Ernie Boggs, Rev William Haslett, Sue Steers and David McCord.

David Steers

Forthcoming Dates:

Wednesday, 14th March Downpatrick congregational meeting at 7.30 pm.

Wednesday, 21st March meeting of the Presbytery of Bangor at Rademon at 7.30 pm.

Wednesday, 4th April Downpatrick Sunday School Beetle Drive at the Lakeside Inn at 7.00 pm.

Wednesday, 11th April Ballee Annual General Meeting at 8.00 pm.

Thursday, 12th April meeting of the Presbytery of Antrim at Warrenpoint at 7.30 pm.



Unitarian Church, Torockó,
Transylvania

	Downpatrick	Ballee	Clough
4 th March	11.15 am Rev Ernie Boggs	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers
11 th March Mother's Day	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Rev Ernie Boggs	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers
18 th March	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11.15 am David McCord
25 th March Palm Sunday	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers Dedication of Bible Stand in memory of Bobby and Eileen Moffett	9.45 am Rev Ernie Boggs	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers
1 st April Easter	11.15 am Rev Ernie Boggs	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers
8 th April	11.15 am David McCord	9.45 am Rev Ernie Boggs	9.45 am David McCord
15 th April	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11.15 am David McCord
22 nd April	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Rev Ernie Boggs	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers
29 th April	Joint Service at Downpatrick 11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers	<i>Joint Service at Downpatrick</i>	<i>Joint Service at Downpatrick</i>

Good Lord, in this season of Lent, help us to aim high as we seek to renew the discipline of our discipleship. May we take up the best and give up the rest, and know your mercy and grace in all things.

From all self-seeking, self-promotion and self-indulgence...From all that would keep us from going to church...From the laziness that would stop us before we begin...From all that would limit our loving our neighbour...Good Lord deliver us.

John Pritchard

Around the Fellowship

Our prayers and best wishes go to all members who have been in hospital recently, especially Kenneth Rooney, Robert Nicholson, Joan Truesdale and Kenneth Taylor, we wish them, and all who have not been well recently, good health in the future. Our deepest sympathy goes to Ann Skillen on the recent loss of her sister in law.

Recent Events

We go to press just before a couple of notable events. Thank you in advance to all those who helped with the Women's World Day of Prayer service at Downpatrick Presbyterian Church on Friday, 2nd March and those who helped with the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland Sunday School Games held at Lisburn on Saturday, 3rd March. Thank you too to those who supported the service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity/Holocaust Memorial Day held on Sunday evening, 28th January.

Clough Dance

The dance was held in the Millennium Hall on New Year's Day and was very well attended with almost 100 people being present. It was a hugely successful occasion which raised £635 for church funds. Thanks go to everyone who helped in any way, especially with regard to catering, setting up, cleaning up and donating prizes and particularly to the Straney family.

Safeguarding

Victoria McMullan, the denominational Safeguarding Officer gave a presentation on the updated Guidelines for Safeguarding at Banbridge on Saturday, 27th January which was attended by representatives of all three congregations. We were given a full picture of the current situation and our obligations in this important area. Copies of the Guidelines are available in the churches.

Downpatrick Dedication of Bible Stand

At the morning service at Downpatrick on Sunday, 25th March at 11.15 am we will dedicate a new Bible Stand to hold the old church Bible from 1946 which contains the signatures of all the church members at that time. The Stand is being presented to the church in memory of Bobby and Eileen Moffett on behalf of their family and has been made by their grandson David Bradford. Everyone is welcome. The service will be followed by refreshments.

Women's League Appeal

All the churches have been supporting this year's Women's League ballot which is for Diabetes NI Research. A few tickets are still available if anyone still hasn't purchased one.

Downpatrick Sunday School Beetle Drive

This will take place on Wednesday, 4th April at the Lakeside Inn at 7.00 pm. This is always a lot of fun with plenty of prizes and everybody is welcome. Please speak to Annabel Cleland for more information.

Ballee Hall Windows

The new windows are now in place and look very well in the hall.

Torockó, Transylvania

On Thursday, 8th February I gave an illustrated talk on Transylvania and what I did there during my visit in January. I have also shown short PowerPoint presentations to congregations and Sunday Schools. If anyone hasn't seen the pictures or would like to see some more pictures of the events these can be viewed online at:

<https://velvethummingbee.wordpress.com/2018/01/26/the-edict-of-torda/>

<https://velvethummingbee.wordpress.com/2018/02/03/gyulafehervar/>

<https://velvethummingbee.wordpress.com/2018/02/22/kolozsvar-cluj-monuments-inscriptions-and-doors/>

(If you are reading this in the online edition you can just click on the above links)

These pictures cover (in order) the service to commemorate the 450th anniversary of the Edict of Torda, the cathedral of Gyulafehérvár (where King John Sigismund is buried), and Kolozsvár, the main city of Transylvania. But most of the pictures I have shown in the churches have related to the Church in Torockó with which we are developing a partnership. I was delighted to spend a night there in the beautifully restored manse with the minister, the Rev Márton Csésc, in the historic village of Torockó. The Unitarian Church there dates from 1670 and the congregation is well-supported by the population of the village. We look forward to developing our friendship with congregation in the days ahead.

Bright Church of Ireland Lenten Conversations

Our friends in the local Church of Ireland congregations have arranged a series of conversations in Bright Golf Club at 8.00 pm on each Monday in Lent. A local clergy person is invited each week to say something about themselves and talk about their faith. So far they have welcomed Father Peter O'Hare and Sam Shaw (of the Baptist Church who also runs the much admired Godshandiworck Puppets). On Monday, 5th March they will welcome Bishop Harold Miller and on Monday, 12th March it will be my turn. The meetings continue throughout Lent and visitors from our churches will be made very welcome.

Downpatrick Congregational Meeting

This will be held on Wednesday, 14th March at 7.30 pm. We have to prepare for the presbytery visitation which will take place soon, update our sub-committee membership and arrange a date for the ordination of our new elders. All members are encouraged to attend.

Ballee Annual General Meeting

This will be held on Wednesday, 11th April at 7.30 pm. All members are encouraged to attend. The dates of the Clough and Downpatrick AGMs will be announced soon.

Baptism

The baptism of Aaron Annett took place at Ballee on Sunday, 25th February and was conducted by Rev Dr David Steers. Our congratulations and best wishes go to Laurence and Natalie.