

CALENDAR

Downpatrick, Ballee & Clough

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Churches

May and June 2017

From the Minister:

I am glad to say that I have been able to return to work over recent months and again would like to thank everyone for their support over the past six months and particularly to Sue who has done such a great job taking services in the three churches and to Jack for doing so much extra driving for us both. I am indebted, as ever, to all our visiting preachers who all do such a first class job, and to my colleagues who have been so supportive.

We had very successful services over Easter and I was pleased to once again be able to take part in the Inter-Church Walk of Witness through Downpatrick on Good Friday with Jack who played the trumpet that morning for a service in Strangford Lodge. It is something that all the churches in the town do together, a small act of witness, a reminder of the season, on what always proves to be a busy day for shopping and traffic.

This Calendar contains the details for our Spring Communion services which we hope all members will make every effort to attend. Later in the year I will be holding Communion Classes for anyone who would like to come. We also look forward to our Children's Day services, the date for this has been chosen at Ballee. Clough and Downpatrick still have to be arranged

Another important event will come at Clough when we will welcome John Larkin, QC, the Attorney General, who will be coming to give a talk on the legal case that surrounded the Clough meeting house in 1836. Mr Larkin has long had an interest in aspects of our denominational history and at this meeting he will be giving an account of this important legal decision that tied in to theological change. The result of the decision in 1836 was that the Non-Subscribers had to give up the original meeting house in Clough and we had to build our own new Church, which today is such a wonderful home for our worship. This happened at Clough and also at Killinchy and had special legislation not been brought in, in 1844 (The Dissenters Chapels Act) could have happened with virtually all our meeting houses. One of the legal experts involved in the struggles of 1836 was Joseph Nelson, a brother of the Downpatrick minister at the time (Rev S.C. Nelson) whose memorial can be seen in Downpatrick on the wall next to the pulpit.

It promises to be a very interesting evening and we expect a good attendance of people from all over. After the service we will be serving tea in the hall. Leaflets about the lecture are available in the church and more details can be found online at

<https://velvethummingbee.wordpress.com/>

David Steers

	Downpatrick	Ballee	Clough
7 th May	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers Communion	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers Communion	11.15 am Rev Ernie Boggs
14 th May	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Rev Ernie Boggs	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers
21 st May	11.15 am Rev Dr William Patterson	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers Communion
28 th May	11.15 am David McCord	9.45 am David McCord	9.45 am Rev Ernie Boggs
4 th June	11.15 am Rev Sam Peden	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers
11 th June	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Rev Dr William Patterson	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers
18 th June	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers Children's Day	11.15 am Rev Dr William Patterson
25 th June	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Rev Sam Peden	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers

Joy

May the world turn round about,
 May all things turn to right;
 May the sunset thank the dawn,
 The noontime bless the night;
 May the rivers thank the rain,
 The stormclouds bless the sea;
 May the good soil thank the leaves,
 The sunshine bless the tree;

May the rich thank those in need,
 The children bless the old;
 May the strong thank those who fail,
 The timid bless the bold;
 May the angels sing on earth,
 May heaven hear our prayer;
 May forgiveness, joy and peace
 And love fill everywhere.

Around the Fellowship

Our thoughts and prayers are with Robert Neill who had a setback and had to have a further operation but is now home. We wish him a full recovery. Our thoughts and prayers are with everyone who has been unwell recently and all those who have suffered bereavement recently.

Message from Sue

May I offer my sincere thanks to everyone who sent messages and cards and who spoke to me personally on the tragic loss of my younger brother Steven. He was a lovely man and only 52. It has been devastating for the family but I know how much your kindness has given me strength to cope.

Thank you so much.

Sue Steers

Ballee AGM

The Ballee AGM was held on Wednesday, 14th April, thank you to everyone who attended. Copies of the financial report are available in the vestry or from Allan Chambers. Ballee Community Group is planning to provide monthly lunches in the hall for elderly residents of the area, there is an appeal for members of our church to volunteer to help with this much needed service. There will be a congregational work day around the grounds on Saturday, 10th June. Further details will be announced. Advance Notice - the Ballee Table Quiz will be held on Saturday, 30th September. The dates of the Clough and Downpatrick AGMs will be announced soon.

Communion Class

There will be a Communion Classes held later in the year for young members of any of the churches who would like to attend. Details will be announced.

Sunday School Games

These were held in Lisburn on Saturday, 4th March. Well done to all the children who took part and thank you to those who made their participation possible.

Clough Website

We are in the process of setting up a new website for Clough Church. It can be found at <https://cloughnspchurch.wordpress.com/>

Any comments, observations or suggestions will be gratefully received.

The Ballee website can be found at <http://www.balleensp.org.uk/>

And the Downpatrick website at <http://www.downpatricknsp.org.uk/>

Lecture by the Attorney General at Clough

On Wednesday, 24th May there will be a Public Lecture by John Larkin QC, the Attorney General for Northern Ireland at Clough at 7.30 pm. The title is *The case of the Clough meeting house (1836): law reporting and pamphleteering*. Followed by tea. All are welcome. Further information is available in the churches.

Downpatrick Sunday School Beetle Drive

This was held at the Lakeside Inn on Tuesday, 18th April and was a great success.

There were over 80 present and everybody had a fun evening. Thank you to everyone

who supported it in any way. Special thanks should go to Annabel, Marion, Rosemary, Jennifer, to everyone who helped, to the three Easter Rabbits who distributed the prizes to all the winners and to Margaret and Geoffrey for hosting the event in what is always such a suitable location. About £400 was raised for the Sunday School's chosen charity. Well done everyone.

Baptisms

The baptism of Sophie Gorman took place at Ballee at the morning service on Sunday, 19th March and was conducted by the Rev Dr David Steers. Our congratulations and best wishes go to Rebecca and Neville.

The baptism of Lottie Ringland took place at Ballee at the morning service on Sunday, 16th April and was conducted by the Rev Dr David Steers. Our congratulations and best wishes go to Lee Anne and Gavin.

Funeral

Bobby Moffett died suddenly on Friday, 10th March. He was a life-long member of the Downpatrick congregation who had served it with great loyalty and devotion throughout his days. At the time of his death Bobby was the senior elder, having been an elder since 1975, and having also been a member of the church committee for 54 years. Bobby had been the representative elder for the congregation for 15 years and faithfully represented the congregation at meetings of the Synod and the Presbytery of Antrim wherever they were held. In the church, on the committee, in the various meetings he attended he was highly regarded for his wisdom and good sense. He regularly visited members of the congregation who were unwell or housebound and indeed was well known and respected throughout the district for his friendship, good neighbourliness and willingness to give support to those who were bereaved or in need in some way. Beyond the church Bobby faithfully served the Hollymount Rural Community Association, was a member of the Hollymount Lodge and was Chairman of the Field Committee of the Listoder Ploughing Society, travelling all over the world to follow the ploughing matches. He was also Vice President of the Hollymount Pipe Band, something which he greatly enjoyed, and it was fitting that Sammy Gill was there to pipe Bobby into the Church at his funeral, with Richard playing the organ. Well known and highly regarded throughout the farming community Bobby had worked as a drover in the sale yard almost from the time it opened. Following his death, when he was not there to set everything up for the first time, they held a one minute's silence for him in the yard. In a similar way at the first meeting of the Presbytery of Antrim convened after Bobby's death, they opened their meeting with one minute's silence for him. Both are testimony to just how widely Bobby was held in such high esteem. At the centre of Bobby's life was his family and Bobby was married to Eileen for almost 52 years until her sad death in 2009. The Downpatrick Church was filled to overflowing for his funeral service on Tuesday, 14th March which was conducted by Rev Dr David Steers, followed by burial in the church yard. During the service his granddaughter, Anna, representing all his grandchildren, read the poem entitled simply 'Bobby' written about him by his friend and neighbour Mickey Mageean. Our deepest sympathy goes to all of Bobby's family, to his children, Alistair, Hazel, Marion, Ann and Joan, and to their families, and to Bobby's grandchildren, Stephen, Neil, David, and Adam, James, William, Anna, and Amy, and David, Jenny, Samuel, Jonathan and Andrew, and the whole family circle.

Clough Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church

PUBLIC LECTURE

by

John F Larkin, QC
Attorney General for Northern Ireland

The case of the Clough meeting house (1836): law reporting and pamphleteering

The Lecture will take place in the meeting house on

Wednesday, 24th May 2017

at 7.30 pm

Followed by refreshments in the hall. Admission free. Everyone welcome.

Abstract

The case of *Dill v Watson* (1836) determined which of two parties in Irish Presbyterianism was entitled to the ownership of the Meeting House in Clough, County Down. It was the first Irish battle in a campaign in which litigation was the adjunct of theological controversy, and in the Clough case there is almost a fusion of legal and theological debate. What is striking (and fascinating) about the Clough case is that both parties published reports of the decision. Law reporting was for the parties to the Clough litigation no abstract record of a judicial decision but a further way for historical, legal, political and theological debate to be carried on. The two reports of the Clough case opened a distinct front in a pamphlet campaign that lasted until the Dissenters Chapels Act 1844 – if not beyond. This lecture explores this litigation and its background through the prism of the two partisan reports of the Clough case and the later law report by Thomas Jones. It examines the significance of the Clough case as a turning point in wider legal and theological controversy.

For further information contact: Rev Dr David Steers, nspresb@hotmail.com

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