

CALENDAR

Downpatrick, Ballee & Clough

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Churches

January and February 2015

From the Minister:

This Calendar is going to press in the middle of December so that information for January is available well in advance and to avoid trying to bring the Calendar out actually over Christmas itself. So at the time of writing we are still preparing for Christmas with our congregational carol services still to come. Our Joint Candlelight Carol Service, this year held at Downpatrick on 10th December, was a great success despite it being a very cold and wet evening. There was a very good attendance and the church was beautifully decorated. Thank you to everyone who helped and especially to all our readers from the three churches - Elsie Nelson, Amanda Ramsey, Kayla Ramsey, Sue Steers, Annabel Cleland, Robert Neill, Tierna Kelly, Avril Burgess, and Ken Taylor, and thank you too to Betty Taylor for playing the organ.

Can I wish everyone a very happy Christmas and a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

David Steers

Forthcoming Dates:

Sunday, 14th December

9.45 am Clough Christmas Carol Service

Sunday, 21st December

9.45 am Ballee Christmas Carol Service

Sunday 21st December

11.15 am Downpatrick Christmas Carol Service

Thursday, 25th December

Joint Short Service for Christmas morning at Ballee at 10.30 am.

Friday, 2nd January

Ballee Sunday School outing to see the Pantomime Jack and the Beanstalk at the Studio Theatre at 3.00pm. Followed by dinner at Downpatrick Cricket Club at 6.30 pm.

Thursday, 8th January

Meeting of the Presbytery of Antrim at 7.30 pm at Newtownards.

Sunday, 11th January

Ordination of Elders at Downpatrick by Commission of the Presbytery of Antrim at 3.30 pm.

Wednesday, 21st January

Service for the week of Prayer for Christian Unity, at Downpatrick at 8.00 pm.

Thursday, 19th February

Presbyterian Historical Society Lecture at 8.00 pm in Banbridge Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church by the Rev Dr David Steers on 'James McAlpin' who was the founder of Killyleagh Philosophy School, c.1696. The lecture will concentrate on McAlpin's role as an educator and the place of the Killyleagh Philosophy School as a training school for those intending to go into the ministry. Everyone welcome.

Date	Downpatrick	Ballee	Clough
4 th January	11:15 am Sue Steers	9:45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11:15 am Rev Dr David Steers
11th January	3.30 pm Presbytery of Antrim Service for the Ordination of Elders	9:45 am Rev Dr David Steers	9:45 am Rev Dr William Patterson
18 th January	11:15 am Rev William Haslett	9:45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11:15 am Rev Dr David Steers
25 th January	11:15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9:45 am Rev William Haslett	9:45 am Rev Dr David Steers
1 st February	11:15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9:45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11:15 am Rev William Haslett
8 th February	11:15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9:45 am Rev Dr William Patterson	9:45 am Rev Dr David Steers
15 th February	11:15 am Rev William Haslett	9:45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11:15 am Rev Dr David Steers
22 nd February	11:15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9:45 am Rev Dr David Steers	9:45 am Rev Dr William Patterson

Guide and bless us, O God, so that our future lives may prove a blessing to others and our days be filled with happiness, contentment and peace. We confess, O God, that we have sometimes been hurtful and thoughtless in our words and deeds. Forgive us for these things and help us in the coming days to be the best we can. Grant unto us, O God, true happiness and prosperity and help us to use all our blessings to bring joy to others. Amen.

From Festivals and Celebrations

Around the Fellowship

Congratulations to Eileen Neill who recently won runner up in the Artistic Student category of the 'Young People's Awards' sponsored by Newington Credit Union.

Christmas Day Service

**Short Service for Christmas Morning
Ballee at 10.30 am, Thursday, 25th December.**

Downpatrick Elders

The Downpatrick congregation has elected Margaret Ferguson and Carol Nixon to serve as new elders for the congregation. According to our rules new elders have to be ordained to this position by the Presbytery and this will take place on Sunday, 11th January at 3.30pm. This will be a service of ordination of new elders by a commission of members of the Presbytery of Antrim. Everyone is welcome to attend. There will be no morning service at Downpatrick on that Sunday.

Clough Harvest

There was a good attendance at Clough for the annual Service of Harvest Thanksgiving on Sunday, 22nd October when we welcomed the moderator, the Rt Rev Paul Reid, as preacher and welcomed the Bailliesmills Accordion Band to lead our praise. The band played around fifteen pieces and were very well received. The hymns were accompanied by Alfie McClelland and we are grateful to everyone who decorated the church and provided food for the refreshments in the hall afterwards.

Downpatrick Table Quiz

This took place at the Lakeside Inn on Saturday, 29th November. There was a really good participation and the total profit raised on the evening was £830. As ever our thanks goes to Margaret, Geoffrey and Anna Ferguson for hosting the event, to Arthur Gibson for his questions and to everyone who helped with catering, the ballots, marking the answer sheets and donated prizes. It was an excellent night all round and resulted in a good sum raised for the church.

Joint Service Clough

There was a good attendance at the joint service hosted by Clough on Sunday, 30th November at 11.15 am which was followed by refreshments. Thanks goes to everyone who helped on the day.

Ballee Sunday School Outing

On Friday, 2nd January Ballee Sunday School will be going to see the Pantomime Jack and the Beanstalk at the Studio Theatre at the Waterfront Hall at 3.00pm. Pre-booking is essential for this if you want to go. This will be followed by dinner at Downpatrick Cricket Club at 6.30 pm (two course, costing £12.95 for adults, £6.50 for children). This is open to anyone who would like to come but again places must be booked in advance. Please check with Doreen Chambers or Donna Lightbody for availability.

Faith and Freedom Calendar

The journal *Faith and Freedom* has produced a colour calendar for 2015, containing a dozen colour pictures illustrating the themes of faith, devotion and religious diversity. The image for October is taken from this year's harvest service at Ballee. If anyone would like to purchase a copy of this Calendar they are available from the Rev David

Steers. They are priced at £5 each and all the proceeds from the sale goes to charity – the Send a Child to Hucklow Fund which helps disadvantaged children have a holiday in the Peak District National Park.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity runs from 18th to 25th January in 2015 and this year we have been invited to host a service at Downpatrick on Wednesday, 21st January at 8.00 pm. There will be other services throughout the week in different churches in the locality including Church of Ireland, Roman Catholic and Baptist churches but this will be our contribution and we hope everyone will come along to support the occasion. Fuller details will be available nearer the time.

Funerals

Joan Thompson died on Wednesday, 12th November, peacefully, at her own home. A longstanding member of the Downpatrick church since her marriage to Dr Alec ‘Curly’ Thompson. A former nursing sister in the Royal Joan suffered the sad loss of two of her children after the death of her husband in 1991. Her funeral took place at Roselawn Crematorium on Monday, 17th November with a service of thanksgiving being held in the church later in the afternoon. The services were conducted by Rev Dr David Steers and a reading of W.B. Yeats’ poem ‘The Lake Isle of Innisfree’ was given by Mary Stewart. Our deepest sympathy is with Joan’s daughter Mary, her brother John and all her family and friends.

George Hay died on Thursday, 13th November, suddenly, after being rushed into hospital the day before. A lifelong member of Clough, George was a highly respected elder and the treasurer of the congregation. He will be greatly missed in the church for his wise stewardship of its resources and the quiet and unassuming way in which he managed so many of the day to day aspects of running the church. He was a generous supporter of his church in so many ways and brought a tremendous efficiency to all the different jobs which he undertook. His funeral took place in the Church on Sunday, 16th November following the communion service in the morning which he had been preparing for just the week before as he always did, bringing the wine to be used. The funeral was conducted by Rev Dr David Steers and was followed by burial in the church grave yard. Our deepest sympathy is with his cousin Lilian and all his family and friends.

David Neill died on Wednesday, 19th November at Slieve Dhu Nursing Home in Newcastle. Although he had been unwell for some time he had remained cheerful throughout and was well cared for in Slieve Dhu and was closely supported by his family. Dave, or Davie, was a lifelong member of Downpatrick who worked throughout his life as a farmer. His funeral took place at Downpatrick on Saturday, 22nd November, conducted by Rev Dr David Steers, with readings being given by his grandsons Steven, Robert and Drew. This was followed by burial in the family grave in the church yard. Our deepest sympathy goes out to Dave’s family - to David and Sandra, to Robert and Rosemary, to Steven and Drew and to Robert, Eileen, Rachel, Megan, and Laura.