

CALENDAR

Downpatrick, Ballee & Clough

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Churches

May and June 2015

From the Minister:

The year soon moves round and we have now reached the month of May, we are starting to look towards the Children's Days and the denominational Sunday School Exhibition and Service. It is very good that we have such active and flourishing Sunday Schools, we are blessed by our Sunday School Superintendents and all those who help every week with the Sunday Schools.

May is also the month in which we celebrate Communion – at Ballee and Downpatrick on the first Sunday in the month and at Clough on the third Sunday in the month. It is important to emphasise that everyone is welcome at these services and all members are encouraged to attend. We do also hold communion classes for people of any age from time to time if anyone would like to learn a bit more about this particular tradition that we share in. Also anyone who is unable to attend church for whatever reason can have communion brought out to them at home – please let me know if you would like – or know someone who would like – communion brought out to them.

As churches we are starting to have a good presence on the internet. Both Downpatrick and Ballee have good websites that are frequently visited and carry a lot of information about the churches. Let's hope that Clough can soon also have its own

website. I have also recently started a Blog – basically a site containing articles, reflections thoughts etc. written by me. I used to write a column, from time to time, in the *Non-Subscribing Presbyterian* magazine called 'Ponder Anew'. It is basically something similar to that although online rather than in print. (Indeed I was going to call it 'Ponder Anew' but someone already had that name!) Anyway if you are interested in this you can find it online at:

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

David Steers

Forthcoming Dates:

Monday, 11th May

Downpatrick Annual General Meeting at 7.30 pm.

Tuesday, 26th May

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

Friday, 5th June

NSPCI Sunday School Service and Exhibition of Work at Moneyreagh at 7.30 pm.

Monday, 9th and Tuesday 10th June

Annual meeting of the General Synod at Moneyreagh.

Saturday, 25th July

Downpatrick summer event. Please keep this date in your diary.

	Downpatrick	Ballee	Clough
3 rd May	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers Communion	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers Communion	11.15 am Very Rev William McMillan
10 th May	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Very Rev William McMillan	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers
17 th May	11.15 am Rev Dr William Patterson	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers Communion
24 th May	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Rev Dr William Patterson
31 st May	11.15 am Joint Service Downpatrick Rev Dr David Steers	<i>11.15 am</i> <i>Joint Service</i> <i>Downpatrick</i>	<i>11.15 am</i> <i>Joint Service</i> <i>Downpatrick</i>
7 th June	11.15 am Sue Steers	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers
14 th June	11.15 am Children's Day Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Rev William Haslett
21 st June	11.15 am Very Rev William McMillan	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers	11.15 am Children's Day Rev Dr David Steers
28 th June	11.15 am Rev Dr David Steers	9.45 am Sue Steers	9.45 am Rev Dr David Steers

A man's religion, if it is sincere, is that consciousness in which he takes up a definite attitude to the world, and gathers to a focus all the meaning of his life.

Edward Caird

We cannot make a religion for others, and we ought not to let others make a religion for us. Our own religion is what life has taught us. If we can clarify this body of experience, which comes to us so turbid and impure, we shall have done what is best worth doing for ourselves, and we shall have to offer to others the best that was in us to give, however small its value may be.

Dean Inge

Around the Fellowship

Our thoughts and prayers are with Sydney McMullan currently recovering from a period in hospital, with David McCurry also recuperating after breaking his ankle, with Sarah Rooney who was rushed to hospital with a serious injury to her finger but is now doing very well, and to her cousin Thomas Rooney who also had a short stay in hospital but is now safely back home.

Sunday School

All three churches were represented at the denominational Sunday School Games held this year at Lisburn. Thank you to everyone who helped, all the participating Sunday School members had a good time. This year's denominational Sunday School Conference will be on Friday, 5th June at 7.30 pm at Moneyreagh. Recorded entries need to be delivered to the judges before 13th May and all other entries need to be brought to Moneyreagh on Sunday, 31st May between 2.30 pm and 5.00 pm. The Sunday School work will also be kept in Moneyreagh over the period of Synod before being taken down.

With regard to our own Children's Day Services this year the Downpatrick service will be on Sunday, 14th June at 11.15 am, Clough will be on Sunday, 21st June at 11.15 am and the date of Ballee Children's Day service will be announced soon. Good luck to all those younger members of our congregations who have important examinations over the next couple of months.

Clough Finance Committee

Many thanks to the Clough Finance Committee who have been meeting to sort out the financial matters for Clough Church and especially thanks to Yvonne Rooney and Elsie Nelson who between them have agreed to take on the role of managing the church finances.

Annual General Meetings

The Ballee AGM was held on Monday, 23rd March, the Downpatrick AGM will be held on Monday, 11th May at 7.30 pm, and the date and time of the Clough AGM will be announced in due course. We are very much indebted to all those people who take on the various offices and tasks that need to be done in our churches.

Retiring Collection for Nepal

On the first two Sundays in May we will be having a retiring collection in each church in aid of the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) Nepal Earthquake Appeal. The DEC is a joint appeal arranged through all the major aid agencies including the Red Cross, Christian Aid, Oxfam, Concern, Save the Children and other similar funds. On their website they explain the need for the appeal in the following way:

On Saturday 25 April a massive 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck Nepal. It severely shook the lives of at least 5.3m people and left many homeless. Nepal's major cities, including the capital Kathmandu, have been badly damaged and rural areas near the epicentre have been completely cut off by avalanches.

Already over 3000 people have been confirmed dead and the figure is likely to rise significantly in the coming days. Even those whose homes are still standing are sleeping in the streets because they are terrified by regular aftershocks.

DEC member agencies and their partners are working urgently to provide emergency shelter, food, clean water and blankets. Once immediate, life-saving needs are met

they will work with individuals, families and communities to support them to rebuild their lives.

If anyone would like to make a donation through their church there will be an opportunity in our retiring collections.

Baptism

The baptism of David Mark Rooney took place at Clough at the morning service on Sunday, 19th April and was conducted by the Rev Dr David Steers. Our congratulations go to Nuala and Gavin and the whole family.

Funerals

Daphne Hughes died in the Ulster Hospital on Friday, 27th February, a lifelong member of Ballee Church and a much loved aunt and great aunt as well as a valued friend to many. Daphne had celebrated her 81st birthday earlier in the month and seemed to have come through a period of health difficulties. The youngest of eight children Daphne grew up on the farm at Carronacaw, a place which she loved, and where, in her younger days she had been responsible for the dairy. Daphne herself had cared for many of her brothers and sisters when they had faced old age and ill health and our sympathy is with David and Helen who did so much for Daphne in recent times. Her funeral took place at Ballee Church on Monday, 2nd March followed by burial in the church grave yard and was conducted by the Rev Dr David Steers. Our sympathy goes to all Daphne's family, particularly to her nephews David and Lynn and the whole family circle.

John Sterritt died very suddenly on Saturday, 4th April. A much loved husband, father, son in law and grandfather a large congregation gathered at Clough for his funeral on Wednesday, 8th April. As part of the service his daughter Fiona gave a tribute to her father on behalf of the whole family. The service was conducted by the Rev Dr David Steers followed by burial in the church grave yard. Our deepest sympathy goes out to Margaret, to Anita and Bobby, Fiona and David, Nicola and Noel, David and Lyndsey, as well as John's grandchildren, Mark, Scott, Grace, Jack, Robert, Abi Rose, Aaron, Kenzie, and Alfie, his sister Violet, mother in law Ivy, and the whole family circle.

Martha McMullan, Downpatrick's oldest member, died suddenly in Slieve Dhu nursing home on Wednesday, 8th April. Martha was 96 but although she had suffered a serious fall a few weeks earlier and broken her hip she had seemed to be making good progress. Martha had been a member of the Church since 1945 when she married her husband Willie. Martha is remembered by many in the town as running her wallpaper and paint shop on Irish Street as well as a very keen bowler, a founder member of Downpatrick Bowling Club, and one of the first residents of the Fold on Market Street. A well-known member of the local community, in later life she even enjoyed fame as a featured extra in a local film. Martha was a much loved mother and grandmother. There was a large attendance at her funeral which took place at Downpatrick in Sunday, 12th April and was conducted by Rev Dr David Steers with her grandson Paul giving a reading. Burial took place after the service in the church grave yard. Our deepest sympathy goes out to her family, to Donald and Diane, to Norman and Catherine and to her grandchildren, Jane, Joanne and Paul and her sisters Hazel and Victoria, who lives in New Zealand, and all her family circle.