

August 2020

Dear Friends

What a difference a day makes, one day it's raining the next day the sun is shining. The weather in July and August has been so changeable, such a difference from the amazing weather we had during the spring and early summer. As we move through the year, we are reminded of the changing seasons. The coming and going of the seasons are a reminder of God's promise that while the earth remains seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease. (Genesis 8:22)

We are familiar with the changing seasons, and Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 reminds us of the changing seasons of life.

For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under heaven.

A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant and a time to harvest...

A time to cry and a time to laugh. A time to grieve and a time to dance...

There are many seasons in life and many types of seasons. Many of us have experienced the seasons of challenge and difficulty, the seasons of strain, stress and sickness, as well as the seasons of joy and delight, the seasons of refreshment, renewal and restoration. There are the seasons in life when we have different experiences, opportunities and responsibilities. Sometimes there are times, such as in the current pandemic, where something impacts on all our lives, but the impact varies for each one of us.

The good news in all of life is that God knows, loves and cares. He calls and invites us into a restored relationship with Himself, through faith in Jesus Christ, His Son, the One who suffered and died on the cross and was raised to life again. God wants us to know Him in a real and meaningful way, to know His loving presence in all the changing seasons and challenges of life, to know his sustaining grace, guidance and help, to know the presence of the Holy Spirit with us and in us.

In all the changing seasons and challenges of life, and in the challenges and concerns of these days, may we know that God's love remains constant and unchanging. The Bible contains many verses about God's love, and the cross is the clearest demonstration of God's love for us. God demonstrates his love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)

Many hymns and songs remind us of the extent of God's love for us. These include; 'How deep the Father's love for us', 'My song is love unknown', 'And can it be' – 'Amazing love, how can it be, that thou my God, shouldst die for me', and 'One thing remains'.

Higher than the mountains that I face
Stronger than the power of the grave
Constant through the trial and the change
One thing remains
This one thing remains
Your love never fails, and never gives up
It never runs out on me ...

Because on and on and on and on it goes
Before it overwhelms and satisfies my soul
And I never, ever, have to be afraid
One thing remains
This one thing remains
Your love never fails, and never gives up
It never runs out on me ...

I pray that in the changing seasons and challenges of life you will know the full extent of God's love for you, that your relationship with Him will be deepened and enriched, that we will walk in His ways and fulfil His will, aware that He remains constant through the trial and the change and that His love never fails, and never gives up and never runs out on us.

Yours for the sake of Christ

Roderic

Please see overleaf for information about our new pattern of Church Services.

Church Services

Following the Executive's decision that churches could reopen for worship, we recommenced our 'in-church' services in Holy Trinity on Sunday 12th July. As we begin a new season, we are going to extend our range of 'in-church' services. Please don't feel under pressure to attend 'in-church' worship; our online services and kids' programme will continue to be available on the website (bchurch.co.uk), Facebook and the dial-in number 028 4040 0345.

Our new (temporary) pattern of services will begin on Sunday 13th September, with two services at Holy Trinity and two at St Patrick's. Our pattern of Sunday services will be kept under review, and further changes made when circumstances allow.

Holy Trinity

The first service in Holy Trinity Church will be at 10.00am. The second service will be a short 'All-age' contemporary service in Holy Trinity Church Hall at 11.15am.

St Patrick's

The service in St Patrick's church will be at 10.00am. The second service will be a short 'All-age' contemporary service in St Patrick's Church Hall at 10.00am.

The 2 metres social distancing regulations mean that the number of people who can attend the 10.00am service in St Patrick's Church is limited to 10 individuals or households. Those who wish to attend this service must phone the Parish Office, Monday to Friday 9.30am – 12.30pm, to reserve a seat for each Sunday. As the numbers who can attend this service are limited, some parishioners who normally attend St Patrick's may decide to attend the 'All-age' service in St Patrick's Church Hall or the 10.00am service in Holy Trinity.

Services will be very different as we follow government regulations and guidelines.

- Although congregational singing isn't permitted at the moment, we are planning to have hymns/songs played or sung at our services. The 'All-age' services will include action songs and have resources for children.
- Social distancing of 2 metres (6 feet) must be observed at all times, including at the entrance and exit. Some pews will be roped off in Holy Trinity and St Patrick's to maintain social distancing. People from the same household do not need to social distance from other members of their household.
- The Church of Ireland recommends and encourages the use of face coverings at all services of worship.
- Everyone will be asked to hand-sanitise at the entrance and fill up designated pews/seats, starting at the front. Stewards will guide people to their seats. Please avoid touching surfaces, apart from where you are sitting.
- People attending a service must bring a piece of paper with their name, contact number and the names of anyone from their household who attends the service with them. Please put the paper, with this information, in the basket at the entrance door. A record of who is present is required in case a contact tracing process needs to take place, in the event of someone who is present subsequently testing positive for Covid 19. This information will be held (complying with Data Protection rules) for the purpose of contact tracing, if required.

Pastoral Care and Record Update Form

Thank you to everyone who returned their Parish Record Update Information. It would be really helpful if parishioners who haven't yet returned the information would send it to the Parish Office or contact Dorothy.

Please contact me (028 4062 2612/07933096720) or the Parish Office (028 4062 2744/info@bchurch.co.uk) if you, or someone you know, need help or support, or if you would like to talk or would like someone to pray with you.

Information about Inspire, Connect Groups and Alpha will be given at our services and be available on the website, social media and from the Parish Office. (028 4062 2744)

The enclosed leaflet has the Bible 2020 readings, the Bible readings for September & October, and information about the General Vestry Meeting, the Diocesan Lebanon Appeal and Community Help Initiatives.