

October 2020

Dear friend

At this time of the year, as I see the leaves changing colour and the various shades of green, yellow, red and brown, I think of a holiday, with Joan, in Iowa, one of the midwestern states of America. The range of colours was spectacular, and people would drive for miles to see these amazing displays of nature. However, my memories aren't just of the amazing array of colours, but of walking on a carpet of dry leaves, or even walking ankle deep through dry leaves that had fallen layer on layer.

Each one of us has our own special memories as we look back over the years. Memories of good times, encouraging times, but memories, too, of challenging times and difficult times. Each of us has our memories of the past seven months, the highs and the lows. May our positive memories be a blessing to us, may they encourage and sustain us, and may we know God's renewing presence and power where we have painful memories and experiences.

The Bible assures us that God loves and cares for each one of us. Do talk to God about your experiences. Ask Him to help you, ask Him to heal the hurts, pains and disappointments of the past, to break the hold any negative experiences and memories are having on your life.

He wants to bring healing into our brokenness, to help us forgive others, to help us forgive ourselves, to enable us to know His forgiveness as we come to Him in repentance and faith.

**Healing into our
brokenness!**

Each of us, in our own way, has experienced hurt and pain, disappointments and frustrations, we have regrets about things we have done, as well as things we haven't done. We can't go back and change what has happened, but our past does not have to determine our future.

When the People of Israel were living as exiles in Babylon, God spoke to them through the prophet Jeremiah. He assured them that He hadn't forgotten them and hadn't given up on them.

God said, 'I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you
and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. (Jeremiah 29:11)

No matter who we are and no matter what we have experienced, God wants us to know that he is a God who forgives, a God who restores and renews. He is the One who gives us hope and a future. We can know a restored relationship with God through faith in Christ as our Saviour and know the presence of the Holy Spirit with us and in us.

**Hope and
a future!**

When we are followers of Christ, part of the Holy Spirit's role is to progressively make us more like Christ, to transform us into the people God wants us to be, and help us do what God wants us to do. He equips, encourages and empowers, He corrects, consoles and comforts, He teaches, trains and transforms. Although we'll still experience challenges and difficulties, we are not on our own, He is with us.

In the coming days, I pray that you will be aware of His presence as you entrust your life and your future to Him, that you will experience his renewing power bringing healing and hope, and that you will know His peace now and always.

Yours for the sake of Christ

Roderic

(Please see overleaf.)

Included in this mailing is information about the Bible 2020 readings, the Bible readings for November and December, a summary of the Parish Accounts for 2019, our Harvest Offering and a Special Gift Day.

Please Pray

First of all, I want to assure you that Joan and I, the staff team and other parishioners are praying for you and all the members of our Church family. Please join with us as we pray and continue to pray for members of our Church family and for the community, as we pray for our family and friends, and as we pray for our country and nation and the nations of the world.

The current pandemic has brought so many changes to daily life, and they impact on each of our lives in various ways and to various degrees. I pray that you will know God's renewing presence, that you will know His sustaining grace, help, guidance and encouragement, in your particular circumstances at this time.

**The joy of the Lord
is your strength!**

The Old Testament reading on Sunday was from Nehemiah 8 and included the words, 'The joy of the Lord is your strength.' God loves us and invites us into a restored relationship with Himself, through faith in Christ. I pray that you will know the joy of the Lord, through faith in Christ; that the joy of the Lord and the joy of knowing the Lord will be your strength now and in the coming days.

Pastoral Care

We are continuing to provide pastoral care and support by phone, apart from exceptional circumstances. Please contact me (028 4062 2612/07933096720) or the Parish Office (028 4062 2744/info@bchurch.co.uk) if you or someone you know is ill or would like/requires pastoral support or help. Please contact me if you would like someone to pray with you.

As restrictions continue to change, please keep in touch with family, friends and neighbours as we seek to provide help and support to one another, and be 'the Church at the heart of Banbridge and Seapatrick.'

Parish Record Update

Thank you to everyone who returned their Parish Record Update Information. Help us keep our records up to date, if you haven't returned the information please send it to the Parish Office or contact Dorothy.

Sunday Services

Our online services are available each Sunday from 10.30am on the parish website (bchurch.co.uk), Facebook and the dial-in number 028 4040 0345.

Our in-church services continue each Sunday, with two services at Holy Trinity and two at St Patrick's.

Holy Trinity

Service in the Church at 10.00am. 'All-age' contemporary service in the Church Hall at 11.15am.

St Patrick's

Service in the Church at 10.00am. 'All-age' contemporary service in St Patrick's Church Hall at 10.00am.

Our pattern of services will be kept under review, and further changes made when circumstances allow.

Social distancing of 2 metres (6 feet) must be observed at all times, including at the entrance and exit. Please wear a face covering. Everyone is requested to hand-sanitise at the entrance and fill up designated pews/seats, starting at the front.

Kids' and Youth Programmes

Our online Kids' programme is available on the website and Facebook each Sunday from 11.30am. Up to date information about our Inspire youth programme is available on the website and Facebook.

Connect Groups Online

Connect Groups are looking at God's Big Picture - a video course, based on a book by Vaughan Roberts. The course gives an overview of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, seeing how it all fits together and reveals God's wonderful plan of salvation. Please contact the Parish Office for further information.

Alpha Course Online - Begins on Wednesday 4th November at 7.30pm

An opportunity to explore the basics of Christian faith, and to ask questions about life and faith. See the website and Facebook for further information, or contact the Parish Office.