

# **St Aidan's Parish Magazine**

Winter 2015

**SERVING CHRIST IN THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1895**



## **CHRISTMAS SERVICES**

**Sunday 13 December: 6pm Community Carol Service**

**Sunday 20 December: 11am Parish Nativity, 6.30 Carols by Candlelight**

**Friday 25 December: 11am Christmas Family Celebration with Communion**

**Thursday 31 December: 11.30pm Watchnight Service**

**Minister in Charge: Revd Bobbie Moore**

**Church address: Blythe Street, Sandy Row, BT12 5HX**

**Website: [www.staidan.connor.anglican.org](http://www.staidan.connor.anglican.org)**

## SERVICE TIMES December - February

**Sunday 6 December:** Second Sunday of Advent

11am Parish Communion

**Sunday 13 December:** Third Sunday of Advent

11am Morning Prayer & 6pm Community Carol Service

**Sunday 20 December:** Fourth Sunday of Advent

11am Parish Nativity & 6.30 Carols by Candlelight

**Friday 25 December:** Christmas Day

11am Christmas Family Celebration with Communion

**Sunday 27 December:** First Sunday of Christmas

11am Morning Prayer

**Thursday 31 December:** New Year's Eve

11.30pm Watchnight Service

**Sunday 3 January:** Epiphany 11am Parish Communion

**Sunday 10 January:** First Sunday after Epiphany

11am MU Enrolment Service

**Sunday 17 January:** Second Sunday after Epiphany

11am Family Service

**Sunday 24 January:** Third Sunday after Epiphany

11am Morning Prayer

**Sunday 31 January:** Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

11am Fifth Sunday Special Service followed by soup lunch

7.00pm Healing Service in Donegall Road Methodist

**Sunday 7 February:** Sunday before Lent

11am Parish Communion

**Wednesday 10 February:** Ash Wednesday

6.30pm Penitential Service

**Sunday 14 February:** First Sunday in Lent

11am Morning Prayer



**Sunday 21 February:**

Second Sunday in Lent

11am Family Service

**Sunday 28 February:**

11am Morning Prayer

## DAILY PRAYER POINTS – PUSH (Pray Until Something Happens!)

A suggested pattern for prayer during the week. Please use the magazine with the weekly pew sheet to focus your parish prayers and news reports to pray for the world.

**Monday:** Pray for the sick, the house bound and bereaved.

**Tuesday:** Choose one item from the news headlines and bring that situation to God in prayer.

**Wednesday:** Pray for young people and leaders involved in Children's Church, Messy Church, Girls' Brigade and remember Alison Shaw, Family Worker

**Thursday:** Pray for members of the Select Vestry, Church Wardens, and all who give their time to various church activities.

**Friday:** Pray for brothers and sisters in Christ who are being persecuted because of their faith. Look at the Open Doors website for up to date information.

**Saturday:** Pray for Sunday Services, for Revd Bobbie, John, Organists Daniel and Gerald and the Choir that our worship may glorify God and bind us together as members of God's family. Pray that St Aidan's will be a beacon of light in the community and a place of welcome and acceptance.

**Sunday:** Pray together in God's house if possible.

**Dear Church Family,**

This issue of the magazine covers the period from December right up to the beginning of Lent and includes the seasons of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. Preparations for Christmas seem to get earlier every year, but in the church calendar we begin our preparations on 29 November – the first Sunday of Advent and also the beginning of the new church year. That means we have four Sundays before Christmas – four weeks to prepare to celebrate the coming of Christ in human form, and also prepare for the time when he will return to the earth once more. Sadly all too often we allow ourselves to get so caught up with the busy-ness of practical preparations, shopping for presents, preparing meals, entertaining and so on that we risk missing the purpose of our celebration.

So we have decided to conclude this 120th anniversary year with a Christmas Tree Festival to help keep us focussed on the meaning of Christmas. Parish organisations, local churches, community groups, Blythefield Primary School and a few local businesses have accepted an invitation to decorate a 'tree' to illustrate a verse from the Nativity. The trees will be in place for the Community Carol Service on Sunday 13 December at 6pm, and then open to the public afternoons and evenings of the following week.

I hope that this Festival will create a space when we can once again reflect on the amazing truth of the Christmas message: The Word became Flesh and made his dwelling among us. (John 1:14).



***No Jesus, no peace Know Jesus, know peace.***

Warm Greetings in Christ,  
Revd. Bobbie.

**A Different Kind of Christmas**

Sometimes Christmas is just overwhelming, it seems  
As we rush around buying up stuff.  
We spend without end, and we rack up those bills,  
But it feels like it's never enough  
So this Christmas, let's all take a different approach:  
Let's try to be more in accord  
With God's Christmas gift, the best one of all.  
Our sweet Jesus, our Saviour, our Lord.  
We'll be gentle and patient, and loving and kind,  
And we'll keep our priorities straight;  
The gifts of the Spirit, the gifts of the heart  
Are the ones that we'll all celebrate.  
And our stress will decrease and we'll feel more at peace,  
As we decorate, package, and trim;  
Our new Christmas will be a pure joy and delight,  
As we try to be much more like Him. *(Joanna Fuchs)*





# ST AIDAN'S GIRLS BRIGADE



**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT FIONA ON 07776234830**

# **Mothers' UNION**

**Christian care for families**

When this copy is printed, we the members will have been already focussing on the 16 days of Activism against Gender Violence, a global movement which speaks out against based violence.

The 16 days begin on 25th November and runs until December 10th Human Rights Day.

On Saturday 28th November members from Connor, Down & Dromore diocese are sharing in a Vigil in St. Anne's Cathedral Belfast, from 3pm-6pm.

The members of the branch are at this time preparing for the Christmas Tree Festival on which they will make and design a manger tree.

What are your thoughts on the message of that first Christmas, do you like many to-day become over whelmed with the commercial side of Christmas. That the Christmas message is lost.

I would encourage you to join with us in the Celebration of the Christ child at our Christmas services here in St. Aidan's.

The word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1: 14

May I take this opportunity in wishing all our members a peaceful and blessed Christmas.

The MU Branch Christmas programme will take place on 12th December the annual outing to the restaurant (Olio) Action & Sons at 5pm, then after, a visit to this year's Panto at the Grand Opera House to see 'Snow White.

2016 Theme: Celebration of Faith: MU celebrates 140 years of faithful, dedicated witness.

The MU Opening Service will take place on Sunday 10th January 2016 at 11am.

Barbara Bowden



## DATES FOR THE DIARY

*Friday 8th January 4pm-6pm*

*Friday 12th February 4pm-6pm*

Messy Church continues to meet on a monthly basis.

We are delighted to have a group of very faithful families sharing with us regularly and are pleased to welcome some new families in recent months.

In our November meeting we made decorations for our Christmas tree for the festival and without giving too much away about our tree, we were all twinkling by the end of the evening, glitter, glitter everywhere! The children were very excited and impressed with our tree, and are all looking forward to the festival in December. Many thanks to the parents and children who helped tidy up afterwards, this was greatly appreciated.

The Messy Church team continue to be blessed and encouraged by the contribution and enthusiasm of the families involved.

Best wishes to all for a peaceful Christmas and hopeful new year. Many thanks.

*Alison Shaw*



## CHILDREN'S CHURCH

We have had an exciting time in Children's Church, as we have made a selection of percussion instruments. These were shakers and bells. We are looking forward to using them in the near future.

We are also going to be involved in the Christmas Tree Festival, Our tree is based on, "Light of the World." Watch this Space !!!!

We have purchased a table, chairs and lovely storage for our room. This is mostly due to the generous donations from The Thrift Shop.

We value the support we have from the children, parents, grandparents and congregation and are always hopeful that more children will join us.

Thank you from *Barbara, Dorothy and Gladys.*



UNITED CAROL SERVICE FOR ALL THE FAMILY  
SUNDAY 13 DECEMBER AT 6PM

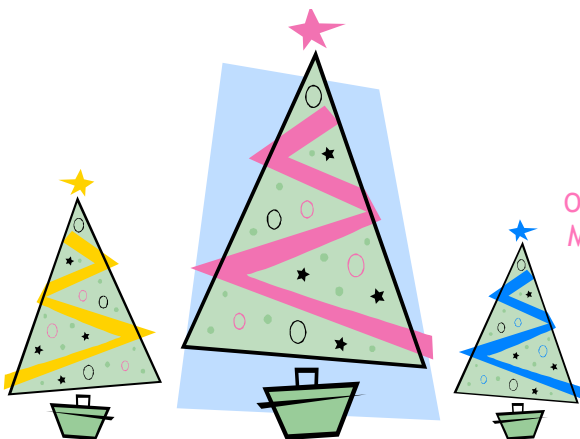
Organised by local churches

ST AIDAN'S CHURCH, BLYTHE STREET and

LAUNCH OF THE  
COMMUNITY  
CHRISTMAS TREE  
FESTIVAL

Opening times from 14-19 Dec  
Mon to Fri 2-4 and 7-9pm  
Sat 12-2pm

Admission Free:  
Refreshments available





## **Papa Panov's Special Christmas - Leo Tolstoy**

It was Christmas Eve and though it was still afternoon, lights had begun to appear in the shops and houses of the little Russian village, for the short winter day was nearly over. Excited children scurried indoors and now only muffled sounds of chatter and laughter escaped from closed shutters.

Old Papa Panov, the village shoemaker, stepped outside his shop to take one last look around. The sounds of happiness, the bright lights and the faint but delicious smells of Christmas cooking, reminded him of past Christmas times when his wife had still been alive and his own children little. Now they had gone. His usually cheerful face, with the little laughter wrinkles behind the round steel spectacles, looked sad now. He went indoors with a firm step, put up the shutters and set a pot of coffee to heat on the charcoal stove. Then with a sigh, he settled in his big armchair.

Papa Panov did not often read but tonight he pulled down the big old family Bible and slowly tracing the lines with one forefinger, he read again the Christmas Story. He read how Mary and Joseph, tired by their journey to Bethlehem, found no room for them at the inn, so that Mary's little baby was born in the cowshed. "Oh dear, Oh dear!" exclaimed Papa Panov, "if only they had come here! I would have given them my bed and I could have covered the baby with my patchwork quilt to keep him warm." He read on about the Wise Men who had come to see the baby Jesus, bringing him splendid gifts. Papa Panov's face fell, "I have no gift that I could give him," he thought sadly. Then his face brightened. He put down the Bible, got up and stretched his long arms to the shelf high up in his little room. He took down a small dusty box and opened it. Inside was a perfect pair of tiny leather shoes.

Papa Panov smiled with satisfaction. Yes, they were as good as he had remembered - the best pair of shoes he had ever made. "I should give him those," he decided, as he gently put them away and sat down again. He was feeling tired now and the further he read, the sleepier he became. The print began to dance before his eyes so that he closed them just for a minute and in no time at all Papa Panov was fast asleep.

As he slept he dreamed that someone was in his room and he knew at once, as one does in dreams, who the person was. It was Jesus. "You have been wishing that you could see me Papa Panov," he said kindly, "then look for me tomorrow. It will be Christmas Day and I will visit you but look carefully, for I shall not tell you who I am." When at last Papa Panov awoke, the bells were ringing out and a thin light was filtering through the shutters. "Bless my soul," said Papa Panov. "It's Christmas Day."

He stood up and stretched himself for he was rather stiff. Then his face filled with happiness as he remembered his dream. This would be a very special Christmas after all for Jesus was coming to visit him. How would he look? Would he be a little baby as at the first Christmas? Would he be a grown man, a carpenter - or the great King that he is, God's Son? He must watch carefully the whole day through so that he recognized him however he came. Papa Panov put on a special pot of coffee for his Christmas breakfast, took down the shutters and looked out of the window. The street was deserted, no one was stirring yet. No one except the road sweeper. He looked as miserable and as dirty as ever and well he might! Whoever wanted to work on Christmas Day - and in the raw cold and bitter freezing mist of such a morning.

Papa Panov opened the door, letting in a thin stream of air. "Come in!" he shouted across the street cheerily. "Come in and have some hot coffee to keep out the cold!" The sweeper looked up, scarcely able to believe his ears. He was only too glad to put down his broom and come into the warm room. His old clothes steamed gently in the heat of the stove and he clasped both red hands round the comforting warm mug as he drank. Papa Panov



watched him with satisfaction but every now and then his eyes strayed to the window. It would never do to miss his special visitor. "Expecting someone?" the sweeper asked at last, so Papa Panov told him about his dream. "Well I hope he comes," the sweeper said, you've given me a bit of Christmas cheer I never expected to have. I'd say you deserve to have your dream come true." and he actually smiled.

When he had gone, Papa Panov put on cabbage soup for his dinner, then went to the door again, scanning the street. He saw no one, but he was mistaken. Someone was coming. The girl walked so slowly and quietly, hugging the walls of shops and houses, that it was a while before he noticed her. She looked very tired and she was carrying something. As she drew nearer he could see that it was a baby she carried, wrapped in a thin shawl. There was such sadness in her face and in the pinched little face of the baby, that Papa Panov's heart went out to them.

"Won't you come in," he called, stepping outside to meet them. "You both need a warm by the fire and a rest." The young mother let him shepherd her indoors and to the comfort of the armchair. She gave a big sigh of relief. "I'll warm some milk for the baby," Papa Panov said, "I've had children of my own - I can feed her for you." He took the milk from the stove and carefully fed the baby from a spoon, warming her tiny feet at the same time. "She needs shoes," the cobbler said. The girl replied, "I can't afford shoes, I've got no husband to bring home money, I'm on my way to the next village to get work."

A sudden thought flashed through Papa Panov's mind. He remembered the little shoes he had looked at last night, but he had been keeping them for Jesus, he looked again at the cold little feet and made up his mind. "Try these on her," he said, handing the baby and the shoes to the mother. The beautiful little shoes were a perfect fit. The girl smiled happily and the baby gurgled with pleasure. "You have been so kind to us," the girl said, when she sat up with her baby to go. "May all your Christmas wishes come true."

But Papa Panov was beginning to wonder if his very special Christmas wish would come true. Perhaps he had missed his visitor? He looked anxiously up and down the street. There were plenty of people about but they were all faces that he recognized. There were neighbours going to call on their families. They nodded and smiled and wished him Happy Christmas! Or beggars and Papa Panov hurried indoors to fetch them hot soup and a generous hunk of bread, hurrying out again in case he missed the Important Stranger. All too soon the Winter Dusk fell. Papa Panov went to the door and strained his eyes, he could no longer make out the passers-by, most were home and indoors by now anyway. He walked slowly back into his room, put up the shutters and sat down wearily in his armchair. So it had been just a dream after all. Jesus had not come.

Then all at once he knew that he was no longer alone in the room. This was not a dream for he was wide awake. At first he seemed to see before his eyes the long stream of people who had come to him that day, he saw again the old road sweeper, the young mother and her baby and the beggars he had fed. As they passed, each whispered, "Didn't you see me, Papa Panov?"

"Who are you?" he called out, bewildered.

Then another voice answered him. It was the voice from his dream, the voice of Jesus. "I was hungry and you fed me," he said. "I was naked and you clothed me, I was cold and you warmed me, I came to you today in everyone of those you helped and welcomed."

Then all was quiet and still. Only the sound of the big clock ticking.

A great peace and happiness seemed to fill the room, overflowing Papa Panov's heart until he wanted to burst out singing and laughing and dancing with joy. "So he did come after all!" was all that he said...

## BIBLE STUDY GROUP

New Six Week Session during Lent  
Every Wednesday 7.30-9pm  
Beginning with a service in Church  
on Ash Wednesday

## Parish Christmas Cards On Sale



£4.50 PER PACK OF 10 OR 50P EACH



## SPONSORED WALK



The total for this years sponsored walk is £2258.00. We have submitted Gift Aid forms to the R.C.B to claim tax which will hopefully increase our total.

This has been a magnificent effort by everyone involved and I would like to say thank you to everybody who helped in any way to make this 'Annual Event' such a success. Well done everyone.

*Margaret Griffin*



## BOWLS

The bowling club will finish for the Christmas break on Monday 14th December (perhaps with a little party!) It will recommence again on Monday 18th January.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our members a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful Happy New Year. *Gladys.*

## REQUEST FROM TREASURER

In previous years there was a lot of confusion when envelopes came in late as two bank lodgments were necessary for early dates in January.

Therefore, for 2015.

The last date for return of 2015 envelopes is Sunday 27th of December 2015.

Any monies received after this date will be entered into the accounts for 2016. Thank you in advance for your co-operation

*Dorothy*

## PARISH REGISTER

### FUNERALS:

Emily Plant – 11 September 2015  
Robert Hamilton (Hammy) Leith –  
22 September 2015  
Baby Aurora Laura Michelle Beggs –  
1 October 2015  
Edward Ferguson – 9 October 2015  
Mary Jane (May) Mann – 16 October 2015

### PASTORAL NOTES

*Baptisms:* Are usually held during Family Service on the third Sunday of each month. Parents should contact Revd Bobbie who will be happy to discuss what is involved. Baptism is the beginning of a faith journey: parents and godparents are required to make promises before God, that they will nurture faith in their children.

*Weddings:* Couples should contact Revd Bobbie to discuss arrangements before any firm bookings are made.

*Funerals:* Please notify Revd Bobbie immediately upon serious illness or death. Clergy should always be consulted before any funeral plans or times are arranged. The Church is available for any funeral service.

Finance: Details of Freewill Offering Envelopes, Gift Aid and Parish Financial Report are all available on request.

## Flower Rota

### December

6th Mrs. M. McBride &  
The McAllister Family  
13th The Leith Family &  
Mrs. M. Griffin  
20th The Coote Family  
27th The Hill Family &  
The Mother's Union

### January

3rd Mrs. M. Close  
10th Mrs K. Wiggins  
17th The Mercer Family  
24th The Crawford Family

### February

7th Mrs. M. McBride  
14th The Hill Family  
21st Mrs. N. Baillie  
28th .....

Please inform Revd Bobbie or the Church Wardens of parishioners who are ill at home or in hospital and those who wish to receive Christmas Communion at home. Also let us know if you would like a name added to the weekly parish prayer list or contact the prayer line: **07733 712942.**



## Thrift Shop

OPEN MOST WEEKDAYS

11am – 3pm BRIC A BRAC

& CLOTHING

Providing a service to the community



## WHO'S WHO IN ST AIDAN'S

**Minister in Charge: Rev. Bobbie Moore**  
02892 682789 / 07746583470

**Parish Reader: Mr John Collins BSc.**  
**Family Parish Worker: Mrs Alison Shaw**  
077547030451

**Organist: Mrs Ellie Leckey**  
**Honorary Secretary: Mr. John Griffin**  
07729204457

**Honorary Treasurer: Mrs. Dorothy Coates**  
02890 692132  
**Rector's Church Warden: Mrs. Barbara Bowden**  
02890 312620

**People's Church Warden: Mr. Robert Redpath**  
**Rector's Glebe Warden: Mr. Alwyn Campbell**  
07712935504

**People's Glebe Warden: Mr. Eddie Murray**  
02890 586733

### **Members of Select Vestry for 2015 – 2016**

**Mr. J. Griffin, Ms. B. Weir, Mr. R. Griffin,**  
**Mr. A. Serplus, Mrs. E. Adair, Mr. J. Hunter,**  
**Mrs. M. Close, Mrs. E. Collins,**  
**Mr. J. Collins, Mrs. D. Coates**  
**Mrs. A. Hunter, Mrs. G. Hollywood.**

### **Parish Organisations & Contacts**

**Sunday Children's Church: Mrs Dorothy Coates**  
02890 692132

**Monday Bowls: Mrs Gladys Holywood**

**Wednesday Bible Study Group: Revd Bobbie**  
07746583470

**Thursday Mothers' Union: Mrs Barbara Bowden**  
02890 312620

**Select Vestry: Mr John Griffin**  
07729204457

**Friday Girls Brigade: Mrs Fiona Hendren**  
07776234830

**Messy Church: Mrs Alison Shaw**  
07547030451