



Church in August 2020

Love God and Love our Neighbour'

Sunday 2nd August- 10am and 12noon- Rev. Edward McKenzie
Sunday 9th August- 10am and 12noon- Rev. Edward McKenzie
Sunday 16th August- 10am and 12noon- Rev. Hastings McIntyre
Sunday 23rd August- 10am and 12noon- Rev. Colin McCormack
Sunday 30th August- 10am and 12noon- Rev. Edward McKenzie

Rev. McKenzie will be on leave 10th-23rd August if you require the services of a minister during this times please contact your elder.

A CHALLENGE FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST- PRAY THE PSALMS

Here's a simple guide to assist you in praying the Psalms.

Pray through the whole Psalter. Multiply the day of the month by five and pray those psalms. If today is 1st then I pray Psalm 1-5, if today is 15th, then I'd pray Psalm 71-75 that day and so on. You'll pray through the whole book of Psalms in a month no problem. Don't worry if you miss a day, just pick up where you left off. This way your prayer life will be nourished by a full diet of psalms.

Make the psalm's words your words. Augustine of Hippo said, ***"If the psalm prays, you pray. If the psalm laments, you lament. If the psalm exalts, you rejoice. If it hopes, you hope. If it fears, you fear. Everything written here is a mirror for us."*** As you pray the Psalms, you will experience how to pray in every season, whether rejoicing with those who rejoice or mourning with those who mourn.

Meditate on the Psalms. By meditating before we pray, we are following in the way of the psalmists themselves (Ps. 1, 19:14, 63:6, 77:12, 119, 143:5 145:5). If anything in the psalm sticks out to you: pause, ask the Spirit to shine his light on it, then mull it over in your mind until it begins to ignite your heart then write it down. Hopefully after a while you will have a number of little list of 'Sam's Notes' that are special to you.

Memorise the Psalms. As you read through the Psalms try and memorise those that particularly stick out to you, at times of doubt or difficulty you can call them back to help you. Jesus modelled this by praying the Psalms from the cross (Matthew 27:46).

Pray the psalm like an apple tree or a Christmas tree. You can either take the pleas and praises of the Psalms as your own, picking them like apples. Or you can decorate the psalm like a Christmas tree, hanging your pleas and praises on it. Use its words to respond to God, who has already initiated the conversation.

Pray the psalm through Jesus and with Jesus. Jesus is both the one through whom we pray to the Father and the one who prays these psalms to the Father (Hebrews 2:12). As you're praying the

psalm, imagine what the words would mean coming out of Jesus' lips as both a human and divine, in his suffering and in his glory. After all, he did say that all the Psalms are about Him (Luke 24:44).

***For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving,
abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you.***

Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer;

listen to my plea for grace.

In the day of my trouble I call upon you,

for you answer me.

Psalm 86:5–7

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COMING BACK TO CHURCH IN AUGUST

At Cregagh we want to create an environment that is both welcoming and safe. While we would actively encourage you to come back to worship, believing it safe to do so with the measures we have taken, we also want to say that no one should come to services if they have any symptoms.

As we continue to move forward towards something more like normal it is imperative that we do so by insuring that ***all actions must be in line with current guidelines and restrictions***. With no changes to PCI guidelines regarding 2m social distance the same arrangements for services that are currently in place will continue for the month of August, continuing to provide a ***service at 10am and 12noon, accommodating up to 60 people*** on each occasion. Doors will be opened at 9:30am and 11:30am so that folk can be guided and seated.

Members are still being asked to register, due to 'contact tracing', by contacting Michael on email: michaelgraham112@gmail.com or phone: 07548635075, indicating which Sunday(s), how many are 'in their bubble' and attending with them, as well as which time slot(s). As before those who have registered will be asked to inform Michael if for whatever reason someone cannot attend so that the register will be as accurate as possible.

The services themselves will continue to be slightly shorter than normal and present arrangements regarding offering will remain in place for the month of August. While we recognise there is an unease about congregational singing, the official advice given to us by both PCI and the NI Executive is that it would be very low risk to have it as part of our services. In an attempt to alleviate fears we have not shared in congregational singing over the past three weeks. A further attempt to respect these concerns while moving forward is the plan to incorporate live singing ***to*** the congregation as part of the service, something which the PCI guidelines suggest and encourage, namely,

"The Northern Ireland Executive is not prohibiting singing in services of worship, rather seeking to be permissive with certain mitigations in place. While the Chief Scientific Advisor to the Executive did not see singing as such a risk that it required regulation, the principles of 'less rather than more', 'softer rather than louder' and 'listening to some and singing some' are all useful guides, at least in the early days of return to Church. So a blended service could well be the way forward, made up of some pieces sung by a small group (socially distanced themselves and four metres from the congregation), some worship songs on video and a few shorter and perhaps softer congregational praise items."

Being mindful of concerns raised surrounding this, singing to the congregation can be shared without causing discomfort or putting anyone at risk, by ***limiting it to one piece of live singing in the middle of the service being provided by a soloist or at most a duet. The singing will be shared***

from the back of the choir stalls, much further away from the front row of the congregation than the guidelines recommend. Considering that preaching is not that different an action than an individual or pair singing we would hope, over the month of August, that doing this would be one more step towards normality while still acting well within the restrictions. Some short responsive prayers will also be introduced, but please do not feel any pressure to take part if you do not wish to.

It is encouraging that the trialled return of KidZone has gone so well, Karen and Jim are happy to carry on covering the month of August and there is no longer a requirement for separate registration in advance. Unfortunately the restrictions are still extremely tight regarding crèche so it will not be available for at least the month of August. However babies are very welcome at our services!

The issue of offering lifts to church has been raised a number of times over the last week. We appreciate that this is a difficult one but the official position in terms of the guidelines is that folk should not offer nor provide lifts to anyone outside of their bubble.

It would be anticipated that all practices would be reviewed on Monday 24th August and that an update would be produced, sent out and made available for distribution on Friday 28th August.

CHURCH FLOWERS IN AUGUST

	Pedestal	Sanctuary
Sunday 2nd	Mrs E White, Castlevew Court	Mrs B McNair, Everton Drive
Sunday 9th	Mr R Irvine, Glenholme Avenue	Mr & Mrs A Scott, Church Road
Sunday 16th	Mr R Blair, Rochester Road	Mr & Mrs G Dunlop, Ardenlee Avenue (‘In Memory of their Parents’)
Sunday 23rd	Mrs B McCluskey, Stirling Avenue and Mrs S Clarke, Ballyhalbert	Mrs J Taylor, The Beeches (‘In Memory’)
Sunday 30th	(‘In Memory of the Rev W A J Barbour and Mrs J C Barbour’)	Mr M Jenkinson, Beech Park (‘In Memory of Margaret’)

OPEN CHURCH

The church building will be open on Fridays 10am-12noon for private prayer. A one-way system, social distancing and hygiene procedures will be in effect. The facility to drop off church envelopes is also available during this time.

PRAYER

The Prayer Link will be sent out during the month of August, if you have any prayer requests please pass them on, if you do not receive the Prayer Link but would like to via email or printed copy please let me know.

3RD LEVEL EDUCATION

Would anyone who is intending to start 3rd level education in September please give their name to either Michael Graham or Maureen Mulligan.

GET IN TOUCH

Please do not hesitate to get in touch

Rev. Edward McKenzie

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