

# NEWS — from the — PEWS

For many Christians unfamiliar with the liturgical year, there may be some confusion surrounding the meaning of the Advent season. Some people may know that the Advent season focuses on expectation and think that it serves as an anticipation of Christ's birth in the season leading up to Christmas. This is part of the story, but

there's more to Advent.

The word "Advent" is derived from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "coming," which is a translation of the Greek word *parousia*. Scholars believe that during the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries in Spain and Gaul, Advent was a season of preparation for the baptism of new Christians at the January feast of Epiphany, the celebration of God's incarnation represented by the visit of the Magi to the baby Jesus (Matthew 2:1) his baptism in the Jordan River by John the Baptist (John 1:29) and his first miracle at Cana (John 2:1).

During this season of preparation, Christians would spend 40 days in penance, prayer, and fasting to prepare for this celebration; originally, there was little connection between Advent and Christmas. By the 6<sup>th</sup> century, however, Roman Christians had tied Advent to the coming of Christ. But the "coming" they had in mind was not Christ's first coming in the manger in Bethlehem, but his second coming in the clouds as the judge of the world. It was not until the Middle Ages that the Advent season was explicitly linked to Christ's first coming at Christmas.



Today, the season of Advent lasts for four Sundays leading up to Christmas. Advent begins on Sunday that falls between November 27th and December 3rd each year). **Advent 2021 begins on Sunday, November 28th, and ends on Friday, December 24.**

Advent symbolizes the present situation of the church in these “last days” (Acts 2:17; Hebrews 1:2), as God’s people wait for the return of Christ in glory to consummate his eternal kingdom. The church is in a similar situation to Israel at the end of the Old Testament: in exile, waiting and hoping in prayerful expectation for the coming of the Messiah. Israel looked back to God’s past gracious actions on their behalf in leading them out of Egypt in the Exodus, and on this basis, they called for God once again to act for them. In the same way, the church, during Advent, looks back upon Christ’s coming in celebration while at the same time looking forward in eager anticipation to the coming of Christ’s kingdom when he returns for his people. In this light, the Advent hymn “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” perfectly represents the church’s cry during the Advent season.

## **The Story of the Advent Wreath**



### **Light in the darkness**

A lit candle has always been a sign of expectation and hope. In the days before Christianity in Scandinavia, people placed lit candles on a wheel; prayers were offered to their god of light, in the hope that the earth’s wheel would be

turned back toward the sun, bringing light and warmth.

## **Origins in Germany**

Like many beloved Advent traditions, the modern-day tradition of the Advent wreath originates in Germany.

The story goes that in 1839, Johann Hinrich Wichern (1808-81), a pastor in Germany, built a wreath out of an old cartwheel to help the children in his mission school count the days until Christmas.

He added small candles to be lit every weekday and Saturday during Advent, and on Sundays, a large white candle was lit.

Although it wasn't widely popular until the 19th century, German immigrants then brought the tradition with them to America in the 20th century.

## **Today's advent wreaths**

The evergreens used in today's wreaths represent everlasting life; holly leaves and berries represent the crown of thorns and blood; and pine cones symbolize the resurrection.

Nowadays, the colours of the candles vary. Violet is popular for Sundays one, two and four, with rose for the third ("Gaudete", or joyful) Sunday, when the half-way point to Christmas has been passed!

Whatever the colours, the first candle represents hope, and the prophets of the Old Testament; the second candle represents faith, and Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem; the third candle signifies joy, and the shepherds; and the fourth represents peace and the angels, with their message of Peace on Earth, and good will to all men.



# Watching for the Light

For three consecutive Wednesdays through Advent, beginning on 1<sup>st</sup> of Dec, St. Patrick's Church opens its doors from 7pm-8pm for a quiet reflective time of music and prayer. Opportunity will be provided to light a candle for a loved one during this time or to come for a blessing or prayer with Rev. Cathy.

1<sup>st</sup> December

8<sup>th</sup> December 7pm - 8pm

15<sup>th</sup> December





28<sup>th</sup> November Advent 1 (Hope)  
Service of the Word

5<sup>th</sup> December Advent 2 (Faith)  
Holy Communion 2

12<sup>th</sup> December Advent 3 (Joy)  
All Age Family Worship

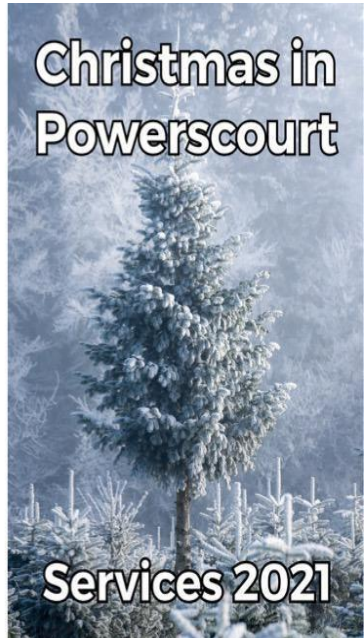
19<sup>th</sup> December Advent 4 (Love)  
Short Said Holy Communion (11:30am)  
Outdoor Carols by Candlelight (7pm)

24<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Eve  
Holy Communion (9pm)

25<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Day  
All Age Family Worship (Outdoor)

26<sup>th</sup> December St. Stephen's Day  
Joint-Parishes 'Short Said Holy Communion' (Kilbride at 11am)

Weather permitting, all Services except Holy Communion will be celebrated outside!



## Christmas in St. Brigid's, Kilbride

Sundays at 9:45am

28<sup>th</sup> November

Advent 1

Service of the Word

5<sup>th</sup> December

Advent 2

Holy Communion 1

12<sup>th</sup> December

Advent 3

Morning Prayer 2

19<sup>th</sup> December

Advent 4

Short Said Holy Communion 2

Joint Parishes Outdoor Carols by Candlelight  
(7pm Powerscourt)

24<sup>th</sup> December

Christmas Eve

Joint-Parishes Holy Communion (9pm Powerscourt)

25<sup>th</sup> December

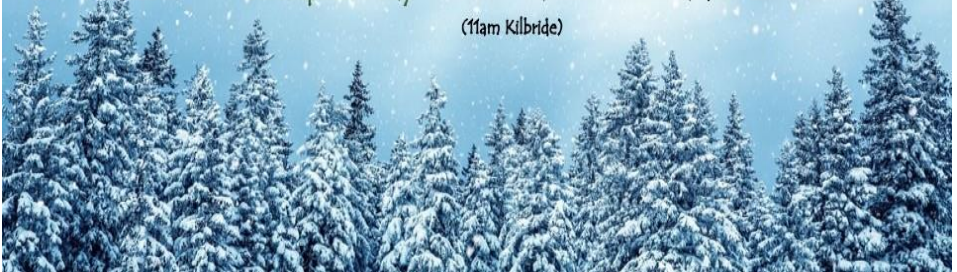
Christmas Day

All Age Family Worship

26<sup>th</sup> December

St. Stephen's Day

Joint-Parishes 'Short Said H. Communion'  
(11am Kilbride)



# St Patrick's Powerscourt Church Outside

**Weather permitting, we hope to hold  
our Church Services in the Church Grounds  
so that we can come together safely and sing!**

**Wrap up Warmly!**



**Sundays at 11:30am**

*“We shall not cease from exploration and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.”*  
T.S.Eliot.

I thought of these lines as it becomes clear that in spite of all we have done individually, as communities and as a country, the Corona virus continues to present huge challenges. Right now, our resilience is being called on more than ever as once again we face into uncertain times. As Christmas and all that comes with it begins to emerge I can feel the old familiar feelings of frustration and disappointment in me and around me, but I also hear the echo of a wise man I once knew ..... *“don’t push the river, allow it to flow”*.

We know and are well versed in what to do and what not to do in order to stay safe during this pandemic, but I think what is really important at this time is not to allow fear and anxiety to overwhelm us. We need to remember that there are many things we can control and choices we can make, because it can be so easy to become mired in negativity and fear. One of many things I have learned over the last number of months is that it is the small things that matter. Sometimes these are the very things we overlook, and we miss out on what can nurture our hearts and spirits. Oftentimes as I watch my grandchildren and their joy in the world around them, I find it lifts my heart. They look at life in such a simple way and take delight in the ordinary around them. On a ‘grey’ day I watch them for direction, and I am never disappointed....

*“You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them.”* Maya Angelou.

*Kindly submitted by Sheila Lindsay*



KILTERNAN PARISH

# 'SOULS OF OUR SHOES' *Exhibition*

*... shoes that seek to tell stories of victims of  
domestic violence.*

**29th November-4th December**

**Monday - Friday 8:30am-2:30pm**

**Saturday 10am-2pm**

BORROWED FROM THE  
MOTHER'S UNION AND ON  
DISPLAY IN THE GATHERING  
GROUNDS, KILTERNAN PARISH  
CENTRE. TEA AND COFFEE  
ALSO AVAILABLE.





## ***CLASSICS BY CANDLELIGHT 2021***



**Classics by Candlelight** makes a very welcome return, now in its 12th year, on **Sunday 28th November.**

Once again, the church will be filled with wonderful music for string quartet and lit by candlelight. In order to keep people safe, we are unfortunately unable to enjoy the usual mince pies and mulled wine afterwards. The reduced price of tickets reflects this.

As far as the musicians are concerned, in addition to Francis and Sheelagh Harte, we are lucky to have again secured the services, given freely, of David and Elaine Clark. All are present or past members of the RTE National Symphony Orchestra and RTE Concert Orchestra.

Tickets are priced at a minimum donation of €5 euros this year. All proceeds will go towards parish funds and Purple House Cancer Support.

In order to make this event as safe as possible, the following will be necessary:

Tickets will need to be pre-booked. To book a ticket make a donation of at least €5 per ticket at the following link, <https://www.idonate.ie/classicsbycandlelight> or buy a ticket and register at the back of the Church.

Contact details must be filled in at the time of online purchase or at the back of the church when purchasing tickets. This is to keep Covid Compliant and our audience safe.

Face coverings must be worn

Covid Certificates will be required on the night

## It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Advent!



Forty years ago I attended music classes. En route home each Thursday, my No. 62 bus passed by a *Seventh Day Adventist Church*. In my childish naivety, I imagined the church was so-called because its members had convinced themselves that Christ would return on a Saturday! But joking aside, every true Christian in the world is an ‘adventist’ (at least with a lowercase ‘a’) in the sense that we all long for Christ’s return (2 Tim 4:8). For many centuries, November 27<sup>th</sup> has been the “New Year’s Day” of the Christian year. And as such it marks Day 1 of a brand-new cycle in our own Church of Ireland liturgical calendar. The first 28 days of the Christian year are known as “Advent” and it’s a special time of preparation. We prepare to commemorate the birth of Messiah over 2,000 years ago in Bethlehem, and we prepare also for his return in glory.

Paul’s instruction to have positive thoughts dominate our minds (Php 4:8) is not some nice little suggestion. He uses the Greek imperative tense “*logizesthe*”, so it’s a command! In my own house there’s a rigidly enforced, zero-tolerance 72-hour news blackout running Saturday through Monday. That’s followed by a ‘ration’ of 300 seconds of news for the rest of the week. My own GP recently remarked that many of his elderly patients in particular are news ‘junkies’, and it’s severely damaging their mental health. One of the most toxic, damaging addictions of all is information addiction!

During Advent in particular, we can obey Paul's command to focus on the positive by reminding ourselves of just how transformed our world will be when Messiah does come to reign. One Old Testament prophet explains the precise mechanics of resurrection in considerable detail. In our own *Book of Common Prayer*, Ezekiel 37:1–14 is one of the readings appointed for Easter Vigils, but I derive enormous comfort from reading it each Advent Sunday too! The Apostle Paul assures us that on that day every true believer will receive “*athanasia*” (1 Cor 15:54) – a Greek word literally translating as “*deathlessness*”. Imagine being conditioned to live on literally for ever, for trillions upon trillions of endless millennia – all the while with a face that “shines like the sun” (Matt 13:43). How exciting!

Messiah will overthrow all political systems by force (1 Cor 15:24–25), foiling the plans of nations (Ps 33:10–11), crushing the rulers of the earth and heaping up all their corpses (Ps 110:5–6). Messiah himself will be enthroned as King (Luke 1:32) and will reign wisely (Jer 23:5) on a throne of love (Isa 16:5). All sickness, pain, death and mourning will be abolished (Rev 21:4). A feast will be prepared with the choicest of meats and finest of wines (Isa 25:6). No-one's medical privacy will be violated as a condition of partaking in the feast and there'll be no “social distancing”. Joy will be endless (Isa 61:7).

The late John Lennon asked us to “give peace a chance”. But fallen mankind is inclined to violence (including, sadly, Lennon's own assassin). In Messiah's kingdom, violence and all military conflict will be permanently abolished (Isa 2:4). So will homelessness. People will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest (Isa 32:18). There'll be prosperity (Ps 37:11), peace and perfect justice (Rom 14:17).

It's very striking that, while Paul instructs us to pray with all kinds of prayers and requests (Eph 6:18), Jesus himself directs us how to prioritise our supplications by teaching us the most famous prayer of all. Before we pray for our deliverance from evil, help in resisting temptation, forgiveness or even food – important as they are – we're to pray for the overthrow, by force, of the world's despots and tyrannical governments (Matt 6:10).

John the Baptizer derived massive joy from the thought of Messiah's first arrival – even when John himself was in his sixth month of “lockdown” in Elizabeth's womb (Luke 1:41). As we move through Advent, let's derive unconfined joy and comfort from the certainty of Messiah's *second* coming. All the prophecies will one day be fulfilled and our world will be, to quote novelist Charles Dickens, “a far, far better place”.

*Ronan Scanlan, Friday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2021.*



**CHURCH OF IRELAND**  
**Children's Ministry**  
Incorporating Sunday School Society for Ireland and Children's Ministry Network



CHURCH OF IRELAND CHILDREN'S  
MINISTRY  
ADVENT & CHRISTMAS  
NEWSLETTER

<http://www.cm.ireland.anglican.org/advent-and-christmas-newsletter-2021/>





## **Alice McNulty**, Sexton of

Powerscourt church from 1939 until 1956, was an energetic and cheerful person. She was the daughter of William George McNulty who had been sexton before her. He lived at Coolakay and kept sheep in what became known as the "sheep field", the parcel of land between the church and the beech walk, which is now the extension of the graveyard. Alice had helped her father

with his work around the church, and in 1939, she became the official Sexton, with a contract and a salary.

Her contract describes a bewildering array of duties. She must wash the tiles weekly, ventilate the building twice a week (the Windows have probably never been opened since), light the oil lamps which hung from the roof by means of a long ladder, fire the boiler, ring the bell for 20 minutes before each service,

pump the organ, and keep a register of the burials. She charged 2/6 for this service. Outside, she kept the grounds in good order, raking the gravel, cutting the weeds, and washing the headstones. When the gravel became too heavy a task for her, she harnessed the donkey to the rake. And at Christmas, she played Santa at the parish Children's' party,



which took place every year in the parochial hall. (Scenes from these parties through the years are indelibly printed in parish memory!)

For all this hard work, Alice received £50 a year.

In 1949, a young fella, the Rev John Desmond Murray, became our pastor until 1953, when he left to join the Royal Navy as a chaplain. Alice was devoted to the Rev Murray, and when, in 1956, he was appointed to be the incumbent of Dalkey, she left Powerscourt to work with him in his new parish. Ned Somers succeeded Alice as Sexton, and the Rev Albert Stokes arrived at the same time.

The sheep field was consecrated as a graveyard by Canon Stokes on May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1964 with a service which was recorded on a cine camera by the young organist Mr Niall Storey. I have been unable to track either him or the film, if it still exists. If any reader can help to find this treasure, it would be wonderful.

*Kindly Submitted by Judy Cameron*

## FLOWER GUILD VOLUNTEERS WANTED



WE are looking for some new names on the Sunday Flower Arrangers List.

It normally needs about 3 bunches of flowers plus greenery but of course it's great if you have garden flowers

Volunteering is required about 3 times per year.

If you are interested to get involved, please contact Marjorie Mold 087 647 2668 or 01 2863499

## **Tea and Coffee Rota for Autumn/ Winter 2021**



November 28<sup>th</sup>

Elizabeth Mahon & Dorrie O'Rourke

5<sup>th</sup> December

Gillian Gleasure

12<sup>th</sup> December

Tim and Gay

Weldon

We need more Volunteers – If you think you can help, please contact Marjorie Mold on 087 647 2668 or 01 2863499

The joint parishes of Powerscourt with Kilbride operate within the Policies and

