



KILTERNAN KLIPS

Building community, strengthening worship, growing in service

The quarterly newsletter of Kilternan Parish, Co. Dublin

Vol. 30 No.3 Kilternan Klips | Autumn 2024

www.kilternanparish.ie

A WARM WELCOME TO REVD CAROLINE BRENNAN



NOTICE BOARD

News and notices from around the parish

MINISTRY

Youth, family and liturgy, articles and more

FEATURES

Articles of interest to the church community

WIDER COMMUNITY

News from our surrounds



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Revd Rob Clements and Revd Caroline Brennan



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The Rector on...

Growing in Faith

Dear beloved community,

This is the first year that all three of our children were able to swim. Credit to our youngest, Micah, who did a fantastic job in his swimming lessons. It made it so much more fun on our holiday, as all of us could enjoy the pool and ocean (safely!) without the limitations of water-wings. We all got to snorkel and play with a tremendous sense of freedom. We couldn't get the kids out of the pool or off the water slides!

In our life of faith, how often do we find ourselves splashing around in the shallow end with our armbands on, when the invitation is to swim with freedom and joy? Faith is an invitation into abundance and fullness of life. I sometimes wonder whether what we have settled for is a very pale imitation of the gift that God presents to us. Perhaps we do this out of fear or self-doubt. Most of the time, however, I think we do this because we have never been shown the wonder of the faith into which we are invited to immerse ourselves.

*“...Our faith isn't a duty or an obligation,
a restriction of freedom. It's an invitation
into fullness and delight...”*

In Ephesians 3:16–21, Paul prays ‘that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God’.

My prayer for us is that God opens our eyes to the wonder of following Him. Our faith isn't a duty or an obligation, a restriction of freedom. It's an invitation into fullness and delight. I remember someone once telling me that if your faith is making you a miserable person, perhaps there is something wrong with your faith.

Just as Micah had to learn to swim, so too we need to commit ourselves to growing in faith. We call this discipleship. It's the steps we take with Jesus in order to live the life we want to live and to be the person God has called us to be. Let's get out of the shallow end, and let's swim.

**Blessings,
Revd Rob**



PARISH NOTICE BOARD

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SELECT VESTRY

Fintan Keogh (Church Warden)
Lazarus Murinda (Church Warden)
Bruce Fitzsimons (Glebe Warden)
Neil Goolding (Glebe Warden)
David Webb (Secretary of the Select Vestry)
Dermot Power (Treasurer of the Select Vestry)

David Webb, Dermot Power, Ross Lauder, Ann Walsh, Craig MacWilliam, Robbie Burns, Philip McQueston, Carol Hennessey, Paul Burrell, Susan O'Toole, Jackie Robinson and Colin Edwards

KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH WHAT'S GOING ON

We send out a weekly email. If you don't receive the email, let us know in the office and we'll get you on the list. We are also looking at strengthening our social media. Kilternan Church of Ireland has a Facebook presence, so search for us at Kilternan Church of Ireland and follow us for updates about what's going on in the parish. You might note that the Gathering Grounds also has a busy Facebook presence.

We have a regular update of our parish calendar on our new website. You might like to have a look or save it to your favourites. It is particularly phone-friendly if you prefer to access these things on your mobile: kilternanparish.ie.

REGISTER

Baptisms: We are delighted to welcome Josh, Sophia, Kaia and Laoise into the family of the church.
Deaths: It was with great sadness that we said our final farewells to Annie Archer. Our prayers continue to be with her friends and families.

PATTERNS OF WORSHIP

First and Second Sunday of the Month
 8:30am Holy Communion
 9:30am Sunday Morning in the Gathering Grounds
 11:00am Morning Prayer

Third Sunday of the Month
 8:30am Holy Communion
 9:30am Sunday Morning in the Gathering Grounds
 11:00am Holy Communion

Fourth Sunday
 8:30am Holy Communion
 11:00am All-Together Worship

Fifth Sundays will normally follow the pattern of the first and second. Occasionally there will be a change to our format. This will be announced on the parish website and in the parish email.

MIDWEEK SERVICE

Every Tuesday at 11:45am there is a short communion service in the Church or meeting room (depending on how cold the days get!). We use the traditional rite 1 service. All are welcome.

SERMONS ONLINE

Sunday sermons and a reading are normally uploaded on the parish website on Tuesdays.

ROTAS

Church readers: Ann Walsh manages our reader list. If you would like to be a reader, or even do the occasional prayers of intercession, let us know and we will get you on the list.

Church flowers: Aisling O'Neill manages the flower rota. If you would like to put yourself on the list, please let us know.

Coffee and tea: We have been offering tea and coffee after the 9:45am service and the 11am service. Contact Irena at irinaricinschi@gmail.com if you would be willing to help.

Welcome teams: There is still room for more welcomers if you would like to join the team. Let the rector know.

SUNDAY NIGHTS AT THE GATHERING GROUNDS

We are relaunching the Sunday Night at the Gathering Grounds programme this September.

Sunday Night at the Gathering Grounds is an informal expression of church on the 4th Sunday of the month. We meet in the Gathering Grounds Café around tables with coffee, tea and treats. The worship band will lead us in a time of worship, followed by an interview with someone on issues of faith and life.

Our first is on 22 September at 7:30pm, when we will interview our new curate, Revd Caroline Brennan. The October date is still to be filled, but on 24 November we will interview the Revd Laurence Graham. Laurence is the Su-

perintendent Minister of the Dublin Central Mission and General Secretary of the Irish Methodist World Mission Partnership. He has recently published an important book called *Hope from the margins: Church history informing mission today*.

ALTAR GUILD

We are putting out a call for anyone who might like to be part of a volunteer group whose ministry is to care for the altar, vestments, vessels and altar linens of the parish. With a good group of people, this should involve occasional washing, ironing and maybe a bit of polishing. Revd Caroline Brennan will initially convene this. Have a chat with her if you are willing to help, or email her at curate@kilternan-parish.ie

WELCOME, REVD CAROLINE BRENNAN: AN INTERVIEW WITH THE RECTOR

Caroline, many of us have got to know you already, but, for those who haven't, can you give us a quick introduction to yourself?

My name is Caroline Brennan, and I am extremely blessed and excited to be the new curate here in Kilternan parish. Aside from being a newly ordained priest, I wear a couple of other hats! I am also wife to David and mum to 12-year-old Oscar. Career-wise, I have worn a couple of different hats. I've worked as a barrister (that was a wig rather than a hat!), a solicitor and a civil servant. Immediately prior to starting my curacy in Kilternan I was deacon in Monkstown parish.

It was a privilege to celebrate with you at your ordination. Can you tell us a bit about the day and what stood out most to you?

I was ordained priest on Sunday 23 June in Christ Church Cathedral. It was a very special day, made even more special by the support of family, friends, clergy colleagues and beloved parishioners from the parishes of Monkstown, Taney and Kilternan. There were lots of stand-

out moments of the day. One of those moments was when Archbishop Michael anointed my head with holy oil. I hadn't anticipated feeling so very moved by this symbolic act. I feel that holy oil has left an indelible, invisible, eternal mark upon me. That is a source of incredible comfort to me in my ministry and in my relationship with God, and that is because I cannot do any of this in my own power. I am acutely aware of this. I constantly remind myself that I am anointed, equipped and supported by God for the momentous task ahead. The declarations that I made during the service were equally very poignant. I did not make those declarations lightly and I can still recall a tremble in my legs taking hold as I spoke those words 'By the help of God I will'. I remember thinking 'God, please don't let me faint!'

We are excited as a parish to have you on board! What are your passions in ministry and where do you see your gifting?

I am so excited to be here! Some of our parishioners may recall that I recently said that it is hard to describe priesthood as 'work'! The truth is I feel so privileged to be able to minister to people in this place. When we align ourselves with God's will for our lives it is such a beautiful way to live. That is not to say that my life now is perfect! Like each of you reading this interview, my life, too, has been and is peppered with challenges. My faith has helped me to navigate those challenges. Thus my passions in ministry are about helping others to come to know God deeply—about leaning into God's love amid life's challenges. I am deeply passionate about pastoral care.

In terms of my gifts, well, I love speaking to people about God and I have found that the best way I can do that is from a pulpit—whether that is in the context of leading services or preaching. There have been times when I have experienced a palpable sense of God's presence with me in those contexts. I made a decision early on in my training that I am going to be true to myself

in my ministry. By that I mean that I am going to be myself. God called the 'me' that God knows intimately to be a priest—that is therefore the authentic me you will encounter!

What do you hope to focus on this year?

As I grow into this new role as curate, I hope to spend the next few months experiencing the full ambit of parish life. I hope to get to know as many parishioners as I can in the coming months. This year is very much focused on relationship-building and all of the pastoral care that naturally flows from such relationships.

During her curacy, Caroline will have a specific focus on developing our pastoral care ministry and deepening our prayer life. I'll take a lead on faith formation, development of our worship and our outreach ministry. I'm delighted that our skills are complementary, and I look forward to ministering with her.

Caroline will consistently take Monday as a day off but will also take one day a week for study, prayer and personal development.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BEING A PARISH READER?

Readers are lay members of the church from all walks of life who are theologically trained and licensed by a bishop to preach, teach, lead worship, and assist in pastoral, evangelistic and liturgical work. Lay readers are an important part of the church and a valuable support to clergy and parish congregations.

Readers may be either diocesan readers or parish readers and the scope of their ministry and roles differs across the dioceses. Lay readers are not authorised to take services of Holy Communion but may assist if authorised by the bishop to do so.

We are blessed in this parish in having Carol Barry as our lay reader. She adds so much to the ministry of the parish and is a great support. There is no reason, though, why we shouldn't be devel-

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oping more parish readers in the church. This will enable us to grow our services and reach, as well as releasing people's gifts and abilities. Have a chat to the rector or Carol if you have an interest.

HARVEST

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up (Galatians 6:9).

Our harvest celebrations this year are the weekend of 11–13 October. On Friday the 11th we will have a 'Big Harvest Sing' with a celebration of all the great harvest classics. Come along and join in the harvest song at 7:30pm.

On the 13th we will have an All-Together Harvest at 11:00am.

CELEBRATING OUR FURRY FRIENDS

In June we invited our pets to church for a service of thanksgiving for the blessing of animals. This is always a special service, albeit a chaotic one. It is also part of our commitment to treasure God's good creation. Here is a prayer of thanksgiving for the animals in our lives.

*God created us and placed us on the earth
to be stewards of all living things,
therefore let us proclaim the glory of
our Creator, saying:
O God, how wonderful are the works
of Your hands.*

*Blessed are You, O Lord of the Universe;
You create the animals and give us
the ability to train them to help us
in our work.*

*Blessed are You, O Lord of the Universe;
You give us food from animals to
replenish our energies.*

*Blessed are You, O Lord of the Universe;
for the sake of our comfort You give
us domestic animals as companions.*

*Blessed are You, O Lord of the Universe;
You care for us even as you care for
the birds of the air.*

*Blessed are You, O Lord of the Universe;
You offered Your Son to us as the
Passover Lamb
and in Him willed that we should be
called Your children. Amen.*

ALPHA AT THE GATHERING GROUNDS

If you would like to explore your faith, or encourage a friend or relative to, then this is for you!

Alpha is designed to spend a little time on big questions that can help you enrich and grow your understanding of life, meaning and faith in a fun and relaxed way, and is for people of any denomination or faith or, indeed, none.

Alpha is a course with weekly meetings consisting of three parts. Firstly, there is time to share food together and get to know each other better. Secondly, there is a talk or video exploring some of the big issues of faith, such as 'Who is Jesus?', 'How can we have faith?', 'Why and how do I pray?' and 'How does God guide us?' Finally, there is a chance to discuss what has been said in a small and safe group where there are no silly questions, no one will judge you for what you say, and you don't even have to contribute unless you want to. You may have a burning question or you may want to say nothing at all—that's perfectly fine.

There are ten Sunday evening sessions and one Saturday, and the course is run once a year in Kilternan Parish Centre, starting each September. It may seem like a big commitment, so why not come to the first session with a friend and see how you like it? The whole course is free and there is no pressure—just a place to explore life, meaning and faith.

You can sign up via the parish website.

LIFE GROUPS



The purpose of Life Groups at Kilternan Parish is to promote spiritual growth through authentic Christian relationships and the study of God's Word.

Life Groups are the place where we gather to share life together in chat, prayer and Bible study.

What is a Life Group?

A Life Group is made up of 10–16 people who meet to study, to share and to support one another in their Christian lives. Each group is led by two leaders.

A Life Group can meet in a home, a café, or a designated space in the Gathering Grounds, depending on the make-up of the group.

A Life Group should aim to meet biweekly as much as possible, but when and how is up to each group. Life Groups can meet almost any day and time of the week.

What does a Life Group do?

There are a few key parts to a Life Group. One is simply fellowship. We don't downplay the value of coffee and hospitality. But the purpose of a Life Group is about deepening faith. There is always an element of Bible study and prayer. Don't be put off by the word 'study'—this isn't a gathering for the academics. Life Group members should include the sincere inquisitive as well as the more mature Christian.

A Life Group picks the length of time they will meet. However, most groups should probably aim for one hour and a half to accommodate a time of fellowship, Bible study and prayer.

What will we study?

This can change from year to year. My suggestion this year is that we study a book by a Christian author called John Ortberg called *The Life You've Always Wanted*. The goal would be to read a chapter in be-

tween gatherings and talk about it at the group. In the future, we might study a book from the Bible directly.

How do I sign up for a Life Group?

We will have 'sign-up Sundays' on 1, 8 and 15 September at our church services. You can also sign up throughout the month of September online via the website (<https://kiltiernanparish.ie/life-groups/>).

If September passes and you still want to join, of course there is flexibility to link you into a group that has already started without waiting for the start of a new session.

How long does a group last?

Each September we will have a new round of Life Groups with a 'sign-up Sunday'. It's exciting when relationships build, but we want to be wary of groups becoming exclusive. Therefore at the end of June each group formally ends, and new Life Groups begin again in September.

Which group should I join?

This is a new initiative, so the number of groups we start with depends on the general interest. Maybe we will have more in the future. It may make sense to join a group based on your 'station in life' and common interests. For the first year, the Life Groups coordinator (the rector) will do his best to discern the make-up of the small groups.

What is the required commitment?

The only requirement really is respect and good faith. Sometimes people in small groups may share openly, so respectful confidentiality is important. If you do sign up, we might expect you make every effort to attend as best you can.

What next?

Once people have had a chance to sign up, the rector, with the support of the parish faith formation team, will organise the small groups, and in the month of October a small group leader will be in touch to organise the first get-together.

'WORD FOR THE DAY' BIBLE READING NOTES

As part of our commitment in the parish to adult faith formation, we are providing quarterly Bible reading notes. These are beautifully put together by UCB (United Christian Broadcasters), who have been providing 'Word for the Day' Bible reading notes for over 30 years.

Bible reading notes will be available for anyone who might like them at the back of the church and in the Gathering Grounds Café. The hope is that people might pick one up and make Bible reflection part of their daily rhythm. Please pick one up and give it a go!

WORK PARTY

It was a wet day, but how amazing to see so many people out at our parish work day! All ages were represented (even a few children), as were those both new and well established in church life. At one point we counted 25 people hard at work. Many thanks to Neil and Bruce for organising, and to all who gave of their time and talents. Thanks also to the Gathering Grounds Café for making sure that there was plenty of warm coffee for everyone.



Youngest helpers on work day

CLIMATE ACTION GRANT FOR SOLAR PANELS

At our Gift Day last year, we spoke about our hopes to install solar panels in the Gathering Grounds.

We are one step closer to this after being awarded a grant of €20,000 by the Community Climate Action Programme—Building Low Carbon Communities. We will be able to draw down this funding in 2025. We are proud to deliver on this exciting initiative.

SILVER ALTAR CROSS

In the last edition of *Klips*, the cross-maker's hallmark was noted as being 'J.W.' After 50 years of cleaning, it was hard to discern the second letter. Mr Jonathan Morton kindly wrote to tell us that the second letter is in fact an 'M' and not a 'W'. Madame O'Morchoe, who originally presented the cross, commissioned John Morton Ltd (maker's hallmark J.M.) of Nassau Street to make the cross. Jonathan's great-grandfather opened John Morton Ltd in 1875. The company closed in 2004.

MUSIC NOTES — WHAT'S ON?

We have a variety of ways to get involved in music-making in our parish, covering all forms of worship styles for children, from contemporary to more traditional. Along with leading our regular Sunday services, the music groups are involved in our Big Sings for Harvest and Christmas.

Queries can be sent to Music Co-ordinator Kevin at music@kiltiernanparish.ie, or catch him after an 11am service.

Junior Choir

The Junior Choir have rehearsal on Tuesdays at 3:15–4:15pm in the centre, for children from 2nd to 6th Class. (A Homework Club for children is available after school at 2:15–3:15pm for those who need it.) Children learn music with friends to sing twice a month at Sunday services and are trained in music literacy and vocal production.

Church Choir

The Church Choir rehearse on Tuesdays at 8–9:30pm and sing at the 11am Sunday services. It is a great place to make new friends,

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make great music and get involved in parish life. No experience is necessary and we're open to teens and adults.

Worship Band

Our Worship Band have grown this last year and have taken a lead at our weekly 9:30am Sunday Worship. Once a month, they lead music at Sunday Night at the Gathering Grounds at 7:30pm. They meet for practice on the first Wednesday of the month from 7:30pm. We're open to teens and adults, singers and players of instruments.

KILTERNAN PARISH TABLE TENNIS CLUB

The Kilternan Parish Table Tennis Club will resume Club Nights on Wednesday 18 September 2024 at the Kilternan Parish Centre, starting at 8:00pm. We look forward to meeting up again with all existing members after the summer break. We also welcome any new members who would like to join the Table Tennis Club.

The emphasis is very much on having a fun night out through the game of table tennis, for adults aged 18+.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact Irwin Johnston at e-mail irwincjohnston@gmail.com or mobile 086 607 5357.

We look forward to seeing you all again on the night.

PARISH BBQ

This has become quite the event at the start of the autumn term. On Saturday 7 September we gathered



to celebrate community and raise some necessary funds for the parish.

There was an Eco addition this year as we opened the parish field for a nature trail. You will be aware that there has been work going on rewilding the field and making paths. Those who chose to make it up to the field were greeted with hot chocolate, marshmallows and a guided wander. It's great to see lots of wildlife already thriving.

Thank you Eco Team! Thank you also to the many volunteers who helped make the BBQ happen! From salad-making to burger-flipping, dishwashing to icecream-scooping, many hands make light work! A special shout out to Hugh O'Sullivan for completing the atmosphere with his musical talents. We are so fortunate, may God continue to bless our community.

SENIORS WHO LUNCH



Carol Barry has organised a few informal gatherings for Sunday lunch for seniors. If you might like to join her, contact her for more information on 087 636 1530.

STEWARDSHIP MONTH: TAKING A RISK AND LAUNCHING A CAMPAIGN

As a church we want to set aside the month of October to focus on Stewardship. There are two things you might want to consider.

First, we have taken a significant

risk this year in bringing on board a curate. We are delighted to do so, and this speaks to our growth as a church. It's simply necessary if we are to flourish. However, it does assume an uplift in our general giving. In terms of your financial commitment, you might take the opportunity to prayerfully consider how much to give for the coming year.

Second, we need to start planning for our bicentenary celebrations in 2026. That might seem like a long way away, but it really isn't. There are a few things that we want to do:

- Improve and update the wiring in the church
- Conduct significant improvements to the church lighting and our audiovisual equipment
- Overhaul the heating system
- Commission a stained-glass window in recognition of this important milestone
- And, on completion, redecorate the church so that it looks its very best

None of this comes without cost, and in order to make this happen we will need to launch a Bicentenary Capital Campaign. We will launch this during our parish Gift Day. If you would like to make a capital contribution, you can do so online (please reference Gift Day or Bicentenary).

Stewardship is about much more than money. Stewardship reminds us that everything we have comes from God and belongs to God. It is a reminder that we are not the owners, God is, and that we are to be good stewards of everything that He has given to us—our time, talents, treasures, words, relationships, roles, spiritual gifts, and the list goes on.

We take nothing for granted as a parish. What we do is dependent on your generosity and the effective stewardship of our church leadership.

God bless you as you serve as a faithful steward of His gifts.

WHY SHOULD I GIVE?



We give so we can serve...those in need. People of all ages struggle with loneliness, fracture, and isolation and we need mechanism to offer connection.

We give so we can nurture...our relationship with God through faith formation programmes, courses, small group etc that enable people to grow as disciples.

We give so we can keep...families, young people and all those who without careful attention might turn away from their faith. Through programmes that are meaningful and engaging we can keep people involved and invested.

We give so we can reach... the new people who have moved into our area. We need to reach out to those who are unchurched, de-churched or unconnected. In modern Ireland, we need to go to people and not assume they will come to us.

We give so we can transform...our society into a force for good. By supporting social justice initiatives, climate justice and causes consistent with our mission.

Generosity is key to achieving the mission of our Church; we give our time, our talents, and our resources. Through our giving we seek to honour God.

HOW CAN I GIVE?

Internet Banking. Standing Order: Log into you online banking and set up a standing order (weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annually). Alternatively, visit your bank with our account details.

Account Name: Kilternan Parochial Account IBAN: IE50 BOFI 9000 1716 3069 36 Account No: 1630 6936 Sort Code: 900017

Envelope Scheme: You can sign up to take a numbered envelope. You can put in each week what you wish to contribute. Contact the parish office to register for the envelope scheme.

In Person: There is a giving box or basket in the Church.

Legacy Giving: If you would like to consider supporting our work through a legacy donation, please contact the Rector.

The parish claim tax back on all donations over €250 annually under the Charitable Donations Scheme. In order to claim the tax back, please complete a CHY form. We would also ask that you put your name of weekly envelope number on your donation.

If you would like to know more about the life of the parish and how money is spent, you can get a copy of our Annual Report and audited accounts from the parish office. Kilternan Parish, is registered with the Charities Regulator – (RCN) 2000 5993



WELCOMING THE STRANGER

HOW DO WE RESPOND TO ASYLUM-SEEKERS?

By Revd Rob Clements

Throughout May, the local community at Ballyogan became a focus of our national press. Protests prevented international protection (IP) applicants from accessing accommodation at the Ballyogan centre near Carrickmines. Social media videos showed a group of protesters, including numerous children, and a large Garda presence gathered at the facility's roadside entrance. One video appeared to show four buses, although the number of IP applicants intended for the facility has not been confirmed. Five men and four women were charged at Dún Laoghaire District Court in connection with the protest.

The Ballyogan facility had until recently been used as temporary shelter for Ukrainian refugees. We linked in with the centre frequently during our 'Kiltiernan Welcomes Ukrainian Refugees' programme. It is understood that a contract has been agreed to use it as shelter for IP applicants amid a growing crisis in accommodation shortfalls.

What do we mean by an international protection applicant? It's another word for an asylum-seeker. An asylum-seeker is a person who has left his or her country and is seeking protection in another country. Seeking asylum is a human right. When you ask for asylum at the border of a country, that country's authorities must examine your application. If you ask for asylum in Ireland, you must make an application for international protection. While you are waiting for a decision on your application, the Irish State gives you accommodation, food and medical care.

Refugees are people who:

- have a well-founded fear of persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership



of a particular social group;

- are outside of their own country and cannot or will not return there because of the well-founded fear of persecution;
- cannot be protected in their own country.

In recent years there have been large numbers of asylum-seekers from war-torn countries such as Afghanistan, Syria and Sudan.

How might we navigate this as a church?

First, it might be useful to recognise that the world in which we live is complex. We can barely grasp what life is like for those caught in conflict and abject poverty. To listen is to expose one's heart to stories of pain and trauma. Perhaps that is why it is often easier not to listen.

Second, it is important to acknowledge that there is a lot of fear in our communities. While there are plenty of sinister forces at work in our society, it is important to state that not everyone who has

concerns about refugees and asylum-seekers is a racist. People have genuine concerns that need to be heard and people need to feel free to share their fears.

Third, we who claim to follow Jesus and to live under the authority of Scripture need to ask that old question: what would Jesus do?

Jesus never joined a political party, but He did make clear what the Kingdom of God looks like. We are called to show compassion and to support those in need, whether that be through providing food, shelter, clothing and medical care or by advocating for their rights and protection. As it has been rightly pointed out, Jesus Himself was a refugee when His family fled to Egypt to escape King Herod's infant genocide.

Jesus would have been well versed in those Old Testament instructions: 'The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God' (Leviticus 19:34).

Such scriptural passages undoubtedly have encouraged the archbishops of the Catholic and Anglican churches to speak out.

Earlier this year, Archbishop Dermot Farrell expressed concern over the 'significant numbers' of people in Ireland 'seeking to foment disinformation, suspicion and hatred' towards refugees and migrants. He warned of the 'significant threat' posed by 'those with an agenda to generate unrest' targeting 'those who can be easily identified as "other" or "different"'.

In an apparent challenge to anti-refugee groups who campaign under the slogan 'Ireland is full', Archbishop Farrell said that 'there is room in our inn, room for those driven from their homes by wars

and economic deprivation. We may not forget our history!

Archbishop John McDowell at his presidential address at Synod this year spoke out against ‘Populist politicians, activists and commentators [who] address and exploit the vast complexity and unprecedented scale of the challenges we face, not with policies but with slogans. Slogans such as “Ireland is full”. Well, Ireland is not full. Ireland, North and South, has been right to welcome migrants and asylum seekers.’

What does this mean for us in our local community? It isn’t necessarily possible to apply ancient rules of hospitality uncritically to situations where there are mass movements of people. It’s also perhaps fair to note, as Archbishop McDowell did in his address, that ‘Perhaps not enough thought was given to how to integrate those newcomers and their needs into society, and what that means for social and physical infrastructure’.

However, it seems that there are a couple of clear obligations upon us. One is to speak out against fear and misinformation. Fear is the enemy of love, and we need to resist it taking root in our hearts. It will destroy us and consume the space where goodness grows.

Another is to lean into generosity. We have a responsibility to seek justice for our neighbour. If the well-being of our neighbour (wherever they may have come from) is at stake, then we are called through the law of love to work even harder for justice.

My prayer is that anyone who steps into our church community is met with love and generosity.

‘FOOD FOR THE SOUL’ BOOK RESOURCES AT THE GATHERING GROUNDS

Reading has been in decline for decades, with social media and incessant streaming competing for our attention. There’s also a gender

divide. The *Telegraph* recently reported that men are twice as likely not to read books at all. Reading, however, should be a priority for every Christian. Let me suggest five reasons why.

1. *Reading bonds us together*

In *Shadowlands*, the award-winning film about the life of C.S. Lewis, a central theme is the repeated line: ‘We read to know we are not alone’. When we read, we are connected to the author in a very profound way. Shared learning can also connect us with other readers. To read the same book as a friend also creates a common connection. Our paths merge around new ideas and experiences.

2. *Reading stretches our minds and helps us to grow in our spiritual walk*

Just as exercise brings cardiovascular efficiency or toning to our muscles, so too reading can stretch our cognitive, emotive and spiritual lives. The word disciple is derived from the Latin *discipulus*, which literally means ‘pupil’ or ‘learner’. Reading is definitely not the only way you can learn, but it is one of the most straightforward. Pete Greig, the founder of the 24/7 prayer movement, put it like this: ‘Reading isn’t really about reading, it’s about “do we want to learn?”’

3. *Reading helps us to gain a better understanding of Scripture*

Most of us will never be Bible scholars, but that doesn’t mean that we can’t get and use the knowledge of those who are. Most Bible scholars and pastors write about reading and interpreting different books or themes of the Bible. By reading their books we can gain knowledge and understanding of difficult ideas without ever having to go to a class or spend years researching.

4. *Reading feeds an appetite*

J. John is a famous Christian preacher and teacher. He claims that before he became a Christian he wasn’t much of a reader, but after he was converted something radically changed: ‘I was so hungry I couldn’t stop reading. I was reading chunks of the Bible, biographies, Hudson Taylor, you name it.

It would not be an exaggeration to say I read a book a night.’ Sometimes we don’t know just how hungry we are until we sit down in front of a good meal. The same is true for reading. A good book can feed us in places we did not realise we needed feeding.

5. *Reading ignites a passion*

A revolution in our reading habits would be a great thing in itself. But as well as the mental benefits, and the emotional and spiritual nourishment this could bring, is the potential for a much bigger revolution. There are some fantastic books out there that, if widely read and practised, could change the world we live in. Books on prayer. Books on unity. Books on ushering in God’s Kingdom. Books that could recalibrate the Church, re-energise Christians and transform our communities.

In Kiltiernan Parish, we want to encourage people to read books that deepen our faith. This has been a goal of the faith formation team, but it’s also been recognised as part of our 2022–2027 Vision plan. An objective was to ‘organise a library/bookshelf using the bookshelves in the Gathering Grounds to deepen our knowledge of the Christian Faith through reading/study’.

We are delighted to be offering a ‘Food for the Soul’ Book Resource programme. Samantha Chandler has kindly agreed to manage this. There are so many excellent Christian books out there that it’s sometimes hard to know where to begin. So we will start off with a couple of books, generously donated in memory of the late Bill Keeley, that will be placed on the shelves in the Gathering Grounds Café. One of these will be Tim Keller’s excellent *The reason for God* (see book review).

If you would like to read one, please take one from the shelves and give the value of the book into the honesty box (we trust you). Maybe we can add a new book every quarter.

PHOTOS THROUGH TI



THE SUMMER MONTHS



Pictures show the Summer BBQ, Parish Clean-Up and one of the June Concerts :

The summer BBQ was very well attended this year, and thankfully there was a break in the rain and a dry day was enjoyed by all.

The June Concerts in the Gathering Grounds were also well attended. And many thanks to all who joined the Parish work party this summer.

THE GATHERING GROUNDS CAFÉ

By Julie Clements

INTERVIEW WITH A BARISTA: ANNA LANGRELL

I started working in the Gathering Grounds earlier this year in January. I believe I first heard about the Gathering Grounds in primary school, when my mum, my sister and I went to the café after school to do our homework while my other sister did horse-riding lessons. I love the community at the Gathering Grounds; everyone is so welcoming. I am sixteen years old and I am just going into fifth year. My favourite subjects are probably English, Science and Music. I love reading and have recently enjoyed writing stories. I enjoy baking (though I can't say I'm very good) and I like art. I am still working out what I want to be when I am older, though I have narrowed down the list a little.

There are eight people in my family, including me. There's my dad and mum, Mark and Sarah, my older sister Keziah and four younger siblings—Clea, Isaac, Elora and Talia. I am the second eldest.

This summer I went to two week-long camps, one in the faith mission centre in Durrow and the other with CIY at a camp called Move. I was also a leader at two camps; one is the 8–10s discovery camp in the faith mission centre and the other was a day camp in the Nazarene church in Greystones—it's called the cookery and craft camp. I also went to Italy this summer. My favourite part of the summer was either Italy or the camps.

My favourite book at the moment is called *Paper Towns* and it's by an author called John Green.



LUNCHTIME CONCERT SERIES

In June, DLRCoCo and the Arts Council funded a lunchtime concert series in the Gathering Grounds, also supported by Artscope. Concerts were held during the Tuesday lunch service for three consecutive weeks, with a growing attendance each week. Former DLR Musician-in-Residence and baritone Simon Morgan presented the events, starting with Lunchtime Folk with Siobhán Buckley and Claire Sherry, followed by Opera and Operetta Classics with Sandra Oman and David Wray, and ending with Songs for a Summer Day with Drazen Derek and special guest Eurovision-winner Niamh Kavanagh. There is clearly an appetite for this type of event, and we look forward to hosting more musicians in the Gathering Grounds in the future.

ECO-CONGREGATION IRELAND: KEEP CUPS FOR THE GATHERING GROUNDS

Eco-Congregation Ireland (ECI) encourages churches of all denominations to take an eco-approach to worship, lifestyle, property and finance management, community outreach and contact with the developing world. Their vision is to see churches of all denominations throughout Ireland celebrate the gift of God's creation, recognise the interdependence of all creation and care for it in their life and mission and through members' personal lifestyles.

ECI is a project initiated by the Church in Society Forum, a standing committee of the Irish Inter-Church Meeting. The Roman Catholic, Church of Ireland, Presbyterian and Methodist churches are involved, as well as the Reli-

gious Society of Friends (Quakers).

We formally registered with Eco-Congregation this year and were delighted to be awarded a small grant of €150 for 'Keep Cups' in the Gathering Grounds Café. This will reduce some of the waste from disposable cups. You will find the Keep Cups in the Gathering Grounds.



Pictures from the Lunchtime Concert Series held in June



FAMILY AND YOUTH MINISTRY

IRISH HEART FOUNDATION FUNDRAISER, 4 OCTOBER



Simon Barrett in Barcelona

By Simon Barrett

At the age of 48, a stroke was not on my to-do list! However, that is exactly what happened to me in early March 2023. Fortunately, thanks to swift emergency medical intervention, I was very lucky. I was left with minor physical weakness on my right side, which has mostly been resolved through speech therapy, physiotherapy and occupational therapy, but the longer-term impact has been from the brain injury caused by the stroke: debilitating fatigue, balance and speech defects, short-term memory loss and cognitive weakness. My life prior to the stroke was that of a busy husband and dad of two girls; professionally, I ran and managed one of the busiest automotive outlets in South Dublin. Ultimately, the stroke resulted in my being signed off work, on long-term sick leave—a humbling experience in itself.

After I was discharged from hospital, I was put in contact with the Irish Heart Foundation (IHF); they, along with family and friends, have become instrumental in my continued path to recovery, providing a dedicated support worker, peer-to-peer support groups, social gatherings, fundraising and various online courses.

However, I have learnt from these contact groups that some oth-

ers are not as fortunate. Some of the statistics that I have come across are shocking:

- Nationally, the Irish Heart Foundation receives just 7% of the cost of delivering these services from central funding.
- Every seven minutes in Ireland a heart or stroke patient is discharged from hospital.
- In County Dublin alone an estimated 168,000 people are affected by a cardiovascular condition. Every 90 minutes somebody has a stroke in Ireland.

As my recovery progresses, I would like to give something back to the IHF in order to help others, so I am delighted to be able to hold a Coffee Morning, to raise funds, in the Gathering Grounds on Friday 4 October.

Looking forward to seeing as many people as possible who can make it on the day.

The photo was taken in February this year in Barcelona, where I participated in the 100km run on behalf of the IHF.

YOUTH NIGHTS

A team have been working to put together monthly youth nights in the Gathering Grounds Café. This is for young people of secondary school age. More info to come!

CONFIRMATION

You may be aware that we made the decision last year to skip a confirmation year so that we could confirm young people when they are a little bit older. That little bit of maturity helps when it comes to matters of faith and life.

We normally have a confirmation gathering in December, and then start confirmation classes in January. Confirmation is for young people who are in 2nd year and above. Note that 1st year students will take confirmation preparation the following year.

Have a chat with your young person and see whether he or she would like to be confirmed. Remember, it's their decision, not their parents', but of course it is good to encourage them. Please do

let the rector know if you have someone who wants to participate.

PRAYERS OF LOVE AND SUPPORT FOR LYNN

As you all know, Lynn, our Family



and Children's Ministry Coordinator, has been undergoing cancer treatment over the summer. We continue to be positive that the cancer is responding, but the treatment has been severe. We hold her in our prayers, and we share with her our love. We are also mindful of her husband Keith and her mum Joan, and the two children, Alanah and Ryan.

SAFEGUARD TRIENNIAL ASSESSMENT 2024

This is carried out every three years by the Safeguarding Trust Diocesan Support Team. It's a rigorous assessment that involved the Kiltiernan Safeguard panel and staff. We are grateful to Olive Good, who is every bit as supportive as she is direct. Nothing gets past Olive—that's why she's so good at her job.

The assessment involved an assessment of our policies, practices and records. There's a lot of work in the lead-up, so well done to Annemarie in the office, who man-

ages much of this.

I'm glad to say that our assessment was very positive. It did, however, highlight a need to do some retraining with our volunteers, which we hope to complete on 17 September. There is also a sizeable piece of work to do to align our practices with new data protection requirements for long-term record-keeping.

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

Our 9:30am service kicked off with our Blessing of the Backpack service, with over 150 people attending. I sometimes feel that this service needs a bit of clarification, because we don't actually bless the backpacks. The backpacks are symbolic of the children who carry

them and our schools in which they learn. We offer a prayer of blessing for everything that the backpacks represent. Below you can see the prayer that we used.

Children of God and curious thinkers,
Be filled with questions about your-self and the world around you.
Be blessed with discernment as you decide when, where, and to whom you will ask your many questions.
And when there is no answer to be found, or none that satisfy, cling to the greatest promise of all: God loves you and will never leave you. Amen.

This service also started our Sunday Club, with 67 children attending!



The Blessing of the Backpacks



FOOD FOR THOUGHT — LITURGY AND THE EUCHARISTIC MEAL

By Revd Caroline Brennan



On Sunday 7 July, supported by both the rector and a group of our 8:30am communicants, I presided at my very first Eucharist as an ordained priest. A priest's first Eucharist, as you can imagine, is an incredibly significant and meaningful occasion. Apart from the practical tasks of learning to prepare the communion table and familiarising oneself with the language and gestures embedded within the Eucharistic prayer, preparation for a first celebration of the Eucharistic meal as priest also sparks an interior kind of preparation, the kind which necessitates a generous collaboration of mind and spirit, study and prayer.

I have spent many hours in recent months poring over the Eucharistic prayers contained in the Book of Common Prayer. When I obtained my personal copy of the BCP in 2004, little did I think that I would some twenty years later be using the same little green prayer-book in the context of ordained ministry. The time I spent entrenched in these Eucharistic prayers in this regard was to help me to better absorb what exactly I, as a follower of Christ, and we, as a congregation, believe is occurring

at each stage of the Service of Holy Communion, and to probe why it is we do what we do. This undoubtedly was time well spent and I would encourage all to likewise set aside some time to reflect on the language, intent, historicity and spirituality of the Eucharistic prayers set out in the services of Holy Communion. This process has really helped to enliven in me a deeper understanding and experience of God's presence with us at the Eucharist.

Some of the most robust conversations I have had with non-believer friends over the years have been around the issue of the Eucharist. There are some who say that the Eucharist or the service of Holy Communion speaks the language of a bizarre kind of cannibalism. And as Christians, when we stop and think about this for a moment, it is easy to understand why some might say that the liturgical language we use in the service of Holy Communion is rather gory. Some readers may recall that I explored this topic recently in the context of a sermon. I think that it is a topic worth revisiting, as it is one which is so central to our faith and worship as Christians.

Our liturgy speaks of the body and blood of Christ being poured out for us. It speaks of eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Jesus. For some non-believers—and, indeed, for some Christians—these are words and concepts that seem at best primitive and at worst a little revolting. So, this begs a serious question: what do we believe we are doing when we profess that we eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus?

One of the women theologians of the Reformation, Jane Grey, the nine-days' queen, was charged with heresy for her beliefs around Holy Communion. When confronted by

her accusers with the question 'Did not our Lord say, "this is my body" and "this is my blood?"', she replied: 'Jesus also said, "I am the vine" and "I am the door" but was he a vine ... was he a door?' The queen's response in this regard, of course, simply meant that Jesus was not literally a door or a vine, and neither at the Last Supper was the bread literally Jesus's body or the wine literally His blood. Our Church of Ireland Catechism explains the Eucharist as a sacrament comprised of two parts. It states: 'The part I can see is Bread and Wine. The part I cannot see is the Body and Blood of Christ, and I cannot see the Body and Blood of Christ because they are present in a heavenly and spiritual manner.'

Perhaps more than any previous generation, our generation is amenable to the idea of embracing things that are virtual or unseen. Living in a digital age, we are in some ways less anchored in the material world. Perhaps, then, it is easier for us to express our conviction in Holy Communion that is visible and invisible, heavenly and corporately shared. As Anglicans we do not suggest that there is a material change in the bread and wine at consecration. There is, we believe, a 'symbolic representation', when the bread and wine symbolically 'become' the body and blood of Christ, and that symbolism should really be very important to us. It is important that we never lose sight of how special each Eucharist is. When we receive bread and wine at a service of Holy Communion, we encounter and experience Christ. But we also encounter all those whom we have loved and lost and who have died in faith before us. In the Eucharistic prayer, we are reminded that we are joined by the heavenly host at this holy meal, which is so central to our faith.

My friend Chris West, a former curate of Taney parish, observed in a short book that he wrote on Embodiment and Eucharist that while receiving the Eucharist is a repetitive action, it is also a 'progressive experience'. We may repeat the same actions each time we come to church and receive bread and wine, but we are different each time we do so. We are different because we stand before God each time with new joys and new sorrows. Therefore each time we receive the bread and wine it is a new experience, a new part of our life's journey, and the Eucharist is what provides us with the spiritual nourishment for that journey.

Eucharistic Prayer 1 begins on page 209 of the Book of Common Prayer. Eucharistic Prayers 2 and 3 can be found on pages 212 and 216 respectively.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

The Revd Dr Leonard Madden appointed to Christ Church, Bray
Leonard was with us on placement in 2020. We would like to congratulate him on his appointment as the new rector of Christ Church, Bray, in the Diocese of Dublin.

Leonard grew up in west Cork

and was educated at University College Cork, where he studied English and Philosophy. He was ordained to the diaconate in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, in 2020, following which he served as Deacon Intern in Blessington Union of Parishes. Since 2021 he has served as Curate Assistant in Limerick City Parish.

Leonard is married to Catherine, who is the Operations Executive of the Church's Ministry of Healing: Ireland.

Following this announcement, Leonard said that he was looking forward to this next phase in his ministry.

'I've had a very rewarding experience as Curate Assistant in Limerick City Parish. I am grateful to the Dean for his thorough teaching, which will stand me in great stead as Rector of Bray. I am, of course, sorry to be leaving my friends in Limerick—both Catherine and I have been so warmly welcomed here over the last three years—but we are really looking forward to making our new home in Bray, and to making new friends there. I am very excited about this new stage of ministry, and look forward to engaging in and en-

couraging the ecumenism and hospitality that has so characterised the Christian witness of Bray over the years.'

We wish him God's blessing.

DISCUSSION GROUP

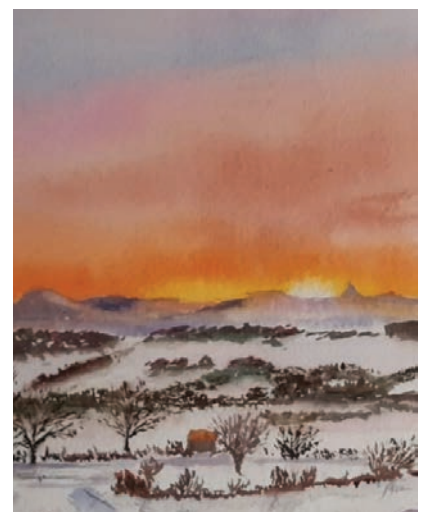
Something new for autumn? A Tuesday morning, community-based Discussion Group enters its 13th year in the Gathering Grounds, Kiltarnan. Your topics of local/national/international interest can be discussed in a friendly, facilitated environment, with the tempting opportunity for a cup of tea and pastry to follow! At present sixteen participants are registered, but we would love to accommodate new and differing perspectives! For information, contact discussiongroup2012@gmail.com or text/call Dominic at 087 434 0019.

ART AT THE GATHERING GROUNDS

There is a watercolour group painting in Kiltarnan Parish on Fridays, from 10am to 12 noon, recommencing on 20 September 2024. It costs €50 for ten weeks. This is a small, friendly group with a variety of experience. For booking and enquiries, contact Mary White (087 987 7377).



Revd Dr Leonard Madden



CHURCH AND WIDER COMMUNITY

History of the Kiltiernan Parish Lawn Tennis Club



The Lawn Tennis Club has a long-established history in Kiltiernan and is part of the parish. In this edition we will look specifically at its history. It is a thriving part of the parish community and has undergone many changes over the decades.

It was established in 1933, and tennis was first played on the rectory lawn during the incumbency of Canon Byrne. The club progressed to building two grass courts in a corner field adjoining the church. A simple wooden pavilion, a shed for equipment and a croquet lawn were also built.

Throughout the 1940s and 1950s the Tennis Club was part of the Parish Social Club. This club went on to organise Table Tennis and Snooker in the Parochial Hall in the winter months. To this day there is also a very active Table Tennis club who use the facilities in the New Hall. The 1950s also saw



the introduction of Men's and Women's changing rooms.

In 1969 the maintenance of the grass courts had become a problem and so the first hard court was installed.

In the 1980s club membership increased and grew to 65 families. This growth allowed the club to install a practice wall that was erected in 1983, and a second hard court which was built in 1985. The court was resurfaced in 1988 when a third hard court was laid. Three hard courts meant that the club could now enter the Dublin Lawn Tennis Council leagues and with

this a new competitive era began.

The subsequent years saw many improvements, with floodlighting installed in 1998, clubhouse renovations done in 2012 and now with changing rooms and showers built in the new Parish Centre which was completed in 2018.

It is a wonderful facility to have on our doorstep, it has a loyal and dedicated membership and it creates a very special space for people to connect.

Thank you so much to Mary White and Irina Ricinschi for their contributions to this article.

KILTIERNAN PARISH MUSIC



Play an Instrument? Love to Sing?

JUNIOR CHOIR

Tuesdays 3:15-4:15pm
Sundays twice monthly



Ages: 2nd to 6th Class

WORSHIP BAND

Sunday Worship
9:45am twice monthly



CHURCH CHOIR

Tuesdays 8-9:30pm
Weekly 11am Sunday Service



Get Involved contact Kevin O'Sullivan
music@kiltiernanparish.ie

RECIPES FROM THE KITCHEN GARDEN

By Sarah Tilson

Autumn is here again and it is truly a time of Harvest. Fruit for free in the hedgerows with abundant blackberries and elderberries to pick, apple trees dripping with fruit, damsons not quite ready, runner beans, tomatoes in the greenhouse ripening at last and spuds aplenty. I've frozen masses of blackberries for future use in tarts and crumbles over the winter months, windfall apples great for apple jelly, and tomatoes frozen whole to be made into soup/sauce later on and great for chutneys ...

I found this recipe for a tomato tart in Sarah Raven's fabulous *Garden Cookbook* and it's so quick to make passed the test with my chief tasting tester here who's very fussy and said it was delicious!

Tomato Tart (serves 6–8)

- 10 medium tomatoes (800g)
- 2 red onions, thinly sliced (I used two medium-sized shallots instead)
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1/2 tbs coarsely chopped fresh thyme
- 1 tsp sugar
- Salt and black pepper
- 30g anchovies (small jar)
- 20 capers
- 500g puff pastry... I used shortcrust because I didn't have puff pastry!



Pre-heat oven to 185° Fan/Gas 7.

Make this tart in a frying pan with a removable handle or, as I did, in a shallow cast-iron pan without a handle, so the prep can be done in the pan that goes into the oven.

Skin the tomatoes (if time allows) and cut them in half horizontally. Sauté the onions in a little olive oil with the garlic, thyme, sugar and salt and pepper for about 10 minutes.

Place the anchovies on top of the onion mix and sprinkle on the capers. Add the tomatoes, placing them cut side down, pushing them into the onion mixture, cook gently for another 3–4 minutes. Roll out the pastry or if using a sheet, put in on top of the tomato mixture, cut away any excess and press down gently. Put pan into the pre-heated oven for 15–20 minutes until the puff pastry is risen and golden brown OR if using shortcrust pastry, golden brown on the top.

Remove from the oven, allow to cool slightly before turning out onto a large plate. Scatter some extra thyme on top. I used some chopped parsley and a few basil leaves.

Dorset Apple Cake (serves 6–8)

We were in Dorset recently at a family wedding and had a piece of Dorset Apple Cake with our coffee in a little café near the pub we were staying in. I ordered one slice



(never knowing when R is going to like something “different”, he's a flapjack man!) and honestly, we were fighting over the last piece. Served warm with clotted cream on the side, what's not to fight about? It was so delicious and I said I'm going to make that when home! I googled the recipe and found this one on the BBC website.

- Pre-set oven to 180° Fan/Gas 6
- Grease and line a 20cm/9” loose-bottomed cake tin.
- 115g softened butter
- 225g SR flour
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 115g light brown sugar
- 1 large egg beaten
- 6–8 tbs milk
- 225g Bramley apples, peeled, cored and diced
- 100g sultanas (I used dried cranberries instead)
- 2 tbs Demerara sugar

Cream the butter and sugar, add the egg and milk and mix in well. Fold in the flour, cinnamon, dried fruit and apples and then pour mixture into the prepared tin. Sprinkle the Demerara sugar on top. Bake in oven for 30–40 minutes until nicely risen. Allow to cool for a few minutes and then turn out onto a wire rack. This cake is delicious served warm with a blob of whipped cream on the side. Enjoy the harvest and autumn season!

ARTS AND LITERATURE

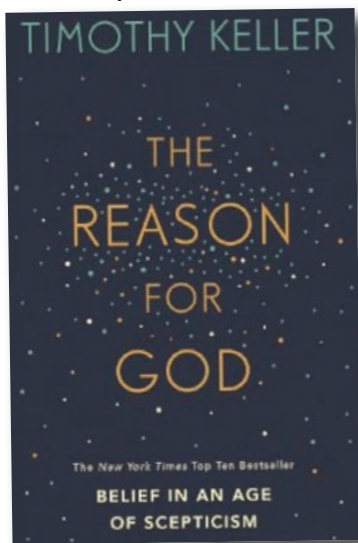
BOOK REVIEW

The reason for God by Tim Keller

ISBN 9780340979327

€15.95

Reviewed by Rob Clements



The reason for God by Tim Keller is an outstanding response to the biggest questions of our day. It is divided into two major sections.

Part 1 is called 'The Leap of Doubt' and offers insightful responses to seven prominent doubts:

- The exclusivity of claiming to be the one true religion.
- The incompatibility of suffering and the existence of a good God.
- The dogmatic moral limitations of the Christian faith.
- The injustices caused by Christians and the church.
- The problem of hell.
- The conflict between science and Christianity.
- The absurdity of taking the Bible literally.

Part 2 is called 'The Reasons for Faith' and provides six central reasons to believe that Christianity is true::

- The argument from morality.
- The Christian explanation of sin.
- The difference between religion and the Gospel.
- The significance of Jesus's crucifixion.

- The historical evidence for the bodily resurrection of Jesus.
- The dance of God—an invitation into relationship with a God of love.

Keller's writing style is highly inviting and conversational, often drawing on stories from books and film. One of the most intriguing parts of his writing is how he chooses to be relentlessly pragmatic. There is a tendency for 'apologetics' books to become a bit dry, but Keller's life experience as a pastor keeps him miles away from drifting into abstractions.

One of the best chapters is Chapter 13, in which Keller unpacks a substantial historical case for the resurrection of Jesus. I think that most readers will be surprised by the actual details. In my experience, many sceptics take it for granted that we can barely know anything about the life of Jesus, and doubts about His very existence are no longer uncommon. But these are doubts very much worth doubting, as Keller would put it, and the mass of historical evidence in favour of Jesus's resurrection is striking. This material is well organised and highly persuasive.

This book is now over a decade old, but it still feels fresh. In an age of scepticism, Keller provides rational and real argument for the relevance and vitality of faith. It continues to be a welcome book.

This is now available on the Kiltarnan bookshelves. I might encourage you to pick one up.

"If you have a God great and transcendent enough to be mad at because he hasn't stopped evil and suffering in the world, Then you have (at the same moment) a God great and transcendent enough to have good reason for allowing it to continue that you can't know. Indeed, you can't have it both ways."

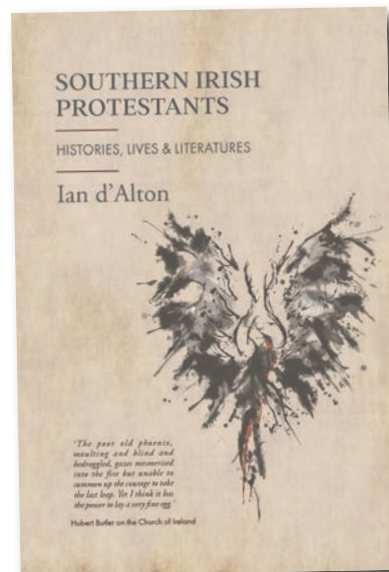
~Tim Keller~ "The Reason for God", p25

Southern Irish Protestants: Histories, Lives and Literatures by Ian d'Alton

Eastwood Books

ISBN 9781916742505

€25



EXPLORING MINORITY IDENTITIES

Ian d'Alton is a historian of Irish Protestantism and this is his latest publication, a collection of his writings on the subject over his career.

The ascendancy of southern Irish Protestants subsides like a slow puncture from the end of the eighteenth century. One disaster followed another — the 1798 rebellion, the Union, Catholic Emancipation, the disestablishment of their church, the loss of land and 'big houses', the slaughter of the Great War, the 1916 Rising and finally Irish independence. They had to come to terms with living in not just an Irish Catholic state but from 1949 in a republic shorn of its link to the British monarchy.

In these scintillating essays Ian d'Alton captures dashed hopes, anguish and suffering. Through a series of themes — iconic Protestant lives; how their history might be explained; identity explored through Anglo-Irish writers such as Elizabeth Bowen, Molly Keane and Iris Murdoch; Protestant reactions to war and rebellion; the trauma of Partition and regime change; and the place of religion in forming the Irish Protestant world-view — the author illuminates the Protestant

community's journey through perilous times.

And yet ... for all the gloom and despondency, out of the ashes of ascendancy a new sense of connection and engagement emerged. Southern Protestants through the careful exercise of 'soft power', maintaining their social and economic privileges, moved — again slowly — from a sense of Britishness to one where they were a 'confident minority' in Ireland, proud — like Ian d'Alton — to be Protestant and Irish.

This is a richly textured, erudite and mischievously subversive book which establishes Ian d'Alton as the laureate of southern Irish Protestant history in the modern period. An indispensable guide, and a delight to read.

Book to be launched at the Gathering Grounds on 24 September from 7pm. All welcome.

CITY BREAK TO AMSTERDAM

By Sarah Tilson



We went to the Netherlands a few months ago for a city break to Amsterdam, mid-week and for five nights. We stayed on Prinsengracht Street, our hotel right on the canal of the same name. It was a great location; the weather was super so we could walk everywhere, dodging the thousands of cyclists wherever we walked — they certainly have the right of way!

We had pre-booked for most things, the Rijksmuseum, the Van Gogh Museum, a guided walk and a canal boat trip. One gets orientated quickly because of the canals and bridges linking streets. We had

amazing food, delicious crêpes, cheeses, coffees, pastries and plentiful Indonesian and Italian restaurants all within walking distance of our hotel. There were great shops too and I found a lovely wool shop (whilst on the guided walk, I made sure to find my way back to it!) where I bought some beautiful wool!

Amsterdam is perfectly situated to do day trips to the Hague and to Haarlem. The tram nearest to our hotel was only 3 minutes' walk away and it took us to Central Station, where there were trains running frequently to both cities. We spent a day in the Hague which we both really enjoyed. It lacked the crowds of Amsterdam, it was peaceful and quiet to walk around and had so many beautiful buildings. We booked to see the Mauritshuis Museum which was just 20 minutes' walk from the station. It was really superb, not crowded, and we were able to see all the paintings in a relaxed atmosphere. It is home to *The Girl with the Pearl Earring* by Vermeer, *The Goldfinch* by Carel Fabritus and *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nichlaes Tulp* by Rembrandt. These artworks were all stunning and wonderful to view in the flesh. I spoke to one of the guides to ask what else we should see in the Hague (I told her we were from Dublin and she told me she had done her Master's in Trinity and had lectured in the National Gallery!), she advised us to go and see the Panorama Mesdag, another 20 minutes' walk away. Here we saw a huge painting, a circular can-



vas painted by W.H. Mesdag in 1881; one felt that one was actually standing on the beach of an old fishing village called Scheveningen. I thought it was incredible, almost surreal but Raymond didn't enthuse as much as me!

The following day, we took the train to Haarlem; it is 20km west of Amsterdam and a very pretty city. We walked to the main square and found the information centre. We did a self-guided walking tour. The streets are narrow and quaint and outside every front door there are pots of beautiful shrubs, flowers and trees. We found a café on a very pretty street and sat outside eating delicious crêpes, watching the world go by. It was so peaceful and quirky. There are interesting shops in Haarlem and we walked past a wonderful chemist shop dating back to 1849 (it is mentioned in the guided walk); there are many specialist food shops (cheese), book shops and fabulous shops for homeware —all very tempting! There is a huge church, the Grote Kerk, on one side of the main square, built in the early 1500s; Haarlem's most famous artist, Frans Hals, is buried there.

We were really too late to see the tulips in their full glory but we passed the "empty" fields on both train journeys, acres and acres of land.

There is really so much to see and do in the Netherlands, public transport is brilliant so one can easily get to other cities from Amsterdam for a day trip — well worth doing.



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