



HOLY TRINITY
CHURCH



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MAY 2024

**A Bible in their hands
A Saviour in their hearts
A Purpose in their lives**

www.holytrinitycarrick.org.uk

Letter to Parishioners



Dear Friends,

Isn't it amazing the excuses you can find not to do something. I am constantly amazed at my ability to find reasons why I should not do administration. Or why it would be better not to go swimming and just to read a book. But

what is not so amazing is how easily reasons not to pray creep into our Christian lives. By identifying the difficulties we encounter I hope we can also identify how to overcome them.

Let me set before you what I believe is a common scenario in the lives of many of you:

You have a desire to pray but it feels like such an effort and a burden that you are ready to give up. You feel guilty for even thinking about giving up and so out of a sense of duty you pray. Your prayers are empty of meaning and life because it is out of duty that you pray. This leads to further guilt. The more effort it takes to pray the more neglected your prayer life becomes and the more guilt weighs heavy on your soul. You feel alienated from God because of your lack of prayer, more guilt. Your mind becomes more worldly and the result is that prayer gets pushed further down or even off the agenda. Yet you still believe in prayer. You still talk to people about prayer and about the necessity of prayer as a daily discipline in the life of a Christian believer. With the result that you have two parallel lives – the public Christian face which may even on occasions pray in public and the private (real) life where prayer is virtually extinct and the result is guilt again. The end is a downward spiral of neglect and guilt which culminates in spiritual desolation and you walking in the wilderness. Is that a fair description of the prayer life of many Christian believers? I think it is and the reason I believe it to be so is because it has been my Christian experience on many occasions.

Many of us have a desire in our hearts to pray. We really want to pray each day. We believe prayer is important for our relationship with God, with others and in our own lives. We desperately want to have a good prayer life. We talk about the importance of prayer. We receive prayer letters from missionaries, Christian organisations and prayer requests from others. We believe in prayer and yet the practical outworking of that in our daily lives is sometimes non-existent. We are full of good intentions but that is all they remain – ‘good intentions.’ Why? Why do we fail to put into practice what we believe about prayer?

I want to identify for you some of the key things which create difficulties in our prayer life and feed the scenario I just outlined to you.

SIN AND DISOBEDIENCE.

Listen to these words of Jesus *in John 14.21 READ*. Those are familiar words to us but they convey so much concerning prayer. What is actually revealed to us here is the ‘*cycle of intimacy*’ in a believer’s life. Jesus tells us that our love for Him is expressed in our obedience to Him, to His Word. He then promises that if we obey Him He will reveal Himself to us. This revelation of Himself to us will lead us deeper into a love relationship with Him and so the cycle continues. But the opposite of that is also true. If we do not obey Him then intimacy is lost. If we disobey Him then we lose that revelation of Him in our lives and our love for Him starts to wane and with it our intimacy with Him. Isn’t that what happened with *Adam and Eve* when they disobeyed in the Garden of Eden? Whilst they obeyed the commands of God they had intimacy with Him. Whilst they obeyed the commands of God He revealed Himself to them. But once they disobeyed intimacy with God was lost. Their disobedience brought sin into the created order and placed a barrier between God and them and the result was a loss of intimacy, loss of revelation and loss of relationship. Sin brought about a loss in their lives and it does the same to us in our prayer life. Listen to these words in *Proverbs 28.9 READ*. Did you listen carefully to what God said there? If you disobey (turn a deaf ear to the law) then your very prayers are detestable to Him. Strong words! Listen to how David expressed it in *Psalms 66.18 READ*. David

says if he tolerated sin in his life, in his heart then God would not have listened to his prayers. Friends, if you entertain sin in your life then you will have difficulties in your prayer life. If you are walking in the ways of sin you cannot know intimacy with God. If you disobey the Word of God then your prayer life will be a struggle. In fact the Word of God says God finds your prayers ‘detestable’ because your walk reveals you do not love Him and you should not expect Him to listen when you disobey.

Turn to **2 Chronicles 7.11-22**. I want you to notice a few things here. Firstly, in **verse 12** God tells Solomon He had heard his prayer. This is an answer to Solomon’s two requests in **6.20, 40**. **But read on to verse 14**. God tells Solomon here are the conditions for answered prayer:

Humility of my people.

Seek my face in prayer. Note that – ‘seek God’s face in prayer’ not ‘seek God’s hands in prayer.’ Too often we come looking for what is in God’s hands and not what is in His face.

Repent – if they turn from their wicked ways – obedience.

Then God promises to hear and to answer. I want you learn from that. Unconfessed Sin will bring difficulties into your prayer life. In fact if it remains unconfessed it will stop your prayer life altogether.

WRONG RELATIONSHIPS.

In the passage **from 2 chronicles 7** we read that God said He would answer prayers spoken in the Temple. We know from the teaching of the NT that we are now God’s Temple of the Holy Spirit – **1 Corinthians 3.16**. We know that sin can hinder prayer but listen to these words from **Matthew 5.23-24 and Matthew 6.15**. What do you notice about them? Do you notice the teaching of each of them? Jesus says that if you come to pray and there is a wrong relationship in your life then you must sort it out or the result will be that difficulties will arise in prayer. Listen to what Peter says in a more specific way concerning prayer and the marital relationship – **1 Peter 3.7 READ**. Peter warns that if a husband does not respect his wife, fail to love her as Christ loves His church, then a hindrance (barrier) will arise in their prayer life. That is a very sobering

warning to us all. Friends, wrong relationships are a reason we have difficulties in prayer. It might be a relationship that needs a fence mended, an apology given or forgiveness asked. It might be a relationship that is forbidden in the Word of God and you are persisting in it, or about to enter upon it and you wonder why your prayer life is beginning to be difficult. Examine your life. Examine your relationships and bring them before God and then mend the fences.

LOSS OF FOCUS.

2 Chronicles 7.14 READ. Matthew 6.6 READ. I could list many more Bible passages which show that our focus in prayer is to be God. The Psalms, especially, are replete with commands to focus on God in prayer. The Bible teaches us that when we come to pray our focus is on God and not on anything else. Listen to these words from ***Exodus 20.1-6*** – they are familiar to us as the 1st and 2nd commandment. But did you ever stop for a moment and think how they relate to your prayer life? When you come to pray you are to have no other god but God on your heart and mind. When you come to pray God’s glory is to be the focus of your heart and mind – not the ‘prayer list.’ It is easy to allow ‘prayer requests’ to become ‘idols.’ It is easy to forget that prayer is about a relationship with God and communication with God. It is easy to lose the focus of an encounter with the living God, which should always lead us to worship Him before anything else. So wrong focus can create difficulties in prayer because we come not thinking of God but of our requests. The result is that our minds wander, stray on to the list of things we want God to do for us and that leads us to the next difficulty.

WRONG MOTIVES.

READ James 4.2-3. Again these may seem like harsh words but they are so true of our lives. How often our prayer life becomes difficult because we come to God with wrong motives. We come seeking His hands and not His face. We come with a shopping list and then sulk when we do not get what we asked for. Turn to ***John 2.1-11*** and Jesus’ first miracle. Jesus was attending a wedding at Cana of Galilee. The wedding party has run

out of wine, which would not only be an embarrassment but a social scandal at that time. Mary, His mother, comes to Him makes a request of Him – a prayer to Him. I want you to note the following about her request (prayer):

she came to Jesus – v.3.

she told Him what they lacked –v.4. She did not tell Him what to do or when to do it. She simply told Him what they lacked.

She left it with Jesus and told the servants to do whatever He said – v.5

You might think there is nothing out of the ordinary in that sequence. But allow me to compare that passage with how we generally pray.

We come to Jesus – great start. We not only tell Him what we lack, but how we would like it to be answered and when we would like it to be answered. I know we should be specific in prayer but that is different than telling God what to do and when to do it. We can, and often do, use prayer as a means of giving instructions to God. We use it as a means of commanding God to do our bidding and the result is it becomes a burden to us because we have failed to trust God for the answer. We think we must tell God how to answer our prayers and the result is we spend hours trying to work out the answer to the prayer request and then we proceed to tell God how to answer the prayer and all the time we say ‘we are depending on God to answer.’ While all the time we are in fact being ‘hypocrites’ because we do not trust Him to answer in any other way than the once we have commanded of Him in our prayers. The result is that when God answers according to His perfect will, and not our sinful commands, we either fail to see the answer, have stopped looking for the answer and generally begin to give up on prayer. The difficulty has arisen not because God does not answer but because He did not do our bidding. It was a wrong motive in prayer and it leads to difficulties in prayer.

So when you come to pray come with the right attitude or motive. Come, seeking God’s face, and not His hands. Come not with the answer already

worked out but with trust to a Father who wants only what is for our good. When we come with the wrong motive/attitude fear is the driving force. Fear and anxiety will rob us of our faith in prayer and will create the difficulties that will lead us to give up on prayer.

PRACTICE AND PERSEVERANCE.

Turn to ***Luke 18.1-8 READ.*** This is a well known parable about the widow who was persistent until she got an answer from her neighbour. Jesus used the parable to teach the disciples about persistence in prayer. One of the reasons we have difficulties in our prayer life is because we are not disciplined people. We give up very easily. We do not stick at prayer. Coaches and athletes speak of a thing called ‘muscle memory.’ It is where the athlete, in whatever sport, has practiced time and again an action needed – so much so that the muscle remembers instinctively how it is done – so that under pressure the muscle’s memory will repeat the action despite the stress of the moment. Friends we need to develop a prayer memory so that even when the pressure comes, the storms arrive and the stress rises we instinctively know how to pray. That will only be if we persistently practice prayer. That will only be if we make prayer so much part of our daily lives that without faltering our memory knows how it is done even in the midst of the storms of life. Jesus said ‘you do not have because you do not ask.’ The widow was rewarded for her persistence – it was an important lesson for the disciples and it is for us also.

Finally read one more verse – ***Exodus 14.15.*** You might wonder ‘what on earth has that got to do with prayer?’ Friends, Moses was still praying when he should have been up on his feet and leading the people across the Red Sea. There are times when difficulties in prayer arise because we are still on our knees when God wants us to be up and walking forward through a Red Sea path He has prepared for us. Don’t you get frustrated with your children when they ask the same question repeatedly – even after you have given the answer? Sometimes we are guilty of asking repeatedly when God has already given the answer. The reason we ask repeatedly is because we have fallen into the trap of telling God what the

answer should be or we have failed to have eyes open for the answer. *We are like the man sitting on the roof of His house as the flood water rises all around and who refuses several means of rescue because ‘I am praying the Lord will rescue me.’ He eventually drowns and standing before God he asks ‘why did you not rescue me? I prayed hard and long.’ God’s reply ‘who do you think sent all the means of rescue?’* Friends, like Moses, there comes a time when God has answered and we need to get up and walk forward. To remain on our knees in prayer when we should be up and walking is a lack of trust, lack of faith and disobedience and the result will be difficulties in our prayer life. So having identified some of the difficulties in prayer I hope we will now have a more Biblical understanding of how we can overcome them. can I encourage you though that no matter how much we struggle with prayer. No matter how difficult we find it. God our Father just longs for us to turn to Him and to seek His face – then He will fulfil His promise to Solomon, and to us, to hear our prayers and to bring healing into our lives.

God bless
Rev Dr Alan McCann

Alan’s Bible Study & Prayer Time



Bible Study continues on Wednesday’s at 1.00pm. We will continue our study in the Psalms.

Please note the following day and times for prayer times and bible study:

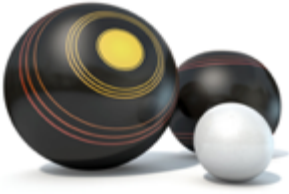
Wednesday’s

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 1.00pm-2.00pm | - Lunch time Bible Study in the Bennett Room |
| 7.30pm-8.00pm | - Prayer Time - Kerr Room |
| 8.00pm-9.00pm | - Bible Study |

Everyone will be very welcome.

God bless
Rev Dr Alan McCann

Holy Trinity Bowls Fellowship



We meet every Thursday at 7:30pm in Holy Trinity. All levels welcome from novice to world champion. Full training and bowling advice freely given. Enjoy a cuppa tea and goodies and some great craic. Children under 16 need to be accompanied by an adult. If interested contact me on 07772512531.

God bless
Vic Wooton

Storehouse



Storehouse continue to help those in need within our community. Please contact me if you have items of unwanted furniture and I will gladly arrange a collection.

Thank you for your support.
Donna Harrison

Select Vestry

If anyone wants an item raised at the Select Vestry please contact:

: secretary@holytrinitycarrick.org.uk
Drew Buchanan: treasurer@holytrinitycarrick.org.uk

or any member of SV. This includes booking the church hall for any events.

Hon Secretary

Men's Fellowship Group

We are restarting the men's fellowship. Meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm in Holy Trinity. The objective of the group is for men to meet and enjoy each other's company on a social level. Tea and coffee provided and hopefully great craic. Trips out can be arranged if we want. So please come along and bring a friend. If interested contact me on 07772512531.

God bless
Vic Wooton

Carrickfergus Food Bank (JVC Church)

Please place non-perishable donations into the 2 black bins in the entrance hall. The food is delivered monthly.

Thank you for the continued support which is very much appreciated.

Trinity Tots - Toddlers Group

Thursday mornings, 10.00am - 11.30am
for play, chat, snacks, singing and craft.



Hello everyone, we hope you are all well. We have missed seeing you all over the past few weeks. Unfortunately we have to announce that we are unable to have our meetings on Thursdays as we do not have enough helpers to run our group. Two of our four regular helpers are ill and will not be available until at least mid-June so we have decided to wait until September to re-open. We hope you have a lovely summer and look forward to seeing you then.

God Bless
Liz, Carolynne, Sandra and Claire

Young At Heart



Our final meeting for this year will be our outing to Dobbies in Antrim on Monday 13th May. The bus will leave the church car park at 10.00 am and we will be back about 2.00 pm. Please be on time and settled on the bus in good time so we can be on our way promptly to enjoy our time at the garden centre for refreshments and retail therapy.

God Bless

Yvonne and her team

Prayer Team

Alison Allen, Joan Harvey & Libby Todd



Two members of the Prayer Team will be meeting in the Prayer Room on Sundays after the service to lift your prayer slips. Two members will also be available at the front of the church to pray with you at this time each week. We will rotate in these roles so you will see different faces from week to week. Please do ask if you would prefer prayer in the privacy of the prayer room. The slips will continue to be lifted weekly and on 4 occasions as previously (usually over 4 weeks but may be over a longer period). Therefore, please do continue to make use of our prayer request box situated in the front hall of the church. As always, be assured that information on the slips remains confidential. We would encourage you to complete a prayer slip after you have attended for prayer so that we can continue to pray for your situation when we meet together.

If you would be interested in being part of the prayer team we ask that you consider this and know that we would dearly love to have your support. Please do approach one of us.

On behalf of the prayer team

Fellowship Café at Holy Trinity



Every Thursday
10.30am – 12.30pm

Wow, Wow, Wow, just **WOW!!!!** What an amazing time we had at the recent celebration of 10 years of **FELLOWSHIP CAFÉ**. Thank you to everyone who came along to support us as we celebrated this memorable occasion. We were truly blessed, with people, great food (thanks to our baking team) and awesome craic.

A special thank you goes to our dear friend Lillie who did us the honour of cutting our cake.

Our visitors were also extremely generous which enabled us to financially support: **Holy Trinity Church, C.H.I.L.L. - Carrickfergus Hub for Improving Lives Locally** which will use our donation to provide for their chill and chat evenings and **THE HAVEN**, a residential home for mentally ill adults, which will use it for organising social and educational activities. Plus, we also covered the monthly sponsorship of our 2 Ugandan children.

If you've never visited us, please call in any Thursday morning and be part of this incredible journey we are on with God.

You can keep up to date by following us on facebook at:
“Holy Trinity Fellowship Café”

Yours in Christ's service,
Maurice Langley
God is good † all the time

C.M.S Ireland Used Postage Stamps



Please continue to collect your used stamps and place them in my box on the church table. Don't be embarrassed if you only have a few stamps as post is slow at this time of the year. Every stamp counts and brings in money towards projects that CMS are involved with in Africa.

Many thanks,
Yvonne Best

Creche Rota –May 2024



5 th May	Laura Kerr	Carolynne Lafferty
12 th May	Lauren Baird	Gemma Fittis
19 th May	NO CRECHE FAMILY SERVICE	
26 th May	Helen Fittis	Maureen Lunn

Many thanks,
Laura Kerr

Tea & Coffee Rota

Team	Team Members			
1	Ann Calvert	Tracey Bowden	Joanne Hunter	
2	Arlene Macartney	Hannah Hulme	Marilyn Hulme	
3	Lorraine Hagan	John Doherty	Gail Doherty	
4	Yvonne Best	Jennifer Hamilton	Gwen Wilson	Jean Jamison
5	Wenda Gray	Sue Majury	Eva Dunn	
6	Kel McDermott	Drew Buchanan	Karen Buchanan	
7	Lorraine Ross	Maureen Lunn	Adrienne Tasker	

Team	Dates	
1		9 th Jun
2	28 th Apr	16 th Jun
3	5 th May	23 rd Jun
4	12 th May	30 th Jun
5	19 th May	
6	26 th May	
7	2 nd Jun	

Karen Buchanan

Carrickfergus Baby Bank

We thank you for the support and ask for donations of nappies, new baby grows, wipes, lotions, baby bath shampoo etc. Please place the items into the bin provided. The contents are delivered each month.

Welcome Team Rota

Teams	Dates	
Jenny Wightman Karen Buchanan		26 th May
Jack Blair Hazel Blair		2 nd Jun
Liz Adair Janis Gibson		9 th Jun
Maureen Lunn Adrienne Tasker		16 th Jun
Eva Dunn Eleanor Steele		23 rd Jun
Sharon McNeill Alison Moffett		30 th Jun
Libby Todd		7 th Jul
Arlene Macartney Wenda Gray		14 th Jul
Ann Calvert Lorraine Hagan		21 st Jul
Joanne Hunter Laura Kerr		28 th Jul
Yvonne Best Jennifer Hamilton Gwen Wilson	28 th Apr	4 th Aug
Kel McDermott Maurice Langley	5 th May	11 th Aug
Donna Harrison Sue Majury	12 th May	18 th Aug
Elaine Wright Joan Cummings	19 th May	25 th Aug

Karen Buchanan

Holy Trinity Chair Rota

Team 1	Team 2	Team 3	Team 4	Team 5
Kel McDermott	Dougie Hempton	Graeme Hunter	David Sprott	John Fittis
Colin McIlwaine	Simon McDonald	Jim McNerlan	Charlie Killow	Daniel Lafferty
Garry Richmond	Phil Moody	Bert Macartney	Richard Hambleson	
Peter Moffett		Maurice Langley		

Team	Dates			
1		5 th May	2 nd Jun	1 st Sept
2		12 th May	9 th Jun	8 th Sept
3		19 th May	16 th Jun	15 th Sept
4	28 th Apr	26 th May	23 rd Jun	22 nd Sept
5			30 th Jun	29 th Sept



Please note: Some teams need additional help. If you think you can help, please contact Simon.

Please take note of church announcements regarding organisations using the church and possible need to put out and put away chairs each week. If possible, please liaise with the others in your group.

Thank you
Simon McDonald

Uplift

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P1 - 1ST YEAR AS OF SEPTEMBER



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BOOK, MUSIC & LYRICS BY
JIM JACOBS & WARREN CASEY

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at The Mill

GREASE

SCHOOL EDITION

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CONCESSIONS: £14

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Thank you for supporting the local arts.
The Uplift Team

Sunday Services

Date	Reading Number	Reader	Title & Prayer Leader	Book	Chapter & Verses
5th May 2024	1st Reading	Colin McIlwaine	HC Stephen	Acts	Chapter 6 verses 1 - 15
	2nd Reading	Rev Alan McCann	Prayers Daniel Lafferty	Acts	Chapter 7 verses 54 - 60
12 May 2024	1st Reading	Lorraine Ross	Service of the Word Simon	Acts	Chapter 8 verses 9 - 17
	2nd Reading	Christine McDermott	Prayers Rev Alan McCann	Acts	Chapter 8 verses 18 - 25
19th May 2024	1st Reading	Terry Shimmon	MP Saul	Acts	Chapter 9 verses 1 - 11
	2nd Reading	Wenda Gray	Prayers Yvonne Best	Acts	Chapter 9 verses 10 - 19
26th May 2024	_____	_____	Family Service	_____	_____

Colin McIlwaine