

The Parish Church of Saint George



PARISH MAGAZINE

*An open door in the heart of the City
A place of prayer and peace*



St Brigid of Kildare



FEBRUARY 2026



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St George's Parish Magazine is published on the Sunday nearest the first day of the month, except August and January. Please send contributions to the Parish Office at stgeorgesoffice@btconnect.com. Views expressed by contributors do not necessarily represent the views of the parish.

Editorial Team: William Odling-Smee, Selby Nesbitt, Tony Merrick.

From the Rector's Desk



Dear Friends in Christ,

Lent this year begins on Wednesday, 18th February. We will have our usual Eucharists at 7:30 AM, 10:30 AM, 1:00 PM, and 7:30 PM. All will include the Imposition Of Ashes. The 7:30 PM Eucharist will be Choral with a sermon.

The Annual General Vestry will take place on Sunday, 22nd March at 1:00 PM after the main morning service and a light lunch. As this is a triennial year, we will also be electing Parochial Nominator's and Diocesan Synod Representatives. It is very important that there is a good attendance of those parishioners who are registered as General Vestry members. As I plan to retire later this year, it will be the responsibility of the new Nominator's to represent St George's in the choice of a new Incumbent to succeed me. So this year's General Vestry Meeting is particularly important, and I would ask for your full, prayerful and considerate attendance. Details of how to register as a voting member of the General Vestry are contained elsewhere in this magazine. If you are unsure of the registration procedure, then please speak to me or to one of the Churchwardens for directions.

We will also have a celebration of the Eucharist on Tuesday, 17th March at 1:00 PM to mark St Patrick's Day. St George's Day, 23rd April, falls this year on a Thursday, so we have decided to hold a Patronal Festival Evensong on Sunday, 19th April in anticipation of our patronal feast day. There will be a short address at Evensong followed by a reception in the Parish Hall. Please spread the word about this service and invite your friends to come along and share in one of the glories of the Anglican Choral tradition.

Yours sincerely in Christ

Brian Stewart

A Prayer for Peace in the Holy Land

O God of all justice and peace, we cry out to you in the midst of the pain and trauma of violence and fear which prevails in the holy land. Be with those who know you in these days of suffering. We pray for people of all faiths - Jews, Muslims and Christians and for all people of the land.

While we pray to you, O Lord, for an end of violence and the establishment of peace, we also call to you to bring justice and equality to the peoples. Guide us into your kingdom where all people are treated with dignity and honour as your children - for to all of us you are our Heavenly Father.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

From Archbishop Hosam Naoum, Jerusalem

PARISH NOTICES

REGISTER OF VESTRY MEMBERS: 2026

The annual review of the Register of Vestry Members will take place during the month of February. This is a reminder of the registration process. First, if you are already registered, then there is nothing more you need to do; you can check for your name on the 2025 list of Vestry Members, which is in the narthex. However, if you are not registered and would like to be 'signed up', Forms of Declaration will be available from our Churchwardens during the month of February. Membership of the Vestry entitles you to participate and vote in the elections, which are held at the Easter General Vestry meeting.

The 'terms' for those who can be included on the Register of Vestry Members are that they must be a resident or accustomed member and subscribe to the funds of the parish by a receiptable collection. The Free Will Offering (FWO) scheme is an ideal way to subscribe to parish funds and satisfy this requirement; for further information on the scheme please consult Selby Nesbitt, FWO co-ordinator or Philip Black, our Treasurer. If you have any general queries about the Register of Vestry Members, please speak with the Rector or Lyn McGlade, Hon. Secretary.

Please note, the **Easter Vestry will be held on Sunday, 22nd March at 1:00pm** after the morning service. There will be a sandwich lunch before the meeting.

LENT SOUP AND CHEESE LUNCH – SUNDAY 22ND FEBRUARY

The Parish Lent Soup and Cheese lunch this year will take place on Sunday 22nd February in the Parish Hall following the Choral Eucharist.

We will continue our support for the two charities 'Embrace the Middle East' and 'The Jerusalem and Middle East Church Association' (JMECA). The Rector writes: 'They both work to support Christians in the Middle East and are long established and well respected in many fields including supporting peace and reconciliation initiatives.' The websites of Embrace the Middle East (www.embraceme.org) and the JMECA (www.jmeca.org.uk) provide much information about the history of these organisations and the valuable work they currently undertake.

Please sign the list in the Narthex if you would like to attend the Lent Lunch and speak to Dot or Judith if you are able to help with preparations.

PARISH NOTICES



Save the Date

Christian Aid Ireland Supporter Conference 2026

Saturday 14 March
10am - 1.30pm
Carnmoney Presbyterian Church

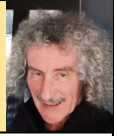


You are invited to Christian Aid Ireland's annual Supporter Conference on **Saturday 14 March 2025!** We're delighted to be returning to Carnmoney Presbyterian Church on Saturday 14 March for our annual supporter conference and we hope that you can join with us. As well as previewing Christian Aid Week 2026, there will also be informative and inspiring seminars designed to give you the opportunity to share with, and learn from, others with a heart to see the end of poverty and injustice worldwide.

Eleanor Maynard

‘AUNT EMMA’

by Paul McLaughlin



Mary Poppins came into the lives of her young charges on the back of a cold East Wind. Our home-help Emma, who would bring just as much joy to all of us children for nearly two years, had a similar squall at **her** back on that early March morning in 1958.

Windswept, although a tight perm fought to keep her steely grey hair in place, and a little out of breath, she came through the door of number eleven, as our house was always called, like a whirlwind that promised better days ahead. And just like Mary P, she would weave more than a little magic in our lives in the weeks and months ahead. Our Mother had taken very ill after the birth of our younger brother and with three children to look after and a full-time job, our Dad was more than happy to have someone to help out with the daily grind.

The Home Help scheme had been set up by the National Health Service to assist with household chores for families where the main caregiver was unable to cope with the labour- intensive housework involved. Emma, most unusually for the time, told my sister and me her Christian name right away and insisted on being called by it, smiling all the while. We knew she would be the angel that our father had promised.

Emma went to work immediately. The top coat came off, was hung up in the hall, the apron taken from her huge shopping bag was tied on and this little woman, less than five feet of sheer dynamism, took to our home as if it were her own.

Even our Mum, who was suffering from deep depression, managed a shy smile when Emma gave her a hug. The woman's vitality was infectious and I remember, even as a four-year-old, the feeling of security she brought and the warmth of her morning embrace.

I suppose I was lucky enough to spend that first year as her 'torture' as she called me. I was still twelve months from starting primary school and all of the time that I wasn't playing in the street with my friend Martin, I spent in and as her shadow.

She worked like a trooper all day and every day; washing, ironing, preparing meals at a time when conveniences were a rarity in working class homes, and often stayed well past her shift- finish time of five o'clock. Through all of that important hustle and bustle, I noticed that Emma, within a few weeks we were calling her 'Aunt' Emma, always made time to encourage my mother, to chat to her and to share that love for life that would go a long way to helping her heal. Emma often talked of her own home life. Her husband 'Pop' and her

son and daughter, both now married themselves, and the York Street area of the inner city where she lived in a two-up, two-down terraced house.

I couldn't imagine it, we lived on the edge of Belfast where the big mountain met the meadows and where dairy cows grazed happily next to the main road, but I didn't have to. Many weekends, Emma would take me home with her and many of my earliest memories are of a warm welcome and an even warmer living room fire where a mound of flaming coal hissed and spat in many colours.

Even as a young boy, I realised that Emma brought that warmth with her each morning and shared it around our home.

Wednesday became my favourite day of the week when she and I would go shopping on the Shankill Road. Once, near the Twelfth of July, I asked for a Union Jack flag, a cloth one to wave. We settled on a paper one after some negotiation as Emma said, 'You'll get me shot with that other thing'.

Emma came from a Protestant background, we were Catholics and some idiots probably would have taken umbrage to a child with a flag, but I treasured that flag and had it for another three months.

My mother gradually got better. A bitter-sweet time for me as too soon it was time for the wind to change and for our honorary 'Aunt' to take her leave. She kissed all of us and gave us hugs that would last a lifetime, but she left something even more important. A spark of understanding in a young boy that kindness knows no creed or colour and love is the greatest gift of all.

The Railway Poster

The old train puffed, his wheels a little weary
Like emphysema riding on the rails
As up the wooded valley he meandered
The smoky, iron stallion of the dales.

His livery shone in apple-green awareness
Of birch and hazel, sycamore and elm
His driver standing right side of the cabin
In cap and dungarees behind the helm.

No camera ever captured such a picture
Of stylised grace and technicolour scale
But the artist paints in smoke and arcane magic
The dreams reality cannot derail.

Where Bedale, Garsdale, Settle and Long Preston
Are memories only now as I look back
The whistle gone, the weasel shocked to wander
The rail trails that have long replaced the track.

I wrote this poem in the Autumn of 1972 after seeing a 1930's LNER poster in a magazine. Paul McLaughlin

POETS CORNER

Mattens

BY GEORGE HERBERT

I cannot ope mine eyes,
But thou art ready there to catch
My morning-soul and sacrifice:
Then we must needs for that day make a match.

My God, what is a heart?
Silver, or gold, or precious stone,
Or starre, or rainbow, or a part
Of all these things, or all of them in one?

My God, what is a heart,
That thou shouldst it so eye, and wooe,
Powring upon it all thy art,
As if that Thou hadst nothing els to do?

Indeed, man's whole estate
Amounts (and richly) to serve thee:
He did not heav'n and earth create,
Yet studies them, not him by whom they be.

Teach me thy love to know;
That this new light, which now I see,
May both the work and workman show:
Then by a sunne-beam I will climbe to thee.

Submitted by Geoffrey May

MUSIC LIST February 2026

Sunday 1st February The Presentation of Christ in the Temple

11:00AM Choral Eucharist

Parish Choir

Processional Hymn	345
Setting	Sumsion in F
Psalm	24: 7-10
Gradual Hymn	187
Offertory Hymn	408
Communion Hymn	295
Anthem	Nunc Dimittis - <i>Howells</i>
Recessional Hymn	381

5:00PM Choral Evensong

Parish Choir

Responses	Rose
Psalm	1
Canticles	Stanford in Bb
Anthem	When to the temple - <i>Eccard</i>
Hymns	443, 467

Sunday 8th February

2nd Sunday before Lent

11:00AM Choral Eucharist

Men's voices

Processional Hymn	265
Setting	Mathias in G
Psalm	136: 1-9, 23-26
Gradual Hymn	342
Offertory Hymn	408
Communion Hymn	54
Motet	Adoramus te Christe - <i>Byrd</i>
Recessional Hymn	377

5:00PM Choral Evensong

Choral Scholars

Responses	Rose ATB
Psalm	112: 1-9
Canticles	Sumsion in G
Anthem	Rejoice in the Lord - <i>Purcell</i>
Hymns	347, 256

MUSIC LIST February 2026

Sunday 15th February

11:00AM Choral Eucharist

Processional Hymn **264**
 Setting Addington service
 Psalm 2
 Gradual Hymn **137**
 Offertory Hymn **239**
 Recessional Hymn **379**

1st Sunday before Lent

Choir Holiday

5:00PM Evening Prayer

Choir Holiday

Wednesday 18th February

7:30pm Choral Eucharist, Order 1

(See separate booklet)

Setting Mass for 5 voices - *Byrd*
 Anthem Wash me thoroughly – *Wesley*

Ash Wednesday

Parish Choir

Sunday 22nd February

11:00AM Choral Eucharist

Processional Hymn 67
 Setting Darke in e
 Psalm 32
 Gradual Hymn 63
 Offertory Hymn 12
 Communion Hymn 308
 Anthem Wash me throughly - *Wesley*
 Recessional Hymn 439

Lent 1

Parish Choir

5:00PM Choral Eucharist

Setting Merbecke
 Hymns **67, 74, 12**

Men's voices

CALENDAR February 2026

Feb 1

THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE

9:30 am

Eucharist: The Rector

11.00 am

Choral Eucharist: The Rector

Preacher: The Rector

ss

Readings: Malachi 3: 1-5; Hebrews 2: 14-18;
Luke 2: 22-40

Reader: *Wardens*

Intercessor: *Pam Tilson*

Servers: *Mark Claney, Tony Merrick, Jonny Calder*

Tea and Coffee: *Julie, Issy Bannon*

5.00 pm

Choral Evensong: The Rector

Lessons: Exodus 13: 1-16; Romans 12: 1-5
(Eleanor Maynard)

Feb 8

THE SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE LENT

9:30 am

Eucharist: The Rector

11.00 am

Choral Eucharist: The Rector

Preacher: The Rector

Readings: Isaiah 58: 1-9a; 1 Corinthians 2: 1-12;
Matthew 5: 13-20

Reader: *Brenda Claney*

Intercessor: *Fr Tom Layden*

Servers: *Omolewa Akinyele, Agape Laoye, Tony Merrick*

Tea and Coffee: *Betty Flynn, Dot Lutton, Linda McConnell*

5.00 pm

Choral Evensong: The Rector

Lessons: Judges 5; James 5 (*Paddy Sloan*)

Feb 11

10:30am

Eucharist: The Rector

Feb 15

THE SUNDAY BEFORE LENT

9:30 am

Eucharist: The Rector

11.00 am

Choral Eucharist: The Rector

Preacher: The Rector

Readings: Deuteronomy 30: 15-20; 1 Corinthians 3: 1-9;
Matthew 5: 21-37

Reader: *Paul McLaughlin*

Intercessor: *Janet Sandikli*

Servers: *Steven McQuitty, Janet Sandikli, Mark Claney*

Tea and Coffee: *Valerie Roberts, Helen Crowe, Holly Ferres*

CALENDAR February 2026

Feb 15

5.00 pm

Choral Evensong: The Rector

Lessons: Amos 2: 4-16; Ephesians 4: 17-32
(Fr Graeme Pollock)

THE SUNDAY BEFORE LENT

Feb 18

7:30 am

Eucharist & Imposition of Ashes: The Rector

10:30 am

Eucharist & Imposition of Ashes: The Rector

1:00 pm

Eucharist & Imposition of Ashes: The Rector

7:30 pm

Eucharist & Imposition of Ashes: The Rector

ASH WEDNESDAY

Feb 22

9:30 am

Eucharist: The Rector

11.00 am

Choral Eucharist: The Rector

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

Preacher: The Rector

Readings: Genesis 2: 15-17; 3: 1-7;

Romans 5: 12-19; Matthew 4: 1-11

Reader: *Janet Sandikli*

Intercessor: *Archdeacon Harte*

Servers: *Banji Akinyele, Mark Claney, Tony Merrick*

Tea and Coffee: *Steven McQuitty, Jack McCormick*

1.00 pm

Lent Soup and Cheese Lunch

5.00 pm

Choral Eucharist: The Rector

Lessons: Deuteronomy 6: 4-9, 16-25:

Luke 15: 1-10 (*Fr Tom Layden*)

Feb 25

10:30am

Eucharist: The Rector

Feb 26

1:00pm

Eucharist: The Rector & Fr Graeme Pollock

The Walsingham Group meets at this Eucharist – all welcome



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A neglected Baroque Genius full of Surprises - Francis FitzGibbon



Giovanni Legrenzi (1626-1690).

This year is the 400 year anniversary of the birth of now little known Italian baroque composer Giovanni Legrenzi, whose work spanned sacred and secular music and helped shape late 17th century Venetian style. He was born on 12 August 1626 in Clusone, a charming small town set in the Seriana Valley at the edge of the Orobic Alps, north of Bergamo region of Lombardy. It is sometimes called *una città dipinta* – a painted town, full of buildings and churches layered with frescoes that surface unexpectedly as you move through the winding, picturesque streets in the historic centre. The most famous of these is the stark *Danza macabra* in the Oratorio dei Disciplini, next to the imposing Basilica of Santa Maria Assunta, which stops visitors in their tracks. So, too, does the 16th-century Fanzago planetary clock in the medieval town hall, still wound by hand each day. In the 17th century, Clusone was a modest provincial centre, but it had a local musical culture and church traditions that nurtured his early talent.

Legrenzi's father was a violinist and composer. He received his first musical training locally, probably as a choirboy in the town's churches. He later studied composition with prominent Venetian musicians, most notably Francesco Cavalli, though records are not definitive. He was influenced by the Venetian school's emphasis on expressive vocal lines, dramatic recitative, and evolving instrumental forms. As a young man, Legrenzi obtained a position as organist at Santa Maria Maggiore, one of the main churches in Bergamo. Under maestro di cappella Alessandro Grandi (1577-1630) who died young and was best known for his highly expressive solo motets, Bergamo had already become a centre for the latest developments in church music.

In Bergamo, Legrenzi worked alongside Maurizio Cazzati (1616-1678) an extraordinary prolific composer who popularised the trio sonata, shaping the formal scheme of the sonata da chiesa and significantly influenced the development of Italian instrumental music during his time in Bologna as teacher of Archangelo Corelli. Following the model of Cazzati, Legrenzi, who had by then been ordained as a priest in 1651, also composed trio sonatas (op. 2) In Bergamo Legrenzi also began composing church music that was printed in Venice and soon made him very well known.

In 1656, he subsequently obtained a position as maestro di cappella at the Academy of the Holy Spirit in Ferrara where his first opera *Nino il Giusto* was written and performed in 1662. Legrenzi's career combined sacred posts with secular composition for the theatre,

reflecting the dual nature of Italian Baroque music. Legrenzi held several appointments including admission as a member of the Accademia Filarmonica, Verona (1650), indicating early recognition of his compositional skill. Between 1655-1670, he was Maestro di Cappella, Santa Maria dei Derelitti, Venice (1655-1670): Directed music at this Venetian hospital church, producing both sacred works and instrumental music, and experimenting with emerging sonata forms.

Legrenzi continued to look for a position more in line with his expectations and ambition and applied for the post of maestro di cappella at Milan cathedral, however the post was eventually given to Giovanni Antonio Grossi. This composer's representative printed collection *Celeste Tesoro* of 1654 is preserved in its entirety in the Benedictine Abbey of Marienberg in Vinschgau, South Tirol, which contains the largest collection of 17th century printed music collection of all Tyrolean abbeys and monasteries, including all of Legrenzi's printed music, his collection *Sacri e festivi concerti* (Venice 1667), the music archive contains an accompanied mass, vespers psalm motets and a Magnificat. In addition works of Cazzati are listed in the inventory of 1666. Venice remained the focal point of Legrenzi's interest. About 1670 he settled in Venice obtaining a position as maestro di musica at the Ospedaletto, one of the main conservatories for girls. From there he moved to the Ospedale dei Medicanti as maestro di coro. At the same time he was also active at the Oratorio of the Congregazione dei Fillipini and as an opera composer.

In 1681, Legrenzi was appointed vice maestro di cappella of San Marco and in 1685 maestro di cappella. Following in the footsteps of Claudio Monteverdi and others he thus came to hold one of the most prestigious offices in the field of church music that Christendom had to offer and the highest musical post in Venice. By the time of his death on 27 May 1690, Legrenzi had published a total of 17 printed collections of his compositions, mainly church music but also instrumental works, and secular cantatas. He also composed some 19 operas and 14 Oratorios.

During his lifetime, Legrenzi was considered one of the most important composers of his day. Among his pupils were Antonio Lotti, Antonio Caldara, Giovanni Varaschino, Francesco Gasparini, Tomaso Albinoni, and Giovanni Sebenico. Legrenzi's compositions continued to be well known and admired beyond the borders of Italy being circulated in London, Hamburg and Amsterdam.

In 2022 with the support of the Municipality of Clusone and its dynamic young mayor, Massimo Morstabalini, a revival of the music of Giovanni Legrenzi was established by the Musica Mirabilis International Festival "Giovanni Legrenzi" in Clusone. The artistic co-directors of the festival are Ivana Valotti Professor of Organ and Organ Composition at the Conservatorio Giuseppe Verdi in Milan, and Giovanni Acciai, a choral conductor and formerly Professor of Musicology, Milan.

Endpiece by Karen Brett

עֲנוּה

Anavah

“And what does the Lord require of you?

To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.”

Micah 6: 8

If you recollect the scheming and perfidious chaplain, Obadiah Slope, either from reading *The Warden* by Anthony Trollope, or watching the excellent BBC *Barchester Chronicles*, where he was played magnificently by the late Alan Rickman, you are probably smiling.

His philosophy appeared to be this: *you can really make yourself important and get things done in the Church, so long as you don't let humility or an attempt to be Christ-like get in the way.*

To the satisfaction of the reader, he is driven from Barchester with a slapped face and his schemes in ruins but, as Trollope was reflecting the reality of life and not writing a morality tale, we afterwards learn that he has resurfaced in London, married a wealthy widow, and has built a great following as an evangelical preacher.

His overweening sense of self-importance and lack of humility earned him the sobriquet of ‘the odious Slope’ and provided literature with an unforgettable, if loathsome, character.

Obadiah Slope had many faults and no apparent virtues. Arguably his greatest sin was the pride which left no space in his soul for even a shred of humility.

Turning to the Hebrew Bible, or the Old Testament, however you describe it, early Judaism is unique in its expectation that a leader or a king should have עֲנוּה, *anavah*, sincere humility.

Anavah is a core virtue - it means recognising your place in relation to others and to God. It demands that you fulfil your God-given purpose without overstepping boundaries or wishing to take someone else's place.

Leaders and kings have much of which to be proud. Their position excites the admiration and confidence of others. Their achievements are celebrated, and their power makes them sought after.

The idea that a king should be humble was a radically new idea introduced by Judaism and later adopted by Christianity. As the world stage looks ever more terrifying, it is one that is badly needed today.

Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation and founder of three great faiths, describes himself as ‘dust and ashes’; he has humility, but he is not servile or fawning. This is the very moment when he challenges God on the justice of destroying Sodom and the cities of the plains.

Our Lord, Jesus Christ, born in shame and poverty, an asylum seeker as a baby, a village carpenter, turns away from the temptation to wield earthly power. He

associates with the despised, touches the contagiously sick, he is a rough sleeper. He stands up to bullies, reassures the afraid, experiences overwhelming fear himself.

He washes the feet of his disciples, he begs for a way out, he asks forgiveness for those who injure him, he experiences desolation, he submits himself to God.

He dies the death of a criminal, executed by the Roman Empire.

He is the King of Kings, the Messiah, and he embodies sincere humility, *anavah*.

He is a clear example to us of how spirituality makes a difference to the way we act, feel, and think. If we believe - as Jesus did - that there is a God in whose presence we stand, it means that we are *not* the centre of our world.

God is.

Having true and sincere humility means you are secure enough not to need to be continually reassured by others. It means not having to prove yourself cleverer, worthier, more pious, more gifted, or more successful than others to feel of value to God, or to other people.

You are secure *because* you live in God's love.

You know that God has faith in you even if at times you do not. Having sincere humility, *anavah*, means you do not need to compare yourself to others.

And this allows you to accept other people and appreciate them just as they are. They are not a series of mirrors in which you look only to see your own reflection.

Confident in your own identity you can value people who are not like you.

You can value - not just accept or tolerate - but truly value people of other faiths and races, people of a different political persuasion, gender, or sexual orientation, from your own. You recognise every other person as a valued child of God and, as Christ did, stand alongside, without fear, those who dance on the edge of our society

Anavah, sincere humility is *not* thinking of yourself as small, it is recognising that others have greatness within them and celebrating that.

When we place the self at the centre of our universe, we eventually turn everyone, and everything, into a means to achieve our selfish ends. We become an Obadiah Slope.

With God at the centre of our lives, and by embodying *anavah*, we are open to God's love and to discovering the joy of loving and cooperating, not competing, with other people.

May you walk today in *anavah* - not as the world sees humility, but as God defines it: a heart surrendered, a life at peace, and with a strength that shines because it is anchored in God

