

News from the Parishes

Church of the Ascension, Annahilt

Magherahamlet Parish Church



December 2025 & January 2026



Rector: The Revd Canon Robert Howard
15 Ballykeel Road, Hillsborough
BT26 6NW
Tel: 028 9263 8218
E-mail: rjrobert.howard@btinternet.com
Website: www.annahiltandmagherahamlet.org



The Rector writes.....

My dear Parishioners,

Most, if not all, of the people reading this magazine will be pretty familiar with the events of the first Christmas. People will know the familiar story of Mary and Joseph making their way to register in Bethlehem for the Roman census. They will know of how angels appeared to Mary and to the shepherds after the birth of Jesus. They will know too of the Magi or the Wise Men travelling from the East, following the star until it stopped over an unlikely place for the king born to be the Saviour of the world.

If there is a character or characters that somehow capture the prevailing mood or spirit in our society at this time, I think it might be the Magi. There is something that seems to resonate with the appetite many seem to have at this time for a spiritual search in their lives.

There seems to be a hunger for spiritual things and rather strange and wonderful things seem to be happening to reflect this. It's sometimes documented in the media as a quiet revolution. Many young people, men in particular, are turning up at churches searching for purpose, for meaning and for some sort of faith perspective.

The very demographic that most people would associate with the rejection of faith and having a deeply sceptical or atheistic world view, are apparently coming back to churches. They are drawn by the beauty, the mystery, the hope of new life after death. They are curious about the idea that God, the creator of the world has revealed himself to us through His Son Jesus Christ and how through His Holy Spirit, He is with us now.

These are events we anticipate during the season of Advent and celebrate during the season of Christmas. I love the openness of the Magi who embody and embrace this search for meaning and purpose.

One of the key features of this modern day 'quiet revolution' is the powerful impact of personal invitations. You could be a key agent in someone from your household or a friend or work colleague coming to faith in Jesus Christ. It can be as simple as inviting someone to a church service or event where somehow their eyes are open and their hearts are more receptive to receiving the gift of faith.

There are all sorts of things happening in the next month or so, Crib Services, Nativity Services, Christmas Carol Services, Advent services. There will be celebrations at our organisations and there will hopefully be invitations to the curious, to the present day seekers who, just like the Magi, are prepared to invest in a spiritual search in their lives.

My prayer is that we will be confident enough to invite people along and maybe in our own quiet way be something of a signpost to the person of Jesus who is at the heart of all our celebrations. Maybe you could be part of distributing this gift that cannot be

measured in monetary value but which has offered hope and meaning and purpose to millions over the centuries.

If you are thinking of inviting friends or family members, may I encourage you to pray for them, that they might be open and that this might be one of the key moments in many people's spiritual journeys.

In this season of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany, may we allow the Christ child to be born in us afresh and may the God of all encouragement and comfort embrace and strengthen each one of us in the year ahead.

Wherever and however you celebrate Christmas this year, whether it's welcoming home family from faraway places or you have a quieter more reflective time on your own, I want to take this opportunity to wish you a joyful and peaceful season. The Church's liturgical calendar offers us the season of Advent as a way to build up towards it and make some spiritual preparations in the midst of all the other 'busyness' which preoccupies us.

As we look forward to these weeks, please be mindful of all those for whom it is a painful and difficult season. Checking in on those who have been through difficult times, praying for them, phone calls and cards are all greatly appreciated as we seek as a community to support one another and make the presence of Jesus real and known in our locality.

With love, prayers and blessings

Your sincere friend and Rector

Robert Howard

Thank you.....

To all who contributed to recent special collections:

	Annahilt	Magherahamlet
Christian Aid Coffee October	£130	
Christian Aid Coffee November	£170	
Harvest Loose collection	£426.20	£284
Harvest Envelopes	£635.00	£782
Poppy Appeal	£221.50	£138.50

....**To all who made donations** to Annahilt Parish in lieu of flowers in memory of Bert Carlisle. £1336.75 was given.

....**To all who organised** and in any way so generously supported the Christmas Fair in Annahilt. To date £2884 was raised which is a splendid result.

...**To all the various volunteers** who have assisted in the Church cleaning, as well as all who provided flowers for the Churches during the past year.

The cleanliness of the Churches for public worship does not go unnoticed and is much appreciated by all. It would 'lighten the load' on our small band of volunteers if others would be willing to fulfil this task.

The floral arrangements which are given each week are also valued and admired by all who worship in both Churches.

...**To Colin Robinette and William Mathers** for their ongoing assistance in the online recording and transmission of Services.



PRAYER WARRIOR

Do you have a concern or problem and would like someone to pray for you?

If so, contact the Rector (Tel 028 9263 8218) who will be willing to help.

This is completely confidential and no details will be passed on to anyone else unless you want them to.



The season of Advent

‘Advent’ means ‘coming’ and marks the four weeks leading up to the celebration of the Nativity and the coming of Christ. It is traditionally a season of penance and preparation before Christmas. The official Church liturgical colour is purple, a symbol of penitence. Weddings used to be forbidden during this season, as they once were during Lent.

Tradition has given its own flavour to each of the Advent Sundays. The Sunday next before Advent was known as ‘Stir up Sunday’, so named because it was the day for ‘stirring up’ Christmas puddings. The second Sunday was known as Bible Sunday when our focus was on the reading, preaching and distribution of God’s Word as revealed in the books of the Bible. The third Sunday is the ‘Gaudete’ Sunday from the Latin word for ‘rejoice’. On that day everyone took a break from the penitential theme. A rose coloured candle is lit on this Sunday.

In our Churches an Advent wreath is often among the decorations made with evergreen branches such as holly, yew or pine. The four Advent candles are fixed into the wreath along with a white candle which represents the Light of Christ coming into the world at Christmas.



Advent calendars are still popular today, usually a card with twenty-four small doors, one to be opened each day from the first day of December until Christmas Eve. Each door conceals a picture, which originally had biblical themes. Every morning children open one door to see a pretty picture or find a chocolate inside. This popular tradition arose in Germany in the late 1800s and soon spread throughout Europe and North America.



Holy Communion in Church

There will be four celebrations of the Holy Communion in the Group of Parishes over the Christmas period.



There will be a SAID Communion Service on the Second Sunday **BEFORE** Christmas, 14 December, at **9.30 am**. This may be of particular interest to those who previously attended the early celebration. It may also suit those who prefer a shorter and 'quieter' act of worship.

On Christmas Eve, 24 December at **11.15 pm** the First Communion of Christmas will be celebrated in Annahilt. The Rector will preside and the Minister of Legacurry Presbyterian Church, The Revd Mark Hawthorne will preach. Please make a special effort to be present to welcome Mr Hawthorne on his first official visit to our Church and to welcome back our friends from the Legacurry congregation.

On Christmas Day, 25 December at the earlier time of **11.30 am** the Parish Communion of Christmas Day will be celebrated in Magherahamlet Parish Church.

On the Sunday before Epiphany, 4 January 2026 there will be Parish Communion in Annahilt at 10.00 am and in Magherahamlet at 12.00 noon.

Private Communion at Christmas

Any parishioners who are ill or housebound or who otherwise are not in a position to attend church and would like Holy Communion in their own home before Christmas should please contact the Rector who will only be too pleased to make the arrangements. Tel 028 9263 8218.

Church Services in the Parishes of Annahilt and Magherahamlet

'I was glad when they said to me: "Let us go to the house of the Lord"' Psalm 122 v1

Sunday 7 December **Advent II**

Bible Sunday

10.00	Parish Communion	Annahilt
12.00	Parish Communion	Magherahamlet

Sunday 14 December **Advent III**

9.30 am	Holy Communion	Annahilt	(SAID SERVICE)
10.00 am	<i>No Service</i>	Annahilt	
11.30 am <i>Sheets</i>	Family Nativity & Holy Baptism	Magherahamlet	<i>Service</i>
3.00 pm	Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols with the Choir of Anahilt Primary School Guest of Honour: Emma Lyttle-Pengelly MLA Deputy First-Minister <i>followed by Seasonal Refreshments in the Parochial Hall</i>	Annahilt	<i>Service Sheets</i>

Sunday 21 December **Advent IV**

10.00	Family Crib Service with Baillies' Mills Accordion Band <i>followed by Seasonal Refreshments in the Parochial Hall</i>	Annahilt	<i>Service Sheets</i>
12.00 am	<i>No Service</i>	Magherahamlet	
7.00 pm	United Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols <i>followed by Seasonal Refreshments in the Parochial Hall</i>	Magherahamlet	<i>Service Sheets</i>

Wednesday 24 December **Christmas Eve**

11.15 pm	The First Communion of Christmas	Annahilt	<i>Service Sheets</i>
-----------------	----------------------------------	----------	-----------------------

Preacher: The Revd Mark Hawthorne Minister of Legacurry
Presbyterian Church

Thursday 25 December **Christmas Day**

10.00 Family Service Annahilt *Service*
Sheets

11.30 am Parish Communion Magherahamlet *Service Sheets*

Sunday 28 December **Christmas I**
Feast of Holy Innocents

10.00 Morning Prayer & Litany Annahilt
11.30 am Morning Prayer & Litany Magherahamlet

Sunday 4 January 2026 **Sunday before Epiphany**

10.00 Parish Communion Annahilt
12.00 Parish Communion Magherahamlet

Sunday 11 January **Epiphany I**

10.00 Family Service Annahilt *Service Sheets*
12.00 Family Service Magherahamlet *Service Sheets*

Sunday 18 January **Epiphany II**

10.00 Parish Communion Annahilt
12.00 Morning Prayer Magherahamlet

Sunday 25 January **Conversion of Saint Paul**

World Leprosy Day

10.00 Morning Prayer Annahilt
12.00 Morning Prayer Magherahamlet

Sunday 1 February **Presentation of Christ in the Temple**

St Brigid's Day

10.00 Parish Communion Annahilt
12.00 Parish Communion Magherahamlet

Sunday 8 February

II Sunday before Lent

10.00

Morning Prayer

Annahilt

12.00

Morning Prayer

Magherahamlet

From the Parish Registers

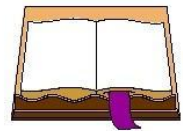
Holy Baptism

'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations baptising in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

Church of the Ascension, Annahilt

23 November 2025

Theo William, son of Nicholas and Alison Robinette'



Christian Burials

'In Christ shall all be made alive'

6 October 2025

Thomas John (Tommy) Cherry, Mountview Road, Ballynahinch

Following a Service at home, burial took place in Magherahamlet Parish Churchyard

Thomas John Cherry, known as Tommy, was one of five children borne to Jean and the late Hugh Cherry. Tommy did not have an easy start in life with health issues but he made it through that period and became a lively child. He was an ever-present attendee at the Sunday school in Magherahamlet Parish and a committed member of The Boys' Brigade at Spa Presbyterian. Tommy received his education at Spa Primary before going to the High School, Ballynahinch, often travelling on a tractor! In later years Tommy regretted that he didn't apply himself better at school and had followed the advice of his teacher who encourage him to take his examinations.

Nevertheless, that didn't stop Tommy from being an exceptionally hard worker for the rest of his life. Tommy was great with his hands and would have done anything for anyone. Whether it was his Uncle Stanley, Wilbert Dickson, Davy Abernethy, Neil Dickson, Davy Carlisle or his brother Andy, Tommy Cherry was always willing to lend a hand to friends, family and neighbours, even working on the homestead with sheep and cattle.

This was shown in his working life too. Tommy started out working for Davy Samuels when he was just 15. He then moved to Tony Pattersons before spending time working for Elvis Kirk. It didn't matter when or where - Tommy was a worker.

Outside of work, Tommy's skills were also put to good use. He loved cars and motorbikes and was able to keep them on the road, helping his brother do the necessary maintenance.

Tommy was blessed with three children Dylan (still born), Bradley and Melissa and later he would become a grandfather to Lottie Rose. He was also an uncle and he was really devoted to Shireen and Andy's children at their home.

Unfortunately, Tommy's declining health forced him to give up work and 'slow down'. Lately it was clear that he was struggling. Nevertheless, it was a tremendous shock to his mother and whole family when Tommy died suddenly at home.

As we mourn Tommy Cherry, we extend our deep sympathy to his son Bradley, daughter Melissa, grandchildren, mother Jean, brothers, sister, sister-in-law, family circle and friends. He will be greatly missed and we thank God for his life.

11 November 2025

Ruth Carlisle, Fishbourne House Nursing Home, Spa and formerly of 'Rocorry', Glebe Road, Aughnaleck.

Following a Service in the Church of the Ascension, Annahilt, burial took place in the adjoining Churchyard

Ruth was born at Annaghmore, Portadown on 7 June 1934 to Thomas and Elizabeth

Devlin. She had one brother, George and a sister, Patricia.

Ruth commenced work aged 15 in Ulster Fruit Products as a wages clerk, leaving after five years due to illness. She then worked in Stevenson & Son, Moygashel, Dungannon for six years as Stock Centre Check. Here she met Bert Carlisle and they got married some 64 years ago on 6 June 1961.

Bert and Ruth came to live in Annahilt soon after their marriage. On coming to this locality, she worked in Gascoigne's as Office Manager for ten years. In 1971 she took on the role of Secretary in Beechlawn Special School, Hillsborough, which she held for seven years. In 1980 she became a Medical Receptionist at Lisburn Health Centre which she continued until 1990. After leaving the Centre Ruth joined Lagan Valley Hospital Ex Patients Guild and spent seventeen years working voluntarily in the Hospital Shop, four hours every week. The money made in the Shop helped to purchase equipment for the wards as it was required.

Since her passing many have recalled what was so special about Ruth. She loved her husband, her family, her friends, her Church and above all, her God.

Bert and Ruth became members of Annahilt Parish in 1964. They attended worship at the Church of the Ascension on a most regular basis and were devout Communicants. But Church was not just a place for them to go on a Sunday. It was a place to meet God and find your place with Him. Bert and Ruth were involved in many activities in the Parish. Ruth particularly enjoyed every moment of serving on the Select Vestry, in the Mothers' Union and on various other Committees, as well as playing a full part organising successive Burns Nights. As Mothers' Union Branch Leader, she took on the co-ordination of serving Teas in the Parochial Hall over the weekend of the Flower Festival held to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the consecration of the Church. And she did it magnificently. At the conclusion of it all on the Sunday evening she was heard saying 'One day when I'm being carried out of this Church, you'll all hear me asking 'Can you each please supply me with two dozen pastries?!'

Ruth was a woman of 'the Country'. She referred to Annahilt as 'God's little acre' and very much enjoyed gardening at her own home and learned so much during their annual holidays for thirty one years in her beloved Cotswolds. She and Bert also enjoyed breeding and rearing dogs especially flat coated retrievers. A very special four-legged friend they named 'Lady Di'! Ruth also loved cats and had several as pets.

Bert and Ruth's home was always an open one. Any visitor was assured of the warmest of welcomes and generous hospitality. Behind the scenes over the years, they quietly and unobtrusively showed generosity to anyone in need without any expectation of repayment

Even as time began to catch up with Ruth and slow her step down, and latterly as her mental health declined, Ruth never lost her kind and loving heart. Her physical stature was small but to all who knew her she was and always will be a giant.

We extend our deep and prayerful sympathy to the extended family circle.

20 November 2025

Prudence Blamir (Prue) Spencer, formerly of Annahilt

Following Service at the Church of the Ascension, Annahilt, burial took place in adjoining Churchyard

Prudence was one of three siblings, she and her twin brother Donald and her younger brother, Thomas. Early in their youth, their father died and they were brought up by their mother and her parents.

Most of the family's younger years were spent growing up in houses between Lisburn and Dromara. They went to Sunday school and Church in Annahilt and the Christian religion remained very important to Prudence throughout her life.

On leaving school Prudence went into office work and then trained in teaching commercial subjects. Her first teaching post was in a secondary education school in Birmingham and she then moved to Holbeach in Lincolnshire, where she taught in the George Farmer School. She bought a house there and made many friends. She was very happy there and kept the house as a holiday home and returned frequently to visit, notwithstanding her return to Northern Ireland to live with her mother whilst she taught in Further Education in Belfast.

Prue was always very active until her health began to decline. Nevertheless, she was fully determined to keep up her visits to Holbeach, although her health was making it become increasingly impractical.

She loved her phone and it became her lifeline in her later years. Even now, when her brother's mobile rings, he and his wife keep expecting it to be Prue on the other end!

We extend our deep sympathy to the family circle.

20 November 2025

Margaret Gamble, Dunbeg Gardens, Hillsborough

Following Services at home and in the Church of the Ascension, Annahilt, burial took place in adjoining Churchyard

Margaret was born in Derriaghy, to Gerry and Jane Thompson. She was the youngest of six siblings and was close to them all. She was educated at the School on the Hill.

Margaret originally belonged to Derriaghy Parish where she was a member and Officer in the Girls' Brigade.

In later life Margaret loved dancing in Newry and also Country & Western at The Four Seasons. She enjoyed holidays at home and abroad travelling on one occasion to Australia and spending three months there. For a number of years Margaret and her husband Tom were proprietors of 'The Golden Pheasant'. Customers and patrons

appreciated the service she offered with her gracious and friendly smile.

In the funeral address the Rector said that as Jesus had gone to prepare a place for us, Margaret was now with Him after an extended period of ill-health, free from pain, free from suffering, in the peace that only the Lord can give. Margaret’s journey of faith has now come to its final destination. She has fought the good fight, finished the race, and kept the faith.

Her journey on earth was marked by faith, perseverance, and trust in God. She faced many challenges, but she never wavered in her trust in Him. She kept her eyes on the prize, knowing that the ultimate victory lay in her eternal home with God. Now, she has reached that victory, and her journey is complete.

As we remember Margaret, we also look forward to our own journeys, that we may live with the same faith, the same endurance, and the same hope that she demonstrated. We extend our deep sympathy to her daughter, Geraldine, son Paul, son-in-law Cecil, her grandchildren and the entire family circle in their great loss.

Flowers for the Churches

Annahilt

Magherahamlet

December

- 7 In memory of Bert & Ruth Carlisle
- 14 Mrs B Harrison
- 21 The Rector
- 28 The Rector




Mrs F Magorrian

Church Cleaning, Annahilt

Month

December

5-6	Mrs E Finney		Mr P Finney
12-13	Mrs L McCambley		Mrs E Harrison
19-20	Mrs S Chapman		Mr S Chapman
23-24	Mrs A Maxwell		Mr R Maxwell
26-27	Mrs S Chapman		Mr S Chapman

January 2026

2-3	Mrs E Crawford	
9-10	Mrs S Chapman	Mr S Chapman
16-17	Mr H Hill	Mrs H Hill
23-24	Mrs S Chapman	Mr S Chapman
30-31	Mrs J Guiney	Mrs H Cardosi

February

6-7	Mrs S Chapman	Mr S Chapman
13-14	Mrs E Finney	Mr P Finney
20-21	Mrs S Chapman	Mr S Chapman

The number on the rota of volunteers who clean the Church of the Ascension has significantly declined. It would now be unviable except that one couple has offered to clean the Church every 2nd week.

It really would be very helpful if there were additional volunteers who would ease the burden on those who already faithfully fulfil this important role. If you would be willing to help, please contact the Rector (Tel 028 9263 8218) or the Secretary to the Vestry, Colin Hassard (Tel 028 9263 8263)

Bishop's Appeal for Maridi Family Centre

Bishop David writes,

"Recently we were blessed to have Bishop Moses and Mama Rejoice from our partner Diocese of Maridi, South Sudan, spend some time with us and met with many across our Diocese.

One of the things that has arisen from their visit is a request that we would partner with them in building a new Family Centre that will provide counselling, health advice, prayer, education and practical provision alongside sharing the love of Church in word and in those and many other practical ways.

The current women's centre in Maridi has impacted the lives of tens of thousands of men, women and children who have lived through decades of trauma. The centre is due for demolition in the very near future, without any government compensation to make way for a new road from Juba to Western Equatoria. To build the new Family Centre it will cost £40,000, so that hope and healing can continue to be offered alongside introducing many to Jesus in the decades ahead.

I am writing to ask every church in the Diocese to consider having a special collection for this project on a Sunday of your choice during the season of Advent. "

Yours in Christ,

+David Down and Dromore

A special collection was held on Sunday 30th November for the Maridi Family Centre. If you wish to make a donation, please forward it to the Honorary Treasurer by early January.

We appreciate that at this time of year there are many demands on your finances and several special collections in church during December and we do appreciate your generosity.



With the closure of direct services in the local area, five experienced Social Workers set up a not-for-profit Community Interest Company called STARNI to continue providing support to children and families impacted by sexual abuse. STARNI is based in Millennium Court Arts Centre in Portadown. Our mission is to create a safe and nurturing environment where children feel comfortable and safe enough to explore their thoughts and feelings.

STARNI has now been running for several years. They are continually working with more children and would love to be able to give them Christmas gifts with our support.

This year, at our Crib Service in **Annahilt on Bible Sunday 21 December (10.00 am)** and at the Christingle Service **Magherahamlet on Sunday 14 December (11.30am)** INSTEAD of donating gifts for these children, perhaps you would like to donate the money you might have otherwise spent on a Christmas gift to the Church collection on these Sundays. This would go directly to the running costs of STAR NI and would greatly assist the company in being kept up and running.



If you would like to know more about STARNI, you can find the organisation on Facebook and Instagram.

As always, STARNI thank you so much for your ongoing support, it is greatly appreciated and makes a big difference.



Dear Mothers' Union Members and Friends,

The October meeting in Annahilt Branch was led by the Church Missionary Society. A very informative illustrated talk was given on CMS and Mothers' Union activity in our link diocese of Maridi. It made a very enjoyable occasion for all. At the Branch meeting on 2 December our Treasurer updated us on various developments on Mothers' Union matters in our diocese. There also was some discussion on how best we may progress as a Branch in the future.

As occurred last year we will be joining the 'Wednesday Club' for their Festive Lunch which will be held on Wednesday 10 December from 11.00 am to 1.00 pm in the Parochial Hall.

Our first meeting of 2026 will take place on Monday 19 January at 8pm in Annahilt Hall. All members are asked to make a special effort to be present. It is hoped to appoint Office Bearers and a Committee for the next three years.

At the October meeting in Magherahamlet we made various floral arrangements for the Harvest decorations in Church. On 26 November, Beverley led us in a craft evening making Christmas decorations. It was very enjoyable with a great night of friendship had by all.

There was an excellent attendance at Saintfield Parish Church on Saturday 29 November for the launch of this year's "16 Days against Gender Violence".

The Branch was well represented at the Advent Carol Service in St Dorothea's Church, Gilnahirk on Monday 1 December at 7.30 pm. On the following night we attended Magheralin Church for 'Angels'.

Magherahamlet members Parcel Night will take place in the Rectory on Wednesday 10 December.

We were deeply saddened by the recent death of Ruth Carlisle, a former Annahilt Branch Leader and one of our most senior and committed members. Ruth was also greatly respected by members of Magherahamlet Branch. Although Ruth had been in declining health for some time, her passing came as quite a shock, just 10 weeks after the death of her dear husband Bert. We extend our deep sympathy to the Family Circle.

We wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful and Prosperous New Year.

With very kind regards and every blessing

Beth
Esme
Elaine

Avril / Sally
Frances / Avril B
Virginia

Mothers' Union Midday Wave of Prayer December 2025

1-2 December: Mpumalanga in South Africa; Central Buganda in Uganda; Zonkwa in Nigeria; Bo in Sierra Leone; Newcastle in England and Barrackpore in India

3-5 December: Akot in South Sudan; South West Tanganyika in Tanzania; Aba & Irele-Ese Odo in Nigeria; Coventry in England and Cuttack in India

7-9 December: Namibia; Mount Kenya South in Kenya; Northern Izon & Ijebu North in Nigeria and Durham in England

10-12 December: Lusaka in Zambia; Shyogwe in Rwanda; Sokoto & Ikka in Nigeria; Ely in England and Karimnagar in India

14-16 December: Fianarantsoa in Madagascar; Central Tanganyika in Tanzania; Calabar & Igbomina in Nigeria; Derry & Raphoe in All Ireland and Banks & Torres in Vanuatu

17-19 December: Lui in South Sudan; Embu in Kenya; Orlu & Awori in Nigeria; The Murray in Australia and Medak in India

21-23 December: Archbishops, Bishops and all clergy in the Anglican Communion

24-26 December: Refugees, internally displaced families & those living in a climate of fear

28-30 December: All involved with the responsibility of caring for & supporting family life

31 December: Mothers' Union worldwide

Vintage Afternoon Tea

This event held on Saturday afternoon 18th October in Annahilt saw over one hundred and fifty people from the Parish and community gather for a sumptuous Afternoon Tea in the newly re-decorated Parish Hall. Such was the response to ticket sales, the schedule had to be re-organised to accommodate two sittings when bookings reached maximum capacity several weeks before the event.

We were blessed with a dry, crisp autumn afternoon with no rain although somewhat breezy at times. Our Parish Treasurer who had volunteered to co-ordinate the event had support from around thirty parishioners who helped not only on the day but on various occasions prior to the event. With the ongoing works in the hall, there were many hours spent cleaning, sorting and tidying up both outside and inside the hall particularly in the preceding days. The hall itself having just been repainted internally looked so fresh and the wall panels made a real difference and showed off some of the activities which take place in the hall. Thanks too to those who supplied prizes for the draw, those who supplied the food and other necessary items and consumables and those who gave financial donations.

The Parish would like to thank once again the members of the committee for their support over the months of planning and hands-on support during the week of the event. There were minimal expenses due to the generosity of the committee and a marvellous sum of £3737.00 was raised for Parish Funds.

Annahilt Wednesday Club

The Annahilt Wednesday Club will hold its Festive Lunch for Seniors and Retirees in the community, including those from Magherahamlet, on **Wednesday 10th December 11am-1pm** in Annahilt Parish Hall. This proved a very popular and enjoyable event in 2024 and was enhanced by the inclusion of entertainment led by John & Roberta Erwin and Baillies Mills Accordion Band. Please contact Patricia (07713 257 691) as soon as possible if you wish to go and have not already booked.

The January meeting will be on Wednesday 21st January at 11am when the speaker will be from Age NI.

The club is open to all seniors and retirees in the community and usually runs from 11am to 12.30pm.

Work at Annahilt Parish Hall

Phase one of the improvements are almost complete. We await the plaster drying out in the new committee room and then the painter can return and finish his work. The final total cost will be around £30K and this will come from our Development Fund. We are however very grateful to an anonymous donor who has made a generous donation towards the cost of the work. There is further work we would like to do, subject to the awarding of grant funding. If we are successful in obtaining funding and the work can be done, we will update parishioners in 2026.

Parishioner details

We continue to request that Parishioners update their contact details with Patricia (Annahilt) or Abbie (Magherahamlet). Many people have moved from landline to mobile and we no longer have a contact number. It is also required by the Data Protection Act that we hold up to date details of our members.

As times change and many people are not in church every week to hear announcements which do not appear in the Parish magazine, we would like to be able to email updates out occasionally.

If you have an email address send it to info@annahiltandmagherahamlet.org and we will update our records.

Parish Magazine

With increasing printing and postage costs for distribution of the Parish magazine, would there be any additional households happy to receive notification via email when the magazine is available on the website?

If so, please email

patriciaapc@btinternet.com or info@annahiltandmagherahamlet.org

Financial matters

Honorary Treasurers

Annahilt

Patricia Halliday - 028 92665310, mobile 07713 257691
email patriciaapc@btinternet.com

Magherahamlet

Abbie Stanford - 028 4481136, mobile 07753746940
email abigailstanford@btinternet.com

Free Will Offering

As we approach the end of the financial year if you wish to check how much you have contributed to Parish FWO funds to the end of November, you can contact Patricia or Abbie after 6th December who will be able to get you a response.

2026 FWO envelopes will be available in church in early December and if any amendments are required, you know who to contact!

The 2025 accounts will close on 31st December 2025 and any contributions after that will be included in the 2026 year.

Gift Aid

If you are a UK taxpayer, you can boost the amount of every donation you make by giving through “Gift Aid”. This is an Income Tax relief scheme created to help charities like our church get the most out of funds that they receive. Gift Aid enables the church to recover the base rate of tax on your donation. The scheme adds 25 pence on each £1.00 you give at no extra cost to you.

We would ask all taxpayers who give to parish funds to give through “Gift Aid”. All that is required is the completion of a “Gift Aid Declaration” form. If you have recently stopped paying tax then any existing Gift Aid declaration needs to be cancelled. Please contact the appropriate Treasurer, should you require a “Gift Aid Declaration” form or need to update an existing Gift Aid Declaration.

Lunch Club

The next time we meet will be Friday 30 January in the Pheasant at the usual time of 12.30pm.

Subsequent Lunch Club meetings will take place on the following date:

27 February

27 March



The Lunch Club is a very relaxed and enjoyable occasion, giving retired and semi-retired members an opportunity to connect with each other. If you would like the opportunity of enjoying a lunchtime meal in the company of established friends or perhaps some new ones, do come along. Please contact Violet Swarbrigg (Telephone 07866914651) for further information.

LISBURN FOODBANK

The Lisburn Foodbank is providing an essential service to those within our community who are experiencing difficult times, often due to circumstances beyond their control.

The Foodbank provides emergency food and support to local people in crisis in the Lisburn area.

A particular request from the Foodbank is for items listed below:

- Fairy Liquid
- small packs of toilet roll
- large nappies (sizes 6 and 7)
- baby wipes
- shower gel
- soaps
- washing powder

YOUR HELP WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED.

Recording of Annahilt Church Services

Free recordings (CD format) are available weekly of the Church services or requested special services.

These CDs are delivered free of charge. If you would like to receive a CD copy, please contact Shirley Robinette on 07974093382

Parish Website: AnnahiltAndMagherahamlet.org

Parishioners are reminded that the website annahiltandmagherahamlet.org has been created to provide information on church related activities and organisations for parishioners and the wider community. The website also continues to host online services most weeks. In addition, the website contains a list of upcoming church services and news from our group of parishes, as well as downloadable versions of the parish magazine. The site will be continually developed, so if you have any submissions, suggestions or requests relating to the website, these can be sent to admin@annahiltandmagherahamlet.org.



www.annahiltandmagherahamlet.org

Parish Magazine

Any contributions for the next edition of the Parish Magazine should be left with the Rector or Roger Maxwell (roger.maxwell1@btinternet.com) by Sunday 18 January 2026.

Registered as a charity with The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland
NIC103246 (Annahilt) and NIC102122 (Magherahamlet)