

Cathedral Life



The Cathedral Church of Christ the Redeemer, Dromore

The Heart of Christmas

December 2025 & January 2026

THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF CHRIST THE REDEEMER, DROMORE



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Rector:
Very Rev Geoff Wilson, B.Th
Dean of Dromore

Pastoral Duty:
**In the event of pastoral need
or emergencies, please
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2275 or the Cathedral Office
on 9269 3968**

"I don't care how much you know....."

I remember very clearly the first time I went on a trip to Africa being asked by someone upon my return why I didn't just give the money it took to get me there to the people in need whom I was visiting. It is a good question, one which I have no doubt has been asked by many people before it was put to me. There are a number of ways in which to answer such a question, perhaps none to the satisfaction of the one posing the question. But the answer which helps me most was given by many of the people I encountered on that trip. They were utterly convinced that God loved them because why would someone from a comfortable existence in the UK leave their home and their family to travel all the way to Africa if that were not the case? There were no benefits for me to travel to Africa. I wouldn't progress in my work as a consequence. It would be a costly trip in terms of my personal financial contribution but also in terms of separation from friends, family and my home comforts. The folks we were visiting didn't need to be told any of the foregoing, they worked it out for themselves that there was sacrifice involved in making that journey. For them, that sacrifice demonstrated something very powerful; it communicated that God cared for them and that He had sent his ambassadors from the UK to communicate that love and concern in a way which words could never do.

One of the key texts which we focus on in the fast approaching season of Christmas is John 1: 1-14. Known as the prologue, it represents a deeply theological text which speaks of the love of God from the beginning

of time. But speaking of love and showing love are two quite different things. I recall once hearing someone say that they didn't care how much I knew until they knew how much I cared. In essence what they were saying was that they didn't care how well I had been trained in preaching. They didn't care how gifted a church leader I was. They didn't care how well I could explain the development of the church down through the ages. What really mattered to them was how much I cared. Once people know how much we care it earns us, in a sense, the right *"to be heard"*.

Through the incarnation, the Father not only spoke of his love, but demonstrated it profoundly by sending his one and only Son to be like one of us. John puts it this way in his prologue; *"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us."* John 1: 14a

By becoming one of us, Jesus showed that he cared about the hungry, for he knew what it was to hunger. Jesus showed that he cared about those who grieve, for he wept over the death of his friend Lazarus. Jesus showed that he cared for those who were caused to flee their homes and communities, for he became a refugee in Egypt to thwart the evil intentions of Herod. Jesus showed that he cared for family, for he entrusted his mother to the care of his friend John. Jesus showed that he cared for those who were unloved, for he reached out again and again with words of love and forgiveness, even to a thief on a cross.

That, friends, is the heart of the Christmas message. Love came down that first Christmas in a way that no one had ever really experienced before. And love continues to come down when we love as he loves us. There will be many opportunities for each of us to demonstrate that love, both in church life and in our families, places of work and communities. Perhaps you could be part of the group who will travel around the town on the evening of Tuesday 16th December singing carols to those who perhaps are no longer able to leave their homes. Perhaps you could volunteer for one hour on Friday 12th December when we have a sit out to raise much needed funds for the work of the Southern Area Hospice.

The heart of the Christmas message is that love took on flesh. Let your love for God be shown clearly this Christmas as you show how much you care.

A very peaceful Christmas and New Year to you all
Geoff

Thank you to everyone who has attended and supported our fundraising events since we started in September. It is good to see our total amount rising but still a very long way to go. As a Church family we need the support of everyone in some form to help finance the rewiring project in the Cathedral making this historic building a safe place to worship. *Jane Russell*

Events for December & January

Car Wash

Our monthly Car Wash continues on Saturday 6th December and Saturday 3rd January 9.30 - 11.15am. Last month saw us wash 40+ cars in 2 hours. Can this number be beaten? Come along and enjoy a warm cuppa and a mince pie while your car gets a Christmas wash.

If you can help with washing cars or refreshments please contact Ashley Silcock.

Afternoon Tea

Our annual Senior's Afternoon Tea is on Saturday 6th December at 2pm followed with music by Candimoon. Thank you to those who have already given their name. You can still add your name until Sunday 30th November or by contacting Jane on 0771 5707 160.

Copies of our Christmas Fireside Quiz will also be available on the afternoon priced at £2 to help you fill an hour when at home in front of the fire.

Christmas Fireside Quiz

Thank you to everyone who has purchased a Fireside Quiz to help boost funds for our fundraising project for new electrics in the Cathedral. Completed sheets are already coming in. If you would like a copy or could take 5 copies to sell for us please contact Jill in the Cathedral office or contact Jane on 0771 5707 160.

Can't Cook Won't Cook

Following the success of this event in 2024, we have been requested to repeat it again on Saturday 24th January at 7.30pm. This time our married victims (sorry contestants) will be Geoff and Naomi Wilson competing against our former Curate Geoff (Titch) and Gill Hamilton. We are very fortunate to have a special host for the evening, all the way from the Ballysallagh Road, Mr Gavin Beck, who assures me that the night will be filled with fun and laughter.

Tickets on sale from the Church Office or Vestry members from start of January priced at £10.

Annual Sit Out

Our annual sit out to support the work of Southern Area Hospice Services is going to take place between 7am and 7pm on Friday 12th December. Collections will take place at the following locations, with the kind permission of the owners:

Outside Taste Cafe, Market Square;

SuperValu Supermarket, Banbridge Road;

The work of the Southern Area Hospice continues to be very severely affected by the pandemic, so it has never been more important for us to step up and support their crucial work.

If you would like to volunteer one hour of your time in support of this cause, then please do contact Jill in the Church Office on 9269 3968.

Community Carol Service

We are delighted to be able to hold our annual Community Carol Service once more. The service will take place on Sunday 14th December at 6pm with children from St Colman's, Dromore Central Primary School and The High School singing as one choir, as well as several pieces from SOMA. Someone from the Southern Area Hospice will be sharing with us regarding the work and ministry of the Hospice and the offering on the evening will go towards supporting their work.

Carol Singing

We will meet once again for door to door Carol singing on Tuesday 16th December at 6.45pm at the Rectory. Carol singing is for the whole Church family to be part of as we seek to bless those parts of our family which may not be able to gather for acts of public worship.

If you know of anyone who may benefit from our Carol singers calling, please let Jill know in the Church Office. We will return to the Rectory for seasonal refreshments at around 8.30pm.

Bishops' Appeal Envelope

This is an opportunity for parishioners to assist the needy in the world by supporting the Church of Ireland's own Relief and Development Fund.

Funds raised are used to promote the education and relief of people in need. Funds are also available for emergencies when they occur, so that immediate relief can be sent.

Cheque payable to - Dromore Cathedral.

Please return your envelopes by the end of December.

Christmas Choir Practices

Choir Practices for our Carols by Candlelight Service on Sunday 21st December will take place on four Thursday nights - 27th November; 4th, 11th and 18th December at 7.30pm in the Upper Room, in the Clayton Memorial Hall.

If you would like to lend your voice to the choir, you will be made most welcome - just come along or speak to any member for more information. Our organist for the Carol Service will be Rev David McCarthy who will also lead our choir practices.

Nativity Service

We are looking forward to our Nativity Service on Sunday 21st December. This will be a United service at 10.45am.

Please come along to encourage our children and invite family and friends to join with us as we celebrate together.

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Mothers' Union

In the past, Mothers' Union members have been very generous in their support of Women's Aid and if you would like to help again this year, we will be gifting them with money. This will be converted by the Down and Dromore Diocese to gift vouchers so that the Women's Aid Centres in Newry and Bangor can purchase food and clothes that are needed. If you leave your donation into Jill at the Church Office or to a member of the committee, we will make sure that it is sent in time for Christmas.

Our fees for 2026 will be £30. We will collect them at our January meeting. This money is used by Mothers' Union to help with all the ongoing projects and ministry in our Diocese together with work Overseas. Information on some of the activities was included in the Autumn addition of the Mothers' Union Newsletter.

Leprosy Mission Boxes

Please return Leprosy Mission boxes to Tommy Wilson or leave in the Church Office as soon as possible. Cheque payable to Dromore Cathedral.

If you would like a Leprosy Mission Box, please get in touch with Tommy.

Clothes Recycling

Thank you to all who provided clothing for the recent recycling collection. The amount raised was **£260.50**.

We thank Ashley Silcock who organised this event.

A LOOK AT LIFE WITH THE RECYCLED TEENAGER - Black Friday

Just when we thought it was safe to go back to the jungle to watch, 'I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here', to view, with a mixture of fascination and revulsion, dubious celebs tackle the challenge of critters and unmentionable animal body parts; we find ourselves being bombarded by an unpalatable smorgasbord of advertising features. Yes, welcome to Black Friday month!

In-between bush-tucker trials and other forms of Antipodean torture (not to mention having to stomach Ant and Dec), we are being asked to digest highly complex and crafted adverts for perfumes, jewellery and technology that are primarily designed to part you from your hard-earned cash. And they work! Even Martin Lewis is warning us about the futility of spending money we don't have and getting into a Christmas quagmire of debt. Not so Happy New Year.

And don't get me started on food. The adverts for the big Supermarkets are worthy Oscar winners. They are not just selling sprouts but a complete lifestyle if you spend in their stores. And it's not just ordinary food...(you know the rest). It occurs to me therefore that Black Friday is well named as it is possibly a very sad day. As a precursor to Advent it sends out all the wrong messages about what Christmas is about.

Before someone shouts, "bah humbug", let me state for the record, I too like a bit of seasonal shopping but I am reminded as I write of another Black Friday when our Saviour sacrificed it all for us. When we focus on Christ we see beyond what this world calls Crimbo, to a promise realised and a gift that lasts well beyond Christmas. "Hark the herald angels sing, glory to the new born king".

WELCOME TO HILARY...

We are thrilled to announce that Hilary Purdy has been appointed as our new organist (job share) with effect from 1st January 2026. Hilary is a Primary 3 teacher in Annahilt Primary, is married to Ian and is no stranger to us as she has helped out during our vacancy. Hilary will be playing at 2 morning services per month and 1 evening, but will not be responsible for preparing the Choir for major festivals. We very much look forward to welcoming Hilary in due course.

AND FAREWELL TO KAREN...

And it is with a genuine note of sadness that we bid farewell to our Worship Leader at 10am, Karen Bowden. Karen has served so faithfully for somewhere in the region of a total 11 years and will be stepping back from her paid role at the end of this year, though will continue to serve in a voluntary capacity until such times as a new Worship Leader is appointed. As has been our custom, should you wish to contribute to a gift for Karen, please place your gift in an envelope marked "Karen's farewell gift" on the collection plate or drop it into the Church Office.

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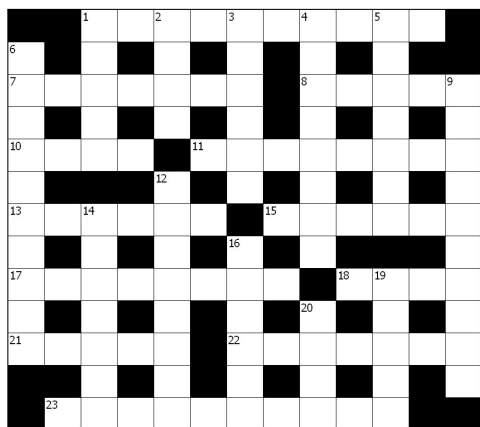
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Across

- 1 Provisional meeting place of God and the Jews (Exodus 25:9) (10)
- 7 David's third son, killed when his head got caught in a tree during a battle with his father (2 Samuel 18:14,15) (7)
- 8 They ruled much of the west coast of South America in the 15th and early 16th centuries (5)
- 10 Small deer of European and Asian extraction (4)
- 11 Seized control of (Numbers 21:25) (8)
- 13 Terror (Luke 24:5) (6)
- 15 First World War heroine shot by the Germans in Brussels, Nurse Edith (6)
- 17 Stormy (8)
- 18 A bitter variety of this, together with lamb and unleavened bread, was the Passover menu for anyone unclean (Numbers 9:11) (4)
- 21 Arson (anag.) (5)

22 How John Newton described God's grace in his well-known hymn

(7)

23 Habitation (Isaiah 27:10) (10)

Down

- 1 and see that the Lord is good (Psalm 34:8) (5)
- 2 The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as ... as a lion (Proverbs 28:1) (4)
- 3 One of the exiles, a descendant of Parosh, who married a foreign woman (Ezra 10:25) (6)
- 4 He escaped from Nob when Saul killed the rest of his family and joined David (1 Samuel 22:19,20) (8)
- 5 City and lake in Central Switzerland (7)
- 6 Offer your bodies as living , holy and pleasing to God (Romans 12:1) (10)
- 9 Pouches carried by horses (Genesis 49:14) (10)
- 12 One who accepts government by God (8)
- 14 Aromatic substance commonly used in Jewish ritual (Exodus 30:1) (7)
- 16 He asked Jesus, 'What is truth?' (John 18:38) (6)
- 19 Are (Romans 13:1) (5)
- 20 You are to give him the name Jesus, because he will ... his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21) (4)

2025 December	Flower Arranger Mrs Caroline Wallace 028 9269 3506	2026 January	Flower Arranger Mrs Sara McCorkell 028 9269 3760
7th	Mrs Mabel Hobson	4th	Mrs Kathy Chambers
14th	Mrs Barbara McKeown	11th	Mrs Margaret McAlister
21st	Mr & Mrs Harvey Wallace	18th	Mr & Mrs Roland Wallace
28th	Mrs Stephanie Shepherd	25th	In Memory of Mr Howard King

2025 December	Refreshments Rota	2026 January	Refreshments Rota
7th	C Mayne & M Mayne	4th	S & J Noble
14th	N Wilson & L Teggart	11th	E Magowan & R Wilson
21st	No Refreshments	18th	Gamble Family
28th	S Shepherd & D Martin	25th	D Farrell & H Forsythe

Refreshments Rota

If you aren't able to cover a date which you have been allocated, please either swap with someone else or contact the Cathedral Office. Thank you.

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Services for December/January

Sunday 7th December 2025

2nd Sunday of Advent	8.30am	Holy Communion
	10.00am	Cathedral Praise
	11.30am	Holy Communion
	6.00pm	Praise, Prayer & Testimony

Sunday 14th

3rd Sunday of Advent	8.30am	Holy Communion
	10.00am	Cathedral Praise & Holy Communion
	11.30am	Morning Prayer
	6.00pm	Community Carol Service

Sunday 21st

4th Sunday of Advent	8.30am	Holy Communion
	10.45am	Nativity Service
	6.00pm	Carols by Candlelight

Wednesday 24th

Christmas Eve	11.00pm	1st Communion of Christmas
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Thursday 25th

Christmas Day	10.45am	Family Christmas Celebration
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Sunday 28th

1st Sunday of Christmas	8.30am	Holy Communion
	10.00am	Cathedral Praise
	11.30am	Service of the Word
	6.00pm	Evening Epilogue Service

Wednesday 31st

11.15pm	Watchnight Service
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Sunday 4th January 2026

2nd Sunday of Christmas	8.30am	Holy Communion
	10.00am	Cathedral Praise
	11.30am	Holy Communion
	7.00pm	Real Change

Sunday 11th

1st Sunday after the Epiphany	8.30am	Holy Communion
	10.00am	Cathedral Praise
	11.30am	Morning Prayer
	6.00pm	Praise, Prayer & Testimony

Sunday 18th

2nd Sunday after the Epiphany	8.30am	Holy Communion
	10.00am	Cathedral Praise <i>with</i> HC
	11.30am	Service of the Word
	7.00pm	Real Change

Sunday 25th

3rd Sunday after the Epiphany	8.30am	Holy Communion
	10.45am	United Service
	7.00pm	Real Change

PARISH REGISTER

CHRISTIAN BURIAL

28th November Harry Silcock, Banbridge Road, Kinallen

“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. They are blessed indeed, says the Spirit, for they rest from their labours.”

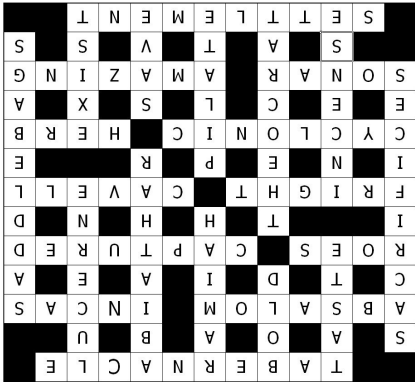
Church Collections: October

GENERAL FUND	2025/26	2024/25
October	8,653.50	8,321.00
Total to date	£60,436.40	£60,560.90
DEVELOPMENT FUND		
October	1,028.00	1,003.00
Total to date	£6,593.00	£5,745.80

Attention all Magazine Distributors

The February edition of our magazine will be ready for collection and distribution on **Friday 30th January** with items for inclusion to be with Jill in the office by **Friday 23rd January at 1pm**. Items can be sent to Jill by emailing - dromorecathedral@outlook.com

SOLUTION



DECEMBER AND JANUARY DATES

December 2025

Monday 1st	7.30	Parish Prayer Meeting	Clayton Hall
Tuesday 2nd	10.30	Craft Class (each Tuesday)	Clayton Hall
Wednesday 3rd	7.00	Pickleball	Cathedral Hall
Thursday 4th	2.00	Monthly Service	Mountvale Nursing Home
Thursday 4th	7.30	Christmas Choir Practice	Clayton Hall
Friday 5th	6.15	Kingdom Kids Christmas Party	Cathedral Hall
Saturday 6th	9.30	Car Wash	Cathedral Hall
Saturday 6th	2.00	Seniors' Afternoon Tea	Cathedral Hall
Tuesday 9th	7.30	Contemplative Prayer	Clayton Hall
Wednesday 10th	7.00	Pickleball	Cathedral Hall
Wednesday 10th	7.30	Parish Bible Class	Clayton Hall
Thursday 11th	7.30	Christmas Choir Practice	Clayton Hall
Friday 12th	7am - 7pm	Annual Sit-Out	Taste Café/SuperValu
Monday 15th	7.30	Select Vestry Meeting	Clayton Hall
Tuesday 16th	6.45	Carol Singing	The Rectory
Thursday 18th	7.30	Christmas Choir Practice	Clayton Hall
Thursday 18th	7.30	High School Carols by Candlelight	Cathedral
Tuesday 23rd	7.30	Contemplative Prayer	Clayton Hall

January 2026

Saturday 3rd	9.30	Car Wash	Cathedral Hall
Sunday 4th	7.00	Real Change	Clayton Hall
Monday 5th	7.30	Parish Prayer Meeting	Clayton Hall
Tuesday 6th	10.30	Craft Class (each Tuesday)	Clayton Hall
Monday 12th	10.00	First Steps (each Monday)	Cathedral Hall
Tuesday 13th	7.30	Contemplative Prayer	Clayton Hall
Wednesday 14th	7.30	Parish Bible Class	Clayton Hall
Sunday 18th	7.00	Real Change	Clayton Hall
Monday 19th	7.30	Select Vestry Meeting	Clayton Hall
Saturday 24th	7.30	Ready Steady Cook	Cathedral Hall
Sunday 25th	7.00	Real Change	Clayton Hall
Tuesday 27th	7.30	Contemplative Prayer	Clayton Hall
Wednesday 28th	7.30	Mothers' Union Meeting	Clayton Hall



The Cathedral Church of Christ the Redeemer, Dromore

Contact details for Staff and Office Bearers



Rector: Very Revd Geoff Wilson, 28 Church Street, Dromore BT25 1AA 028 9269 2275
email: revgeoffwilson@gmail.com Mobile: 07808 844637

Lay Pastoral Assistant: Carolyn Jackson 07791 935801

Office: Jill Wylie, Cathedral Office, 30 Church St, Dromore BT25 1AA 028 9269 3968
e-mail: jill@dromorecathedral.co.uk or dromorecathedral@outlook.com

Organist: Hilary Purdy (commencing 1st January 2026)

Praise Group: Karen Bowden e-mail: karenbowden@me.com 0780 094 1256

Sexton: Jim McComb 028 9269 3968

Children's & Youth Worker: Christine Shanks 028 9269 3968

e-mail: dromore.youth.children@gmail.com

Parish Panel: Very Revd Geoff Wilson 028 9269 2275

Robert Beggs 0777 1607914 : Sue Pegrum 028 9269 3280

Please contact the Office to request the setting up of a Standing Order, the issue of Weekly Envelopes or Cathedral Life, and for queries about Hall Bookings, Record Searches, Adverts, etc

Select Vestry 2025-2026

Churchwardens: Suzanne Watson (Rector's) Brian Hanna (People's)

Glebewardens: Ian Purdy (Rector's) Bill Forsythe (People's)

Vestry Members: Edgar Boggs, Andrew Carson, Rebekah Davidson (Honorary Secretary), George Gracey, Nan McMurray (Honorary Treasurer), Andrew McNeill, Robert Poots, Hilary Purdy, Jane Russell, Ashley Silcock, Leanne Teggart, Alan Turkington.

Honorary Secretary: Mrs Rebekah Davidson, 30 Church Street, Dromore, Co Down BT25 1AA
email: rebekah.down@gmail.com TN 028 9269 3838

Honorary Treasurer: Miss Nan McMurray 10 Pines Grove, Lurgan, Craigavon BT66 7PE
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When: Most Wednesdays 7pm - 9pm

Where: The Cathedral Hall

Who: All Adults welcome



We'll provide all the equipment - just come along in comfortable clothes and trainers and give it a go.

Contact Leanne on 07933 885996 for further info.

RE-WIRING OF CATHEDRAL

At time of writing this note, we still haven't appointed a contractor to carry out the essential work of re-wiring our historic Cathedral, though the Select Vestry would be of the mind to commence this work as early in the New Year as possible. During the works, services will take place in the Cathedral Hall for at least a 12 week period with one service taking place at 10.45am each Sunday. Please see this as an opportunity for us to worship together more regularly rather than a reason to stay at home. I would ask everyone to be particularly understanding and gracious during this period of disruption for all of us. Our service schedule on page 11 reflects our normal rhythm of worship. Please note that there will be no evening Epilogue Service during January or February.

PRAISE, PRAYER & TESTIMONY

Praise, Prayer & Testimony will take place on the Sunday 7th December in the Cathedral with Peter Branker sharing something of his experiences in Zanzibar following his recent trip. Peter has visited Zanzibar on a number of occasions and intends to spend an extended period there in 2026.

And Melanie Bond will be sharing something of her faith journey on the evening of Sunday 11th January 2026, either in the Cathedral or the Cathedral Hall, depending on whether the rewiring works will have commenced at that time. Melanie has a ladies boutique in Bridge St, Dromore and is a member of the Elim Church here in the town.

REAL CHANGE - becoming more like Jesus in everyday life

Some exciting news! In the first part of 2026, on Sunday evenings (see dates below), we are planning on going through Real Change, a six-session course that helps churches and Christian groups pursue biblical, gospel-centred, heart-focused change.

Based on CCEF's (Christian Counselling and Educational Foundation) Dynamics of Biblical Change, Real Change is ideal for anyone who wants to grow to be more like Jesus. It is a course for anyone who wants to find out how the gospel changes us from the inside out – for anyone who wants to take a look at what is going on in their heart and grow with God's help to see real change.

Introduction: In Real Change we will learn more about how God changes us. It is an opportunity to grow in faith, in love, and in hope. Whether we are new Christians or mature, we all have areas of our lives which need transforming. All of us have hearts that go astray; all of us face troubles that weigh on us. But Christ meets us where we are, in the places where we struggle. Some of us tend towards anger or impatience, others towards jealousy or discontent. Some of us struggle with addictions and, in different ways, all of us still harbour pride in our hearts. God is not planning on leaving us this way!

God promises to work patiently with us in the midst of our waywardness and our woes. Faith meets God in the very place of honest struggle with sin and affliction. His mercy and grace change us in ways that are truly beautiful and joyous. We can trust the words of Phil 1:6 "I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ." God is going to bring to completion the good work He has already begun in us. But how does this process of change work?

Each week the Bible Study, reflection, and discussion in Real Change will help us understand how God works with us. We will reflect on our own hearts. We will reflect on life's hardships. We will reflect on God's mercies. And we will come to better understand how our Saviour meets us in our particular life situation. (Any group reflection will be in pairs, the same pair each week)

Real change is not a self-improvement project that we do entirely on our own. We grow nearer to God by His direct working and by the encouragement and prayers of other people. If you are interested in being part of Real Change, please let Geoff or Carolyn know and they ensure that a guest manual is ordered for you. Each evening will commence at 7pm in the Clayton Hall with a cup of tea/coffee and will begin on Sunday 4th January 2026 continuing on the 18th, 25th January, 8th, 15th and 22nd February. Everyone is really welcome to come along.



Dromore Cathedral is the Parish Church serving the Dromore and Kinallen areas and a Cathedral of the Diocese of Down and Dromore in the Church of Ireland.

Registered with The Charity Commission for NI - NIC101679

Cathedral Life