

# HOLY WEEK 2016

## MONDAY

7.00pm St Patrick's Church of Ireland

## TUESDAY

7.00pm Whitehead Congregational Church

## SPY WEDNESDAY

7.00pm Whitehead Baptist Church

## MAUNDY THURSDAY

7.00pm Whitehead Methodist Church (*Holy Communion*)

## GOOD FRIDAY

12.00 St Patrick's Church of Ireland "*Three Hours at the Cross*"

6.30pm Whitehead Presbyterian Church *Tenebrae Service*

8.00pm St John's Church of Ireland, Islandmagee

## RESURRECTION SUNDAY

6.30am Dawn Service @ Blackhead Car Park followed by bacon butties, tea and worship in WPC

10.30am WMC Service of Reception into Full Membership and Holy Communion

12.00pm IMC Sacrament of Holy Communion for Easter morning

*Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross*

*Therefore, God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

*Philippians 2: 6-11*

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"Easter is early this year" as I've heard many folk say over the past couple of weeks. It seems no time at all since we were on the Advent journey towards Christmas and the birth of Emmanuel "*God with us*". Yet here we are, thinking of that same Emmanuel going on another journey, the journey towards Jerusalem – the *Via Dolorosa* and *Golgotha*.

Just as throughout Advent we are asked to count ourselves among "*the people who walked in darkness [who] have seen a great light*" (Isaiah 9:2), now we are asked to accompany Christ on the downward journey toward sacrifice. To make ourselves less so that he can be more. To allow our hands to embrace the roughness of the cross, to feel the weight on our shoulder, the difficulty of the path's surface beneath our feet; we pray with Jesus in Gethsemane "*Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.*" (Luke 22:42)

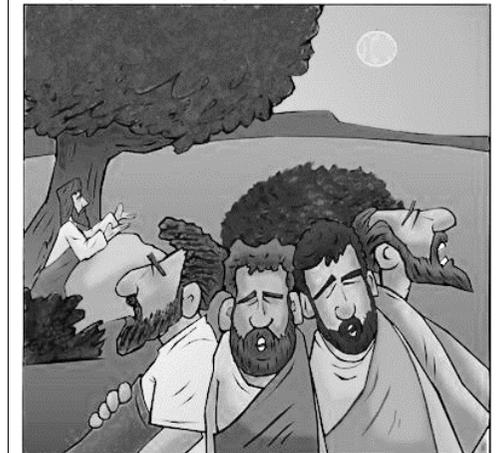
"*Drinking the cup,*" wrote Henri Nouwen, "*is the way to salvation. It is a hard, painful way, a way we want to avoid at all costs. Often it even seems an impossible way. Still, unless we are willing to drink our cup, real freedom will elude us*" (Can You Drink the Cup? H Nouwen, pg 91). The cup is the cup of our lives together. It is the boldness of loving people enough to join in their struggles. This is the cup Jesus offers us, to drink deeply and abundantly of our lives together, to feel outrageous love for each other and to live that out at the cost of walking together through hardship. The cup is not the trophy of sitting pleasantly to either side of Jesus in his glory.

Jesus' glory is the community we make with each other, when we share equally in the bread of life, when we drink deeply together of the cup. This is the cup of our lives together.

And the good news is, none of us is alone on this journey. Jesus has already drunk this cup. This year please accept this invitation to join with members of churches across Whitehead and Islandmagee throughout Holy Week and Easter to consider how we will drink the cup together.

God bless, *Gary*.

### The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



Jesus told his disciples to "WATCH AND PRAY" .. and the time honored tradition of sleeping in church was born. Mt. 26:36-46