

Church of

# St Columbanus

Parish of Ballyholme

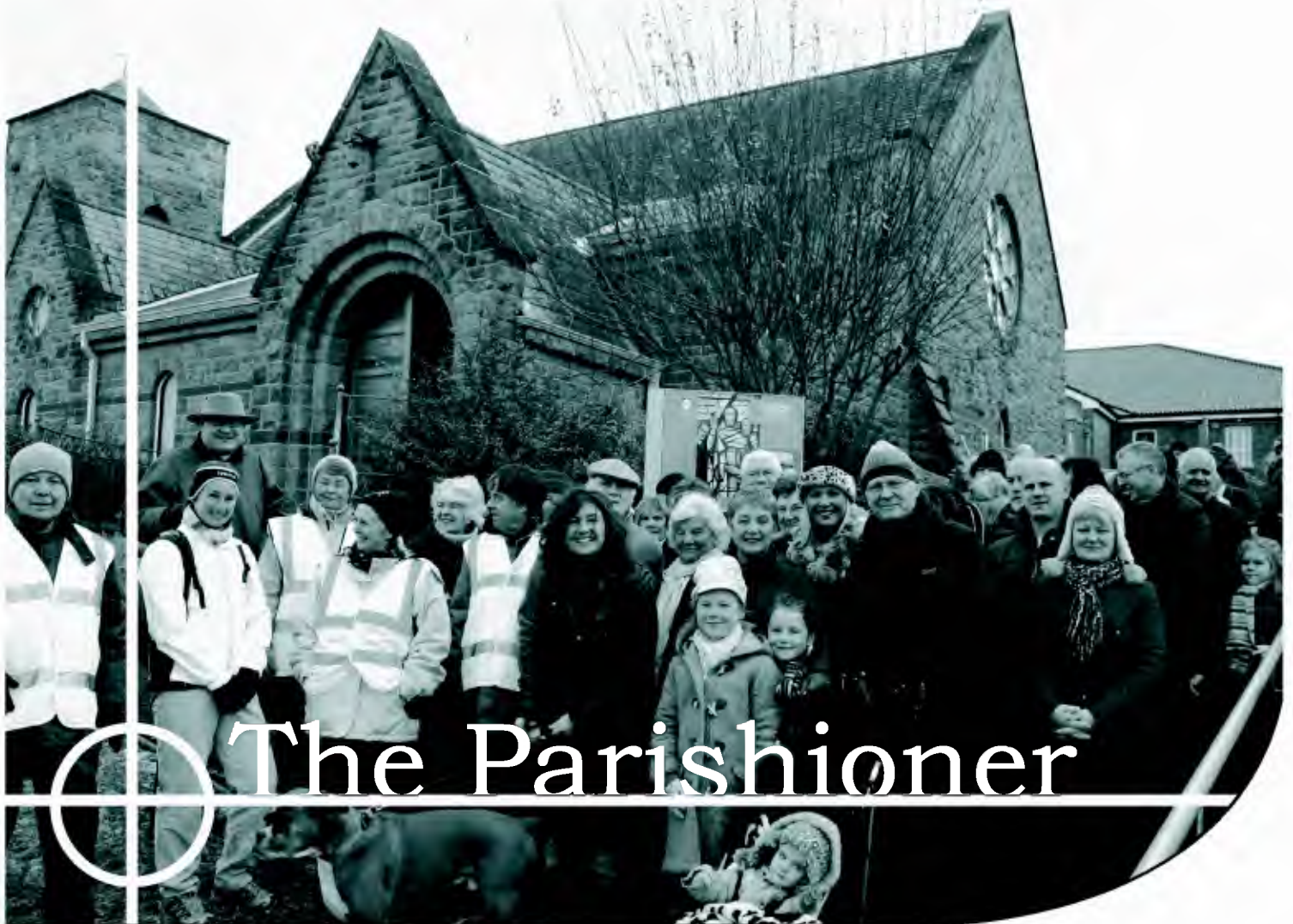


February 2010



## Festive Photos

Catch up  
on pages 4 & 5



The Parishioner

The Church is open every weekday morning for private prayer and meditation

# In This Issue

♦ **Football Crazy**  
One Senior too many!  
Page 3

♦ **Festive Photos**  
From the carol singing around Ballyholme to the Nativity Play in church, Christmas in pictures at St. Columbanus.  
Pages 4 & 5

♦ **Parish Profile**  
Chris Harte: Much more than a Geography teacher.  
Page 6

♦ **Children's Church**  
All you need to know, and with pictures!  
Pages 7, 8 & 9

♦ **Home and Away**  
Dave catches up with the parish youth.  
Page 14

♦ **Front Cover**  
This month's cover shows the walkers about to depart on the annual New Year's Day walk.  
Photo by Don Todd.

♦ **Magazine Contact email:**  
office@ballyholmeparish.co.uk

## The Rambling Rector



If you want to stop people eating chips, don't put salad on the menu. So say scientists at Duke University in North Carolina whose researchers are calling this phenomenon 'vicarious goal fulfilment': apparently just seeing salad on the menu makes people feel they've done their dietary duty, and that they can therefore now reward themselves with a tasty but unhealthy dish! It's left me wondering could the same apply where God and Church are concerned. Should we drape a tarpaulin over St Columbanus during the day and switch off the floodlights at night just in

case, for some people, driving past feels enough? Actually at a personal level, it raises a far more serious and searching question than that for me. My week is filled with what I hope is the work and service of God: the visits, the conversations, the meetings. But if my chief end or goal is 'to worship God and enjoy Him for ever' (the phrase most of us know well from the Westminster Confession), what may be distracting me from that goal in the menu of fluster and busyness that is my ministerial life? What's distracting you?

SED



## Operation Christmas Child: Shoe-Box Appeal

On behalf of The Samaritan's Purse many thanks to everyone who filled a shoe-box for a needy child this Christmas. It gives these children great joy to receive their box filled with some useful things and some toys and sweets. They are amazed that someone thinks about them and takes the trouble to send these boxes with love. This year we collected 165 boxes and they are on their way to Belarus where they will be distributed.

If anyone would like to have some information on how to fill a shoe-box next Christmas please get in touch with me on 91460050  
Once again many thanks.

Carole Caruth



## Book Review

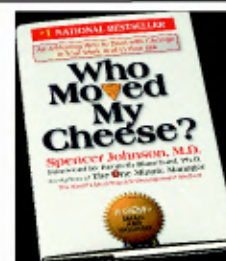
Who Moved my Cheese?  
by Dr Spencer Johnson

Have you ever awakened to find that your 'Cheese' (a metaphor for what you want to have in life) has been moved? This book relates a simple parable, written for all ages, which takes less than an hour to read, but its unique insights can last a lifetime. The plot involves four imaginary characters - the mice Sniff and Scurry, and the little people Hem and Haw - they all live in a maze. As the story unfolds we learn how the

mice and the little people search for 'Cheese' and the diverse ways in which they deal with change.

If you are going through change in different areas of your life, this quote from A J Cronin is appropriate "but always, if we have faith, God will open a door for us, not perhaps one that we ourselves would ever have thought of, but one that will ultimately prove good for us". Lorna McClelland

Published by G.P Putnam's Sons at rrp £5.99 (paperback).



## LE JEU AVANT TOUT

Boxing Day morning was cool, bright and sunny, and conditions were perfect for the football extravaganza of the annual match between the Youth Fellowship and the Slightly Older Fellowship. Both teams had been training, practising and dieting for the past year to have themselves in peak condition for the match. Those readers who think they detect a certain irony in the last sentence need to be disabused of that notion.

It is true that the Man.Utd fanatic, Bishop in waiting and player manager who instigated this match many years ago liked to surround himself with players even older than himself. But all has now changed. Simon, the new, strictly non playing manager and cricket aficionado, prefers to pick a younger and more athletic team of players who have recently moved up from the YF, while the remaining Peter Pan wannabes, Robbie, Alan, Julio and recent signings Brian, Michael H and Jim retain enough skill to produce a few oases of calm in the midst of the generally increased tempo of the game. This new selection policy, while robbing spectators of the perverse pleasure of watching ageing limbs trying to repeat the vaguely remembered skills and movements of their youth even though the message from the brain just fails to get through, at least provides a sport easily recognisable as football. Indeed, this year's match proved to be one of the most entertaining and skilful encounters of this long running series.

There were goal scoring chances right from the start when Jaime shot just over the bar for the YF. In reply Michael H had an excellent shot well saved by Connor. Then despite calls for offside Stephen Jnr. resplendent in his bright red Santa Claus boots, was understandably allowed to play on by his refereeing father Stephen Snr, but again Connor saved. However, the seniors took the lead after fifteen minutes when Stephen's corner was headed in for an unfortunate own goal. The YF had a chance to hit back when Julio picked the ball up after confusing the line on the edge of the penalty box with the touchline! But Dave's free kick from the edge of the penalty box was safely charged down and then Graeme was unlucky to see a clever lob hit the top of the bar. The Older Fellowship

produced the best movement of the match passing the ball across the pitch via Stephen, Ryan and young Jonathan, only to see Kris' fine shot again superbly saved by Connor. Adam then saw his lob



just clear the bar before the player manager Dave scored a wonderful deserved equaliser for the YF by curling the ball into the top corner from the edge of the penalty box. The match remained even until the stroke of half time, when Ryan got his toe to the ball just ahead of the keeper to allow Kris to poke the ball over the line from two yards out to restore the lead for the Elderly Fellowship.

As the whistle blew for half time, team manager, Simon, showing his complete confidence in his selection made his appearance to see how things were going.

The start of the second half saw Connor continue to earn the man of the match award, with another excellent save, pushing Brian's fierce shot over the bar, but then the YF seemed to get their second wind. Sam made a strong run down the left and his cross was met with a text book downward header by Graeme for a fine equalising goal. They almost took the lead when Matty had a long range shot well saved but it was the senior team who eventually clinched the match when good work on the right by Jonathan saw the ball moved to Brian who finished sharply from ten yards out.

The YF had opportunities to save the match in the last ten minutes squandering two presentable chances from close range, leaving player manager Dave Benitez with a better understanding of his Uncle Rafa's problems in producing a winning team. However, he should not be too disappointed as the senior team had cunningly played with an extra man for the whole match!

This was a really enjoyable match for all present, with goal mouth incidents, moments of skill and a tempo with some real blood and thunder, replacing the thud and blunder of the early matches of this series.

Our thanks go to the players and spectators for a good morning's fun, Sue for washing the kit and to the referee Stephen Snr, whose affable and masterly performance justified Sepp Blatter's refusal to use camera technology in the World Cup.

WMB





### Festive Photos

- Carol Singing and Lights Switch-on
- Boxing Day Football Teams
- New Year's Day Walk
- Sit In & Carry Out
- Nativity Play



## Chris is “in the pink” after retiring

After a teaching career which spanned 37 eventful years at Bangor Grammar School, Chris Harte finally hung up his gown and mortar board last year.

A former pupil of Belfast Royal Academy, where his own father taught for many years, Chris cheerfully admitted that when he completed his studies at the school he didn't have a “game plan” as to what he wanted to do next. However, he was sure that he wanted to attend Trinity College, Dublin, following in the footsteps of his father and older siblings. A suggestion from the school's then vice principal that he should think about studying Law struck a chord with him as his maternal grandfather had been a solicitor in Cavan. So, off he headed to Trinity where, halfway through his law degree, it dawned on him that he really wanted to teach. “It was in the blood” he commented.

As a child of seven Chris discovered what was to become a lifelong passion for cricket. Although he loved most sports he says he was “hooked” on cricket, first playing on the sands at Annalong on summer holidays. At Trinity College, he became known as a talented sportsman

and won a ‘pink’ - the Trinity equivalent of an Oxford blue and the nickname by which he has been affectionately known ever since. Chris played for the North Leinster hockey team and went on to win 20 caps playing for Ireland, a time he looks back on with great affection.

After graduating in Law, Chris went on to do his Dip Ed at Trinity and was fortunate to be appointed resident master at the prestigious Wesley College in Dublin. By coincidence, his eldest son Jonathan is now a teacher there. In 1972, Chris was appointed to BGS and, in the course of his career, has taught History, Latin, Law, Mathematics and the subject which was his greatest love, Geography. Paying tribute to Chris in this year's edition of the school magazine, headmaster Stephen Connolly wrote. “He proved to be a simply natural, instinctive teacher with an exuberant

enthusiasm for knowledge and an innate ability to share it”. And he added, “There were occasions, I daresay, when he actually managed to stick to the prescribed curriculum or the recommended schemes of work but, otherwise, he ranged far and wide across the *vasty fields* of knowledge taking with him his more or less willing disciples.”

In 1992, the opportunity of a lifetime came up to go to New Zealand on a teacher exchange which came about through contacts he made after an earlier cricket tour. “I had always wanted to go there and I loved my time there on tour. I just felt very comfortable out there,” he recalled. The whole family upped sticks and went, and as Chris explained, the two boys,

Jonathan and Michael and their sister Jennifer were luckily at stages in their schooling where they were not affected too much by the upheaval. His wife Ann also gave up her job in an estate agency.

It was the experience of a lifetime and since then they have been back to NZ several times and have also hosted visitors from there. Sport has taken him to many different parts of the world and given him many life enriching experiences and he has a fund of interesting

anecdotes about his travels and family background.

Ironically it was his great passion for cricket that also caused him tremendous pain when he ruptured his Achilles tendon last August while playing for Bangor. This led to a long period of recuperation and also some heart-searching.

“I'm now in a dilemma as to whether I dare try again to play cricket. It would be a big wrench to give it up. I only gave up hockey at the age of 37,” he added.

Also, frustratingly for Chris, the injury curtailed his visits to St Columbanus where he has been a member for many years. “I wouldn't say I was the most devout or religious person but I have always enjoyed going to church,” said Chris.

However, he is looking forward to being back in church and also to spending more time with his first grandchild Elijah, born last year.



## Children's Church

Everyone who was there will agree that this year's 'Christmas Cameos' service on 20th December was a joy from start to finish. But not only did it represent several weeks of hard work by the young people and leaders of Children's Church, it also came after three and a half months of hard work behind the scenes to breathe new Spiritual life and new organisational shape into Children's Church. We thought we would take this opportunity to bring you up to date on some of the most important changes.



### Leaders

Up until June 2008 Children's Church was led Sunday by Sunday by a dedicated team of junior youth leaders and we want to thank God for all that these wonderful young people continue to do so faithfully for our children, week by week. In September of that year some parents expressed an interest in getting involved but as the weeks progressed it became increasingly apparent that in order to reach its full potential more of our Children's Church mums and dads and many other adults with brilliant gifts to offer needed to be encouraged to step up to the plate, not only to help with supervision and 'crowd control' but with the delivering of the Sunday programme itself. Slowly but surely it seems to have dawned on us that since we are members of one Christian family in St Columbanus all of us have a part to play in teaching our children the love of Jesus. Arguably the single most basic change is that while the junior youth leaders continue to take a vital and central weekly role, in a new and very real sense our Children's Church is now adult led with many parents playing a fundamental role.



To date the clergy have been able to process more than 25 Access NI/Safeguarding Trust applications so that in their turn lots of adults can now lend a practical hand on Sunday mornings. This number will grow as Simon and Stephen are able to call at more and more homes but we hope to reach a position before long where every family with a child in Children's Church is taking its share of responsibility for Children's Church. Of course the more volunteers we have on board the less frequently we will need to call upon them, but what this system will really require to make it work is organisation. With that in mind we are pleased to present our new Ballyholme Children's Church 'Backroom Grannies'!

### Backroom Grannies



The Rector is to blame for this title though both the ladies concerned are grannies and pleased to be known as such! Joan Dales and Heather Copelton have agreed to give us the organisational and administrative support which is so key to our new structure. They will manage the rotas, distribute the materials, remind the volunteers each week when it's their turn and order the *Scripture Union* resources as asked to do so. They will also oversee a central attendance roll and keep our Youth Co-ordinator and Clergy informed about dates and any practical needs or problems as they arise.



Children's Church currently breaks down into three groups: 'Bubbles' for pre-school & P1, 'Splash' for P2, P3 & P4 and 'Ice' for P5, P6 & P7. Each group has 2 key leaders, one upfront assisted by at least one adult helper (depending on the size of the group) and obviously it is preferable if parents aren't involved with groups containing their own children. While the assistant helpers are drawn from the long list of volunteers, in order to give the children continuity the key leader role is taken on by two people for the full September-June season.

However - and crucially - this is for one year only. These two people alternate as it suits them (Sunday on, Sunday off or month on, month off) but, allowing for Christmas, Easter and other holidays and on the basis that they share out the Sundays more or less equally, it works out at roughly 20 Sundays in the year. By any standard this is not an onerous commitment and we hope that adults and parents will be glad to take their turn as key leaders for the year when the opportunity comes knocking!



### Festival Task Force!

As of July 2009 we have been greatly blessed by a team of ten Primary School teachers working in four groups to prepare the children for visual/musical presentations in Church on the Sunday mornings leading up to Harvest, Christmas, Easter and the end of the year. On these Sundays the *Scripture Union* materials are not used and no lesson is prepared or led by the regular Sunday leaders' team. So far we have all enjoyed seeing and hearing from the children in Church at Harvest and Christmas and the arrangement seems to be working well for all concerned.

### Sunday Crèche

As new arrangements for Children's Church were being put in place it was brought to our attention by some of the mums that Sunday Crèche also needed some re-organisation. First and foremost Mrs Violet Davidson (Tilly & Frank Tweedie's Granny!) offered her services as our new guardian of the rota. Rather like the Children's Church Backroom Grannies, Violet will be the one who organises the list of helpers for Sunday mornings and gets in touch to remind people that it is their turn that week. Like Heather and Joan, as well as being a mum and a grandmother Violet is also a natural administrator and we are extremely glad to have her co-ordinating things for us.



### Venue

There was also a basic concern about the suitability of the Choir Room as our venue. Since the Thursday morning Mothers and Toddlers Group already meets in the Columbanus Room and since this room already has a well-stocked toy cupboard, there seemed to be an obvious solution. A few emails later the Children's Church 'Ice' group which had been using the Columbanus Room were happy to relocate to the Kajiado Room and the folks on the coffee rota were happy to set up for refreshments in front of the glass doors rather than behind them - in the foyer itself in other words. Our thanks to both very gracious groups of people for being so willing to work around us.

Just like with Children's Church, from now on our plan will be to incorporate as many mums and dads into the Sunday Crèche rota as possible. All the parents bringing children for baptism are now being asked by the clergy to add their name to the Crèche list and to undergo the Access



NI/Safeguarding Trust child protection procedure so that as the Ballyholme baby boom continues so we hope the list of Crèche volunteers will also grow. While the noise of children in Church is always a welcome addition to worship at 10 o'clock we all know how self-conscious some parents feel on a Sunday morning when their little ones get restless. Obviously the ideal would be to create some provision within the Church building itself so that no one feels the need to leave the main worship space. For now the new-improved floor-space of the Columbanus Room will have to do!



## Vision & Prayer

As with all aspects of Church life, the success and growth of Children's Church and Crèche in Ballyholme depend on the vision and prayer behind them.

In terms of the vision, and in no particular order, we want both Children's Church and Crèche to be safe, to be fun, to be a loving, learning environment and to be fully connected to the wider life of the parish family. We want our children to discover something real about God and His call on our lives and in an atmosphere where it's okay to think and ask questions. We want Children's Church specifically to build on the best of the classic Sunday School model but we want it to be vibrant and growing, something our children enjoy and remember fondly through adulthood. We also want our leaders - Mums, Dads, adult and junior Leaders - to be people who care about our children finding their place in God's world.

In terms of prayer, please add yours to ours:

Father, we pray for all the children of our Parish.  
 Help them to know You as their heavenly Father.  
 Show them the reality of Your love in the person of Jesus.  
 Help them to learn to serve You and to share You by Your Spirit.  
 Give them courage to be true to You and to themselves,  
 with other people and at school.  
 Bless them, that they may be joyful members of our Church family  
 and grow into the fullness of life for ever with You. Amen

## Sunday Practicalities: Registration & Pick-Up!

There are certain essential elements to children's ministry these days which require us to be better prepared and organised for our young people than ever before. Registration forms are key: before any child can be left in our care we need to hold written permission from parents along with full contact details and any essential medical information. While setting this up at the beginning can take time it makes keeping track of attendance much easier for everybody. Also, while the drop-off is important, the collection of children afterwards is equally so. Officially, Children's Church and Crèche end when Church ends. This means that parents must pick up their children on their way to coffee rather than leave them to run around the parish centre unsupervised. Thank you for your co-operation with this!



Most of what we have outlined above first emerged from our discussion night with parents about youth and children's ministry back in September. The full feedback from that meeting is now available to view on the Parish website: [www.ballyholmeparish.co.uk](http://www.ballyholmeparish.co.uk)

## ST COLUMBANUS WALKERS



### CHRISTMAS OUTING AND DINNER

Nineteen walkers gathered on a beautiful December morning for our train ride to Helen's Bay and walk back via the coastal path to Bangor. After all the cold weather the day was surprisingly mild but with the beaches and rivers showing evidence of the heavy rain the night before. The first part of our day finished in late morning with coffee and scones in the Heritage Centre. We were delighted to welcome new members Colin and Joy Honeyford. Everyone then slipped home, changed out of walking gear, and reconvened in Coyles Bistro in the early evening. Our numbers rose to twenty seven at this stage as we were joined for a superb meal by members of the group who had been unable to make it to Helen's Bay.

### Snow at Scrabo and Killynether

The Walkers' first outing of the New Year was scheduled for the Sperrins but due to the extremely chilly weather conditions we decided to stay nearer home and instead headed for Newtownards and Scrabo Hill.

Eleven intrepid souls gathered at 08.30 in the Church Car Park and made their way without difficulty to Newtownards. From the base of Scrabo however the roads became noticeably icy resulting in one of our cars refusing to climb the steep hill to Scrabo Golf Club. Seeing this the others parked at the bottom rather than make the attempt and fortunately with de-icing salt and willing shovellers the stranded car was able to manoeuvre to the car park.

Soon the walk was underway taking us first through the great sandstone quarries which in times gone had boasted their own mini railway and sent stone for the construction of public buildings all over the UK. Then on to the Tower itself with its magnificent views as far as the H&W cranes, Scotland and Strangford Lough, obscured only briefly by a passing snow shower from the North East. From the hilltop the last leg of our journey took us through the ancient woodlands of Killynether taking extra care not to slide or slither on snowy paths compacted by the feet of other passing walkers.

Safe and sound we made it to our traditional coffee stop enjoying, among other things, chocolate orange scones and exchanging New Year greetings as we parted looking forward to our next walk on Saturday 6 February to the Fairy Glen near Rostrevor.

Why not join us on the 6<sup>th</sup>. Meet in the Church Car Park at 08.45 and bring a packed lunch. More Information from Betty 91465372 or Leslie 91466689.



### House Group Quiz Night

It was an evening of hilarity and questionable knowledge (for some teams!) when the house groups got together in early December for

wine and cheese and quiz. Question master Roy Darragh ran a tight ship and 'phone a friend' was banned, all contributing to a great evening.

### WANTED MONDAY COFFEE MORNING HELPERS

Many hands make light work! If you fancy a great start to the week, Karen could do with some help for the Monday coffee mornings. The more the merrier on her rota would mean you would be needed less often. Please ring Sue in the office if you feel you could lend an occasional hand.



### CHRISTMAS GOLF OUTING

On Wednesday 29th December, 24 hardy souls, including the Rector, turned up to do battle at Helen's Bay Golf Club. The course was successful for some, and the winners were:-

Ladies: 1st Jem Moran Men: 1st Chris King



A good and testing time was had by all despite the stormy weather, and surely helped to get rid of



some of the Christmas excess! The next outing will take place in the Spring possibly at Donaghadee Golf Club. More details will be available later but I can be contacted either at home at 91467275, or on my mobile 07790520916. Harry Browne

### Women's World Day of Prayer


The 2010 Service for the Ballyholme/Groomsport Area will be held on Friday **morning**, 5<sup>th</sup> March in Ballyholme Methodist Church at 11.00 a.m. Tea/coffee will be served in the Hall adjacent to the Church from 10.00 a.m.

The speaker at the Service this year will be Mrs Eileen Kerr, wife of the Rev. David Kerr. The Ballyholme School Choir will lead the worship.

This year's service is prepared by Christian Women of Cameroon.

Ballyholme Parish Representatives:-  
Ruth Ruttle Tel. 91450130  
Yvonne Manogue Tel. 91469707

### The Wednesday Club

 So disappointing that last month's meeting had to be cancelled, but I am sure that by the first Wednesday in February (3rd) the weather will have improved, and we will all be raring to go! See you then. Sue

### General Vestry

The Register of Vestrymen and women is now open for revision. Forms for registration can be obtained from the parish office, or from the church wardens. The register will close on February 18th at the Select Vestry meeting.

### The Beavers

Last term Beavers had a fun filled time making crafts and going on outings. Amongst other things they assisted North Down Borough Council planting trees in Castle Park. Some of the Beavers also attended Guys and Dolls to watch their leaders tread the boards. This year the annual Beaver and Cub carol service was held in our church and was kindly organised by the Cub leaders Sylvia, Susan, Gordon, Nicky and Elaine. Three of the Beavers, Rory Wood, Jason McKenzie and Nathan Dellar each read a prayer during the service. They can be seen in the picture together with some of the hampers which were donated to the Simon Community.



### Carry Out, Sit In

Over 100 people enjoyed a great evening's "Carry Out and Sit In" in the beautifully decorated Parish Centre in late December. Sam Johnston and his band provided top class



jazz with a guest appearance by Allen Foye. Well done Tim and Jane Smyth!

### Hospital and Sick Calls

The pastoral staff can only respond to information received. Please always get in touch when a family member or friend is taken unwell and would be glad of a visit - especially if they have been admitted to hospital. We would rather be told several times than not know at all. Equally, so no one has a wasted trip, it's extremely helpful to hear from you when your loved ones have been safely discharged home.



## CHRISTMAS IN KIWOKO

Carol singing in English and Lugandan, little girls with braided hair in pretty dresses, Christmas gifts of kitchen soap and sugar to patients, new born babes, nativity plays, people praising God because it was raining and finding a mango in my Christmas stocking! - just some memories of Christmas 2009 at Kiwoko Hospital, Uganda. Church prayers on Christmas Day started with thanks for Christ's birth, and then for the rain. The rest of the prayers were drowned out by the rain on the roof! It was great to experience a Christmas where the birth of Christ was the centre of the celebrations. For many finding the money to buy a little special food was a problem. My Christmas dinner was a feast on a small farm - rice, matoke (steamed cooking banana), beef stew and for us special guests, some chicken also. Everyone ate with their fingers but Denise and I were given forks! The family were so happy just to be eating together. Greetings to you from the hospital staff and the congregation of St John's. Thanks to those who gave diaries and calendars to take out. They were gratefully received.

*Christine Wilson aka Mama Rory and from April to be known as JaJa (granny).*

PS Many will remember that some years ago I collected wedding dresses which are now well used in Kiwoko. Some appeared in the Nativity plays as costumes for Mary and the Angel Gabriel!



William (Estates Manager), Rev Michael (Kiwoko), Ken Finch, Rev. Livingstone (Luwero), Mama Rory, Denise, Rogers (Personnel Manager)

## Visit of Rev. Dr. Pat Mollan

In November over 70 House Group members and friends took part in the four week



course on Prayer Ministry and the consensus was that "It was good for our souls!"

Pat was ordained in 1997 and after serving as curate in the parishes of Aghalee, Glencraig and Lecale, she was appointed Deputy Director for Ireland of the Church's Ministry of healing in 2004. The stated aim of the Ministry is to 'promote, develop and practice Christ's healing ministry in accordance with Biblical authority; using prayer, laying on of hands, counselling, anointing, preaching, teaching and healing practice among all people, to advance the Kingdom of God'.

Now Director of CMH, Pat gave us a wonderful overview of her work. She explained that "Preaching the Kingdom of God with laying on of hands is essential" but a Biblical understanding must accompany it. There is a crucial difference between healing and being cured. While Healing may bring peace, it may not necessarily take away illness. Faith in Jesus Christ is always the starting point but naturally CMH is glad to offer help to anyone who asks for it.

Praying, with the laying on of hands, where the recipient agrees, can be the introduction to the healing process, but Pat reminded us that we have to remember it is God who heals. Repentance, where sin is acknowledged, is desirable in any healing process.

Leaflets on subjects such as a "Prayer of Awareness" are available from the Church Office.

## Adult Confirmation Classes: Monday 22 February 7.30pm

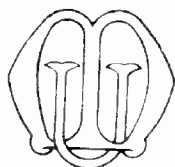
Every year there are always a few adults who for whatever reason have never been Confirmed (or Baptized and Confirmed). Perhaps they have come from another Church tradition, maybe it was something they just never got round to. As he did last year the Rector will be offering a course of preparation through Lent and classes begin on Monday 22 February. Please come to the Rectory (3 Ward Avenue) for 7.30pm - even if it's only to get a flavour of what might be involved.



### Parish Census

By now everyone should have received their Census *pro forma* and very many of you have already responded with changes and updates. Thank you for being so fast about getting back to us and for being so gracious and forgiving about our mistakes. Though it has been a truly mammoth task, it has already proved an extremely worthwhile exercise as we get our new *Omega* computer system up and running. At the time of writing, from more than 900 forms sent out with the December/January magazine you have returned 350. We know that some of our white envelopes got mislaid in people's Christmas postbag and we also know that some of our parishioners over-winter in sunnier climes so needless to say it is not too late to get back to us with your return. There are plenty of spares in the Parish Office if you need one and we will be glad to hear from you at any stage.

If you haven't quite got around to filling yours in yet, we would be very grateful if you could do so as soon as possible. It will only take a few minutes of your time!



### Mothers' Union Notes

Mr Colin Davis from Mission Aviation Fellowship will be the guest speaker for our Overseas Night on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February at 8pm. "MAF", as it is better known, operates the world's largest fleet of private aircraft used for the public good. These flights support Christian workers and take food, medicine and relief supplies to people that others cannot reach. Please remember to bring your MU Overseas boxes to the meeting. We would also like to provide some soap bags for patients in the Ulster Hospital and items for these will be gratefully received.

Don't forget our annual sale to be held at the beginning of March - come along and be part of it.

Pat

### New envelopes

At the time of writing most of you have collected your new supply of Church envelopes from the tables on your way into Church. They are a new brand of envelope for us this year and a considerable saving on the ones we normally buy. Not only can you fit more in them (you can honestly, try it and see for yourself!) but our counting team just love them as they are extremely easy to open. A number of people have mentioned that there is no line or box for you to mark the amount. It is always helpful when parishioners do write the amount they have given on the envelope so please continue to do so. We think the manufacturers probably intend us to write our figure after the words: "My Weekly Offering".

### The Parishioner Donations please



As you know, the Parishioner comes to you free of charge and will continue to do so. To help with our overheads we always enclose an envelope with the February issue in which we hope you can make a contribution towards our running costs. If all of our 1000 recipients gave £5 we would certainly cover ourselves but please bear in mind that only 50% currently make a gift. Half of you are paying for the other half! Please return your envelope by the collection plate on Sunday and do bear in mind that the full text of the magazine is now available on the parish website. If this is the format that best suits you why not consider cancelling your paper copy and you won't have to worry about the envelope at all!

You may not know this, but two willing and able ladies organise the readers at our Sunday morning services.

At 10.00 Service the Prayer & Reading Rota is organised by Sarah Ferris Tel 91454826 Email sarah@sarahferris.co.uk And at 11.30 it is Freda Woods Tel: 91467624 or 07855282476

They are always willing to welcome any new Pray-ers and Readers so please contact them if you are interested.

**For your information**

The Christmas holidays are always a good time to catch up with people and in particular, all those who are at university. We have 20+ young people connected to the church who are away at university either at Queen's or further away like Aberdeen. So to make sure that everyone had the chance to spend a bit of time with each other, we had a night out. There were about 16 of us in total. Unfortunately a good few couldn't make it! It turned out to be a very inexpensive and banter filled night. We had a £5 all you could eat buffet dinner at a noodle bar in Belfast, the 'Fo - Kin Noodle', then went on to the cinema to see Sherlock Holmes. For all those movie buffs not aware of this deal (although it's been about for a couple of years) a few cinemas have what they call 'crazy Tuesday'. This means that any movie, all day on Tuesday is £2.50/£3 (depending on the cinema). It's fantastic, especially since the cinema in Bangor charges £6 or something stupid.



Anyway, it was a great night out with some great people, who love the community that is there, even when they don't see each other that often. We had a 4/5 year age range and everyone was excited to spend time in each other's company! Here is a picture of us at the end of the night!!

On the Wednesday before Christmas we also had a special visit from Santa... below is a picture of some of the kids getting a small pre Christmas present from the man himself. It was a great day and everyone had a lot of fun!!

Happy New Year everyone, really looking forward to the challenges over the next few months, lots of stuff happening... I know the youth website hasn't been used much of late but more info as it comes will be available there. You can sign up to the email newsletter, the subscription form in the top right hand corner of the youth site. We have also launched a prayer box on the site. If you have any prayers you can fill in the box and some of our prayer warriors will get an email with your prayer request, anonymous if preferred!



Look forward to hearing from you all!!

grace and peace

dc



### THE QUIET CORNER

**“Please ask them to pray for Sri Lanka” they said.**

On my last visit to Sri Lanka, I went twice to a House Group in Colombo. The members were all young women from diverse backgrounds as well as Sri Lankan and included some with small children. Their enthusiasm for study was palpable as was the obvious need for prayer for that country. Sri Lanka has been a centre of the Buddhist religion and culture from ancient times as well as being a bastion of Hinduism. The Sinhalese community forms the majority of the population; the Tamils, who are concentrated in the north and east of the island, form the largest ethnic minority. Christianity is a minority religion in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka has been dogged for twenty years by ethnic conflict between the Sri Lankan forces and the LTTE, a group claiming to represent Tamil minority interests but who in reality engaged in forced recruitment of civilians into the fighting. The LTTE leadership was killed in May (I was there on that day) and the ground offensive won. Many Tamil civilians were used as human shields and those who survived have been in internment camps with no freedom to leave. Resettlement is finally happening but access to the war torn areas is limited so people are returning to devastated communities without basic facilities such as water, health centres and minimal shelter. Now religious liberty is threatened in Sri Lanka like never before. While acts of violence against Christians have escalated, political leaders lobby for legislation restricting the freedom to change one's religion; a right guaranteed in Article 18 of the United Nations



Declaration of Human Rights, of which Sri Lanka is a signatory. Sri Lankan Christians of all denominations and ethnicity are deeply concerned about these developments.

So please pray for greater opportunity for the international community to assist with rebuilding and displaced people returning; for Christian leaders in the Tamil communities as they assist people who have lost family members or sustained injuries from the fighting; for social justice - the initial conflict was fuelled by discrimination against the Tamil minority.

Betty Armstrong



**February**

- 7th:** Daphne Hamill
- 14th:** Ann McMurray & Marie McKee
- 21st:** Kay Lowry
- 28th:** Ann Browne

**BAPTISMS**

- 6th December:** SOPHIE ANNE McWILLIAMS, daughter of Colin & Kerry
- 6th December:** PYPHER ANAIS BOYD, daughter of Steven & Ashleigh
- 13th December:** IAN WILLIAM SAVAGE, son of Mark & Michelle
- 13th December:** DAVID RICHARD McCARTAN, son of Stuart & Natalie
- 13th December:** MAX ALEXANDER GRANT SYKES, son of Dale & Katherine
- 10th January:** DYLAN ISAAC WRIGHT, son of Jeffrey & Gemma
- 10th January:** RHYS PAUL MARKWELL, son of Stephen & Catherine

**FUNERALS**

- 3rd December:** Ruth Barkatullah, late of 5 Godfrey Ave
- 8th December:** Rosemary Peacock, late of 3 Dam Rd, Cottown
- 10th December:** Dolly Turner, late of 63 Ballyholme Rd
- 24th December:** Jean Lynch, late of 182 Groomsport Road
- 28th December:** Basil McClean, late of 13 Glenburn Park
- 8th January:** Doreen Graham, late of 8 Montgomery Court
- 12th January:** Audrey Beatty, late of the Somme N. H., Belfast



**February:**

- 7th:** No Creche
- 14th:** Julie Monaghan, Debra Johnston, Gillian Jones, Jennifer McKnight
- 21st:** Geri Barnes, Deborah Galbraith, Debbie Calvert
- 28th:** Katherine Newman, Joanne Smith, Lyndsey McDermott



- Feb 7** Pauline Baird, Christine Wilson, Samantha Gouk
- Feb 14** Anna Gullen, Lorraine Campbell, Sandra Hill
- Feb 21** Grace McLaughlin, Patrick Crothers, Ella Walker
- Feb 28** Fiona Jackson, Susan Stockton, Pat Davidson

**WEDDING**

- 3rd December:** Andrew Gowdy 56 Shaftesbury Pk & Sharon Handforth, 50 Knightsbridge Court

# Our Worship

## Sunday 7th February 2nd before Lent

8:30 Holy Communion  
10:00 Family Service  
11:30 Morning Prayer  
6.30 Holy Communion

## Wednesday 10th February

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado room

## Sunday 14th February Sunday before Lent

8:30 Holy Communion  
10:00 Morning Worship & Children's Church  
11:30 Parish Communion  
6.30 X-alt

## 17th February - Ash Wednesday

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado room

## Sunday 21st February 1st in Lent

8.30 Holy Communion  
10.00 Morning Worship & Children's Church  
11.30 Morning Prayer  
6.30 Taize service

## Wednesday 24th February

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado room

## Sunday 28th February 2nd Sunday in Lent

8.30 Holy Communion  
10.00 Parish Communion & Children's Church  
11.30 Morning Prayer  
6.30 Compline

The Church Walking Group was blessed with fine weather when they organised the New Year's Walk for the second year. There was a good turnout of about seventy souls, ranging from non walking babies in buggies, energetic young lads in shorts to more sedate walkers wearing several layers of Damart thermals. The marshals in their hi vis vests did a good job in shepherding the group safely across the roads. After turning down the lane at the Banks to the seashore, we were confronted by a very high tide. The Health and Safety arm of the Walking Group decided we need to turn back as the waves were crashing across the path. However a kindly resident and architect of the Parish Centre, spotting our problem, granted permission for us to cross the gardens of Dufferin Villas. The walking group now resembled a 1960's



Right to Roam protest group, doing a Mass Trespass across private property! Next we had to decide whether to walk along Ballyholme Promenade, where the spray was raining down from the waves, or follow the road up to Ballyholme Esplanade. A few of the walkers on the promenade paid for their bravery with a good soaking. The two groups eventually reunited and we continued a pleasant walk round the Seacliff Road before returning to the Parish Centre via Ballyholme Road. The bracing walk had whetted all our appetites and we were well ready for warming soup, prepared and served by Anne, Ann, Roberta and Eleanor. Our thanks goes to the organisers, the marshals, and the cooks for this pleasant social event which made a perfect start to the New Year.

WMB

## Lent 2010

Over 70 people participated in our Last Explore Module with the Rev. Pat Mollan and there is still plenty of space for more, so do please consider joining us for our 2010 Lent Course, when we will be exploring the themes of Pilgrimage, Suffering and the Book of Job.

*Pancakes and coffee will be served on the first morning which falls on Shrove Tuesday.*

Tues. 16 Feb 10.30am	Wed. 17 Feb 8pm
Tues. 23 Feb 10.30am	Wed. 24 Feb 8pm
Tues. 2 Mar 10.30am	Wed. 3 Mar 8pm
Tues. 9 Mar 10.30am	Wed. 10 Mar 8pm

