

# St Columbanus

Ballyholme



Helen - 100 Years Young  
Alistair's Farewell  
Prayer Page Pullout  
Easter Vestry Report

*..On the way together..*

## *The Parishioner* April 2016

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

## The Rambling Rector

Okay then – this time! Everything is now ready to begin the new Phase One of Restoration 2016 in May. Moving the NIE box has been rescheduled, full planning permission is secured, a tender is being agreed and your pledges continue to come in. St Columbanus College are expecting us on Sunday 1 May. What can possibly go wrong!



The past few months have reminded me that Christianity is not about cast-iron certainty that everything will go exactly according to our plan. The life of faith is about stepping out in trust. It's about believing that in His way and His time, God will lead us, direct us and provide for us – if we put the risen Christ first. What that means is all our families making worship on Sunday a real priority through the duration of the build. The historical evidence suggests that faith in Jesus did not create belief in his resurrection. It was the resurrection that created faith in Jesus. The Church of God arose to bear witness to that resurrection. Where we meet to celebrate that Easter hope over the coming months is less important than the fact that we do meet – Sunday by Sunday by Sunday!

SED

## Farewell



## With Much Gratitude

My last Sunday with you as Curate in Ballyholme will be remembered with much fondness and gratitude. I was amazed by so many of you turning out at the services to say goodbye and filling the hall for the presentation. I was blown away by your love and good wishes. Thank you so much for the very kind and generous gift, for the cards and not to mention the occasional dollar or two! I've really enjoyed being with you these last 3½ years and I take great memories with me to the States. It was difficult over the last few weeks of my curacy saying good-bye to as many of you as possible at home or in hospital.

I've had wonderful opportunities to meet so many of you at church services but also outside of Sunday mornings. For example, I've enjoyed playing with you (beating you!!) at the Table Tennis Club, joining with you in the Home Groups, praying with you at the Monthly Prayer Meeting, and participating with you at the Mothers' Union, Confirmation classes, Alpha Groups and the Men of Ballyholme, not forgetting the Building Subcommittee, working with the Design Team on the Restoration Project. It has been a very enriching and rewarding time.

I didn't get a good opportunity due to time constraints at the presentation but I would also like to say a big thank-you to Simon and the Staff Team here in Ballyholme: initially Sue then Kelly, Karen, Ann, Ian Bell, Laura, and more recently Sophie, and I almost forgot Jade (how could I ever do that!!!). They have been so encouraging, affirming and I will miss working with them all very much.

Ministry is a vocation and I've certainly enjoyed serving you here as curate in Ballyholme. Now new challenges lie ahead - a new wife, a new country, a new church tradition but one thing remains the same, the God who has called me to serve in His church no matter where that might be, even as I settle on the far side of the sea (Ps 139:9).



Thank you Ballyholme - "missing you already!"

Alistair

## Hats off to the Sallagh Braes



A week later than originally planned, because of rain, a group of ten St Columbanus Walkers completed the Sallagh

Braes loop walk above Ballygally on the Antrim coast. The Sallagh Braes are a natural amphitheatre of cliffs composed of hard rocks (basalt and chalk) which are sitting on softer rocks. When the glaciers retreated the cliffs became unstable and prone to landslips. Along with neighbouring Knock Dhu, the Sallagh Braes are an Area of Scenic Interest. The path along the top of the cliffs, which is part of the Antrim Hills Way, is now fenced for obvious safety reasons. During the walk, we saw more recent landslips. The top of the escarpment of the Sallagh Braes is about 1000 feet above sea level and we enjoyed the views towards the coast, from Ballygally to Larne and out to sea to Scotland.

It was a dry day but there was a cold east wind that ensured that we were all clad with layers of clothes and headwear. However, for the photo, for most of us, it was hats off to the Sallagh Braes! We encountered a group of model glider enthusiasts making use of the stiff east wind. Their radio controlled gliders, the biggest of which had a wingspan of 16 feet, circled gracefully in the sky as we returned to the carpark. After a coffee stop in Carrickfergus, we returned to Bangor. Peter G



### Smile Lines

#### Up or down?

Is this apisdn umop or am I just standing on my head?

#### Do it

Here's a sure-fire way to cross off every item on your To-Do list: Do the chores first, then write them down and then cross them off!

#### Beyond

I'm living so far beyond my income that we may almost be said to be living apart



## The Walkers in Castlewellaan Forest Park (with their new best friends)

Snow on the Mourne and a clear blue sky was the stunning backdrop for our outing in Castlewellaan Park in early March and we weren't the only ones enjoying the bright sunshine. There were canoeists, mountain bikers, horse riders and archers, all intent on making the best of a good day.

The Castlewellaan Demesne is steeped in history and dates from medieval times when the Maginnis family had a crannog on the north side of the lake. In 1741 William Annesley bought the Maginnis lands and they stayed in the family until they sold it to the Ministry of Agriculture in 1967 with the Forest Park opening two years later.

The ten of us began our walk at the car park, heading along the south side of the lake to the first of the new trails, the Moorish Tower Walk. It climbs steeply up hill to the restored Moorish Tower, a tea house built in 1884 by High Annesley for his family picnics. On the way up we met several archers with serious looking bows and arrows and as some were ensconced in the Moorish Tower we waited till they had finished their competition, and then enjoyed the views up the lake and beyond to Dundrum Bay. You can see from the photograph that we have three new best friends! On then up to the 200 m contour along the horse riding track, giving us views of the County Down countryside none of us had seen before, and back down to the Cypress Pond (sadly too early for the water lilies). Then it was along the north side of the lake to have lunch at the picnic tables in the car park.

The Annesley Garden walk takes in the famous Annesley Garden and National Arboretum – in total 45 hectares and six of the group did this 3.2 mile extra walk. They reported a really interesting area with daffodils just about to burst forth (surely worth returning for), glass houses and a peach house. Irene and Betty put the world to right in the courtyard café and Sean and Annette set off for the delights of Newcastle. Betty



## 2015-16 Easter Vestry Report



The traditional Easter General Vestry agenda of reports, accounts and elections also included the following remarks by the Chair, Canon Simon Doogan to a gathering of around 80 people.

An early Easter means this 2016 AGM follows hot on the heels of the departure of our curate the Reverend Alistair Morrison. In every way a Godsend, 'our man from Greyabbey' gave himself unsparingly to the work of the Kingdom in Ballyholme. Whilst keen to try new ideas, especially his Alpha Male and MOB (Men of Ballyholme) initiatives, Alistair relished the routine round of worship and pastoral visiting and he will be sorely missed by the whole Church family. Many of you have been asking about a replacement for Alistair. No one will miss a second pair of full time clergy hands more than your rector. The possibility of some temporary help will

certainly be explored, but the timing of a new curate is now uncertain.

In every parish, whatever the size and setting, there are always two dimensions to financial management: the current account covering regular running costs, and the building fund covering maintenance costs for church premises. Regulars to the Easter Vestry will know that for at least the last ten years, our current account fluctuates between sufficient and insufficient funds. The time to address the situation has now come. Before seeking the services of a new full time curate, the Vestry is keen that all our parishioners should be clear about our spiritual responsibility to bear a fair share of our church family's 'housekeeping'. As a parish we value our Youth, Children's and Seniors' programmes very much, as well as our mission partnership links with Kajiado and Kiwoko. However before we return to a full staff team, we simply must reach a place where our basic costs are more or less covered.

In the meantime, we will try to keep the show on the road as best we can, and while we know the faithful parishioners of Ballyholme will remain faithful in terms of worship and prayer and giving, inevitably this year's restoration work will mean upheaval. Our feeling as a Vestry, is that we should entrust ourselves to God's leading and guiding to get through this busy period and then review our situation at the end of it. Obviously this will mean a reduced programme for now, with me now covering the bulk of the pastoral workload rather than splitting it two ways with a curate. I can only hope that my eight years of door-knocking will earn me your understanding as I am forced to take a responsive rather than pro-active approach to my ministry. Perhaps we can try to make September 2017 a target for appointing a new curate?

Seen in the round, it's all part of Ballyholme's journey from Restoration to Transformation.

I was clear from the outset, that if we were to move to the next stage of our worship and witness a change of spiritual gear would be required. That was why Where is your

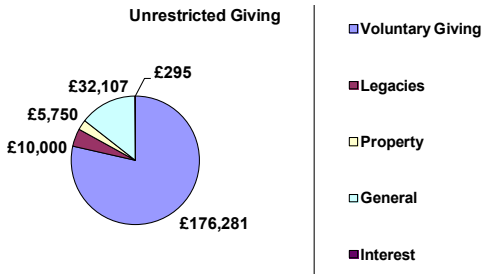
chair? and the Lent conversations came into being. Our week of mission back in October saw a wonderful response although some remarked that I was going out on a bit of a limb to call our St Columbanus family to a year of daily Bible reading and prayer. Perhaps! As a Church of Ireland man, my feeling has always been that people should be allowed to find their own spiritual level. And yet saying you believe in God in some vague way is one thing. Connecting personally and corporately with the living Christ is another. Taking Ballyholme to the next level, which is surely what obedience to the Lord's call requires us to do, was always going to involve us drawing directly on the strength and energy of the Holy Spirit.

I have learned a lot in the twelve months since our last Easter Vestry. To single out just one lesson, it would be that God really is in charge of things – not us. It's the old chestnut: if you want to make God laugh, just show Him your plans. Alistair arriving when he did from the building industry was no coincidence. Preparing and looking forwards in the way we have done was entirely the right thing to do. What we now need in order to see that through, are those priceless spiritual gifts of perseverance and faithfulness.



As with the last three years the Select Vestry presented a report and financial accounts in the format recommended by the Church of Ireland. They are a simplified version of the accounts previously presented and comply with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities", produced by the Institutes of Chartered Accountants and the Charities Commission.

The aim of the simplified accounts is to make them more understandable to all. Highlights of the accounts include:

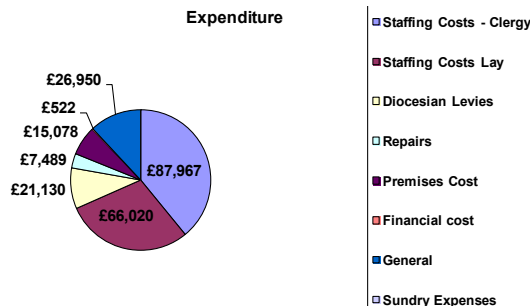


### Income:

Total Income increased from £213,833 to £224,433, an increase of £10,600 or 5%.

Voluntary planned giving through envelopes and standing orders (including the tax reclaimed) was £176,281, a decrease of £7,663 or 4% from last year (£183,944).

Income from other sources, such as Catering, Legacies, Hall rental increased by £9,504 from £22,603 in 2014 to £32,107.



### Expenditure:

Expenditure increased from £224,417 to £225,156 an increase of £739 or 0.3%.

Our share of the costs of the diocese increased to £21,130 and represents just over 9% of our total expenditure.

Running costs have remained largely the same, with general Parish expenses increasing a little from £26,403 to £26,950. Repair costs have decreased by £1,458 to £7,489.

The outcome for the year was that we had an excess of expenditure over income of £723 (last year it was an excess of £10,584).

### Missions

Our income to mission was £3,329 and giving to mission during the year totalled £2,900. A further £784 in financial support was given by the Parish to support Missions.

### Youth Account

Last year £5,999 was raised by the Parish youth during the year for youth initiatives and activities. A further £999 in financial support was given by the Parish to support the youth and children's work.

### The Parish Development Fund

In 2015 £90,518 was paid into the Parish Development Fund by 256 Parishioners. This was made up of £61,680 in cash gifts and on average £3,500 per month in standing orders. The Parish spent £109,535 on the restoration project, this was on professional fees, surveys and the relocation of the NIE electricity sub station

### And so to 2016:

- The restoration project will gather momentum, with the work starting in May 2016, this will require further gathering of money to finance the project.
- Our aim is to increase the number of Parishioners who pay by Standing Orders. This will:
  - Provide regular income.
  - Reduce the cost of purchasing envelopes.
  - Reduce the administrative burden of counting and banking the money.
- Financial stewardship. The Select Vestry will investigate further ways of reducing our costs over the next year.

Roy Lawther  
Treasurer

*Members of the new Vestry can be found on page 10*

## Alistair's Farewell



After three and a half extremely happy years in Ballyholme, Alistair's final Sunday at the end of February came round all too quickly. A large congregation at all three morning services sent him off with their gratitude, love and prayers and the assurance that he will be sorely missed by our whole church family.

During a presentation over coffee between 10 and 11.30, Leslie Adams our Honorary Secretary led us in several choruses of "Thank you

Alistair" and "Well done Alistair" for everything he accomplished throughout his time at St Columbanus, from worship and teaching, through Alpha and men's groups, to heading-up our Restoration 2016 Buildings Committee. The presentation cheque (for £2100) was handed over by People's Churchwarden Stephen Baker and further gifts and words of appreciation came from Elaine Elborn of the Missions Committee and Ruth Ruttle of the Mothers' Union.



As everyone squeezed into the main hall for refreshments, strains of the Alessi Brothers 1976 hit "Oh Lori" were not quite audible over the PA system. By the end of the speeches however, Old Blue Eyes was heard loud and clear: "Start spreading the news, I'm leaving today". As everyone joined in (at least for the opening few lines), "New York, New York" saw Alistair making his way out of the hall and down to Church for the 11.30 service. At the end of Morning Prayer, the Churchwardens laid hands on Alistair and the Rector called down God's blessing in the time-honoured New Testament way.



Alistair's closing theme was "Come to me and drink" from Isaiah 55, a reminder that Christ is the living water, the answer to all of our thirsting and our only source of lasting energy and refreshment. He spoke warmly and appreciatively of the welcome, love and acceptance he had been shown throughout his time at St Columbanus, and of the richness of the experiences and opportunities he had been offered. While we may not have been on his list of first preferences at selection time, Alistair testified to a clear sense that Ballyholme was exactly where God wanted him to be – a place and a time he will look back on with gladness and gratitude.



Members don't forget that on Monday 4th April we will be meeting in Bangor Parish Church, Hamilton Road for the Down & Dromore annual festival service at 7.30 pm. Bishop Harold and his wife, Liz, have kindly offered to host a special afternoon tea party on Thursday 21st April 2016 to celebrate the 90th birthday of her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, specifically for those Mothers' Union members in the diocese who were born in 1926 or earlier. We have 7 eligible members, 3 who expect to attend and 4 who may be able to do so plus car drivers.

On Thursday May 19th, the indoor & older members' communion & tea party will take place in St. John's church, Lurgan at 2.30 pm.

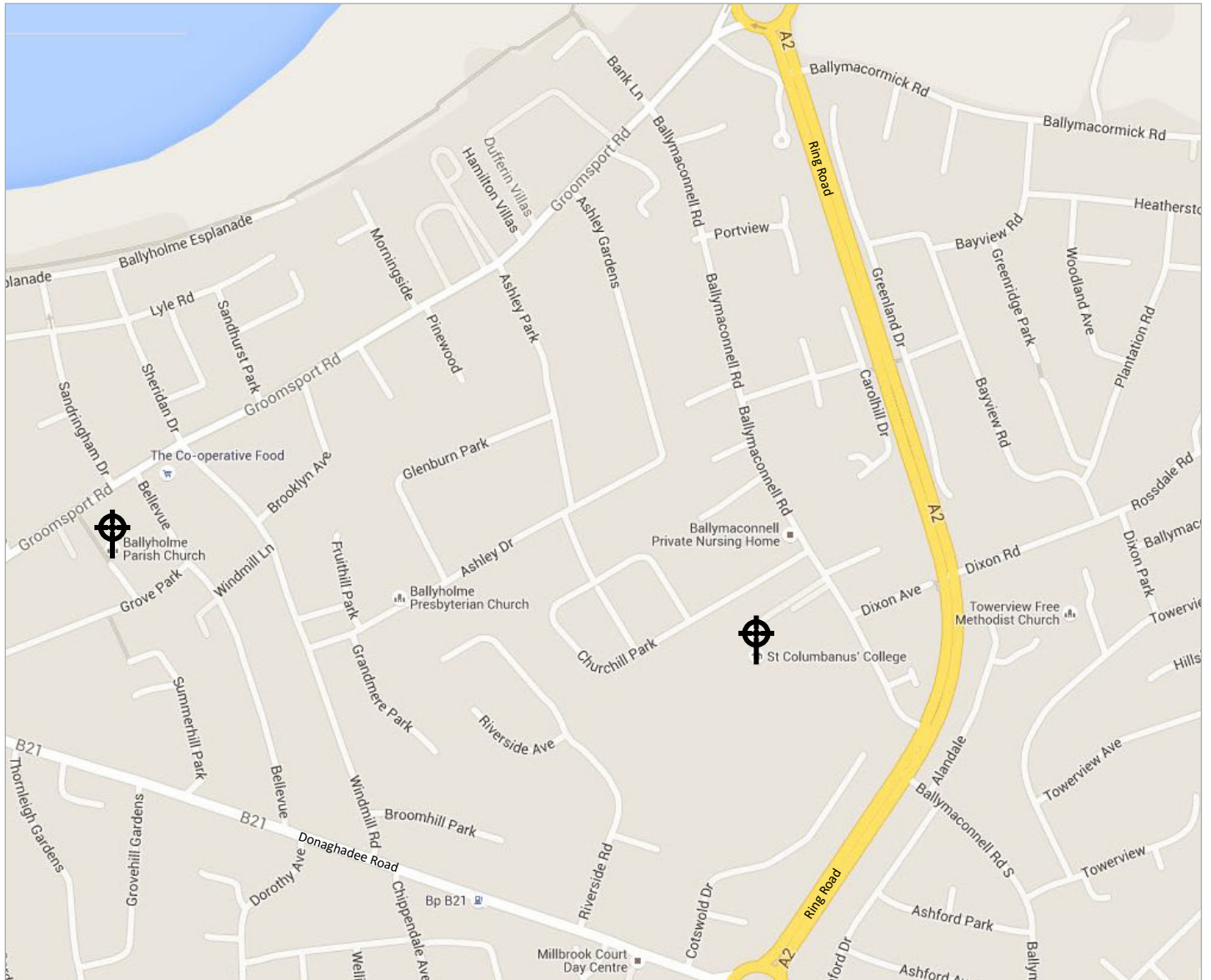
On Saturday 11th June we have organised a full day bus trip to the outlet centre in Kildare, leaving at 8.00 am, stopping at the Newbridge shop for refreshments. The cost will be £20. This does not cover your food. Parishioners and friends who wish to join us on this trip would be very welcome. Let me know as soon as possible if you intend to come along. We have organised a 53 seat coach and hope we can fill it. We also intend to invite other branches in the area to join us on this outing, so it would be advisable to book as soon as possible. Any money over from expenses will be given to the church restoration fund.

Ruth Ruttle (Branch leader) phone no. 02891 450130

## 1st May - On the Way

St Columbanus College is the venue, through the gates next to the shops on Ballymacconnell Road, see the map below.

We are hoping the whole church family can join us for worship on Sunday 1 May.



### Worship as usual

Our hope is to offer the familiar Sunday morning worship menu everyone is used to: 8.30, 10 and 11.30 (8.30 and 10.30 through July and August). Creche, Children's Church and Emerge will also be as normal at 10 o'clock, and we will do our best to serve coffee and tea between the main morning services in the usual way.

### Why the move?

- Because the Parish Centre isn't quite big enough. Basically on Sunday morning we need 200-plus seater worship space with enough additional rooms for our youth and children's ministries.
- Because once building work starts, we will not be able to access the Parish Centre from the Groomsport Road, nor the Church from Grove Park.



The school does offer us a few bonus visitor attractions:

### **Great Parking**

There is as much onsite parking as we could possibly ever need on a Sunday morning, certainly much more than we've got at Grove Park and in our own lower car park.



### **Easy Access**

There will be no ski-slope or steps to ascend or descend since most of the St Columbanus College site is on the level and within easy reach of the main doors.

### **Convenient Conveniences**

Toilet facilities are available in the arrival/foyer which is right outside the main hall – no more sprinting up-hill through the rain to find a loo in a hurry!

### **Brand new PA and loop system**

For those who currently find it difficult to hear in Church, we will have the benefit of a brand new audio-visual system fitted in St Columbanus College last summer.

### **Under the one roof**

Church, Creche, Children's Church and our meeting area for coffee are all in the same main school building block.



### **Packing up Church: volunteers required!**

Our task is to clear the Church building of all moveable furnishings the week beginning Monday 25 April.

Some of what will be removed needs to be carefully bubble-wrapped and safely stored away until November. We have been offered three spare classrooms at Movilla High School (thank you our own Ian Bell, Movilla's Head Teacher!). These will serve as excellent 'cold storage' for those larger and more precious items which would not take well to being moved and hauled about too often.

A small Sunday 'kit' will be put together comprising, among other things, prayer and hymn books, electric piano, candles etc. These will take up residence in the school for the duration of the build. Additional more valuable items such as our Communion-ware will be stored safely off-site and brought to the school each Sunday morning.

If you can help with the pack-up task – and especially if you have access to a van – a sign-up page is available at the back of the Church and in the Parish Office or by all means call Kelly to add your name to the list.

### **Sunday Set-up Teams: volunteers required!**

We also need practical help each weekend. Since no one will be using St Columbanus College in July and August, we can leave everything in place for Sundays from the end of June to the end of the summer. Throughout the other months however, it will be necessary



for us to set-up for our three Sunday morning services on either Friday or Saturday and then put everything away again afterwards on the Sunday.

We have been offered enough space to store the bare Sunday essentials at the school so it is simply a matter of gathering names of people who can go on a rota. We would like to have at least a dozen people and we would propose to get this group together to see when it would suit them to come and go. A sign-up page is available at the back of the Church and in the Parish Office or by all means call Kelly to add your name to the list.

### **Church Chairs: get them while they're hot!**

One of the loudest calls received during our 'Have your say' consultation in 2009, was for more comfortable Church seating. Although we have yet to select a new model, the plan is to replace our current wooden chairs and so we would like to find good homes for as many of them as possible.

They have charm, character and are an excellent quality beech. All have the Prayer Book holder at the back and some have a 'tray' arrangement below the seat. By all means you are welcome to buy the one you most often occupy on Sundays if you have grown especially attached to it. A sizeable number of parishioners have already expressed an interest in buying chairs, either for use around the house or as personal mementoes. Now is the time to make a little bit of St Columbanus your own!



Our last Sunday in Church will be 24 April and work will start to clear the building almost immediately so we will need people to take their chairs home with them after Church that day if at all possible. First come, first served seems the only practical way to organise this, and since some parishioners are planning to buy enough for a whole dining room suite we would encourage you to act fast! There is a page at the back of Church on Sundays or buy all means get in touch with the Church office to reserve however many you want and then get your money in as quickly as possible.

Auction house research revealed prices as much as £50 a chair. As a special rate to St Columbanus parishioners: we are asking £25 each or two for £40! All 298 must go with full proceeds to the building fund.

### **Can we help you with a lift?**

Some parishioners who live in the Ballymacconnell Road area will be able to walk to Sunday service when we move to the school. Others more local to Ballyholme will probably want to drive, but if you need a lift this can very easily be arranged for you. Already every Sunday there is a busy lift-sharing scheme to and from Church and we are so grateful to the drivers and friends who make this happen quietly week after week but of course there needs to be an initial conversation or maybe even an initial introduction. We will be glad to help with this and are anxious that no one should feel St Columbanus College is beyond reach for them on Sunday mornings, especially when access at the school building itself is so easy. There will be a list for names with the Churchwardens or by all means speak directly to Kelly in the Parish Office.



## Restoration ⇨ Transformation



**Pull-out and keep Prayer Page  
April 2016**

**As the on-site work begins, please pray with us for all the elements of the project, practical and spiritual, as we build and plant for God in Ballyholme and look forward to a newly restored St Columbanus towards the end of November.**

### **Nehemiah 2:18**

*I told them that the hand of my God had been gracious upon me, and also the words that the king had spoken to me. Then they said, 'Let us start building!'*

We lift up our hearts and minds in prayer  
in the faith of God the Father  
who loves us and knows our every need;  
in the name of God the Son,  
our Advocate with the Father,  
who ever lives to intercede for us;  
in the power of God the Holy Spirit,  
who comes to the aid of our weakness  
and pleads within our hearts.

Hear us in your mercy, O God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
for the honour and glory of your name. Amen



### **Pray for the building work itself**

- a safe and smooth programme of work onsite from May through to November
- our design team: guidance through the decisions and assistance through the difficulties

### **Pray for our Glebewardens and Buildings Committee**

- open communication and good ongoing relations with our architects and contractors
- a clear vision for the preservation and enhancement of our beloved church

### **Pray for our Sunday congregations**

- faithful worship by our families Sunday by Sunday in St Columbanus College from 1 May
- new practical insights and real spiritual growth as we 'camp out' at the school

### **Pray for our weekly set-up and take-down teams**

- Those who will set things up for worship, Creche and Children's Church on Sundays
- Those who will tidy away after us before school opens again on Mondays

### **Pray for our Treasurer and Vestry and our parish finances**

- new pledges and gifts from parishioners who have yet to get involved with Restoration 2016
- a return to a position where we can support a full time Curate Assistant, perhaps in 2017

### **Please pray for this year's wedding couples**

- Emily and Victor getting married on 30 May in Groomsport Parish Church
- Sarah and Robbie getting married on 18 June in Groomsport Parish Church
- Ashley and Chris getting married on 17 September in Glencraig Parish Church
- Laura and Laurie getting married on 24 September in Bangor Parish Church

### **Lenten Conversation Prayer Themes**

#### **Pray for our Worship**

- That we would continue to offer a variety of services to glorify God
- That our worship would feed and challenge the whole people of God in Ballyholme
- That the potential of each service would be maximised
- That we would strive for a greater integration of age groups
- That we would look at options for the most imaginative use of our evening services
- That we could continue to cherish the old hymns and to use the psalms creatively
- That we would find an effective way of introducing new worship songs
- That we would raise up people to give a strong vocal lead to the music at 10 o'clock
- That we would raise-up a sustainable praise/music group for 10 o'clock
- That opportunities for more informal praise and worship can be developed
- That our all-age worship can grow increasingly child-friendly through direct family input
- That we would create more time for our people to meet and mix before and after worship
- That connections between people at each service and between services will grow deeper
- That more of our congregation would take active roles in services: reading, praying etc
- That Restoration 2016 would resolve current issues with our audio-visual system
- That we would encourage friends from our local community to share in our worship



## Pray for our Discipleship:

- That our whole congregation would be encouraged to share in our teaching programme
- That what happens in our homegroups and prayer meetings might be communicated
- That the connection between homegroups, prayer groups and Sunday mornings can grow
- That our homegroups might do more things together, especially in prayer and fellowship
- That we would grasp the key role of personal invitations in Church life generally
- That we would reach out with what we are offering to our local community more effectively
- That we would hear more personal spiritual 'stories' and experiences from our congregation
- That more and more lay leadership should be encouraged
- That the full range of teaching gifts, talents and potential in St Columbanus be utilised
- That Alpha and Lent Courses would continue and that uptake for them would increase
- That God would breathe new life and leadership into our monthly prayer meeting
- That our prayer meeting would not be threatening for those who pray silently
- That the wider church family might share in the daily prayers of our clergy and staff team

## Pray for our Youth & Children's Ministry:

- That young people can be encouraged to come to Church and feel part of 'the family'
- That the value of our paid youth worker and youth programme continue to be valued
- That Jumpin/Xcess might connect with our Sunday services to encourage new families
- That Jumpin/Xcess might generate other spin-off events throughout the year
- That our Scout Group would know an injection of new life and leadership
- That the possibility of a weekend youth club for primary children/tweens be explored
- That provision in Church for our youngest children (such as a soft area) be prioritised
- That our young people and adults find ways of worshipping, learning and serving together
- That we encourage a mix of ages in our parish volunteer base
- That young people be more involved in children's ministry, All Age worship and mentoring
- That parents would be better informed of the content and curriculum in Children's Church



- That we can raise the profile of Ballyholme Parish for young people and children in Bangor
- That Emerge and YF might share their activities in Church with the wider congregation
- That YF might offer trial nights so newcomers can 'come and see'

### Pray for our Community

- That we would build on the range of groups and activities we offer to the wider community
- That the Parish Centre can welcome more of the wider community in to enjoy our premises
- That our programmes for seniors and young families would continue to grow
- That we do everything possible to foster and deepen our inter-personal relationships
- That we would organise more social nights like quizzes and 'bling flings' for all age groups
- That we would explore sports/activities nights to encourage our families to come together
- That folk be raised up to fill our gaps for young dads, newly marrieds, 20 & 30 somethings
- That we find new ways of sharing gifts and skills among the members of our church family



**Father we thank you  
for our beautiful and beloved church St Columbanus  
and for those whose prayers and generosity  
bequeathed it to us.**

**Open our hearts in faith and trust  
that we may give in the same spirit of  
gratitude and sacrifice as those who went before us.  
By your Spirit guide and direct our plans  
to preserve and enhance your house of prayer  
for our own generation  
and those who will follow after us.  
To the glory of your son, Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen**



## Where is your chair?



Have you sampled our weekday devotionals for this year of Ballyholme restoration yet? There are versions for adults, young people and children and all available through the parish website. Here's a letter received recently to encourage you.

"As someone who has grown to love communing with God, be it on a walk or bike ride or gardening, enjoying the beauties of Nature in the waves, the trees, the flowers, the animals etc., "Where's your chair?" has provided a refreshing dimension for quiet devotion. Regardless of how much we love God, one of the hardest disciplines is to spend time on a daily basis getting to know Him better. "Where's your chair?" has been so brilliant because:-

- the daily Bible quotation is easy to remember and take through the day
- the praising section reminds us of the inspiration of well-known hymns which is always so uplifting
- the reading and clear, incisive explanation provides valuable lessons for life
- the praying section seems to go straight to the heart and provide plenty to think about as we carry on with our lives knowing that God is with us and never leaves us despite all our wanderings and failings.
- the hard bits are the Listening and the Doing, but with God's help they are a work in progress!"

### Parishioner Cost/Envelope



As you know, The Parishioner comes to you free of charge. To help with our overheads we enclose an envelope once a year by which we hope you can make a contribution towards our running costs. If all of our 763 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 remember 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. What a difference it would make if everyone that read The Parishioner made a contribution towards it!

### The Three of us in the Waiting Room

"Jennifer Dennis" my name is called.  
I turn to him who waits.  
A brief kiss, and then I walk away.

At the door I glance back.  
His newspaper and crossword at his side,  
he sits, taking comfort that  
our God waits with him,  
as our God moves silently  
with me to the next scan.



### Members of the Parish elected to serve on the 2016/2017 Vestry :-

Leslie Adams, Ann Browne, Sarah Boyd, Elaine Elborn, Ian Foster, Ivan Humphreys, Christine Johnstone, Mark Larmour, Yvonne Manogue, Christine Rankin, Patricia Robinson, Gillian Young

#### Churchwardens:

Rector's: Ann Killops  
People's: David Crooks

#### Glebewardens:

Rector's: Stephen Baker  
People's: Geoff Hewitt

**Hon. Secretary:** Leslie Adams

**Hon Treasurer:** Roy Lawther  
(co-opted)





## Counting your blessings all the way to 100

Helen Parkinson was born on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1916 in the village of Orrell, near Pemberton in Wigan, Lancashire. Helen and her brother attended the local school and one of her earliest memories is that of her mother bringing her a glass of milk to the playground when she was poorly.

Helen was an active member of the village church and attended Sunday School each week and was Confirmed at the age of 14. She travelled to Wigan by tram each week to go to Miss Churchill's dance school, which fuelled her life long love of dancing.

Meeting her husband, William Parkinson, at a dance held each Saturday in the Parochial Hall, Helen and William went on to have two sons, Jeffrey and John. William was attached to the Air Ministry and the family lived for a time in Germany. William and Helen also spent time in Hong Kong and Malaya. After moving to Northern Ireland in 1960, Helen became a member of Mount Merrion Pentecostal Church. Some years later she moved to Bangor to be near her son Jeff and wife Maureen. Invited by a friend to come along to Ballyholme Parish, she quickly felt at home and part of the church family. She very much enjoys the Wednesday Club and has made many friends there.

Looking back on her long life, Helen feels she has been truly blessed by God. She has enjoyed "very good health and can't grumble". Her family, which now includes 4 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren, all hold her dear to their hearts, as do we, her church family.

Karen



## The Wednesday Club



Our March meeting was somewhat different as unfortunately our speaker had to cancel at short notice due to ill health, so we were left to our own devices.

All was not lost however, as we started our meeting by singing Happy Birthday to Helen, who had reached the grand age of 100 the day before. She was presented with a cake with candles, which she had no trouble in blowing out. The rest of our afternoon was spent chatting to each other, and trying to answer a few quizzes that were given out, before helping Helen to eat her birthday cake with our cups of tea. It worked out as a great afternoon.

We welcomed Beatrice to her first meeting and Margaret Kerr (another birthday girl) was the winner of our monthly draw.



Helen with Roberta, Sue and Margaret



The Wednesday Club Ladies

Around the Parish



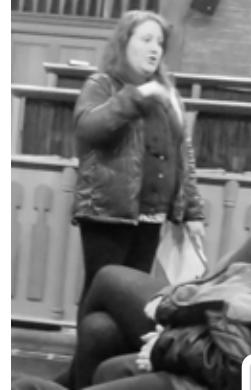
Alistair's Farewell



Beavers Sponsored Walk



Brownies Galore!



Restoration → Transformation







Hi Ballyholme!!

There are no words that would be able to explain properly the experience I have had at Kiwoko Hospital in Uganda between January and March. I have decided to sum it up in an acrostic poem, entitled 'Afaayo' and spelling out 'Kiwoko Hospital'. I need to give you a brief background so that you can understand the poem easily.

I have been in Kiwoko teaching Rory and Denise Wilson's lovely son Gideon for a school term. As well as this, I have been involved with various forms of children's ministry and community ministry. Matoke is a staple food eaten in this part of Uganda, made with a special kind of savoury banana. Mirinda is a local favourite fizzy drink, loaded with sugar. A muzungu is a white person and a pit latrine is a hole-in-the-ground toilet.

A special thanks to everyone who supported me in prayer, with resources, with kind words and financially. It has been a really significant time where I have been able to learn and grow in really unique ways. Feeding into the community here has been a joy.

Every blessing,

Jade



## Afaayo

K is for Kiwoko, where I have been for a while  
I have eaten matoke, and seen kids  
dance in style!

I is for imagination, which Gideon has!  
Making lessons exciting when we are in class.

W is for wind, which is a joy when it blows,  
Relieving overheating muzungus  
wherever it goes.

O is for open, which doors often are,  
Extending a welcome to visitors from afar.

K is for Katonda, which is Lugandan for God,  
Who brings freedom and life, not a big scary rod.

O is for Oranges, which grow on the tree,  
Alas they don't come from Tesco's, I finally see!

H is for hope, which this place is built on  
It is in every word and on every lawn.

O is for over, which this trip almost is,  
I will miss the taste of Mirinda,  
and of course, the fizz!

S is for sure, which I certainly am,  
That there is none quite as tasty as Jaaja's jam!

P is for pit latrine, which has quite a scent,  
But when a must is a must,  
you're just glad that you went!

I is for icy, which it never is here,  
Not any day, any month, any year.

T is for talking, and tasting, and tea,  
All with my friends here who I often would see.

A is for afaayo, which means 'God cares',  
Which the HIV clinic show through  
actions and prayers.

L is for love, the core of it all,  
"Love one another", Kiwoko's missional call.



**Kiwoko Hospital**  
WE TREAT, JESUS HEALS

# YOUTH-news

youth [youth] (youths)

news [nooz]

Hello! This month has been quite the month in the youth calendar. We have had a Stay Awake in which £120 was raised for the youth account, and there were a few tired faces in the morning but it was a great night. The young people played dodge ball, Xbox, Playstation 2 (with a guest appearance from Crash Bandicoot, although the younger ones were unaware of the incredible importance this game held for many of the older youths' childhoods), we baked and we chatted until the early hours of the morning. It was fantastic!



On the 11th March we also headed down to Castlewellan Castle, (three leaders and

seven young people) for the Down and Dromore Diocese Confirmation Weekend. Needless to say we returned from this weekend exhausted, after hearing amazing worship and talks, and exciting activities such as bubble football and canoeing. We all had so much fun & again not a lot of sleep!

Over Easter, we had a large group of eager young people to volunteer with Street Reach and Jumpin. It was fantastic to see so many young people excited to volunteer with holiday bible clubs, playing football with the kids and cleaning up the streets. It really excites and encourages me to see our fabulous young people find life in giving it away. Within Youth Fellowship and Emerge we have been looking at the refugee crisis again. We focused on Calais in France and the demolishing of the southern part of the camp. We looked at what the bible said about helping others and injustice, focusing on love your neighbour as yourself and the story of the Good Samaritan. This prompted some insightful and interesting discussions

with the young people. We also looked at love and what it means to love others and be loved. It's been an exciting season within youth with lots of fun and learning – although not so much sleep! Sophie



## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

### EASTER REPORT

An update on this year in the world of our kids this year so far.

---

### CHILDREN'S CHURCH

For all children aged 3-7

*Jigsaw!*  
This year we have been piloting the new curriculum from DCCYC

**Jigsaw**  
Connecting God's Big Picture

**118 Kids!**  
... and counting!

Children per Group  
2015/2016

Bubbles	27
Splash	57
Ice	34

What we've been up to!

*praying in different ways*

*Learning how to live with Jesus*

*Loving others*

*crafted Bible stories*

## The Breakdown

### Numbers of children per group

	(2013/14)	2015/16
Bubbles	31	27
Splash	43	57
Ice	16	34

### Ongoing

Praise Kids  
Family Visits  
Jigsaw

### Upcoming!

Good Friday Praise Party  
Easter Jumpin!  
P7 Residential

Laura

## The Quiet Corner

### APRIL – RELATED THOUGHTS



The yearly arrival of the month of April recalls to memory words of comfort, encouragement and advice from my parents and my maternal grandmother (with whom we lived). These words go back to primary school years and on into my early teens. The same words are probably on many parental lips in this day and age.

Those intentions to encourage were brought to the fore in days of dark clouds and heavy rain and gained expression in the positive terms that ‘April showers bring forth May flowers’! Contrasting tones of advice, guidance, even warning, were voiced as “Cast not a ‘clout’ till May is out”! Without knowing the origin of the word used we had no doubt that as addressed to us, ‘clout’ meant woolly underwear and warm outer clothing.

In school days the annual first day of April was one requiring alertness of mind and response to questions and requests for on that day questions and requests were intended to trick the hearer into a response that made him or her look or sound foolish and be laughed at as “April Fool!” Sometimes it was possible to gain revenge if a person, intentionally or mistakenly, tried the trick any day after the first of April. That drew forth from the intended victim the response: “April Fool Day is dead and gone—you’re the fool for carrying it on”!

April this year, following on from the Easter Thanksgiving on Sunday March 27<sup>th</sup>, also brings us back from the darkness and cruelty of Calvary and the Crucifixion of Jesus into the early Easter-tide of His Resurrection and the invitation to enter and share in the divine Love that is Life Eternal. Thanks be to God for the gift of Jesus Christ who loved us and gave Himself for us and for our Salvation.

+Gordon McMullan



### Praise Kids

This month I went along to ‘Praise Kids’ to see what the budding Beyonces and Biebers of Ballyholme get up to on Wednesday afternoons in the Parish Centre.

Laura Jeffrey explained that she decided to form ‘Praise Kids’ about a couple of years ago because some children, who wanted to sing, had told her how disappointed they were that they had been unable to get into their school choir. Laura told me normally between eight to ten children attend ‘Praise Kids’ and currently she has Matthew Brown and Brooke Keenan to help her.

‘Praise Kids’ is involved in helping to provide some of the music for our main Church services and festivals. I’m sure that you have probably seen and heard them at the Nativity Play as well as the Christmas Eve, Harvest and Palm Sunday services. All of this takes lots of practice, commitment and hard work from both Laura and the children. The day I went the Group was learning a new song. Laura played the tune on the piano and went through the words line by line. I also found out that ‘Praise Kids’ is not just about singing. Laura takes time to discuss and explain the meaning of the hymns and songs and in this way ‘Praise Kids’ helps children grow in understanding and faith.

Laura told me how she has seen the children becoming more confident about singing and praying. This year she is encouraging children who are learning to play a musical instrument at home or in school to bring it along to the Group. It made me think how fortunate we are to have someone as talented and dedicated as Laura in St Columbanus!

I was really impressed by the energy and enthusiasm of the Group. It was great to see all the hands go up when Laura asked for a volunteer to lead the actions at the front of the group. Each week the person who sings loudest or helps out the most is awarded the title of ‘Star of the Week’. Praise Kids starts at 4:30pm and finishes at 5:30pm with short prayers. Boys and girls in years P1 to P6 are very welcome to come along. The atmosphere is relaxed and informal and the best thing is there are no auditions! If you love singing, dancing, making new friends and generally having fun why not give ‘Praise Kids’ a try? If you have any queries or would like to find out more about ‘Praise Kids’ please contact Laura Jeffrey Tel: 02891-274912.

Christine Johnstone

# OUR WORSHIP

## Sunday 3rd April Easter 2

8.30 Holy Communion  
10.00 All Age Service  
11.30 Morning Prayer

## Wednesday 6th April

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

## Sunday 10th April Easter 3

8.30 Holy Communion  
10.00 Morning Worship  
11.30 Parish Communion  
6.30 Churches Together Ballyholme Methodist

## Wednesday 13th April

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

## Sunday 17th April Easter 4

8.30 Holy Communion  
10.00 Morning Worship & Children's Church  
11.30 Morning Prayer  
6.30 Kiwoko Night - Parish Centre

## Wednesday 20th April

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

## Sunday 24th April Easter 5

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

## Wednesday 27th April

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room



### April

**3rd:** Irene Long  
**10th:** Karen Baker  
**17th:** Margaret Magee  
**24th:** Eleanor Bell



### Children's Church Helpers

**10th:** Kelly McCullough, Janice McDonough, Trish McGrugan, Rhona Magennis  
**17th:** Margaret Moorehead, Catherine Nuttall, Fiona Oliva, Amanda Thompson  
**24th:** Geoff & Gillian Young, Tracie Andreasson, Emma Darragh



### April

**3rd:** No Crèche  
**10th:** Katherine Newman, Aileen Smyth, Leone Noblett  
**17th:** Violet Davidson, Elizabeth Rafferty, Rosemary Thompson  
**24th:** Julie Monaghan, Paula McIlwaine, Rachel Brittain

Parish Office: 91274912  
Rectory: 91274901  
Prayer Line: 07531806167  
Transport: 07599794968

Church Readers Rota:  
John 91467243  
or Freda  
91467624



### April

**3rd:** Fiona Jackson, Maureen Aiken, Nicole Watson  
**10th:** Patrick Crothers, Ella Walker, Heather Johnston  
**17th:** Jill Owens, Barbara Wallace, Daphne Moore  
**24th:** Elaine Elborn, Ann Reynolds, Ann Shaw

## FUNERALS

**24th February:** Lisa Graham, late of Beechfield Crescent

### March

**9th:** Emily Weir, formerly of Grove Park  
**15th:** Ian Reading, late of Windermere Drive

## You are invited to a Wedding!

Sunday 3 April (evening)

The Reverend Alistair Morrison & The Reverend Laurie Garramore  
at the Church of St John, Johnstown, Albany  
or the Kajiado Room Ballyholme  
whichever you find more convenient!

If we can manage it technically, we will try to stream a live Skype broadcast of Alistair and Laurie's wedding for anyone who wants to come along to see it. Listen out for announcements in Church and keep your eye on the News in the Pews. TO BE CONFIRMED.

