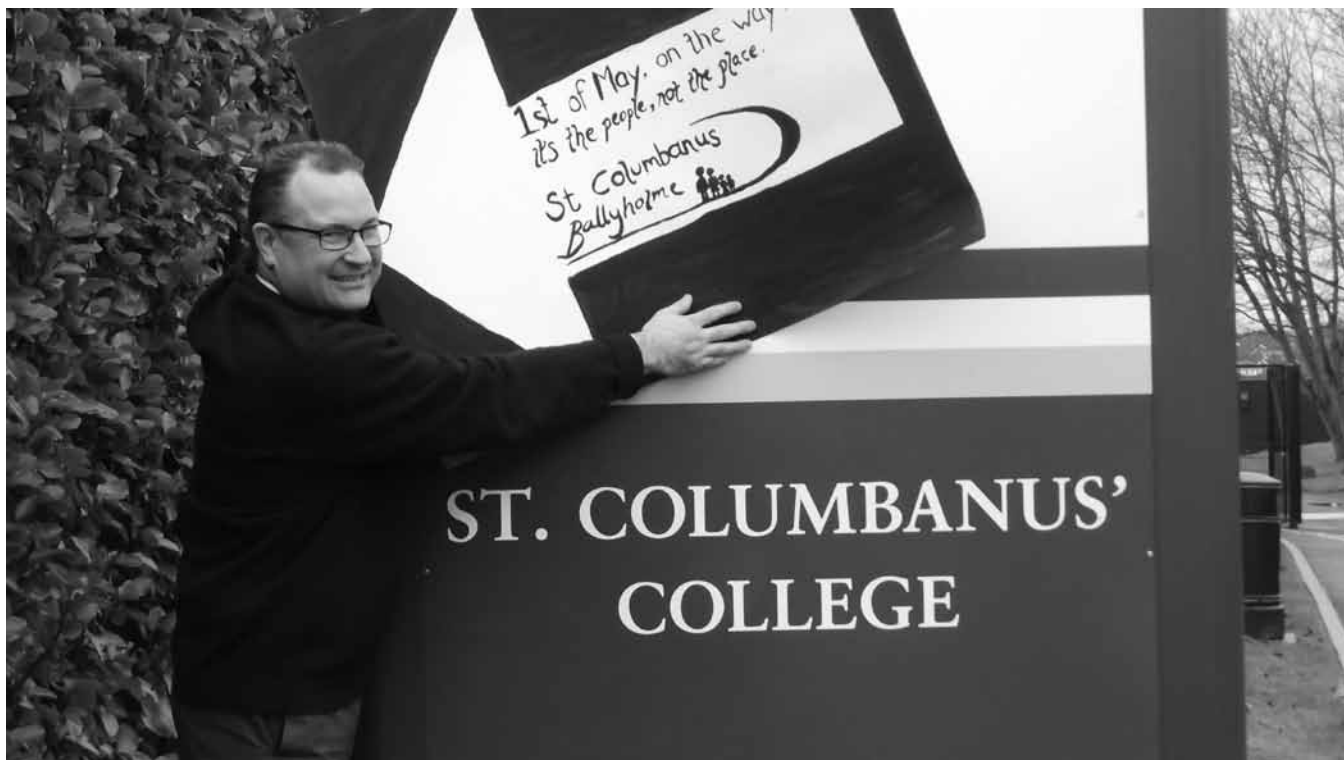


St Columbanus

Ballyholme



1st of May, on the way
Jumpin' and Streetreach
What's a home group?



..On the way *together*..

The Parishioner

May 2016

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

It's the people, not the place. All the clergy I know who have lived through a 'Church in a box' camping-out experience vouch for how positive a time it was for their Church family. Yes, it was exhausting for those behind the scenes making worship happen Sunday by Sunday. But mostly it was a time for remembering why meeting is such a key part of believing. For followers of Jesus, to meet together is to know the very presence of the Saviour Himself. But don't take my word for it. Over the next few months parishioner and journalist Sarah Scott is writing a series of features for us on Christians in different situations around the world who know firsthand what it is to be forced out of their own beloved churches. The truth is, we don't know the half of it. Yet for them, like us, it becomes as never before the people not the place. Not that the place isn't important – don't get me wrong. That's why St Columbanus will shortly be covered in scaffolding. But where we are is not nearly so important as who we are with – and the fact that the Lord is in the midst of us.



SED



Can't make it on Sunday?
Don't forget Wednesdays!

Our weekly Wednesday morning Communion service in the Kajiado Room will continue as our use of the Parish Centre remains largely unaffected by the building work. This has become a vibrant and valued opportunity for worship for many of our parishioners, some of whom find access to our Church building a challenge. It's just half an hour, we remember by name those on our parish prayer list and we always stop for coffee and tea together after the service. Bear in mind that there will be no access to the Parish Centre from the Groomsport Road for the duration of the build project – only from the Grove Park entrance. On the plus side, access from the lower car park couldn't be easier. It's on the level and loos are handy in the foyer. We would love you to join us.



Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families
Diocese of Down & Dromore

Hopefully, on Thursday 21st April, Joy Conn, Renee Miles, Ann Munnis, and Joyce Stock, along with their 2 drivers, will have had a wonderful time celebrating the Queen's 90th Birthday with other Mothers' Union Members in the Down & Dromore Diocese. St. Donards Parish was the venue for this special event.

The Indoor Members' Communion and Afternoon Tea Party will take place on Thursday 19th May at 2.30pm in St. John's Parish Church, Lurgan. Hopefully some of our members will be able to attend.

As these notes are being written at the end of March, I am glad to say that the 53 Seater Bus to the Kildare Outlet Centre on Saturday 11th June is practically full with only 8 empty seats left. Thank you to those who have agreed to come on this journey with us. We all hope we will have a memorable day. Make sure you have a biro in your bag!! It may come in handy.

Please contact me in you have any queries.

Ruth Ruttle (Branch Leader) Phone No. 91450130

The Walkers in the Glens

Two beautiful Glens were our destination in early April and so it was that the fifteen of us arrived first in Glenariff to walk the Rainbow and Waterfalls trails, followed by a foray into the Glenarm forest. In the 'Queen of the Glens', Glenariff, a large part of the Scenic Trail is closed due to felling of diseased trees. But the Rainbow and Waterfalls paths are still open. Going down to the foot of the valley to Rainbow Bridge and the walk to the stunning waterfalls which were in full flood after the previous day's rain, was comparatively easy. This takes you past the refurbished 120 year old Laragh Lodge which served as a tea house for tourists visiting the famous walks and waterfalls.

Brian tells me they would come to Parkmore on the Ballymena, Cushendall and Red Bay railway line and take a jaunting car to Glenariff, which they picked up again at Laragh Lodge from where they travelled to Larne and back to Belfast. However as we returned twisting uphill to the car park we required somewhat more breath and stronger legs.



Spring had just about arrived in Glenariff with plenty of primroses on display, and bluebells raising their heads above the very wet soil. The wild garlic was so prolific you could smell it. Fiona, who seems to have the sharpest eyes of the group, spied a Dipper perched on a rock in the very fast flowing river. Lunch time was spent back in the car park with the luxury of picnic tables and then it was off down the road through Waterfoot and Carnlough to Glenarm. Glenarm is probably one of the least known of the nine glens. The forest is small

with three trails and the walkers chose the 2 mile path which added to that in Glenariff, gave a satisfying day's outing.

Then it was off to the beautiful Water's Edge, Jenny and Peter Munro's new B&B in a much transformed old Police Station on the outskirts of Glenarm. We had arranged to have refreshments there and the scones, fruit and lemon drizzle cakes were the best we had ever had.

And to crown a really successful day, the forecast rain did indeed hold off till we stepped outside the Munro establishment. Perfect timing.

Where is your chair?

We love the feedback you are sending us about our restoration year devotionals – do drop a note into the Parish Office or send an email. Although they were written specially for our own St Columbanus congregation, apparently they are being passed around much more widely which is wonderful. The website offers three different versions (one for adults, one for young people and one for children) in the hope that everyone can join in. Here's a note of appreciation from a parishioner who found this winter unexpectedly difficult.

"Where's my chair?" Where indeed? The devotional notes held great appeal, something I could join, with most if not all the church fellowship. I did not know then that for ten weeks I would be unable to attend Church. Those notes just kept the bond with the fellowship and made a great link. The verse from a Psalm, the verse of a hymn, which I sing though not while in hospital – I might have been awarded another diagnosis! The reading and Simon's notes, so very helpful – we call the Bible "the Living Word" and so it proved. Passages I knew well given a fresh significance and at the weekend I read them all again. Thoughtful suggestions for prayer were very helpful. If you aren't using these notes, get involved so that as a church we can move forward in pilgrimage together."

Home Groups

The responses collected from the two Lenten Conversations held in February/March 2016 included issues concerning the home groups. Parishioners felt that the Home Groups should be better advertised and they did not know who was leading the various Groups. So with that in mind I plan to attend some of the Home Groups to find out more.

Not knowing what to expect I went along to the Home Group run by Caroline Gillan and Paula McIlwaine. This Group has evolved over the 7 years since it began as different members and leaders have become involved. The Group meets during Term Time every fortnight on Tuesday evenings from 8 to 10pm and in between times the members keep in touch using Social Media.

When I arrived Caroline offered me a cup of coffee or tea and a selection of M&S goodies! Always a good way to get things going!

The Group has a list of prayer points and the meeting began with prayers. Caroline stressed that confidentiality is ensured and there is no pressure for members to pray out loud.

This Group is currently studying 'just10' which is a modern day interpretation of the 10 Commandments by Canon J John (more commonly referred to as J John) using YouTube presentations and a study guide. J John presents the 10 Commandments in a positive light and asks us to consider what we can do today to keep the Commandments. If you get the chance to watch his YouTube presentations you will see that he is very easy to listen to, funny and engaging.



The night I went the Group was considering the 4th Commandment – 'Remember to observe the Sabbath day' or 'Catch Your Breath' and members take turns to lead the discussions.

This topic was very relevant to the Group most of whom are trying to balance work and family life along with time for worship. Members were very enthusiastic and keen to share practical ideas about how to make best use of the Sabbath, which is a gift from God, to make sure we get physical rest, recharge our emotions and get spiritual renewal by making time for God.

This Group decides what to study by taking account of recommendations from others, then discussing the options and picking the one that will be most helpful and relevant to all members.

The Group made me feel very welcome and I found the discussion very thought provoking. What immediately struck me was the relaxed atmosphere, and the obvious fellowship and support within the 7 members of the Group who are all female and range in age from late 20s to early 40s.

Home Groups are an important part of our Church's ministry and this Group is keen to explore ways to become more involved in our Church services.

I saw first hand the pastoral support and close bond that exists within the members of this Group. If you would like to give this group a try please contact Paula McIlwaine email - vincent3mac@hotmail.com. New members are always welcome and there is no harm in going along to see if this Group is the one for you!

Watch this space for information about other Home Groups!

Christine Johnstone



Just Older Youth

The Christian Alphabet

Although things are not perfect
Because of trial or pain
Continue in thanksgiving
Do not begin to blame.

Even when the times are hard
Fierce winds are bound to blow
God is forever able
Hold on to what you know.

Imagine life without His love
Joy would cease to be
Keep thanking Him for all the things
Love imparts to thee.

Move out of "Camp Complaining"
No weapon that is known
On earth can yield the power
Praise can do alone.

Quit looking at the future
Redeem the time at hand
Start every day with worship
To "thank" is a command.

Until we see Him coming
Victorious in the sky
We'll run the race with gratitude
eXalting God most high.

Yes, there will be good times and
 yes some will be bad, but
Zion waits in glory, where none
 are ever sad!

The Wednesday Club

Our sincere thanks to Pat Peel for putting the ladies through their paces on 6th April helping to burn off the extra calories consumed over Easter. All joined in the chair exercises including our loyal helpers Roberta, Margaret, Agnes and Ruth. This was followed by much needed afternoon tea and lots of chat. The winner of this month's ballot prize was a delighted Dorothy Smyth.



Easter Communion Lunch



Renee, Tommy, Violet and Charles



Lilian, Brian, Jim and Trevor

Lifts to 'Church' on Sunday morning from 1 May

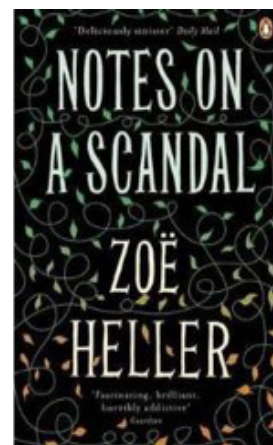
By the time some of you are reading this, we will already be set up for Sunday worship in St Columbanus College. As we said in last month's magazine, we are anxious that everyone who normally walks to Church on the Groomsport Road should be able to make it up to the school. If you will now need a lift on a Sunday morning please let us know in the Parish Office and we will be only too happy to help arrange this for you. Remember, it's the people not the place! We don't want anyone to feel they cannot make it to be part of their Ballyholme church family every week.

Note On A Scandal. By Zoe Heller.



Heller's novel is a story of obsessive friendship and sexual intoxication, told by a gloriously unreliable narrator. It's funny, touching, beautifully observed and radiated with a wholly un-depressing gloom.

From the first day that the beguiling Sheba Hart joins the staff of St George's, history teacher Barbara Covett is convinced that she has found a kindred spirit. Barbara's loyalty to her new friend is passionate and unstinting and when Sheba is discovered to be having an illicit affair with one of her young pupils, Barbara quickly elects herself as Sheba's chief defender. But all is not as it first seems in this dark story and, as Sheba will soon discover, a friend can be just as treacherous as any lover.



Eleanor Mulholland
Shortlisted for The MAN BOOKER PRIZE 2003

Churches on the Move : Yasmin Indonesia



You can't always get what you want, but if you try sometimes you find, you get what you need. Wise words from The Rolling Stones, and ones we here at Ballyholme Parish should take from in the coming weeks and months.

We are gearing up to move out of our church, that seems like a big deal and six months might feel like a long time but sit back and really think about it.

It may be later than we planned and we may not be getting exactly what we thought we wanted, but perhaps we are getting exactly what we need.

Things have a funny way of working out and who are we to question God's plan because all these twists and turns are His will. This time next year we will be wondering why the thought of moving out was such a big deal. It is nothing in comparison to what fellow Christians around the globe must endure in order to come together and praise the Lord.

In Indonesia, worshippers at Yasmin Church have been without a church building since 2010 after the administration of Bogor revoked the building permit and stopped work.

These people are being forced out of their church because the authorities are blocking its construction. Imagine if Ards and North Down Borough Council did that to us. It is just something we will never have to encounter.

They are forced to meet outdoors for their services in all weather conditions, while we will be in the comfort of St Columbanus College.

Members of Yasmin Church have gone through seven Christmas celebrations without a church.

We will not miss a single one and we are actually making our place of worship better. We should return in time for the run up to Christmas to an improved building. November doesn't seem as far away now does it?

Instead of focusing on the negative aspects, the inconveniences, perhaps we should look at this as an opportunity. This is our chance to come together as a congregation, to offer those we do not know lifts to our temporary home, to sit beside new people and form new friendships.

Our church is a family and we are lucky enough to be able to improve the place where we worship. So over the next few months keep the congregation of Yasmin church in your thoughts and also The Rolling Stones.

Because "You can't always get what you want, but if you try sometimes you find, you get what you need."

Sarah Scott



Journeying with Jesus: Holy Week 2016

Our former rector Bishop Alan Abernethy made a very welcome return to St Columbanus for Holy Week 2016. The nightly services were led by the clergy from the Ballyholme Churches with members of all four congregations (Ballyholme Methodist, Ballyholme Presbyterian and the Most Holy Redeemer Sheridan Drive) reading and praying at various points.

Preaching to nearly 200 people each evening, Bishop Alan explored a theme that has informed and shaped much of his ministry: journeying with Jesus. Drawing on a selection of Bible texts which were particularly significant and formative for him, he spoke fondly and appreciatively of the central part Ballyholme Parish had played in his own spiritual pilgrimage. Sharing readily from the highs and lows of his own personal experiences since leaving St Columbanus, he reminded everyone of the openness and vulnerability which have always been his trademarks.

Monday night was entitled “An important place to begin” and took us back to St John’s ‘the word became flesh’ as the introduction to the greatest love story ever told. Incarnating that love in the being and person of Jesus, God’s call on all of us is to be agents of love in a hurting world. “A different kind of religion” was Tuesday’s heading, based on the story of the woman caught in adultery. In a religious culture of rules and condemnation Christ’s grace made everyone he came in contact with, however unworthy, feel better about themselves.

On Wednesday, ‘I am the vine, you are the branches’ was the inspiration for “Roots and Shoots”. Only if we rest in the loving provision of God can we even begin to bear real fruit for Him. “Remembering and Thanking” provided the focus on Maundy Thursday as the tension between looking back and looking forwards was unpacked by Jesus in the Upper Room with his closest friends. In a summary address on Good Friday “Death with a Difference” we were urged to feel the love Christ offers from the cross and embrace the guilt-free life of those who have been completely forgiven.

Ian and the choir did much to set the devotional tone for each service. The praise ranged from familiar hymns, songs and canticles, to introits, sung meditations and Taize chants. Their care and preparation was plain for all to hear and few will forget the mood and atmosphere of the Tenebrae, especially with the two crosses silhouetted so movingly against the sanctuary as an echo of Calvary.



The refreshments on Wednesday evening provided a much appreciated opportunity for fellowship and making new acquaintances and all told, it was a special week for more reasons than can here be mentioned. Our dawn service and breakfast on Easter morning came as the icing on the cake. Next year: Ballyholme Presbyterian.



Christian Aid Week
15 - 21 May 2016
Jesus calls us to love our neighbour as ourselves, and not just the ones next door or at the end of the street.

Around the Parish



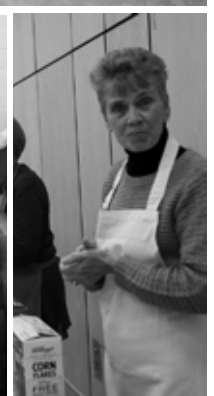
Jumpin'



Streetreach



Easter Dawn Service and Breakfast



Mothers' Union Bazaar



Check out the latest photos on the web site too!



Kiwoko Prayer Walk

The 14th February is usually associated with romance, flowers, chocolates, nice dinners and the like. We celebrated Valentine's Day a little differently this year...

Many believers within Kiwoko have been burdened to pray for the town due to a decline in morals and behaviour. In

addition to the immediate need in our locality, Uganda will see Presidential elections take place on the 18th February. People will tell you that they are confident there will be no trouble but in the same breath will utter something that reveals their actual uncertainty. A small group of us came together prior to Christmas to discuss the possibility and plan for a prayer march, to intercede for Kiwoko and our nation. Yesterday, after weeks of planning, Kiwoko Hospital and our local churches – All Saints, Voice of Truth and St John's – came together to march and pray!

How good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! (Psalm 133:1)

250 people turned out mid-afternoon with temperatures well into the 30s to walk a route around the town that would take just under two hours. Armed with water, umbrellas (to keep the sun off, rather than any threat of rain!) hats and sun cream for some of us, young and old gathered behind the truck to praise and pray to the Lord. The atmosphere was jolly and peaceful.

Heartfelt prayers were offered for our schools, churches, police force, courts, local government leaders, businesses and our families. We declared the authority and sovereignty of our God in the area, coming against the many witchcraft practices and claiming Kiwoko for the Lord.

We finished our walk at the taxi park in Kiwoko where Pastor Hosea proclaimed the gospel and three people gave their lives to Christ. One of the new believers was a Muslim lady, and she publically confessed Christ in answer to an appeal. Praise the Lord!

To see people able to worship God freely without persecution or obstruction, is not something to take for granted in these days. We are mindful of the privilege it is to take our stand publicly for the Lord. We believe that in the heavenly realm God is moving in answer to our cries for Kiwoko and Uganda (2Chronicles 20:1-30).

Let us pray that revival is on the way!

Denise Wilson



YOUTH-news

youth [youth] (youths)

news [nooz]

Reaching Out



There is something about reaching out at Easter time that not only does our hearts and heads a good turn, but deeply connects us with Jesus. It is during the Easter season that we focus and reflect upon how Jesus reached out to us, arms wide upon the cross suffering immensely just so that we may experience love, acceptance, forgiveness and freedom. The life, death and resurrection was the Godhead reaching to us on earth, arriving and abiding with us in human form, and doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.



Within the youth at Ballyholme we have a tagline that we often recall: "Forget yourself long enough to lend a helping hand." With the focus on how God reached out to us through Jesus, we as a youth group spent the two weeks of our Easter holidays reaching out to others. The first week a group of 20 young people and leaders connected with several other churches in Bangor and headed over to Kilcooley to do gardening and fence painting for senior citizens or people who were struggling to do these things themselves, a children's holiday scheme, an evening drop-in for teenagers and a positive mural for the community. We spend every other week in the year focusing on our church community and surrounding residents, but it is good to remember that as well as caring for those at our own front doors, there are people in need outside of our homes, immediate communities or comfort zones.



The second week of course was spent running our very own 'Jumpin' Easter holiday scheme. Alongside the adults on the team, so many of our young people were leaders at Jumpin, some of whom had never done anything like this before. It was incredible to watch young people who undoubtedly had many other offers of activities they could have been doing during their time off school, want to invest in the lives of children and provide a fun and meaningful time for them. The young people were caring, willing to try new things, hilarious and above all wanting the children to know that they are loved by God and by us.



We can all beam with pride and smile with thankfulness for such a wonderful group of young people who spend their spare time reaching out to others as Jesus reached out to them.

Kids Corner!

Easter Jumpin 2016 is over, and what a week it was!

This year's theme was taken from the blockbuster Pixar film "Inside Out", which is a story of a girl and her emotions. Through talks, games, crafts and songs we explored our own emotions and how Jesus knows and cares about how we feel.

The children had a blast with events like the pea fair and the murder mystery, and it was great to see both new faces and old. It's hard to believe that it's over for another few months, but it won't be long till Summer comes, and along with it Summer Jumpin... which will take place on 18th-22nd July! Keep an eye out in the magazine and the Parish facebook page (www.facebook.com/ballyholmeparish) for further details.



The Holy Spirit...

Last year, I suddenly became very ill, being admitted to hospital and transferred, as my condition deteriorated, to the Intensive Care Unit. Initially, I could just shake my head and blink. Unable to hear or speak, my thoughts turned inwards. I prayed. I mulled over happier times; holidays and family occasions. Memories brought forth ideas for plotlines and led to storyboarding four pieces of work. Throughout these diversions, I returned time and again to prayer. From the back of my mind, lines from a hymn long forgotten kept emerging:

**Come Holy Spirit, Sent from God the Father
Thou Friend and Teacher, Comforter and Guide
Our thoughts directing, Keep us close to Jesus
And in our hearts, For evermore abides.**

As the days and prayers continued, I witnessed first-hand many acts of kindness and compassion from many people who were friends, teachers, comforters and guides. Visits were restricted to family and the clergy. Simon and Alistair were frequent visitors and fulfilled all four Holy Spirit roles, reinforcing faith, imparting strength and encouraging determination. My family and friends were of unfailing and loving support.

At other times, the Holy Spirit was manifest via unexpected sources. The male cleaner who curtailed his lunch break to bring an iced lollipop which he had to then take time to feed me; the nurse who decided, unbidden, to wash my hair on a hot September day. The young doctor, part of the Neurology team, who took precious time to sit and talk. Whilst we should never take the steadfast love and support of our family and friends for granted, it is the kindness of comparative strangers which brings us up sharply.

We may be very swift to rush to judgement about people who have what we perceive as unconventional appearances. Previously, my image of the Holy Spirit was of a benevolent old man in flowing robes. I now know that his accomplices come in all shapes and sizes, their 'flowing robes' are uniforms, overalls, leather jackets; their bodies sometimes tattooed. The Holy Spirit indiscriminately recruits from all walks of life and is a continued reminder that, no matter what we have to suffer or endure throughout our lives, the love of God is always with us.

Patricia Fawcett

Restoration → Transformation 2016

The next step: Thursday 5 May

A full list of responses from our two Lenten conversations is now available to view on the news section of the parish website. Seventy-five people came along to Church to discuss worship, discipleship, youth, children, community and seniors and a number of parishioners contributed via the written questionnaires.

Introducing the second conversation, the Rector said that every individual contribution, verbal or written, had been valuable. He went on to identify three broad categories of response. Some responses made this time, came up in more or less the same form seven years ago in 'Have your say'. Simon remarked that they would probably come up again seven years from now because they are universal challenges – things that every Church struggles to get right in every situation and whatever their resources. A second category, he continued, was those responses which blended together to form a chorus! In other words, lots of people made the same basic points in such a way that trying to address them needs to be a clear priority. A third category of responses were the ones no one saw coming: fresh, insightful, practical ideas not aired before - if they had even previously been thought of.

Taking everything forward will require prayer and careful prioritisation and we need your help to start working all of this through. We hope you are already using the four page prayer pull-out from the April magazine and we would love you to join us in the Kajiado Room on the evening of Thursday 5 May. By that stage, we will have had our first Sunday in St Columbanus College and the restoration work will have begun. The time and format of the meeting will be advertised in the News in the Pews but for now, please hold the date.

OUR WORSHIP

Sunday 1st May Easter 6

8.30 Holy Communion
 10.00 All Age Service
 11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 4th May

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 8th May Laster 7

8.30 Holy Communion
 10.00 Morning Worship & Children's Church
 11.30 Parish Communion

Wednesday 11th May

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 15th May Day of Pentecost

8.30 Holy Communion
 10.00 Morning Worship & Children's Church
 11.30 Morning Prayer
 6.30pm United Service Ballyholme Presbyterian.

Wednesday 18th May

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 22nd May Trinity Sunday

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

Wednesday 25th May

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 29 May Trinity 1

8.30 Holy Communion
 10.00 Wholeness & Healing
 11.30 Wholeness & Healing

FUNERAL

March

21st: June Green, formerly of Sir Samuel Kelly Nursing Home, Holywood.

April

15th: Florence Boal, formerly of Donaghadee Road.

BAPTISMS

April

17th: Tess Anne Elizabeth Looker, daughter of Paul & Kelly Looker

Parish Office:

91274912

Rectory:

91274901

Prayer Line:

07531806167

Transport: 07599794968

Church Readers Rota:

John 91467243

Michelle 91271327

Web Site www.

Ballyholmeparish.co.uk



May

1st: Susan & Jonnie Stockton, Pat Davidson
8th: Jacqui & Neil Devlin, Michael & Sharon Hatch
15th: Gillian & Geoff Young, Vicky Hayes
22nd: Charles Robinson, Pat Adair, Jean Law
29th: Jem Moram, Joy Hamilton, Irene Bell

May

1st: No Creche
8th: Katherine Newman, Colette Pike, Leanne Young
15th: Violet Davidson, Rosemary Thompson, Leonne Noblett
22nd: Julie Monaghan, Rachel Brittan, Paula McIlwain
29th: No Creche



May

1st: Jane Fitzimmon
8th: Heidi Doogan
15th: Joy Conn
22nd: Joan Larmour
29th: Anna Lemon

Children's Church Helpers



May

1st: No Children's Church
8th: Stefan & Tracie Andreasson, Heather Dickey, Gillian Fletcher
15th: Gareth & Janet Boal, Deborah Galbraith
22th: Emma Hamilton, Debbie Hunter, Jacqui & Neil Devlin
29th: Allison Jamison, Gilian Jones, Gail Kerr, Gerry McCaughan