

St Columbanus

Ballyholme



St Patrick's Day Celebrations
Lent & Holy Week 2018
Young People and
Social Media

..On the way
together..



The Parishioner

March 2018

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

The day I booked our flights to New Zealand, I asked my friends Stuart and Pru Bell to book theirs to Belfast. For us, the holiday of a lifetime; for St Columbanus, the best preacher I know. Sunday by Sunday through the last year of my law degree I sat under Stuart's preaching and my call to ministry gradually took hold. I had never heard anyone speak about Christ so gently yet so powerfully. No ego, no angst, just love, humility and truth. By all accounts, he made quite an impact on his two Sundays in Ballyholme and many sensed the Spirit of God movingly at work. Before we left for New Zealand on Boxing Day my last burst of emails was to invite a small group of parishioners to meet with Stuart and Pru. On coming home, almost the first thing I learn is that the small group concerned have mapped out what Stuart wants to call "A Festival of Faith" from 23 to 30 September this autumn. Make a note of the dates and please join me in praying for Stuart and Pru's return visit and for those you will want to encourage along to our week of activities.



SED.



Ballyholme Mothers' Union
Coffee Morning
 Saturday 10th March
 10 am - 12 noon

Come and spoil yourself this
Mothers' Day weekend!

Preloved ladies and children's clothes
 Children's Mothers' Day Crafts
 Hand and Nail treatments
 Accessories and Gifts Stall
 Bottle Tombola
 Cake Stall

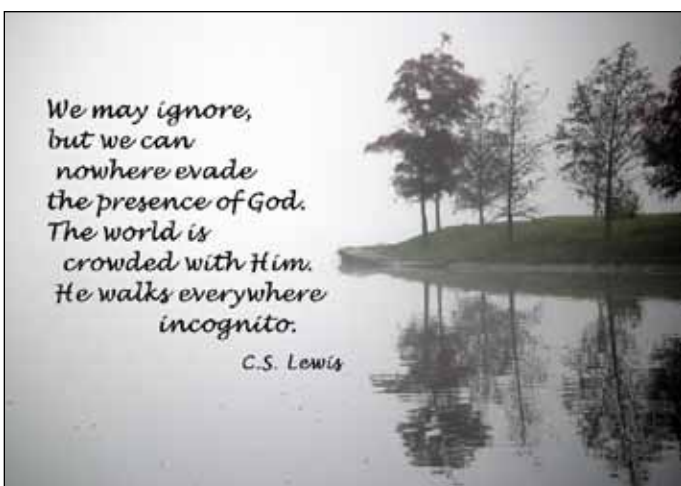


The maternal poem below is by Carol Ann Duffy who was appointed Britain's first female Poet Laureate in 2009.

The Light Gatherer

When you were small, your cupped palms
 each held a candleworth under the skin,
 enough light to begin,
 and as you grew,
 light gathered in you, two clear raindrops
 in your eyes,
 warm pearls, shy,
 in the lobes of your ears, even always
 the light of a smile after your tears.
 Your kissed feet glowed in my one hand,
 or I'd enter a room to see the corner you
 played in
 lit like a stage set,
 the crown of your bowed head spotlit.
 When language came, it glittered like a river,
 silver, clever with fish,
 and you slept
 with the whole moon held in your arms for a
 night light
 where I knelt watching.
 Light gatherer. You fell from a star
 into my lap, the soft lamp at the bedside
 mirrored in you,
 and now you shine like a snowgirl,
 a buttercup under a chin, the wide blue
 yonder
 you squeal at and fly in,
 like a jewelled cave,
 turquoise and diamond and gold, opening out
 at the end of a tunnel of years.

Carol Ann Duffy



Joy Just Older Youth

Mothering Sunday is always the fourth Sunday of Lent and this year falls on 11th March.

Many years ago it was considered important for people to return to their home or 'mother' church once a year.

It was common for children to leave home for work as domestic servants from the age of ten, and most historians think that it was the return to the 'mother' church which led to the tradition of children being given the day off to visit their mother and family. Walking home, children would pick wild flowers to give as a gift to their mother or church.

Mothering Sunday was also known as Refreshment Sunday because the fasting rules for Lent were relaxed that day.

By 1938 Mothering Sunday had become a popular celebration with Boy Scouts, Girl Guides and Parishes marking the day. By the 1950s it was being celebrated throughout the UK and businesses realised the commercial opportunities.



The Wednesday Club

This month, our group of ladies, warmly ensconced in the Kajiado room, listened to Rachel from Crossroads NI, give a very interesting talk on the charity work that they do for young carers - children, who can be as young as 8 or 9, caring for either siblings or parents on a regular basis. They support these children by taking them out socially, or just being there if they need to talk or need help. They also have a domiciliary service where carers help older people in their own homes, and a volunteer service that befriend lonely or isolated people, by either visiting them in their homes, or making regular phone calls just for a chat. They are always looking for volunteers, either for the elderly, or supporting the young carers in various ways. So if anyone reading this thinks they could help, Crossroads NI would only be too pleased to hear from them.



As usual, we finished with tea and buns, and the winner of this months draw was Miriam Cochrane.

Same time next month - see you then!

Sue



Tuesday 27th March is the date of our next **Communion Lunch**, all are welcome to attend. As this takes place in the Parish Centre it is easily accessible. The Communion Service is at 12.30pm and is followed by a light lunch at 1.00pm. Please consider joining us for this celebration during Holy Week. Lifts can be arranged by ringing me at the Parish office on 9127 4712.

God bless, Karen



Decluttering With Gwen

You may notice some of our parishioners, around the recycling centres or purchasing extra refuse sacks in Tesco... It's all because we have been smitten by the decluttering bug from Gwen!

She visited us on Monday 5th February and eased us into thinking about the 'stuff' that gathers up around us, in fact overwhelming us from time to time!

She explained that most of us could be slotted into four categories of gatherer:-

- * Crafty with unfinished items!
- * Anxiously storing up stuff just in case!
- * Custodians of historical artefacts!
- * Treasures as idols, we were storing up!

There was much food for thought, with some passages of Scripture shared as well. We will wait and see how many of us have taken that all important first step to a more calm and ordered living space...How blissful would that be?

A delightful supper was enjoyed amongst planning for A GOOD OLD SPRING-CLEAN!

Forthcoming Events

Donations are needed for **MU Coffee Morning and Sale on Saturday 10th March 10am - 12noon**. Especially aimed at pampering for Mother's Day! Plenty of stalls, nail polish, cakes, accessories, plants etc. Kid's Mother's Day Art, Pre Lived Clothes Sale. Tea, coffee and scones. Bring mum along and the whole family too!

We are looking for jewellery, handbags, scarves and unwanted gifts. We also hope to have a bottle stall tombola (donations please). These can be left in the Parish Centre.

Paula McIlwaine is also running a pre loved clothes sale for ladies and kids clothes More details to follow.

Our next MU meeting is Monday 5th March. It's the Area Meeting, so we will be hosting the other branches of MU in the Area.

Denise Wilson is our guest speaker; she will be sharing Women's Stories from her time in Uganda, Rachel Brittain will also be present with Marketplace from CMSI, a platform too for sharing the Craftmaker's Stories.

It will be a very inspiring and informative evening... Please come along and even bring a friend! You'll not be disappointed!

Monday 26th March, members should meet up for the Holy Week Service in Ballyholme Methodist.

Many Blessings

Yvonne Minogue and

The Mothers' Union Team.

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families



I want to follow Christ....but how?

3 weeks beginning
Tuesday 6 March 10am
or Wednesday 7 March 8pm
Starting with the film,
"I, Daniel Blake",
followed by 2 Bible studies.

Love God ...Love your neighbour



“Every year in the Diocese of Down & Dromore we celebrate St Patrick's Day at Saul Church and Down Cathedral – two places steeped in the history of our patron saint. The 17 March falls on a Saturday this year so this is a special invitation to families to join our annual celebrations at Saul Church but especially at Down Cathedral. I hope to see you there!”

PROGRAMME

- * Holy Communion at Saul at **9.15 am**, with preacher Revd Dr Laurence Graham (Methodist President).
- * Pilgrimage from Saul to Downpatrick from **10.15 am**
- * Family Fun at Down Cathedral from **10.30–11.45 am**
- * Family friendly Festival Service in Down Cathedral at **11.45 am**. Guest speaker, Nick Harding. Traditional music beforehand, Irish dancers, quiet space for young children during the service.
- * A wreath is laid at St Patrick's Grave.
- * Free Irish stew lunch in the marquee.

TRANSPORT TO SAUL

- * From **8.00 am** private buses will leave the Mall for the service and pilgrimage.
- * The last bus for the service leaves at **8.45 am**
- * The last bus for the pilgrimage leaves at **9.45 am**
- * The last bus from Saul to the Cathedral leaves at **10.40 am**

FAMILY FUN AT DOWN CATHEDRAL FROM 10.30 -11.45 am

St Patrick's Trail

Discover St Patrick's life story, with clues in and around Down Cathedral. Prizes to be won!

St Patrick Selfie booth

Have fun with our St Patrick's Day costumes and hashtag your selfie

Goody Bag

St Patrick's Day goodies for every child.

Stuart and Pru Bell

‘When the cat's away’..... what fun we had. Eighteen days of meeting such a welcoming and warm congregation. We'd been told before that the hospitality in N. Ireland is legendary, and so it proved to be. We're so grateful to Simon for trusting his church family to our care.

There were memorable highlights for us, from seeing for the first time the wonderful transformative work inside St. Columbanus, to a room full to bursting with interested people when Pru told the story of her martyred great grandparents; from a weekly programme of activities for every age group, to 30+ people standing at the front of church to put their feet into the footsteps of Christ as his disciples; and so much more.

It's remarkable how much we grew together in such a short period; we grew together and we grew together closer to the Lord. Maybe we could do that again still more in September.

Pru and I have received an invitation to come back in September [23-30th] for a week of celebrating our faith, and we'd love to do that. We'll be booking our ferry very shortly. We'll have to find some way of sending the cat away for another much needed break though! Only teasing!

Stuart Bell



Easter Praise Party!

This is a children's workshop with games, crafts and a short talk.

When? Good Friday (30th March)
Time? 10am - noon

It is followed by the Good Friday Family Service, in the church at noon.



As Children's Church is a thriving community within St Columbanus Parish, I thought it would be good to take a closer at each of the three groups that meet, starting with the Bubbles.

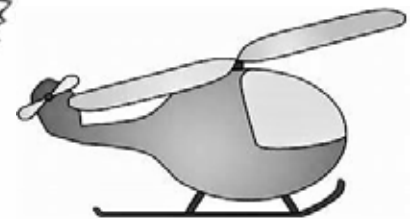
The Bubbles are a wonderful group of young children, from 3 years old to P1. They arrive with excitement, eager to tell me their news and cuddle our friends Scary Roar and Googley Eyes! We have been learning Old Testament stories, and singing action songs such as God made me and I am Special. We pray, play games (our favourite is What's the time Mr Wolf?) and complete a craft based on our Bible story. I pray that the children will leave Bubbles knowing that God made them, He loves them, and they are special because they are wonderfully made as children of God!

Paula



QUESTIONS

K I D S A S K



How do we get to heaven?

Does Jesus come down in his helicopter and get us?

As the spiritual reality of heaven is very difficult for children to understand, it is not surprising they ask what physical means Jesus will use to bring us there! It's a question grounded in the gospel truth that Jesus is the way to get heaven. In John 14 v 6 Jesus says:

Jesus told them, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me." (NLT)

So, what does this verse really say about how we get to heaven?

Making it easy...for the kids!

- * Going to heaven isn't about being good or bad...it is about being friends with Jesus.
- * When we believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that He came to earth to share the good news that God loves us, and that He died so that whenever we say 'sorry' we can be forgiven, then one day we will live with Him forever in heaven.

* Jesus doesn't come and collect us in a helicopter! Our bodies get older, and eventually they die, but the Bible says that, for Christians, this is like falling asleep in Jesus (1 Thess 4:14), and when we do we will join Him in paradise. (Luke 23:43)

* The Bible promises that everyone who belongs to Christ will be given new bodies, but there is an order to it and we have to wait our turn! Christ was raised first, and then, when he returns to earth at the End of Time, we will be raised too (1 Cor 15:20-28) – it will be like waking up to live forever with God so we won't need a helicopter!

A little bit more...(for the mums and dads!)

* John 14 contains Jesus's words of encouragement to His disciples, opening with Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and also trust in me. Jesus wanted them to know that there is ample space in heaven for the followers of Jesus, with the promise of many rooms.

* Jesus states that he was preparing a place for them, we now know that this preparation took the form of His passion and resurrection. This means that The Way is found in Jesus suffering on the cross and the belief in His triumphant victory over death.

Going deeper...try this at home

* Know that GOD LOVES YOU!

* Personalise John 3 v 16 for each member of the family. Read the verse aloud, filling the name of each person into the blanks below:

This is how much God loved _____: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that _____ need not be destroyed; by believing in him, _____ can have a whole and lasting life.

Snapshot

For my fortieth birthday, my brother Richard created a DVD of various images, mostly of his niece and nephew and some other members of our family. It was, hands down, the most treasured gift I received that year. Richard lives in England and so when he visited home he always brought (in the days before smart phones) his camera and his video camera. Often without me noticing he'd be snapping away and recording things that were going on when my son and daughter were very little.

Still pictures of moments in time, moving images, some with live sound and other sequences which he had edited and accompanied with background music. Christmas present opening, Easter Egg hunts, Ben and Zoe learning to ride their bikes filled the screen, those moments bursting with colour, with life and with love. It struck me while watching that I didn't personally take any of the photos, instead was either immersed in an activity elsewhere yet nearby, or absent completely, and so I was able to see with fresh eyes the images, of the two most precious people in my life for the first time.

These days of social media dominance, Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook can force many of us to "stage" our photographs, portraying all that we show in the best light possible, applying filters, cropping out unwanted background items and even other people, but in real life as it is happening there are no filters. It can be raw, good or bad but always honest.

Watching the DVD made me think about the omniscient God, an everlasting presence throughout all our moments in this life. He doesn't need a camera or a recording device to catalogue our lives, made up of snapshots in time, transient experiences and long-term trials. One of my favourite authors, C S Lewis wrote "We may ignore, but we can nowhere evade the presence of God. The world is crowded with Him. He walks everywhere incognito".

This is a comfort to me, knowing that not only myself but my husband and children, parents, sister and brother, all of us are mixed into this world then and now, always with God in the centre, behind the camera, hoping that we are living our lives in the best "light" possible.

Kelly McCullough



Holy Week

Monday 26 to Friday 30 March 2018 at 7.30pm

Methodist Church, Brooklyn Avenue, Ballyholme

Theme: 'Walking the way of the cross.'

We will be exploring passages from the second half of Mark's gospel and reflecting on what it means to follow Christ in our everyday lives.

Guest Speaker: **John Alderdice**

John is husband to Ruth and dad to Hannah and Daniel. He has been a Minister of the Methodist Church in Ireland since 1998 and has served in local church settings in Co Armagh and Co Down before becoming Methodist Chaplain to Queen's University Belfast in 2009. In July 2014 he took up the post of Director of Ministry for the Methodist Church in Ireland, based at Edgehill College. He is also involved with leadership development through Arrow Leadership.

He is deeply interested in how the church needs to be shaped or reshaped to fulfil its calling in today's world to share the gospel, and the type of leadership that is required to do this.

He is a technology lover, Mac geek, guitar player, Man Utd fan, book collector, music listener, geocache finder and loves the idea of getting out more to run and cycle!



We will have the engaging and talented Christian Drama group, Play It By Ear with us on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday.



EASTER JUMPIN' IS FAST APPROACHING –

I hope you are registered!

Dates: 4th, 5th & 6th April



Time:
10am – 1pm
Price: £20

After some feedback from Ballyholme parents, we are piloting a new format of Jumpin' this year with one longer morning session.

We feel this is the best way to ensure we have the appropriate ratio between the high numbers of children/junior leaders and adults, whilst still making it a fun and positive time for the kids!

We are really looking forward to seeing you all there!

Paula and Billy



A Clear(ing) day in Tollymore

A small, but intrepid, group of seven walkers made its way to Tollymore Forest Park for the February walk. The route chosen was the mountain trail with the addition of part of The Drinns Loop. However, for the first part of the walk, we chose to take the more scenic route along the Shinma River before following the mountain trail.

As we descended to the river, through the formal gardens, we noticed the first clearing of the day. Most of the rhododendrons that had previously dominated the garden have been removed – presumably to be replaced by new planting.

Later in the walk, on The Drinns Loop, the group's most experienced Mourne walkers, Brian and Maurice, commented on the extensive harvesting of the pine forest through which the path travels. Saplings have been planted between the stumps of the harvested trees, but there is now an open vista over the surrounding mountains. Slievenabrock and Luke's Mountain were in clear view. Unfortunately, the mist that was clinging to the snow on the top of Donard prevented us from seeing the highest point in Northern Ireland.

When we crossed the path between The Drinns, the clearance gave a great view across the Forest Park to Castlewellan and to Slieve Croob in the distance. We joked that we should make the most of the view because, if we came back in 25 years time, the saplings would have grown and the view would be obscured.

Around this point Brian promised us a summer seat on which to have lunch. Unfortunately, the seat was not to be found. We surmised that it was collateral damage of the several large trees that had been uprooted by storms.

Further on, we found a spot for lunch – sitting on the grassy edge of the path with our feet in a dry ditch. We believe that this was the first time the Walkers have had lunch in a sheugh!



As we were having lunch, we were passed by a couple walking two Irish wolfhounds. A few minutes later, from another direction, came another couple with a single Irish wolfhound. (You go for years without ever seeing an Irish wolfhound and then, one day, three come along in five minutes!!).

Other fellow travellers were several groups of mountain bikers and a couple of men whose accents suggested their home county was well to the south of County Down. They had walked several miles already and had a few more to travel before reaching their destination – Meelmore Lodge, which, they told us, serves a “great pot of tay”.

We returned to the car park having enjoyed a great walk. As is our tradition, we sought “tay” and coffee for refreshment and found them, once again, in McCann's at Balloo.

PETER GIBSON

The Lent Appeal for Storehouse



The trolley will be at the back of Church during Lent for your donations. Items that we need include:

Tins: Tuna, custard, sweetcorn, beans, rice pudding, soup

Jars: Baby food, jam, pasta sauce

Drinks: Diluted juice, breakfast juice, long life milk

Boxes: Cereal, biscuits, sugar, pasta, tea bags & coffee

Bottles: Washing-up liquid, cleaning products

Other Items: Male & Female toiletries, nappies, wipes



Easter Vestry: 18 March 2018

In accordance with chapter 3 of the Constitution of the Church of Ireland, our annual General (Easter) Vestry meeting in Ballyholme takes place at 12.45pm on Sunday 18 March in the Parish Centre over a parish family lunch.

Constitutionally, as you know, we are free to conduct elections to the Select Vestry in whatever way we see fit. Written nominations will be invited ahead of the meeting in the hope that we will receive at least 12 names. It is up to you to stand yourself or to propose someone else to stand and the basic commitment is one meeting a month.

Nominations will close on Sunday 11 March. Forms will be available from the Churchwardens on Sundays, from the Parish Office on weekday mornings and from our Honorary Secretary Leslie Adams (91466689). We will take a digital photograph to use on the voting paper.

So far as the agenda for the meeting itself is concerned, in addition to the elections, the adoption of the parish accounts and the submission of any reports, 'any other notified business' should be brought to the Rector's attention the day before the meeting at the latest. Please plan to be part of this important day in the parish calendar.



Planning GAP year activities?
Thinking of a sabbatical?
Wanting to do something different?

KIWOKO HOSPITAL

WE NEED A TEACHER!



- » no experience needed, but enthusiasm and a love for children essential!
- » ASAP, for 6 weeks, 6 months or longer...
- » for two children, aged 9 & 6
- » based at Kiwoko Hospital, Uganda
- » plenty of opportunity for involvement in other activities at the hospital, especially ministry (if interested)
- » voluntary position (but if finances are an issue please still enquire)

CHAT TO RORY OR DENISE FOR FURTHER DETAILS



Lenten Prayer

Come along and change things
Come along and be changed

Every Thursday during Lent
7.30-8.00pm

In the Parish Centre
15 minutes of theory
15 minutes of practice

*No prior experience required
Prepare the way of the Lord*

YOUTH-news

youth [youth] (youths) news [nooz]

Young people are becoming more and more exposed to the effects of social media. The Internet just came out of nowhere and changed everything including childhood and adolescence. Whether this change has been for the better or worse depends on how you look at it.

Teenagers today are the first generation that cannot imagine life without the internet and the various devices that connect us to it. Mobile phones and tablets have become extensions of our bodies. On the other hand, you might also say that these gadgets have a positive impact on the youth of today. Some people believe that the Internet and its various social networking options affect us negatively while others beg to differ. Parents are scrambling to make sure they have the right answers to guide their children.

Many parents worry about how exposure to technology and social media might affect their children and young people. Whilst we know that children pick up social and cognitive skills from tablets at an incredible pace, we don't want our young people spending hours glued to a screen. Adolescence is an equally important period of development and we need to be careful with how the use of technology affects our teenagers. The experts worry that excessive use of technology and social media are promoting anxiety and lowering self-esteem.

75% of young people are currently using social media today. 89% of young people feel that social networking helps with their relationships with friends and family whilst only 6% feel that it hurts relationships with friends and family. It's interesting to note that 49% feel that social media makes them feel more confident.

I feel that it is important that the church can step in to fill the void that social media can leave in the lives of young people. We must educate young people to find their identity that isn't connected to a screen or a social media platform. It is our responsibility as a church and youth group to allow space for young people to build relationships with others their own age through activities, programmes and trips. We must enable young people to build healthy self-esteem and prepare them for success in life by helping them acquire proper communication skills and to develop essential skills for building stable relationships that will last and not be dependent on a 'like' or a 'follow'.

As a church, we continue to pray for the young people who are in our congregation. With the rising influence of social media, it is important to pray that young people can find relationships and positive influences amongst their peers. Pray that church can be a safe place away from negativity they may find online or in the every day and that young people can overcome the anxiety and worry placed on them.

The youth leadership team are continuously trying to come up with creative ways to encourage, equip and empower our young people through the programmes and activities we deliver. Pray for us as we dig deeper into what it means to be a young person in the world today.

Billy

Photos from YF night called "Shack Attack with Habitat For Humanity"



Sunday 4th March

Lent 3
 8.30 Holy Communion
 10.00 Good News at Ten - All Age
 11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 7th March

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 11th March

Lent 4 - Mothering Sunday
 8.30 Holy Communion
 10.00 Good News at Ten & Children's Church
 11.30 Parish Communion
 6.30 United Service Ballyholme Presbyterian

Wednesday 14th March

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 18th March

Lent 5
 8.30 Holy Communion
 10.00 Good News at Ten & Children's Church
 11.30 Morning Prayer

FUNERALS

January

17th: Henrica McIlwaine, formerly of Bangor Care Home

18th: Edmund Beckett, formerly of Downshire Road

February

1st: June Caughey, formerly of Fairfield Road

Parish Office:

91274912

Rectory:

91274901

Prayer Line:

07531806167

Transport: 07599794968

Church Readers Rota:

Freda (11.30) 91467624

Thelma (10.00) 91453602

Web Site www.ballyholmeparish.co.uk

Ballyholmeparish.co.uk



Wednesday 21st March

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 25th March

Palm Sunday
 8.30 Holy Communion
 10.00 Good News at Ten - Communion & Children's Church
 11.30 Holy Communion
 6.30 Stainer's Crucifixion

Wednesday 28th March

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Friday 30th March

12 noon Family Service

Details of the Holy Week evening services in Ballyholme Methodist can be found inside the magazine



March



4th: Karen Baker

11th: Mothering Sunday
 Ruth Ruttle

18th: Sue Bleakley

25th: Sybil Robertson



March

4th: Michael & Sharon Hatch, Charles Robinson

11th: Mothers' Union Team

18th: Ann, Karen & Kelly

25th: Tony & Jan Carver
 Glynis McSorley, Peter Robinson

Help needed to decorate the Church for Easter

Saturday 31st March 2018 at 10.00 am

All offers of help, flowers, greenery etc, very much appreciated

Children's Church Helpers



March

4th: No Children's Church

11th: Claire Andrews, Judith Bell, Sarah Boyd, Katherine Newman

18th: Neil Devlin, Jayne Nickell, Aileen Smith, Trish McGrugan

25th: Janice McDonough, Debbie Hunter, Caireen Porter, Kelly McCullough



March

4th: No creche

11th: Rachel Brittain, Dawn Shackles, Johanna Lawther

18th: Natalie McCartan, Jenny Beattie, Claire Skelly

25th: Christine Rankin, Julie Caulfield, Ashleigh Birkett