

St Columbanus

Ballyholme



Easter Vestry Report
Safeguarding Trust
Coronavirus guidelines



..On the way
together..

The Parishioner

April 2020

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

The Rambling Rector

Easter 2020 offers us an unexpected perspective on Jesus' words at the Last Supper: "I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matthew 26). Let's hope the rest of us don't have to wait that long, because while the Coronavirus Guidelines apply, Holy Communion will feel incomplete without the common cup. At the Reformation, our Anglican forebears felt strongly enough to enshrine this Biblical principle in the Thirty-Nine Articles. "The Cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the Lay-people", reads Article 30, "for both the parts of the Lord's Sacrament, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be ministered to all Christian men alike." Whilst Covid-19 is a symptom of how intimate and interconnected the world has become, it has left many people feeling nervous, even frightened. Yet for Christians, Jesus' words about not drinking wine are actually a statement of divine faith and divine optimism. With Calvary in His sights, the Lord is still thinking in terms of a Kingdom. The Cross was never a defeat for Jesus, it was the way to a throne. Hallelujah!



SED.

Holy Week in Ballyholme Presbyterian Church

**Monday 6 April - Friday 10 April 2020
at 8pm**



HOLY WEEK

Guest Speaker Very Rev Dr John Dixon

John Dixon hails from Co. Monaghan. On completion of his ministry training he ministered First Rathfriland and then the majority of his ministry in First Antrim from which he retired in 2008. Throughout his life he has been passionate for mission work both at home and overseas.

For some time he was the Irish Chair of Overseas Missionary Fellowship and also served as Convenor of the Presbyterian Overseas Board between 2000 and 2007. He was elected Moderator of the General Assembly in 1998. He is highly respected within the Presbyterian Church for his godliness, wisdom, experience and sense of fun. One of his greatest challenges came in 1991 when he became Boss to Peter Lyle.

John is married to Claire and they have two married daughters, Julie and Cheryl.

POSTPONED

Spring into Life Postponed

new dates 18 – 20 September 2020

Intended as a joyful coming together of our whole church family, sadly coronavirus has forced us to reschedule our Parish Weekend.

All tickets and bookings for the programme currently in place will be honoured.

Thank you for all your preparations and excitement (and clothes donations!) in the run-up but given the circumstances it would be irresponsible and potentially unsafe to go ahead.

In anticipation of your understanding, prayer and presence in September.

SED.





Just Older Youth

Murillo's 'St John the Baptist with the Lamb'

The nursery rhymes we learnt as children often focused on lambs: Mary Had a Little Lamb, Baa Baa Black Sheep, Little Bo-Peep and Little Boy Blue. They come to mind in springtime when we see lambs in the field jumping for joy or bleating as they run to the ewes for warmth and safety.

Murillo, a 17th century artist from Seville, had that world of childhood in mind when he painted 'St John the Baptist with the Lamb'. He looks back to the little child of Isaiah 11 leading the animals, but also we are called to think of the adult John the Baptist, who sees Jesus walking by and exclaims, "Look, here is the Lamb of God".

In the painting, St John is a child with his arms around the lamb. He stands on rocky ground with a reed cross at his feet that has the words 'Behold the Lamb of God' on the ribbon.

The painting hangs in the National Gallery and it certainly lacks the strength and brilliance of other Spanish artists. But Murillo is telling us how the drama of salvation is played out by children and lambs. He is inviting us to look from that world of childhood to another part of Isaiah's prophecy, where he talks of the Messiah led like a lamb to the slaughter. We enter that drama of salvation in Holy Week this month. On Good Friday Jesus was led to His crucifixion, just as the lambs were being killed for the Passover.

We think of the world of Old Testament sacrifice, where the high priest on the day of Atonement would enter the Holy of Holies and sacrifice a lamb. And we focus on Jesus who is for us both priest and sacrifice, and realise there is a divine chemistry at work that leads us from Good Friday to Easter Day.

The writer of Hebrews meditates on this theme and proclaims that in Jesus we have a high priest of the good things that have come - eternal redemption. We are invited to appropriate that great gift for ourselves in this Holy Week of our salvation. So, we journey from the childhood days of Murillo's painting to Calvary and the Easter garden. And we can also journey beyond to the heavenly city, where Revelation tells us that all the nations walk by the light of that Lamb - the Lamb of God.

The Wednesday Club

Our ladies were really ready for their tea and buns this month after being put through a gruelling exercise afternoon.



Their brains, after having had to work at some quiz sheets, with such diverse subjects as flowers, sweets, proverbs and even a Mothers' Day quiz, were at peak fitness. The quiz led to a lot of swapping of answers, eavesdropping and general laughter in the Kajiado Room on a bright spring afternoon.

It was nice to see Florence, one of our newly joined ladies, win this month's draw.

There will not be a Wednesday Club meeting in April.

Sue

Monday Coffee and Scones postponed until Monday 20 April

So sorry not to be able to meet, but with coronavirus running amok, to look after you as best we can, we feel it would be unwise and potentially unsafe to continue at present. Thank you for understanding, see you after Easter.

Blessings, The Parish Team.





Easter time is very close, school holidays will soon begin and there are LOADS of fun things for children to do at Ballyholme parish during your time off!

Before I tell about what is happening next let's have a look at some of the things we have been doing in Children's Church...

Bubbles have been learning the story of Moses, making burning bush buns, acting out the plagues and the escape from Egypt. Jasper Smith dressed up as Pharaoh, while Sophie McCullough made an excellent Moses.



Meanwhile, **Ice and Splash** have continued with the Jigsaw programme, learning that God loves them and how to pray. They have made prayer cubes and have used their hands to help them remember the important parts of prayer... to say thank you, to talk to God about forgiveness and to ask God to help them. They have used the cube to prompt them to pray for their friends and families, and for other people right around the world.

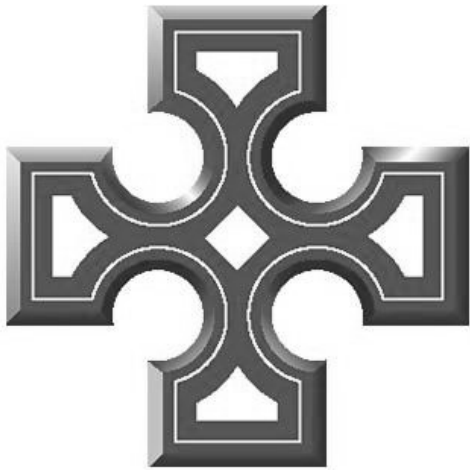


Easter activities:

NB SUNDAY 5 APRIL – PALM SUNDAY Children's Church IS ON as children are singing in the service!! Please come and hear them.



Church of Ireland Guidance in relation to Novel Coronavirus



The following advisory guidelines for the Church of Ireland's response regarding the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) reflect previous advice provided by the Church as a response to pandemic flu. They offer a general framework to parishes, subject to further approval or other advice that may be considered appropriate by the local bishop:

- * Follow all public health guidance provided by state authorities – the Public Health Agency in Northern Ireland (www.publichealth.hscni.net)
- * Physical interaction during services, including the Sign of Peace, should be suspended. Clergy may choose to give the congregation permission to carry out an alternative Sign of Peace that does not involve hand contact (e.g. a smile, nod or bow) if so wished. Shaking hands on greeting and departure at religious services/ gatherings should be suspended. Observe good hand and general hygiene – thorough hand-washing with soap or sanitisers and disposal of tissues.
- * Stay at home if you feel ill and display influenza-like symptoms. The symptoms to be aware of in the case of the coronavirus include cough, shortness of breath, difficulty in breathing, and fever. Do not come to church services until you feel well.
- * The Church's duty of care extends to members of the clergy. If you have influenza-type symptoms, do not call the clergy for pastoral visitation. Pastoral support for parishioners who are unable to attend church services should be provided by telephone or online (e.g. Skype).
- * Everyone administering Holy Communion should wash their hands or use alcohol-based hand gel before beginning. Holy Communion should be administered only in one kind (bread) and placed into the hands only and not onto the tongue. Only the celebrant should drink from the chalice. Holy Communion is normally received in both kinds separately – bread and wine – but may be received in either kind, and those who are incapable of receiving the sacrament are to be assured that they are by faith partakers of the body and blood of Christ and of the benefits He conveys to us by them (Book of Common Prayer, p.440). Intinction (dipping the bread in the wine) should be avoided.



Friday Lunch postponed until Friday 24 April

So sorry not to be able to meet, but with coronavirus running amok, to look after you as best we can, we feel it would be unwise and potentially unsafe to continue at present.

Thank you for understanding, see you after Easter.

Blessings, The Parish Team.

The traditional Easter General Vestry agenda of reports, accounts and elections (which will be reported in next month's magazine), also included the following remarks by the Chair, Canon Simon Doogan:

As Jacqui Devlin and Trevor Smith's year as Churchwardens draws to a close, we can only hope it has given them as much joy as they have given us. Outgoing Churchwardens testify universally to the honour of serving Sunday by Sunday and the pleasure of meeting lots of new people. Their readiness to fill in and cover holiday Sundays in subsequent years tends to be another sign that they look back on their year happily. The role of Churchwarden is one I hope every committed parishioner would plan to take on at some stage, so if you are just waiting to be asked, please let us know!

Another farewell will be said this Easter however as Roy Lawther stands down as Honorary Treasurer. Roy's ten years in office have been eventful to say the least. Clearing the Parish Centre debt was followed by the restoration project. With that bill paid for we are now saving to begin on Phase 2. The Generous Giving appeal, to move us from the peaks-and-troughs of envelopes to the consistency of standing orders, has transformed our day-to-day parish finances. All of this has been against a background of new regulatory requirements from the Charity Commissioners and, to cap it all, Roy moved from a day job with Castlereagh and Lisburn Council to be our Down and Dromore Diocesan Secretary. Prudent but always proactive and with a vision for our development and growth, Roy has been such a gift to us.

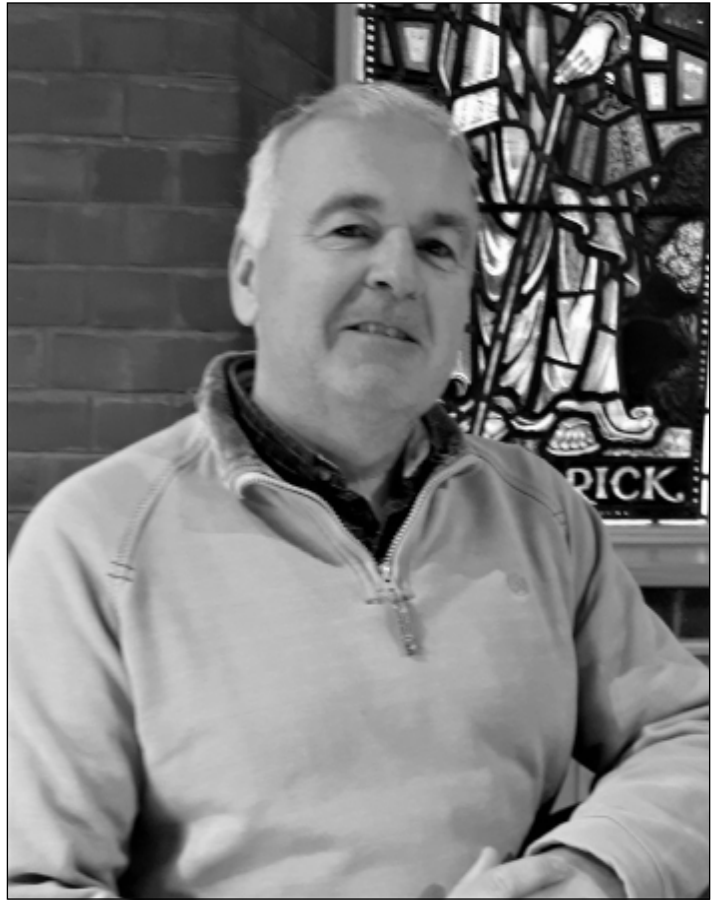


How glad we are for Roy's sake and Ballyholme's that Liz Grant has stepped forward to take on this vital parish responsibility. A year ago I asked you to pray for someone to follow Roy. Pray you did, and Liz is God's answer. A management accountant by profession, Liz is no stranger to payrolls and budgets. Liz and Colin were married in St Columbanus and their children Cameron and Erin were baptised with us so when we cast our net for a new Treasurer, Liz felt this was her opportunity to serve. Please pray for Liz as she assumes charge and oversees our new finance software upgrade with continued watchful input from Roy, Mark McBride and our faithful bookkeepers Larry Cheshire and Anne and Leslie Adams.

A review of 2019-20 would not be complete without recording our joy at the commissioning of two new Ballyholme Diocesan Readers. Both Paula McIlwaine and Denise Wilson are natural communicators and are adding a welcome freshness and vitality to our worship and preaching. As, in his day, did Diocesan Reader Emeritus Marsden FitzSimons who entered into the joy of his Lord on the eve of St Columbanus Day. Few gave so much to our parish over so many years. I would love to expand Marsden's 'Guide to the Windows' booklet to include our three newest stained glass additions and then give it the colour-photograph, coffee-table treatment. Maybe this year, maybe next, but no guessing to whom it will be dedicated!

At the end of August we all felt the departure of the Reverends Mercia Flanagan and Maithrie White-Dundas. Mercia joined us as a parishioner on her retirement from full-time ministry but she remains on hand to help from time to time and is making a very valuable contribution to, among other things, our Mission Committee and our monthly PUSH prayer times. In early September, Maithrie was ordained Priest to serve in the Non-Stipendiary Ministry at St Anne's Cathedral. Shortly after beginning at the Cathedral however Maithrie received a cancer diagnosis. Currently undergoing chemotherapy but still assisting at St Anne's between treatments, Maithrie and her husband Paul continue to value our support and prayers.

At the beginning of October our prayer for clergy help was answered in the appointment of the Reverend Jan Stevenson as our brand new Community Pastor. Jan's primary role is to reach out and make new connections with our local community. It's a brief that plays to Jan's strengths and she has been busy forging all sorts of links which 12 years after first arriving I still don't have the time, personality or sheer chutzpah even to attempt. Jan is reminding us all that looking beyond our own doors is spiritually-speaking what we are here for. With a new Alpha Course on the horizon, Jan brings a heart for growth and outreach, informal worship and Christian discipleship – not to mention a lovely family in the shape of Sam, Ruth and Hope.



The retirement of Ann Browne at the end of December was never going to be something we would get over quickly. Whilst consciously and graciously taking a backseat for a few months, especially to give our new Sextons Karen Baker and Kelly McCullough a chance to make the job their own, mercifully Ann and Harry remain very much part of our Church family. For Ann a well-earned retirement from the Staff Team could never mean walking away from the life of a busy, buzzing church family. It remains the case that everyone in Ballyholme has a role to play and a job to do. Nowhere in the New Testament do we find Christians on the outside looking in, keeping their distance and dodging the plate rather than stepping up to it.

Followers of Jesus Christ don't look back on what they have done for God in the past, they are alert to new ways they can serve Him right here and right now. On this side of the grave, the call to present our bodies as a living sacrifice simply never ends. And those of us who respond to that call wouldn't have it any other way.

Ensuring the care and safety of our children and young people in a loving and supportive Christian environment remains at the top of our daily ministry agenda in Ballyholme Parish.

Last year, the Church of Ireland General Synod devolved responsibility for Safeguarding Trust (our policy and guidelines for working with children and young people) from national church level to diocesan level. This change doesn't affect much in terms of how we routinely do things in Ballyholme. In terms of accountability however, we are now asked to make an annual Safeguarding Compliance Return to the diocese at the same as we submit our financial return and our parish statistical information.

Every congregation in the Church of Ireland is required to have a three-strong Parish Panel dedicated to Child Protection. The Panel in Ballyholme comprises the Rector, retired teacher Libby Beech and retired police officer Stanley Officer and they met recently to undertake a formal review with our Youth Worker Andrew Watson and Children's Worker Paula Lown. Three separate areas were covered: (i) implementation and programme delivery by our paid and volunteer leaders; (ii) responsibilities overseen by our Select Vestry; and (iii) archive and record keeping.

Having submitted its report pro-forma to the Select Vestry, one of the ways the Panel felt we could raise the profile of Safeguarding Trust in our Church family was to reproduce the basic volunteer guidelines in this issue of the magazine (see below). Please feel you can get in touch with our Youth Worker, Children's Worker or Parish Panel members about any aspect of our youth and children's ministry at any time. Your input and ideas are always welcome – as well as your prayers.



The Parish Panel:

Canon Simon Doogan	02891 274901
Libby Beech	07896204244
Stanley Officer	07748272330

Gateway Emergency Phone Numbers:

Office Hours:	028 9050 7000
Out of Hours:	028 9504 9999



Safeguarding Trust –
The church of Ireland
Code of Good Practice

At Ballyholme Parish we believe that children matter.

- They should be treated with respect and dignity.
- They should be valued.
- They should be listened to.
- They should have their rights respected.

Our workers/volunteers should operate within the Church of Ireland's code of good practice and:

- Provide an example of good conduct
- Respect a young person's right to privacy
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact
- Be aware that even caring physical contact may be misinterpreted
- Recognise that special care is required at moments when discussing sensitive issues with children or young people
- Only conduct one to one discussion in an open area in view of other leaders
- Ensure that children are adequately supervised
- Ensure that a group of both girls and boys has a similar mix of leaders
- Keep the Group "Code of Conduct" always in mind
- Challenge any unacceptable behaviour

We must never:

- Permit abusive youth peer activities (e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying)
- Have inappropriate physical and verbal contact with children
- Strike a child
- Make suggestive remarks or gestures
- Poke fun at children

- Show favouritism
- Jump to conclusions without checking facts
- Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- Allow children to be put at risk by careless behaviour
- Be alone with a child
- Take children on trips without written permission from parents

General safety is important, and we will:

- Always check the premises for hazards.
- Record all accidents/incidents.
- Know how to evacuate the building in an emergency.

If a child confides:

DO

- Stay calm, listen and hear
- Record what was said afterwards
- Use the report form
- Report the concern to the leader and Parish Panel immediately
- Follow the procedures found on the website
- Reassure the child

DO NOT

- Investigate the incident
- Make any promises
- Enquire into details of the abuse
- Attempt to deal with the problem directly
- Assume someone with a good name cannot behave inappropriately

Current diocesan NI safeguarding policy is at www.ireland.anglican.org/about/safeguarding

This includes our policies on complaints, disciplinary, grievances, anti-bullying, communications and partnership.



A number of Ballyholme parishioners were present at St Jude's Ballynaveigh on Wednesday 12 February for a CMSI farewell service for Ronnie and Maggie Briggs. With worship led by the Kerygma Choir there was a distinctly African spark to the praise and prayer.

In a series of interviews over the course of the evening much was learned of the Briggs' CMSI journey, including how Ronnie and Maggie first got started in Kenya. It all began with a summer youth trip to Kajiado from Lisburn Cathedral in the 1970s. The

curate came into Youth Fellowship one Sunday night and asked the question: Who wants to go to Kenya for £100? Two members of that team were Ronnie Briggs and Margaret Patterson.

After Ronnie and Maggie got married, they were both working happily, settling down and getting on with life together in Northern Ireland when CMSI approached them to go back to finish the work that they had started on their youth trip. Initially dismissive of the idea, they felt a growing sense of call from God which in the end wouldn't go away. They travelled to Kenya for a 12 month placement. 1 year became 12 years and the rest as they say....

In their early days in Kenya there were no telephones. Letters took three weeks to get home and at least three weeks to be replied to and in terms of their work with the Anglican Church in Kenya, Kajiado consisted of one parish. Asked to single out what had given them the greatest sense of achievement over their time, Ronnie spoke of what a fundamental difference it had made to a number of remote, rural communities to help bring them safe, clean water. Maggie had loved working with the women and girls. In a culture where girls are eligible for marriage when they turn 12 or 13, Maggie spoke movingly of her role in education, empowerment and motivating women and giving girls a sense of value.

Over their years in Kenya the Briggs were visited by more than 500 people from Ireland. Reflecting on that in the presence of so many who had made the journey, one of the most precious opportunities was to share Kenya and the culture of Kenya with folks from home. The struggle for resources on the ground had been constant. Even the smallest projects were hard and slow but living in the middle of where they worked had been a real blessing – so long as they got their regular monthly escapes!

Ronnie and Maggie aren't yet sure what the Lord has planned for them now they're home. They do however feel they have a few years of work still left in them and await whatever new opportunity the Lord will open up. As one speaker said, the ripples from the Briggs 40 years of missionary adventure and obedience to God's call will continue long after their departure from Kenya. The two drops of water in the picture represent Ronnie and Maggie.





While other CMSI staff visited faraway places like Enniskillen and Cork, on Monday 10 February Roger Cooke and Rachel Brittain brought the roadshow to the Parish Centre Ballyholme.

The roadshow began with a reminder of CMSI's central mission: "making connections between different parts of God's global family, equipping God's people to transform lives." The 2020 theme is 'Church at the Centre'.

The opening report was from the Democratic Republic of Congo. A country with widespread civil unrest, large swathes of DR Congo are on the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office 'don't even go there' list. All the more reason for us to be supporting the Mothers' Union prison outreach programme, particularly in a setting where domestic violence is often endemic.

Next we heard of CMSI's partners in the Anglican Diocese of Egypt. Egypt seems something of a missionary hub, with resources being shared across international borders in South Sudan (especially among refugees), Israel and as far away as Uganda. Over recent years the Nuba Mountain Bible Institute in Egypt has been busy training ordination students and clergy.

We were then introduced to the 2020 CMSI Children's Resource. While primarily an educational tool, over the past three years those participating have raised more than £45,000 for the projects profiled. This year's resource is called 'In the Middle' and focuses on the Church in Burundi, specifically the work of the Dioceses of Gitega and Matana.

Perhaps of most interest to Ballyholme folk was news from Nairobi on the Urban Development Partnership which began in 1990. Thirty years later, the children who were originally cleared out from a city slum are now running schools, youth projects and mentoring programmes as key leaders in a model of Christian community which is still growing and changing lives in Kenya.

Before a final update from Nepal, we heard closing snippets about:

- * Keith and Lynn Scott, writing a syllabus for theological students in Zambia
- * Ronnie and Maggie Briggs, retiring after nearly 40 years with CMSI, mostly in Kenya but who are now back in Northern Ireland and looking for a new house and new work
- * Shine: the CMSI Members' day 2020 in Dublin on Saturday 28 March
- * Voices of Hope (CMS and SAMS): Learning from the Global Church. 19 partner bishops visiting the UK for the Lambeth Conference who will come to Northern Ireland in August



- * Ignite: CMSI Annual Conference September 2020

Everyone present was impressed by Roger and Rachel's enthusiasm and detailed command of their brief. The personal stories shared conveyed both the breadth of the CMSI international network and the depth of the relationships built up with so many partners on the ground over so many years. In closing, we committed to God CMSI's continuing vision to connect, equip and transform his Church.

In typically low-key fashion, 9 March marked the last Monday Keep-Fit session led by St Columbanus's resident personal trainer Pat Peel. It will be a surprise to many to learn that Pat has been leading exercise classes in our parish for more than 25 years!

Pat's final pre-session routine (organising the music, jugs of water etc), was briefly interrupted by the Rector to make a small presentation on behalf of all those who have appreciated Pat's faithful years of stretching and toning. Not that there was any time for speeches before the group's last work-out: after a quick couple of photographs it was back to the step-count!



Associated latterly with Monday mornings, the scheduling of classes immediately before coffee and scones in Kajiado was purely coincidental and relatively recent. Over Pat's years, Keep Fit has gone through a number of metamorphoses, meeting in different venues, at different times and with both men only and women only and mixed groups.

With Pat retiring, church Keep-Fit will be taking a break for now but the Columbanus Room remains free on Monday mornings so all expressions of interest are welcome. In the meantime, our thanks to Pat for doing her part so energetically over so many years to keep the bodies of Ballyholme Parish, hopefully, in as healthy a state as the souls.

Samaritan's Purse

Operation Christmas Child

I was asked to pass on a **Big Thank You** from the Samaritan's Purse International Relief UK to the people of the Parish who filled the shoe boxes. Our boxes went to children in the Middle East. A total of 10.5 million boxes were distributed, with 400,000 coming from the UK which included 31,967 from Northern Ireland. Our collection point was Ballycrochan Presbyterian Church who checked and forwarded 3,000 boxes.

Margaret Magee



Appeal for Storehouse

With schools closing due to the Coronavirus more families will struggle to feed their children. They will not be getting the free school dinners they normally receive. The Storehouse will be under more pressure to help provide essential foods and toiletries to help these families. Please help by buying a few additional items and leave them at one of the collection points at the supermarket or locally in the Ballyholme Co-op.

Items in particular need are:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| Spaghetti (dry and tinned) | Diluted Juice |
| Biscuits | Sugar |
| Porridge | Kitchen rolls |
| Toilet rolls | Toothpaste |
| Cereals | Tea & Coffee |
| Tinned snacks – ravioli, meatballs. sausage & beans etc. | |
| Tinned meals to serve with potatoes | |



‘A woman, a dog and a walnut tree, the more you beat them the better they be.’

That saying from the sixteenth century feels shocking to modern sensibilities. I don't know about Tudor gardening practices, but cruelty is abhorrent in any form and as for wife beating, domestic violence can surely not be that common now and certainly not within good Christian homes or communities?

For two Thursdays in February and a final evening in March, the Rev. Jan Stevenson and I attended some training in Willowfield Parish, provided by Women's Aid for churches, on this very issue. And unfortunately the statistics suggest that domestic violence is prevalent in every area of society, and church communities are far from exempt. Victims of such abuse can of course be both men and women, but because this training came from Women's Aid, the information provided related mainly to women. The stark reality is that one in four women have experienced domestic abuse in some form in the UK. The abuse is not necessarily physical but includes controlling behaviour and emotional manipulation. That can mean dictating spending or clothing to be worn, demeaning comments undermining confidence and self esteem, and isolating a person from contact with family and friends. Global statistics suggest that one in three women have experienced physical or emotional abuse. That makes it very likely that someone you know or even sit next to in church is currently experiencing abuse.

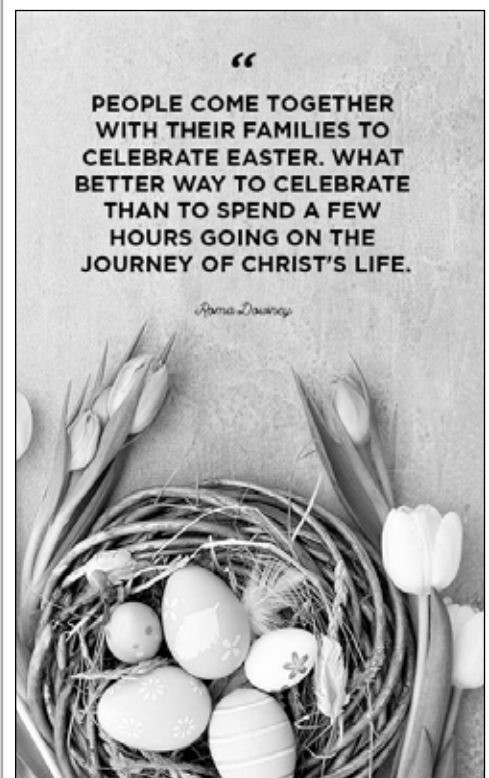


By attending this training we have been able to register Ballyholme Parish as a 'Safe Church'. This means simply that some of us have been made aware of this reality and we as a church are prepared to provide a listening ear and information on sources of help for when an individual might feel ready to access them. We have also placed some posters with such information around the church buildings. Abuse in any form is unacceptable and we want to make sure we are ready and available to help anyone who needs our support.

Mercia Flanagan



Donald Hayes, past president welcomes Derrick Nash the new President of Ballyholme Probuss.



More Joy Just Older Youth

Monday Coffee



Friday Lunch



Everyone has questions. We're built for it.

Explore more about life, faith and meaning with Alpha.

Alpha starts with a launch party - an introductory come and see what you think night, when you can decide if you'd like to try Alpha. This will be held in the Parish Centre later in the year. There will be food, a short DVD and an explanation of what the course entails.

Alpha is a series of sessions exploring the Christian faith, run over 11 weeks.

Following on from the launch night the sessions will be on Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre. Each talk looks at a different question around faith and is designed to create conversation. The emphasis is on journeying together, building supportive friendships and having a fun evening. Probably the most important part of any Alpha is the chance to share thoughts. There's no obligation to say anything and there's nothing you can't say (seriously!). It's an opportunity to hear from others and contribute your own perspective in an honest friendly and open environment. We will explore the big issues around faith, addressing questions from "Who is Jesus?" and "How can I have faith?" to "Why and how do I pray?" and "How does God guide us?" Looking forward to seeing you there.

Rev Jan Stevenson & team



Mums & Tots - Thursdays at 10.00am - Dads welcome!



3rd Bangor Scout Group Urgent Volunteer Appeal

3rd Bangor Scout Group are currently in need of volunteers across all sections
(Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts)

We are also actively recruiting for a Group Scout Leader and a Group Treasurer!

What if I don't have that much spare time?

Volunteering with us is easy, fun and flexible – how much time you give is completely up to you. Whether you help out once a fortnight, month or term or just at special events or camps, there is bound to be a role you can play, and no matter how you get involved, we'll make sure you're properly trained and supported.

What will I get out of volunteering?

As well as gaining externally recognised skills and having a brilliant time, Scouting also offers the chance to build on personal skills, like teamwork, confidence and leadership. A study found that over 90% of our volunteers believe that the skills and experiences they have gained through Scouting have been of relevance to their working or personal lives.

My child is in Scouting – is there anything I could do to help?

The short answer is yes. Many of our helpers and leaders are parents of our youth members because they've seen first-hand how Scouting benefits young people and want to give something back. It's also a chance to spend more time with your children and learn new skills. Speak to your child's leader to discuss how you might become involved.

Do I really have the skills you need?

You don't have to be an adventurer like Bear Grylls to get involved with Scouting. Do you have first aid knowledge? Are you good with numbers? Handy in the kitchen? Or are you a DIY whizz? We all have useful skills and you can volunteer and help in many ways?

Are there any age restrictions on helping out?

As long as you're over 18, you can help out as an adult volunteer in Scouting. There is no upper age limit for adult volunteers. If you are aged between 14 to 18, there is the option of becoming a Young Leader.

If you are interested please contact one of the following addresses:

3rdbangorsquirrels@gmail.com / cas.stewart7@googlemail.com or speak to the Parish Office who will forward on your information.

Hello everyone, MU was due to have a very busy month in March and we hoped most of you would enjoy a few of treats from our tip top bakers on Mothering Sunday! Unfortunately Coronavirus put paid to this and the cancellation of the Festival Service.

Our meeting at the beginning of the month went ahead with our speakers from Ards & North Down Community Council; they were interesting, engaging speakers. Firstly they talked about eyecare and how important it is to have regular eye checks. She explained some eye conditions which could affect anyone at particular periods in their life.



Moving on, the second speaker spoke about keeping safe from injuries around our homes. Simple trips etc which could be avoided with a little thought. She explained Seniors living in this area could avail themselves of a "home - check" to discover any possible dangers in our homes waiting to "catch us out!" She talked about the range of aids they could supply, showing us a "helping hand", touch operated bedside lamps, etc.

An evening of Helpful Hints indeed, with each member being given a bag of leaflets to ponder and a free gift of a "daylight bulb" to boot!

The MU Spring Sale and Coffee Morning advertised in last month's magazine will not now be happening and we hope to re-schedule for later in the year.

Monday 6th April at 8.00pm - Holy Week Service in Ballyholme Presbyterian, let's go as a group.

Thanks for your interest and support.

Many Blessings Yvonne and the MU team.





Energetic Walkers in Cregagh Glen, Lisnabreeny Rath and Belvoir Park Forest

Ten walkers set off on a dull March morning to the Cregagh Road in Belfast. We parked in a lay-by at the top of the road that had originally been the turning point for trolleybuses.

We carefully negotiated crossing the Knock dual carriageway (surprisingly, there are no pedestrian lights at this busy junction) and entered Cregagh Glen. The Glen is owned by the National Trust who have installed bridges, steps and boardwalks to facilitate the steep climb up this part of the Castlereagh hills. It was full of ferns which thrive in the moist, shaded conditions. The arrival of spring was heralded by bluebells showing their green shoots and the lesser celandine showing their yellow flowers.



At the top of the glen, an old tunnel takes the river and the path under the Manse Road to Lagan College, which, since the 1980s, has incorporated Lisnabreeny House. Originally the house was the home of the Robb family, who had a department store in the centre of Belfast. Later it was a youth hostel and, during World War 2, the HQ of the US army in Northern Ireland.

Past the school, we climbed Lisnabreeny Hill and spent some time at Lisnabreeny Rath – the site of a fortified homestead which was occupied some time between 500 and 1000 CE.

As we retraced our steps downhill, we enjoyed panoramic vistas of the city. We then visited the memorial to the US graveyard that, during the war, had been the burying place of 148 US servicemen, who died in Northern Ireland, before their bodies were returned home.

On then down Rocky Road – again more great views – and negotiated the very steep part of the road before returning to the dual carriageway.



The cafe at the Museum of Orange Heritage, beside where we had parked, provided a welcome venue for a coffee and tea break after our fairly strenuous four mile walk during which we had climbed, and then descended, some 630 feet.

At the cafe, Maurice introduced us to a website which displays radar maps of rain with a 10-minute delay. Thankfully, the forecast rain that day was shown to be well to the west.

We then travelled to Belvoir Park Forest where, after lunch, we followed the Lagan Trail (about two miles). By the time we returned to Bangor, the rain had not yet reached Lisburn!

Peter Gibson



YOUTH-news

youth [youth] (youths)

news [nooz]

The last month or so has been brilliant with the youth as we've had not one, but TWO residential! First was our Youth Fellowship weekend, where we went to Moira and stayed in church halls there. On the Friday night myself, six other leaders and eighteen young people all hopped on a bus and travelled down to Moira for a weekend of fun, games, sleep (only joking), and teaching from the fantastic Luke Sherwin about who Jesus is. If you're on Instagram feel free to check out the Ballyholme Youth page for some highlights!

A mere two weeks after our YF weekend was the annual Confirmation Weekend, and we were delighted to have Amy, Lydia, Rachael and Ruth come to that! The diocese put on a fantastic weekend every year and the girls had a brilliant time doing soft arrow combat, paintball, a game show and loads more – as well as hearing about who Jesus is and why he's so important! What could be more important than that? Again, if you're on Instagram or Facebook feel free to go to the DDYC page and check out the highlights video of the weekend.

After all of that I'm sure I deserve a good rest, and I'd imagine the young people do too!

Andrew



Wednesday 1st April

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 5th April

Palm Sunday

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Good News at Ten - All Age

11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 8th April

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Friday 10th April - Good Friday

12 noon Family Service

Sunday 12th April - Easter Day

6.30 Dawn Service at Ballymacconnell Beach

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Holy Communion

11.30 Holy Communion

Sunday 19th April

Easter 2

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Good News at Ten

11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 22nd April

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 26th April

Easter 3

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Good News at Ten & Children's Church

11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 29th April

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

FUNERALS**March****6th:** David Keenan, formerly of Ballyholme Court.**BAPTISM****February****16th:** Georgia Olivia Walsh, daughter of Damian and Laura

Parish Office:

91274912

Rectory:

91274901

Prayer Line:

07531806167

Transport: 07599794968

Church Readers Rota:

Freda (11.30) 91467624

Thelma (10.00) 91453602

Web Site www.

Ballyholme parish.co.uk

**April****5th:** No Coffee**12th:** EASTER SUNDAY**19th:** No Coffee**26th:** Michael & Sharon Hatch, Charles Robinson**April****5th:** Rachel

Brittain, Sharon Gowdy

12th: Easter Sunday - No Creche**19th:** No Creche**26th:** Natalie McCartan, Jenny Whiteside**April****5th:** Irene Long**12th:** Easter Sunday**19th:** Margaret Magee**26th:** Ian Bell**Help needed to decorate the Church for Easter****Saturday 11th April 2020 at 10.00 am**

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

Children's Church Helpers**April****5th:** Kate English, Carla Kells, Dawn Niblock, Emma Sutherland**12th:** Easter Sunday - No Children's Church**19th:** No Children's Church**26th:** Andrew Cuthbert, Sharon Gowdy, Johanna Lawther, Andrea McInnes