

St Columbanus

Ballyholme



Parish Finances
Beverley Gardens
Harvest



..On the way
together..

The Parishioner

November/December 2023

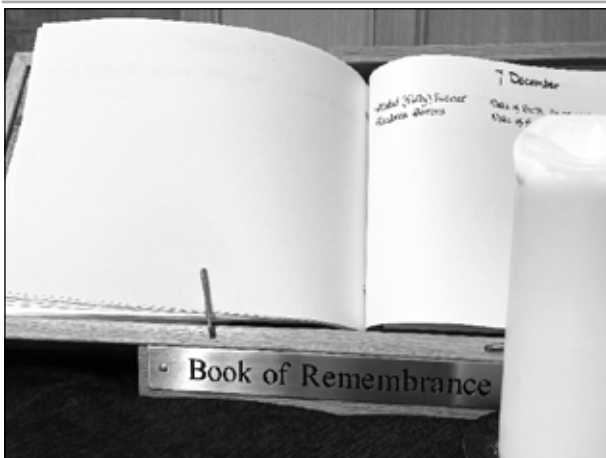
The closing months of 2023 have brought me many sparks of joy. Nothing to do with the Marie Kondo test for decluttering, by the way. I mean those longed-for and heart-quickenning flashes when St Columbanus has at last felt recognisably pre-Covid again: buzzing, slightly chaotic and with a steady stream of new faces. It's been busy, even frantic at times, but on every occasion when we gather as the Lord's people, a blessing is released. I find that blessing especially powerful when all ages are present, perhaps because for the sake of the youngest in our midst at the time, the rest of us have to be as little children. We have lots of opportunities in Ballyholme to journey more deeply into faith, like our 'Friend of God' Parish Weekend in November. But it's always in child-like trust that we really grow. Which is why, in the darkest part of December, the light of Christ still shines out to all of us. A God who became as we once were – small, dependent, and at the mercy of the world – is plainly a God who wants to know us. And deep down, deny it though we might, the feeling is mutual.



SED

Service of Remembering Sunday 3 December 6.30pm with the Reverend Paul McAdam

Letters will go out shortly inviting the families of those bereaved this year to our annual service of remembering. The run-up to the festive season is a difficult time when you have recently lost a loved one. Every year, faces and voices are missing from our traditional family gatherings that were always there and meant so much.



It's also a time when families add names to our Book of Remembrance. This is a simple and understated way to create a visual memory of those we have entrusted to God's eternal love. The pages of the book are turned throughout the year so that the names are displayed on or near to the anniversary of their death.

While all names are welcome in the book, it's especially fitting for those for whom St Columbanus was their spiritual home. Contact the Parish Office to complete a form if there is someone you would like to add. We ask for a small fee for each name, and then we pass on the details to our volunteer parish calligrapher who is never less than ready and willing.

This year's preacher is the Rector of Aghalee Parish, the Reverend Paul McAdam. Paul invited me back to Aghalee last May as part of their re-opening programme, following an extensive restoration project. Returning the compliment felt entirely the right thing to do. Paul has 30 years' experience of pastoral ministry and prior to his appointment in Aghalee served in a number of different parish settings in the dioceses of Connor and Armagh. For Paul as for me, bringing the light of Christ to those passing through 'the valley of the shadow', is a mainstay of our workaday ministries.



Not so much a question from Jesus in Luke 11 verse 12, as an assurance and a promise from the Lord, that our heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit abundantly to those who ask Him and over the course of our whole lives.

That message from Bishop David McClay set the tone for our Confirmation Service on 15 October, when 18 of our young people, the largest Ballyholme group for 15 years, received the laying on of hands and prayer in the ancient New Testament way: Chris Belshaw, Matthew Brittain, Ellen Chivers, Sam Coey, Samuel Graham, Charlotte Gough, Rachel Menary, Rory Menary, Nessie Monaghan, Alex Newman, Felix Niblock-Hamill, Emma Reading, Ollie Rice, Ian Savage, Emily Thompson, William Thompson, Daniel Toogood, Gideon Wilson.

5 additional candidates were presented by the Reverend Nigel Parker from Bangor Parish which made for a full St Columbanus on the night, and a lovely gathering of family, friends and visitors. For those of us Confirmed years ago, it was a timely reminder of how God longs to equip us to be disciples of Jesus Christ in every new situation of our lives and all the way through our lives with all their ups and downs. For anyone new to Church or new even to the Christian faith, perhaps it was an opportunity to discover that reports of the death of Christianity in this day and age and among young people in particular, have been greatly exaggerated.

Our Church Choir and two of our 10 o'clock singers led us wonderfully in no fewer than nine hymns and worship songs and the Mothers' Union ensured that the tea and tray bakes kept flowing in the main hall afterwards. Once everyone else had left the premises, the young people stayed on in Kajiado for a Pizza Feast.

The way Confirmation fell this year, several sessions followed the service itself, but it was obvious to all concerned that under the leadership of Andrew and Hannah Watson along with input from the Rector, this is a group of young people who have largely grown up with one another through our children's and youth programmes, who enjoy being together and who feel very much at home in the Church and the Parish Centre. A residential youth

weekend for all those who have been Confirmed or are preparing for Confirmation throughout Down and Dromore is planned for March.

Our next Confirmation of young people will be in St Comgall's in 2025. Any adults who would like to explore what's involved will be offered preparation in Lent 2024 and accompanied to a service in another Church in the Deanery or Diocese.



muddy Church

We chose 'sticks' as our theme to begin the term at Muddy Church, in particular Moses' sticks. We learnt how God could show His power through a simple, knobbly stick by turning it into a serpent. Then we dramatized the story of Moses parting the Red Sea by holding his stick over it. (In the photo below the balloons represent the Red Sea).



As you can see, Muddy Church is filled with fun and lots of messy craft. The little ones especially enjoyed making butterflies, crocodiles and fish as props for our Harvest presentation, while BLAST made up a fabulous HARVEST prayer, using the letters as an acronym.

SOME DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES!

Sunday 19 November – Casting for the Nativity

Saturday 16 December – Nativity dress rehearsal and Christmas Party

Sunday 17 December – Nativity Service at 10am

Sunday 24 December – Family Carol Service at 5pm

Tune Tots!

As some of you may know, I have to take some time off November and maybe December. Nonetheless, Tune Tots will continue to meet every Thursday @10am, with Abi Wells taking the lead, and Ann McMurray serving tea and coffee.

Paula

Communion Lunch – December date for your diary

The Communion lunch is an opportunity to welcome to the Parish Centre senior members of our congregation, who are not able to attend church as often as they would like. Together we have the opportunity to celebrate Holy Communion followed by a light lunch and chat.

Date of December lunch: Thursday 14th December 12.30pm

We hope to have the local Primary School choir attending in December.

If you would like to join us, please contact the Parish office. We would love to see you. An invitation will be sent nearer the time for you to respond re attendance, dietary requirements and if transport is required.

I look forward to seeing everyone in December.

Margaret



filled with green waste. At the time of writing, it's still in a strimming rather than mowing state, but the progress is already more than visible. Internally, it might be easier to list what doesn't need attending to. The plan is strip out and replace the kitchen and the bathroom. The house is long-overdue an electrical upgrade and since what we must do is regulated by Building Control, essentially we are looking at a new fuse-box and a substantial re-wiring job. New carpets will also be required throughout, and then the house will need to be redecorated.



After repeated but unsuccessful efforts to gain access to Beverley Gardens for remedial electrical and other repairs, back in the Spring the Select Vestry reluctantly served our tenants with a 'Notice to Quit'. They finally vacated No 34 on 25 August, moving on to another rental property in the area. While we wish them nothing but well, their deposit was not returned. Though it would be going too far to say house and garden have been abused, they have certainly been badly neglected. Efforts to restore order are now under way and the salvage operation is being expertly overseen by our Glebewardens. Their objective is to return the house to a lettable state by January.

Work Required

Externally, a valiant team of parishioners is re-taming the garden. Neither front nor back garden had been cared for as the tenancy agreement required, and one refuse skip and several trailers have been quickly



Volunteer parishioners have redecorated No 34 before, and if that can happen again over the next few months, money will be saved.

Good News & Bad News

Rental properties like Beverley Gardens remain in high demand, especially in our area and we have been advised it will realise over £1000 per calendar month (after fees) once re-let. The Vestry feel this regular income stream is considerably more valuable to us than putting the house on the market. Quotations are being gathered, but at this stage, repairs will cost in the region of £30,000. An anonymous £5,000 gift from one parish family has already been promised, and should any other parishioners privately feel they would like to help with defraying these substantial costs, their generosity will be extremely timely and much appreciated.

The “Peaced Together” Craft & Wellness course is wonderful

Thank you to everyone who donated craft materials to “Peaced Together”. Our first 10 week course started in September and is an oasis for the 13 ladies attending. We meet in Surrurban Coffee Shop sampling their coffee/tea and sweet treats. A huge thank you to Peter Graham, the owner, for hosting us. We have all learnt new skills and are enjoying getting to know new friends.



Café Church

Café Church is loving having the Youth Fellowship Band to lead us as we praise God. The team of children, teenagers and adults who now lead Café Church are growing in faith. Our young people bring a fresh approach and buckets of creativity. We are looking at the Parables of Jesus this term. Jesus deliberately talked about ordinary experiences to open people’s eyes to spiritual truth and we are trying to do the same in these services.



The “Rise” Ladies BBQ was a memorable event

What a gloriously balmy evening we had watching the sun set as we chatted to friends new and already known. Enjoying a tasty burger and delicious desserts, Glynis Matchett, our speaker for the upcoming Ladies night away in Dromantine, told us a little about herself and her hope that every lady who goes will have a “special moment” with God, where they realise how well they are known and come to know more of God.



Love Ballyholme Maintain the Orchard

Love Ballyholme organized a workparty on Saturday 7th October to help maintain the orchard of fruit trees planted by the P7s from Ballyholme PS last Spring in Brice Park. Ards and North Down Borough Council asked Love Ballyholme to get 15 people to volunteer to mulch around the fruit trees. Going forward they would like a team of local volunteers to tend the trees and pick the fruit.

Ballyholme Christmas Tree

The 4th annual Ballyholme Christmas Tree Light Switch-on will be Friday 1st December 6pm with choirs from Ballyholme Primary School and St Columbanus College.

Rev Jan Stevenson
(Community Pastor)



Come along and enjoy the fun at these Christmas family events. Everyone is welcome.



**Community Christmas Carols
Thursday 14 December 5.30pm
Ballyholme Shops**

Mince pies and mulled wine courtesy of the Heatherlea keep us warm for this important annual community get-together. Members of the local churches first met to bless the community with carols 15 Christmases ago now, and it's a fun evening for singers and local residents alike. Passers-by and unsuspecting shoppers always end up joining in with the singing, and every year for some of the people we get talking to, our carols will be the nearest they come to worship over the whole Christmas period. Please plan to come and help us bring a little bit of Bethlehem joy to Ballyholme again this year.





Every time we have a work party, I am reminded of the late lamented Sir Anthony Hart.

The retired High Court Judge and Chair of the Northern Ireland Victims' Inquiry was also Chancellor of the Diocese of Down and Dromore and Assessor of our annual synod. Sir Anthony died very suddenly in July 2019 and having got to know him over some years in my own role as Diocesan Registrar, I attended his funeral at St Mark's Dundela where he worshipped Sunday by Sunday. What did his rector say was the measure of this

lovely man of such achievement and accomplishment? The fact that every time there was a parish work party, he was first through the church gates with his strimmer.

To those parishioners of ours who arrive so faithfully with their buckets and shovels at St Columbanus twice a year or indeed more often: your love for the Lord and His Church is plain for all to see. I hereby confer upon you all, honorary membership of the Sir Anthony Hart Club!

SED

Church Sign: watch this space!

Our new church sign has found its home. Once permission was received from the RCB, a small team of parishioners under the direction of Glebewarden Steven Nickell, set about siting the new metal framework. Some hidden drainpipes had to be worked around but with a subtle adjustment of the angles, post holes were dug and then stanchions used to hold the sign in place until the cement was fully set. Primer and several coats of metal paint have now been applied and the next stage will be to commission the visuals. As explained in an earlier issue of The Parishioner, the top part of the sign will be fixed and bear the name of our parish; the lower part will carry changeable canvas banners advertising seasonal/special church events. So, watch this space...



Wednesday Club

At our September meeting we welcomed Jonathan from Bangor City Hall, who gave us a very interesting talk on Percy French, along with slides, and of course, played a recording of Percy's most famous song "Where The Mountains of Mourne sweep down to the sea", which some of us sang along with very quietly. He joined us for a cup of tea afterwards, chatting with some of the ladies about his travels in his gap year from university. Helen, on joining our merry band for the first time, was the winner of the draw.

October was our film afternoon, with Paddington Bear 2 being the film of choice. A really lovely film, which we all enjoyed. Simon joined us for our cup of tea and cake before our ballot was drawn, with Agnes being the lucky winner this month.

Our next meeting will be on the 1st November, followed on the 6th of December with our Christmas gathering, and we would love to have your company.

Sue



Our opening night for MU in October was well attended; it was brilliant to welcome everyone and greet some newcomers too!

Who knew a beetle drive could stand the test of time and provide much mirth in 2023. Mind you not beetles but scarecrows were the subject of our artistry. Very creative they were too!! The artists were greatly encouraged with the prospect of a take-home plant-pot mini scarecrow or a “dip in the heroes” tin by way of congratulations.

Well that's us underway for our busy programme for this year. Next month on Monday 6th November we have “ARM-CHAIR YOGA” which sounds fun starting at 7.30 pm followed by Autumn Supper. Why not bring along a friend.

On Monday 4th December we have a festive theme evening complete with Seasonal Supper; remember that evening we will be preparing cards and gifts for our seniors. Also we will be selecting our menu that evening for our January Get-together in the Broadway room of Bangor Golf Club on Wednesday 10th January 2024.

As you can see, busy times ahead. I'll leave you with some photos of the Church Family hot dog fun hosted by MU to celebrate another year in Ballyholme Parish with our opening service.

A happy meeting place spanning all the generations together!

Many Blessings

Yvonne & MU Team.



Paul is a retired Limavady Grammar teacher living in Bangor and a member of Hamilton Road Presbyterian. A long time Board Member of CMS Ireland, Paul brought us greetings from Jenny Smyth who is currently in Nepal, and special warm Kenyan greetings from Bishop Jeremiah Taama, former Bishop of the Diocese of Kajiado and the man who officially opened our Ballyholme Parish Centre in 2006.

Paul is in regular contact with the Taama family and was able to share lots of news from our friends who have been struggling so much through the drought of the last three years. Climate change really seems to be biting sharply in the equatorial regions but there was much encouragement in Paul's reports of reconciliation work in Rwanda, and church growth in Democratic Republic of Congo. Particularly exciting was the recent appointment of the Reverend Andrew Quill and his wife Joanne to Ibba, South Sudan. Rector of Dromore in Co Tyrone since 2009, Andrew and Joanne have considerable previous experience overseas with CMSI in, you've guessed it, Kenya and Uganda!



After the 11.30 service, the Missions Committee served their traditional selection of delicious soups. Over our apple tarts and coffee, Chair of the Missions Committee Sandra Griffiths shared forthcoming plans and drew everyone's attention to the Disbursements leaflet, listing off the various mission organisations in receipt of Ballyholme monies. The lunch raised £475.

Harvest Smarties Tubes remained unopened at the time of writing so we are unable to tell you how much has been raised at this stage.



Christmas Appeal for Storehouse



The trolley will be in the Church porch in the run-up to Christmas for you to bring your donations on Sundays.

tins: tuna, custard, sweetcorn, beans, rice pudding, soup

jars: baby food, jam, pasta sauce, diluting juice, breakfast juice, long life milk, coffee

boxes: cereals, biscuits, sugar, pasta, tea bags, jellies

bottles: washing-up liquid, cleaning products and other items including male and female toiletries, nappies, wipes

Christmas fayre: mince pies, small Christmas cakes and puddings, chocolates, bottles of Shloer, and other treats that help to make Christmas special

'Friend of God' Parish Weekend with Mones & Sally Farah Friday 24 to Sunday 26 November

Enclosed with this issue is your invitation to a weekend of activities for our whole church family and for any wider family or friends you might like to bring along with you. In addition to the four church services on Sunday (8.30, 10.00, 11.30 and 6.30), take your pick from...



All age fun with a message Friday 7pm in Church

Chris and Ross form the Christian drama company Play it by Ear and travel across Ireland, the UK and beyond sharing their faith. Family-friendly eats will be served. Book using the QR Code £2 per head donation on the night



'Ole Buffers/Baby Boomers Brunch Saturday 11.30am in the Parish Centre

Is it breakfast or lunch? When the food's good, who cares! If your days of Saturday morning taxiing and touchline duties are now happily behind you, don't miss this leisurely late morning treat.

£5 per head, book by phone/in person through the Parish Office



Saturday 7pm in the Parish Centre

Hot street-food, a light-hearted quiz (quiz-master Peter McIlwaine) and a chance for the adults of the parish to let their hair down with friends or folks they've never met before! Bring a gang or join a table. BYO.

£10 per head, book by phone/in person through the Parish Office

Introducing our guests

Mones (pronounced Monn-ezz), grew up as a Christian Arab in Nazareth, Israel, the eldest of ten children. Having come to Bristol to study veterinary, no one was more surprised than Mones when he started to feel the Lord calling him to Christian ministry.

At Theological College, Mones met Sally, from Tiptree in Essex, and since Mones' ordination in 1988 they have served in parish and university settings in Wales and England.

They have four daughters and seven grand-children.

Mones and Sally will share a word at all our events and services on their theme 'Friend of God'.

CMJ Ireland was delighted to welcome Kelvin Crombie to our shores for a 200th Anniversary Tour celebrating and thanking God for His faithfulness to His ancient people and His leading of CMJ. Kelvin, who grew up in Western Australia, received a warm welcome in the Kajaido Room on Monday 28th August. He is well known in CMJ as he worked at Christ Church in Jerusalem's Old City for over 20 years in various roles, including managing the Guest House. During this time, Kelvin started to collect resources relating to the history of CMJ over 200 years both in Israel and in the various branches ('Auxiliaries'), the earliest being the formation of the Dublin Auxiliary in 1810, a year after the launch of CMJ in London. With generous funding from the Irish Branch, he was able to form the first Heritage Centre in the compound of Christ Church and was later to resource the Heritage Centre in the Anglican International School, one in Beit Immanuel in Tel Aviv and another at Beit Bracha in the Galilee. With all his painstaking work and research Kelvin has become the historian of CMJ and has written many books including "CMJ, Israel's Restoration and The Irish Connection."



It was fascinating to hear how several Irishmen played strategic roles in CMJ's early history. In 1821 the Rev Alexander McCaul, originally from Dublin, was sent by CMJ to establish a mission station in Warsaw which had the largest Jewish population in the world at that time and the Rev William Lewis from Ardagh went as a missionary to the Jews of Jerusalem. Dr George Dalton from Dublin was one of the first modern doctors in the Middle East and the Earl and Countess of Meath, after seeing the need for a hospital when the Countess was taken ill during their visit, contributed significant financial support towards the Mission Hospital in Prophet Street. Michael Solomon Alexander, a Polish rabbi became a Jewish Believer, worked as secretary of the Irish Auxiliary for a number of years. Later he was ordained in St Anne's Church in Dublin and, together with Rev Alexander McCaul, translated the New Testament and the Book of Common Prayer into Hebrew. CMJ had the only Anglican-Protestant establishment in the land of Israel, Christ Church, and Alexander was appointed as the first protestant Bishop of Jerusalem in 1841. Another notable figure was the Rev Joseph Barclay from Strabane, who was instrumental in instituting the first "Modern Hospital" in the city, the building that is now the Anglican International School Jerusalem where students from more than 30 nations learn together in a safe, happy and caring environment. In 2004 Rev Billy Holmes and Derek Langram, representatives of the Northern and Southern CMJ Ireland committees, were invited to open the new Heritage Center at A.I.S.J. appropriately named in honour of Joseph Barclay.

Kelvin had just returned from a trip to Donegal accompanied by the Rev Billy Holmes, where he had gone to research the Jewish Connection with the town of Moville and the link with WW2 hero Field Marshal Montgomery whose parents are buried in the local Church of Ireland churchyard. It is perhaps a little known fact, even among Israelis, that Montgomery played a critical role in saving the Jewish people in the Middle East from genocide by defeating the German led forces at the battle of El Alamein. Some years later the Jewish leadership of Palestine presented Field Marshal Montgomery with a special gift of gratitude - Hebrew Bible. This important heirloom was brought to Jerusalem and put on display in the Heritage Center.

Each year thousands of people visit the four CMJ Centres in Israel, including Israelis, who hear not just about the history and heritage, but more importantly about the real reason why this history came about. The message of salvation in the finished work of Jesus on the cross went forth from Jerusalem to the Gentiles (Acts 1:7-8) and from the 1820's this message has returned to the Jewish people and Arabic-speaking peoples as well. Today the Christ Church community consists of Messianic Jews, Arab Christians and expatriates, who live, work and worship together. At the end of Kelvin's talk, a short video of thanks and a testimony from one of the Israeli guides at the Heritage Center was shown.

Thanks to all who helped with showing the video and providing the refreshments.

A History to celebrate and a Future to declare!

Pat Davidson



As the financial year draws to an end, and you review your giving to God's work in St Columbanus, we thought it might be helpful to offer you a simple overview of how Ballyholme Parish pays for its ministry. By way of first principles, for Christians, all things have their source in God our heavenly Father. As Christ gave Himself for us on the Cross, so we give ourselves back to Him in love, gratitude and service. As for the rest...

Who pays for everything?

- * YOU – our parishioners
- * no money comes to us from the central Church of Ireland/ Representative Church Body
- * we pay a 'parish share' to the central Church of Ireland for its bishops and secretariat

Ballyholme Parish is a Registered Charity

- * we claim Gift Aid four times a year on all donations from UK tax-payers
- * our Select Vestry members are all Trustees
- * we submit an annual return to the Charity Commissioners



Income: the Current Account

- * our income is made up of your Standing Orders, Sunday offerings and other donations
- * rental income from the Parish Centre and two residential properties is also vital
- * legacy gifts are 'restricted' so not 'taxed' by the central church for our parish share

Expenditure: paying our bills

- * clergy/ staff wages account for our single largest outgoing and these are set centrally
- * Church of Ireland wages rise 7.9% in January 2024 in line with the Consumer Price Index
- * other major overheads include our parish share, utility bills, maintenance and insurance

The Building Fund: Phase 2 of Restoration 2016

- * money received for our Building Fund is 'restricted' and not for general parish expenses
- * it is earmarked for a building which will connect the Church and Parish Centre
- * it is not 'taxed' by central church and 10% of its annual income goes to Missions



2024 Standing Orders & Envelopes

As we seek God's blessing at the start of a new year, the most helpful thing you can do to support our ministry financially is to increase your Standing Orders or to set up new ones if you haven't already done so. Two years ago, we were forced to move our business from the Bank of Ireland to Danske Bank so if your church Standing Order remains with Bank

of Ireland you only have a limited time left to switch over. To the donors of the remaining 20 or so envelopes we still receive every month: we couldn't manage without you and we will supply you with envelopes for as long as you need them! If you can possibly set up a new Standing Order for us, now is the time and here's a reminder of our details:

Thank you for your generous response to the love of our generous God!

**IF YOU'VE NOT ALREADY DONE SO,
PLEASE NOW STOP YOUR BANK OF IRELAND STANDING ORDERS
AND START NEW ONES WITH**

Danske Bank

**Danske Current Account "Parish of Ballyholme"
Sort Code 950229 Account Number 11063162**

**Danske Building Fund Account "Parish of Ballyholme"
Sort Code 950229 Account Number 51121367**

Christmas Cards for Kiwoko



The Christmas card in aid of Kiwoko Hospital is now on sale in packs of 10 for £5. The greeting card carries seasonal greetings to your friends and support for the needy patients in Kiwoko.

In addition, an 'alternative gift' card is for sale costing £10.

Cards will be on sale from the Parish Office and at some services over the coming weeks.



This autumn saw the funerals of two much loved Ballyholme parishioners who made a very significant contribution to our worshipping life over many years. By way of tribute and thanksgiving, here are short extracts from the Rector's Sermons at both services.

Jill Boal, Diocesan Lay Reader

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life
John 6 v35

What many of us will never forget, was Jill's voice. Retirement was supposed to be a time for new opportunities for ministry and service but while the spirit was willing... Practical to her last breath, Jill never wanted to be less than dependable and so over recent years was content to take her place in the pew or in the choir stalls rather than make commitments and end up letting people down.

Where are the purple frontals today? We opted for the white – since Jill made them herself! And let's read it as white for those meditations at the Candlelit Carol Service, written by Jill and read by Ian, which had become little short of a Ballyholme Christmas institution. A former curate of this parish donning his stole for a service recently smiled to see the letters 'JB' stitched on the back – Jill had made it. That said, maybe I carry Jill closest to my heart: who do you think stitched the St Patrick's Cathedral Chapter Badge on my preaching scarf?

Another former curate of this parish told me about Jill's contribution to a Ballyholme collection called 'The Jesus I know'. Under 'Jesus, my Lord' Jill wrote "He is the Son of God, no one can be higher than he is. I count myself privileged to be allowed to join in the worship and adoration that is going on ceaselessly, both in this world and in eternity." Under 'Jesus, my love', she said "But God did more than that, He gave his only Son because he loves me, so how could I not love him?" And under 'Jesus, my life' she said "My relationship with Him is not Him on one side and me on the other, but an inter-twining, intimate relationship of Him in me, and I in Him."



The Reverend Brian Parker

Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called children of God *Matthew 5 v9*

The more I've learned about Brian's Civil Service years, the more inspiring it all was. Effectively, Brian went from breaking Northern Ireland's bad news and managing the fall-out from that which so often must have felt like a one-way downward spiral – years and years of compounded darkness... but that followed then so dramatically by reinforcing and building on our good news. How blessed we were, to have someone of Brian's wise and steady temperament and deeply Christian worldview right in the middle of creating a new Northern Ireland.

And yet for all that Brian's professional life was influential and important, Brian's single greatest longing vocationally-speaking was to be Ordained as a Deacon and a Priest in his beloved Church of Ireland. Commissioned as a Diocesan Lay Reader in 1992 and Ordained Deacon in 1999, some great ministry partnerships were to follow for Brian: with Brian Mayne in Lecale, Gregor McAmley in Knock, Raymond Fox in Carryduff and Paul Hewitt in Glenraig. Before joining Ballyholme, Brian made a very significant contribution to the life of Bangor Parish.

And yet long, long before that, there was for Brian, so he once told me, the landmark personal milestone of being Confirmed. The whole business of preparing for Confirmation, the learning and lead-up and then the moment of Confirmation itself the laying on of hands and the prayer, all of that made a big impression on Brian at the time. Evidently, lasting seeds were sown.

I was a stranger and you welcomed me. *Matthew 25:35*

During November we will be making a call to parishioners to provide items for Christmas gifts for the forty asylum seekers currently living in the Marine Hotel, Bangor.

The idea is to provide a gift bag containing the items below for each person living in the hotel.

Through liaising with the Welfare Support Officer of Mears Housing, a housing management company, the following items have been designated as appropriate.

Shower gel

Aerosol spray deodorant

Notebook

Pen


Warm hat, scarf, gloves

Halal sweets/chocolate

Last year parishioners contributed very generously to a similar project. Please watch out in church in November for further details regarding the project. Guidance regarding the Halal sweets and chocolate will be given then.

Sandra Griffiths

Missions Committee

FUNERALS	BAPTISM
<p>September</p> <p>5th: Olive Styles, formerly of Dorothy Avenue</p> <p>11th: Elizabeth Steele, formerly of Thornleigh Gardens</p> <p>15th: Kenneth Ward, late of Groomsport Road</p> <p>25th: Valerie Jill Boal, late of Bayview Road</p> <p>26th: Kenneth Humphreys, formerly of Ballyholme Court</p> <p>October</p> <p>2nd: Rev. Brian Parker, formerly of Cairnsville Park</p>	<p>October</p> <p>8th: Rachel Nicola Menary</p> <p>8th: Rory Robin Menary</p> 



Save the Date

The Missions Committee invites you to join us for a Saturday evening quiz in the new year:-

Saturday 27th January 2024
at 7.30 pm
in the Parish Centre

Come along and bring your friends.

Details on booking will be announced nearer the date.



Hot Dogs in October from the Mothers' Union was a lovely reminder of how much we miss sharing a cup of coffee between the 10 and 11.30 services. It simply wasn't possible to do this through the Pandemic and, even if it had, folk would not have been available to take turns on the rota for serving and washing-up. The time is now ripe to reinstate a simple but important Ballyholme tradition and so we are recruiting a new team of volunteers to get this up and running again. Robbie Jackson has come forward to manage the rota and, naturally, the longer the list of volunteers, the less frequently they will be called upon.

Our initial plan is the second, third and fifth Sundays in the month – the reason being that the first Sunday is Café Church when coffee and buns are available anyway, and the fourth is Parish Communion at 10.00 when the children are

back down in Church and most families leave straight for home. 'How to' instructions will be provided but it's a pretty straightforward matter of brewing before Church and using the dishwasher afterwards. Please get in touch with Robbie (robbie.jackson.email@gmail.com) or the Parish Office (91274912) to get involved. You will be helping to bring our Church family together and to create a friendly welcome for our increasing number of new faces.

Parish Centre User Posters

Has your eye been caught recently by one of the new 'Parish Centre User' posters on the four external doors? With a number of new groups and organisations now using the halls, and to accompany the annual Risk Assessments circulated by the Health and Safety



Committee, a snappy one-page checklist now reminds folks of key information. Alongside the location of our First Aid Kits and Defibrillators, the posters outline a plan for how to close-up the premises, switching off the lights, turning off the taps, closing all the doors and locking up the gates. They also explain how to report faults or breakages, and how to tell us when supplies are running low. The Parish Centre is a shared space and the more shared the better. Our respect



for the buildings conveys respect for one another and ultimately reflects on our love for the God who brings us together as a community of welcome and service. The next time you pass one of the new posters, why not pause to refresh your memory on how best to look out for our parish property and all those who enjoy using it.

Saving stamps for RNIB

Just a little reminder with Christmas approaching, that I would be grateful for any stamps you could save for me over the festive season. I send the stamps to the RNIB to help train guide dogs for disabled people with vision problems. For some people it ends their isolation enabling them to be more independent, so I think it is worth the effort. All donations of stamps can be left in church or the parish office, where I will collect them.

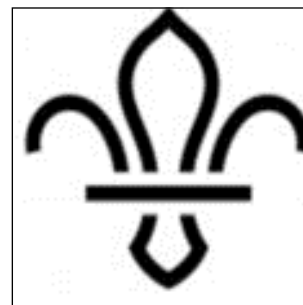
Thanks in anticipation

Sue



We runs an active programme for all young people from 4 to 14½ years, meeting on a Thursday Night

Squirrels	(Age 4-6)	17:30 – 18:45
Beavers	(Age 6-8)	18:15 – 19:30
Cubs	(Age 8-10)	18:30 – 20:00
Scouts	(Age 10.5-14)	20:00 – 21:30



We are delighted to come and join Ballyholme Parish and remain in the Ballyholme area. We have been an active Scout Group for over 60 years in Ballyholme and we run active programmes for young people.

Over the past year as a group, we have taken part in Northern Ireland Squirrels and Beaver's Day and a group camp at Crawfordsburn Scout Centre with all sections.

The Cubs and Scouts have run camps throughout the year with the Scouts having their annual summer camp to Delft in Holland.



Scout Camp Delft – 15 Scouts and Leaders went to summer camp this year at the Kruithuis Scout centre in Delft. The Scout centre was the old barracks and gunpowder store for Delft.

At the camp the scouts went canoeing around the canals of Delft, cycled to Den Hagg and visited Amsterdam and skippered boats around the city canals.

Last year we had 14 Scouts attaining the Gold Chief Scout Award and attended the presentation at Belfast City Hall.

Hallelujah?



My adventure began on a brisk Friday December morning. Overnight trolley case packed, tickets at the ready, I boarded 1st Plus on the Enterprise, was shown my designated seat and settled down to enjoy the journey. It was wonderful. For lunch, I broke out and had a Club Sandwich and a glass of wine. All too soon, we were arriving in Dublin Connolly. As I prepared to leave, I went to collect my case from the luggage area close to the door of the carriage. A lonely case, which I could tell immediately was not mine, looked forlornly up at me. I alerted

the Train Guard, who pointed me in the direction of the information desk on the station concourse, where I left my contact details. I gave a brief description of the contents of the case, to a raised eyebrow on the part of the CIE employee.

I suppose not everyone travels with a Garfield in their case. Well, not someone aged 65.

It was now after 3.00pm. There was nothing else for it but to go to the Gresham Hotel and check in. En route, I called at a chemist's shop and bought some toiletries and makeup. I had spent a Boots' voucher on new makeup for the journey – they have a gadget that matches your skin tone to the correct shade of foundation – but here I was, with the most helpful shop assistant in all Dublin, throwing together an emergency makeup selection.

On arrival at The Gresham, I checked in and said there would hopefully be a call soon about my trolley case. I had planned to use the intervening hours between arrival in Dublin and my attendance at the





Cathedral when the doors opened at 6.30 that evening by a bit of window shopping in O'Connell Street, chiefly at Eason's. Now all I could do was sit in my hotel room and wait.

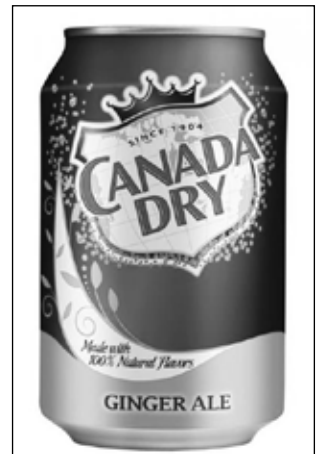
Just before 5.30pm, a hotel receptionist tapped on the door, with a message to say my case had been returned to Connolly Station. I scrambled into a taxi. Dublin traffic is heavy at the best of times. Having driven in and around the city in the past, I vowed that never again would I negotiate the one-way systems, the constant roadworks, the unpredictable drivers, the cyclists weaving in, out and across lanes. On a Friday evening at the beginning of December, all was chaos, but the driver,

Dublin-born and bred, assured me that he would get me to the station as soon as possible. I enjoyed the drive, slow as it was, his explanation of the signalling which ensures the peaceful coexistence of the Luas and other vehicular traffic, the stop for a chat with the taxi driver's prospective son-in-law – well, the traffic was going nowhere, a brief discussion on Irish History, which had formed the greater part of my joint Modern History and English degree eight years ago. Eventually, we arrived at Connolly. I thanked the driver profusely and gave him a tip.

Alighting from the taxi, I reflected that he must have left me at the back door to Connolly. I went into the building. As far as the eye could see, there were buses. No signs for the train station. Returning to the street, I reasoned that the bus and train station must be side by side. Not quite. A passing pedestrian explained the anomaly, pointing me in the right direction. 'If you ask a Dublin-born taxi driver to take you to Connolly, he will assume that you want to go to the bus station.' You live and you learn.

The employee at the Information Desk directed me up the platform, where I was met by the Station Master wheeling my case. I shook his hand and trundled back to the entrance, boarding another taxi to take me back to The Gresham. On this occasion, my taxi driver was of North African extraction and had me back in O'Connell Street in two minutes.

It was now approaching 6.30pm. No chance of getting to Christ Church as soon as the doors opened. On returning to my room, I was pleased to see that all was in order with my case. The first thing the myopic woman – yes, sadly the culprit who took my case by mistake was a woman – would have been met with when she opened the case was one Garfield, a hip flask and three 150ml cans of Canada Dry Ginger. I lifted out the no-doubt traumatised Garfield, makeup and change of clothes, pausing to pour a small drink, and performed the swiftest change and makeup freshener ever.



The taxi driver who took me to Christ Church was of Eastern European extraction and he knew Dublin like the back of his hand. I arrived at the Cathedral just before 7.15pm. The performance was due to start at 7.30. I gave in my printout of the e confirmation. The place was packed. There were some seats to the right of where the orchestra would be playing. I joined an older couple and two German girls. We would be sitting at right angles to the Orchestra but that didn't matter. Fulfilling the ambition of many years, I settled down to enjoy a performance of George Frideric Handel's 'Messiah,' close to where it was first performed, on 13th April, 1742, at Fishamble Street. The actual hall disappeared many years ago, but Christ Church Cathedral is not far away. Handel used choristers from Christ Church and rehearsed there. Prior to the performance, he exhorted the ladies intending to be present to refrain from wearing hooped petticoats and any military gentlemen to leave their ceremonial swords at home; space was at a premium. Now, we settled down in anticipation of a few spine-tingling moments when the performance would shortly get under way.



The Orchestra and choir came in. Instruments were tuned. In the centre, the Harpsichordist/Organist positioned himself. He would be moving from one instrument to the other as the piece progressed. Behind me was a door which led to the Crypt. It was closed. To the side of it, close to us, sat an employee of Christ Church Cathedral, working with her mobile telephone. It rang.



How she survived the collective looks of death which flew at her from the Harpsichordist/Organist and me I will never know. He and I exchanged glances and shook our heads. No matter. The performance was just about to start.

As it did so, it began to be accompanied by some kind of commotion from the Crypt. You would have thought that a Cathedral of the age and eminence of Christ Church would have had walls and a door thick enough to contain noise of a certain level. However, this was proving not to be the case. The Cathedral employee traipsed past. I silently beckoned her, pointed to the Crypt and put my finger to my lips. The Harpsichordist nodded his approval. All would now be well. She would deal with it.

The background babble ceased for all of five minutes. As we wound on towards the interval, the choir, orchestra and soloists playing and singing their hearts out, snatches of revelry could still be heard from the Crypt, despite subsequent visits from Cathedral staff.

I contemplated leaving at the interval.

When it arrived, a hive of discussion erupted in our seating area, where we were joined by the Harpsichordist. It was decided to move us to the opposite side, where equipment was being stored. The German girls and I sat immediately behind where the trumpet and kettle drummer players would shortly join appear. You would have thought that we were part of the orchestra.

The employee of the Cathedral, she of the mobile telephone and unsuccessful attempts at silencing those in the Crypt, came to apologise. 'They' – the faceless, nameless 'they' who are often blamed for any shortcomings – had double-booked for Messiah Night.' Whilst I was happy that we had been re-seated satisfactorily, I mentioned that I had travelled over 100 miles to attend this performance and that a great deal of money, partly an early Christmas present, had been spent to help me fulfil my ambition to hear The Messiah performed close to where it had made its debut, 272 years earlier, and that the experience had been disappointing.



The second half was wonderful, especially when the brass and percussionist section gave their all to the magnificent Hallelujah Chorus. I got to my feet, as did King George II when he first attended the Messiah. The German girls sat on, but I was heartened to see that the majority of my fellow attendees were also on their feet. At last, there was the sense of history, the spine-tingling moment which I had awaited all evening. All too soon, the performance came to an end. We filed out into a Dublin buzzing with a Friday night, pre-Christmas fervour. I hailed a taxi, contemplating a cocktail in the hotel bar before going to bed. The driver – back to a Dublin-born taxi driver on this occasion – responded with alacrity to my request to be taken back to The Gresham Hotel, O'Connell Street [just in case he might have thought of taking me to another Gresham Hotel, a member of the Gresham group]. I was dropped at the door some ten minutes later.



The bars to either side of the reception area were throngs of Dublin partygoers. Movement, let alone the purchase of a no-doubt overpriced Long Island Iced Tea, would prove impossible. I retreated to my room, rang home, finished off the contents of the hip flask and ginger ale, brushed my teeth, took off my makeup, went to sleep.

It was with no little sense of relief that I left for Connolly TRAIN station next morning, for the journey home.

On a positive note, the foundation bought in such haste the previous afternoon is proving much better than the one which the Boots' staff had deliberated over a few days previously – and it was cheaper.

As for The Messiah, I shall be returning to the Waterfront Hall for the next performance. Here's hoping that Belfast City Council does not book The Studio for a heavy metal reunion on the same evening.

September - The Newtownabbey Way

The St Columbanus Walkers visited the Newtownabbey Way, following the trail from Mossley Mill along the Three Mile Water to the Belfast Lough coast at Whiteabbey, passing the Bleachgreen Viaducts, and then along the coast to Diarmid Gavin's clockwork Coronation Garden in Hazlebank Park.

Betty

**October - The Walkers go to Blackhead Lighthouse**

Sixteen walkers travelled to Whitehead by train to walk to Blackhead lighthouse and back. Whitehead and the walk to the lighthouse were largely the creation of the railway company. The first promenade was built of old railway sleepers! The walk had fine views across Belfast Lough to Bangor, Groomsport and the Copeland Islands. The easy walk to Blackhead didn't prepare us for the ferocious climb up the steps to the lighthouse! Jacob's

ladder came to mind! After a much-needed rest at the lighthouse we descended the zig zag path back to the shore for lunch. Suitably recovered we returned to Whitehead and coffee having had a very enjoyable walk.

Brian Templeton

YOUTH-news

youth [youth] (youths)

news [nooz]

At the time of writing, the new term is well underway, and those involved in the youth ministry of the church are really excited about everything that it holds. Perhaps at the forefront of our minds is Confirmation, where 18 of our young people are about to be Confirmed! It's been wonderful to spend the last few weeks learning about God and our faith, and we look forward to continuing with this after the service itself. We're all incredibly proud of them as they take this step!

On top of that, we've also been running the usual weekly Bible studies, Emerge, Praise Band, Drop-In, post-church bacon, Junior YF and Senior YF. It's encouraging to look back on the last few years and compare our engagement with young people then vs now – we now see young people 5 days per week. None of that would be possible without the amazing volunteers, and I'm always super grateful for them!

We've also brought our 6th years on board with helping run Junior YF – giving them opportunities to lead and develop their various skills. That's been exciting, and really helpful in managing Junior YF!

The youth praise band has had opportunities recently to lead worship at café church, and those have been great opportunities for them to grow in confidence and stretch themselves. If you've been to café church when they've led, you'll know how awesome they are! We still have plenty ahead of us before Christmas; the Parish weekend, the Christmas Bazaar, as well as the various trips and parties! Thank you as ever for your continued support of, and prayer for, the youth ministry at Ballyholme Parish.

Andrew



NOVEMBER 2023**Wednesday 1st November**

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 5th November**4th before Advent**

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Cafe Church - Parish Centre

11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 8th November

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 12th November**3rd before Advent - Remembrance Sunday**

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Good News at Ten & Children's Church

11.30 Parish Communion

6.30 United Service St Columbanus

Wednesday 15th November

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 19th November**2nd before Advent**

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Good News at Ten Prayer & Praise & Children's Church

11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 22nd November

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 26th November**Sunday before Advent - Parish Weekend**

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Parish Communion & Children's Church

11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 29th November

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

DECEMBER 2023**Sunday 3rd December Advent 12**

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Cafe Church - Parish Centre

11.30 Morning Prayer

6.30 Service of Remembering

Wednesday 6th December

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 10th December Advent 2

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Good News at Ten &

Children's Church

11.30 Parish Communion

Wednesday 13th December

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 17th December Advent 3

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Children's Carol Service

11.30 Morning Prayer

6.30 Nine Lessons & Carols by Candlelight

Wednesday 20th December

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 24th December Advent 4**Christmas Eve**

8.30am Holy Communion

5.00pm Family Carols

11.00pm First Communion of Christmas

Monday 25th December Christmas Day

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Family Carols

Sunday 31st December**New Year's Day**

8.30 Holy Communion

10.30 Combined Service

November 2023**5th** Liz Foye**12th** Ivan Reid**19th** Julie Monaghan**26th** Ian Bell**December 2023****3rd** Raymond McCabe**10th** Yvonne Manogue**17th** Christmas**24th** Christmas**31st** Irene Long

Decorating the Church for Christmas

Help needed to decorate the church for
Christmas please.

Saturday 16th December at 10.00am
All offers of help, flowers greenery etc will
be very much appreciated.
Thank you!