

St Columbanus

Ballyholme



New Year Messages
Defibrillator Installed
Lent Course



..On the way
together..

The Parishioner

January/February 2024

There is, it seems, a scary feature buried deep within our phones, that will tell us exactly how long we spend staring at them. The attention and energy our phones consume is one thing, but then there's the nagging sense that we'll need to deal with something later (academics call this "attention residue"). Heading into what often feels like the longest, coldest darkest month of winter and a 29-day February, it begs the question how long do we spend with the One who is our only true source of light and hope? Whether at Sunday or weekday service, in small groups or one-to-one, it's often said that we become like what or who we worship. Our new Alpha Course starting on 17 January would be a good way of committing to some 'God-time' this new year. Likewise, the Lent Course, starting on 13 February. You see the real discovery when we consciously turn our eyes and hearts to God, is that however frequently we look away, his gaze stays trained on us longingly and indefinitely. *The eye of the Lord is on those who fear him, says Psalm 33 verse 18, on those who hope in his steadfast love.*



SED

Register of Vestry Members and Easter Vestry 2024

In accordance with Chapter 3 of the Constitution of the Church of Ireland and Regulation 7 of the Down and Dromore Diocesan Regulations, the Register of Vestry Members for Ballyholme Parish is open for review and available for inspection in the Parish Office from Thursday 18th January 2024.

Our Select Vestry will meet to conduct the formal review at 7.45 pm on Thursday 15th February 2024 in the Parish Centre (Kajiado Room). All those seeking registration are entitled to appear at the meeting to support any claim.

To add your name to the Register, Forms of Declaration for both Resident and Accustomed (non-resident) members of the congregation must be submitted before the opening of the 15th February meeting. Forms are available either from the Churchwardens on the relevant Sundays or the Parish Office on weekday mornings.

The Easter Vestry meeting will take place on Sunday 17 March 2024. More details on this will be published in the next magazine.



Annual Vestry Meeting



CATHEDRAL 120 CHAIRS APPEAL

The Very Revd Stephen Forde, Dean of Belfast has launched the "Cathedral 120 Chairs Appeal". This new appeal seeks to raise £75,000, to replace the original wooden chairs which have filled the nave for the past 120 years. The new chairs are to be in place in time for the cathedral's Service of Celebration to mark the 120th Anniversary of the consecration of the Nave on Sunday 2nd June 2024.

The new quality chairs, which will be comfortable, moveable and stackable, are to serve as a symbol for the cathedral's continued community growth and service for generations to come.

Donors are encouraged to give what they can to the appeal. Those who donate the £150 cost per chair (or £120 plus Gift Aid) can have the name of a loved one, with their dates if desired, etched in a commemorative plaque within the Cathedral.

Donations can be made directly by BACS transfer to the cathedral's bank account (see www.belfastcathedral.org/news for bank details).

*Let the love tide swelling surround me and my dwelling.
 Let the power of the mighty sea
 flow in, Lord, and strengthen me.
 Tide of Christ, covering my shore,
 that I should live for evermore.*

The old has passed away;

behold

the new has come.

2 Cor. 5:17

*Whatever the tide, the Lord at my side;
 in storm or in calm, to keep me from harm.
 In good or in ill, He's with me still.
 Amen*

A blessed 2024 to you all

Please join me in praising God for His continued love and faithfulness to our church family, for His call to step out into another New Year together and for all the things He will give us to do for Christ in Ballyholme over the coming twelve months. SED



muddy Church

This year's nativity was full of fun, and the children were very excited to get their role and worked really hard in rehearsals. With so many children, we thought it would be cool to let them become involved in making the props and costumes.

Once again, Jenny's creative skills came to the fore as she designed and made a whole new stage set! We were also very lucky to have a number of youths to help us out with costumes, practices and photo shoots. We enjoyed creating new 'crew' t-shirts for these guys and we hope everyone enjoyed the nativity 2023 as much as myself, my team and the children did!



Tune Tots!

Tune Tots have had a lovely term! A faithful crew of children come along from 6 months to 3 years and are really growing in confidence.

We had a very special Christmas party with a visit from Santa!
Looking forward to seeing this wee group continue to grow.

Paula

Tiddlywinks

Back in November 2023 the young children who attend Tiddlywinks held a sponsored bounce for the BBC's annual Children in Need appeal. They raised £685, wouldn't Pudsey Bear be pleased.

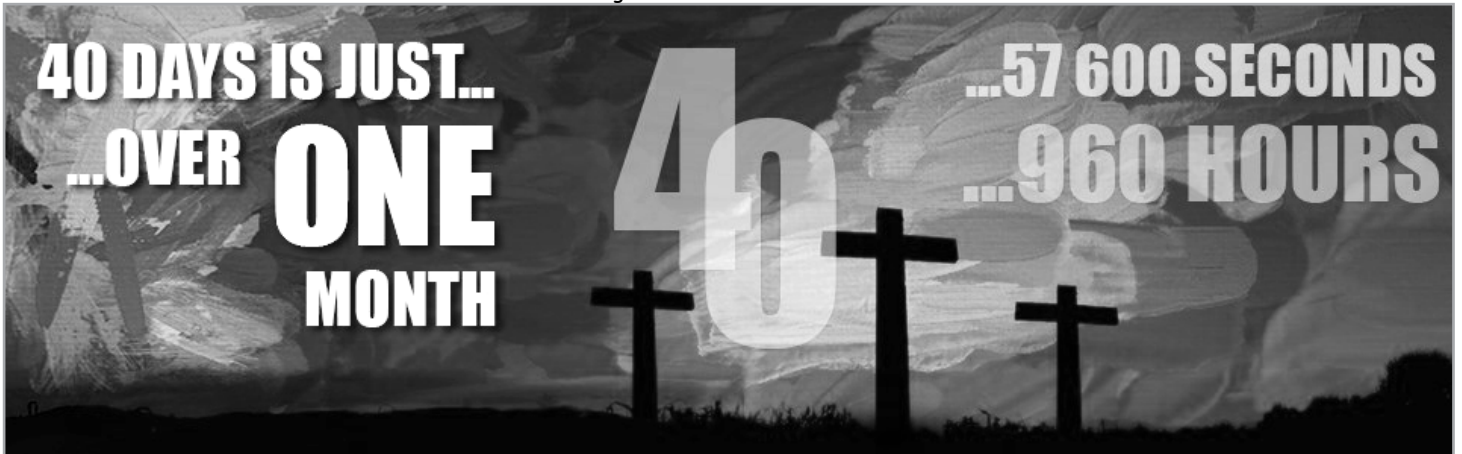


40 Shades of Lent

Meeting the Lord in the honest rawness of life,
and looking at the darker side of discipleship
on our way to the dawn of Resurrection.

Six Tuesday reflections on the scriptural significance of the number 40
beginning on Shrove Tuesday 13 February
10.30am and 7.30pm in the Kajiado Room

Image from Truth is the Word



Monday 15 to Thursday 18 January: Five-Yearly Emergency Lighting & Electrical Wiring Test

DMG Electrical have been contracted by the Vestry to undertake our compulsory five-yearly testing in the Church and Parish Centre (at a cost of £1286+VAT). Originally DMG proposed to complete the testing in November, however due to the limited time to give notice to our hall users with the power being off, it was decided to schedule the test for this January. The works will commence at 8.00am each day and the breakdown plan is as follows:-

Monday 15th January

AM – Works will mainly be within the Church
PM – Works will take place in the Parish Centre

Tuesday 16th January

The power will be off totally: the Parish Centre and Church will be closed all day

Wednesday 17th January

AM – Works will take place in the Church
PM – Works will take place in the Parish Centre – Alpha Taster Night unaffected

Thursday 18th January

AM – Works will be completed in the Church and the office should be able to be occupied

**Due to the Health and Safety of staff and Parishioners, it would be best if activities and access to the Parish Centre were minimised as much as possible over the four days.
If you require further information please contact Glebewarden Ivan Humphreys.**



Love Ballyholme's annual Light Switch On, Friday 1st December

Nothing could have prepared us for the shock revelation made by Santa to an assembled crowd of over 600. When asked by the compere Ian McCarthy from Subhub Paddleboarding School, Santa said that he had a good report of everyone in Ballyholme except for Simon Doogan (Shock! Horror!). We genuinely think Santa was pulling Simon's leg and Simon is totally enjoying the unexpected notoriety, so letters to appeal his case aren't needed thank you!

A big thank you to the team of marshalls who helped along with the Community Police Team to keep the event safe. Our thanks to Woodstoc who donated the tree. Also thanks to a grant from Ards and North Down Borough Council Love Ballyholme were able to hire a sound engineer and both sides of the road were able to hear the amazing choirs from St Columbanus College and Ballyholme PS. There was such a special atmosphere to what has become a much-appreciated annual community event. A huge thank you to the Love Ballyholme Committee and volunteers who created such a memorable evening!



Rev Jan Stevenson (member of the Love Ballyholme committee)



Our First "Peaced Together" Craft & Wellness course was great fun!

Meeting new friends, learning new crafts, chatting, drinking Surburban's excellent coffee, what was not to love? For 10 weeks we met in Surburban on Thursday night and learnt new skills; making mosaics, cushions, scrapbooking, painting, weaving and so much more. We laughed and sang, (Surburban has a great playlist!) What was shared in the group stays in the group, confidentiality is really important to us. Talking and sharing is just so good; as the saying goes "A burden shared is a burden halved". Two hours seemed to fly by as we all enjoyed time away from the stresses and cares of our daily lives. We all graduated walking through an arch with the word "Beautiful" on it, reminding us that we are indeed

“Peaced Together” Craft & Wellness course Cont.d

beautiful. Here are some pictures of the things we made as we journeyed awhile together.

Jan Stevenson, Yvonne Manogue, Megan Mack & Mandy Bell-Watson



“Overwhelming gratitude to God”



“Overwhelming gratitude to God” sums up the feedback we the organising committee received from the ladies who went on the Night Away in Dromantine on 21-22nd October 2023. Sister Maura said “I laughed so much and met such lovely people, the food was lavish.” All agreed that sitting or having a walk in the stunning grounds in the gloriously warm sunshine all added to the relaxing feel of time out with friends and with God. Glynis Matchett, our speaker helped us open our hearts up to more of what God has for us. Janice Courtney led the worship beautifully. God seemed more real and we came again to that place of surrender. Many felt affirmed again that we are daughters of the King of Kings, all our struggles are eased in the awareness of his presence and power.

Going forward we hope to book another night away in two years' time. To develop the friendships we have formed we would like to invite you to Crawfordsburn Country Park for a walk at 2.30pm on Saturday 21st April 2024 and for a coffee at 3.30pm in the restaurant in the Park centre. Join us for coffee if you want to give the walk a miss. Children welcome too.

Rev Jan Stevenson on behalf of the Rise Committee

Parish Weekend November 2023: Boards, Bacon & Burgers



Every few years, it's important to get together in a focused way as a parish, for no other reason than it's good for the heart and soul of the church family. There is joy as well as blessing in fellowship and worship, especially as we make new acquaintances and renew old ones in the living presence of the God who brings all things together in Christ. 'Friend of God' was our theme back in November and Archdeacon Mones Farah and his wife Sally were our leaders.

Friday/Saturday

On Friday night, after a breathless 'treading the boards' performance by Play it by Ear, Mones had fun with the families and young people identifying our oldest friendships. At the delicious Saturday Bacon and Pancake Brunch, Mones shared his family story and the friendships that were so vital to his mother and father after they were ethnically-cleansed from their Christian village of Birem in the Arab-Israeli War of 1948. During an interval at our gourmet Nosh & Knowledge quiz on the Saturday evening, he told us about the enduring friendships he had made with both Muslim and Jewish families through his years of growing up in Nazareth. The round-table seating plan and food-sharing at all our events were a big part of the weekend's success.



Sunday

At all three services on Sunday morning, Mones unpacked John 15 and the friendship with God which does away with any residual sense of Master/Servant between us and the Maker of heaven and earth. More than a notional or sentimental idea, that friendship finds its ultimate expression in Christ's readiness to die for us on the cross. To round things off, we met for a Sunday night celebration-service, and that was Sally's opportunity to share from Romans 8 her journey into a fuller and deeper experience of God the Holy Spirit. Everyone enjoyed a quiet, reflective winding-up of what had been a busy few days, and left with Sally's gentle invitation from God to 'come into the garden'...





Response & Israel

All weekend the invitation was to come along to the Alpha Taster Night on 17 January. But there was also an appeal for people to submit their names as 'Interested in Israel'. Mones visits his parents in Nazareth two or three times a year. Once the dire current situation settles down again, he proposes to lead a trip to the Holy Land so people can see for themselves what he calls 'the Fifth Gospel' and grow further into the single most important relationship of our lives, our friendship with God.

Mones pictured with his Ballyholme Stunt Double Paddy Donnelly



Wednesday Club

Our November meeting was a fun one, playing a game of headbantz, where we had to guess who we were, followed by talking of memories of Bangor long gone and finding out who could remember what shops etc used to be in the Main Street. The draw was won by Laura this month. The December meeting was one of Christmas cheer, with a light lunch for our members, with crackers (along with the usual cracker jokes), paper hats and not forgetting a visit from Santa, with presents in his sack for all of our ladies. Our festive meeting ended with us all singing Christmas carols, led by Santa himself!

Our January meeting will be held on the 3rd, when we hope to see everyone again.

Sue



Work proceeds apace at Beverley Gardens with a view to getting the property back on the market again and earning rental income as early as possible. Glebewarden Steven Nickell is project managing the renovations and a team of extremely willing parishioners valiantly continues to wrest back control of the garden!

At the time of writing, the kitchen and bathroom have been stripped out and the re-wiring first fix has been completed. Phoenix Gas were due to provide the property with a gas connection on Tuesday 21 November and the new boiler was due to be fitted on Tuesday 28 November. The new kitchen has been selected and a deposit requested. The bathroom replacement quotation has been received and is under consideration. The last Quinquennial Inspection of Beverley Gardens recommended that the cavity wall insulation be replaced and the roof-space insulated (and vented to prevent problems with condensation). The total cost of the refurbishment is going to be around £30,000.

At the November Vestry meeting, members were reminded that, as our curatage, Beverley Gardens remains an important parish asset and indeed is not ours to sell even if we did not feel inclined to keep it for rental. Following the meeting, and in response to the article in the November/December magazine, a parishioner came forward with a gift of £5000. Praise the Lord for that timely and extremely generous contribution to our costs which comes ahead of the second £5000 gift from another parish family which will be received in January.



**‘The Fifth Gospel’
The Land of our Lord with
Archdeacon Mones Farah
Autumn 2024**

(image Tourist Israel)

A goodly number of you over the Parish Weekend in November said you were ‘Interested in Israel’.

On the basis – please God – that stability returns soon to the Land of our Lord, here’s the plan...

Mones proposes to lead a 10 day trip from Ballyholme at the end of September/beginning of October.

The cost will cover:-

- * Bed, Breakfast and Evening Meal in Israel
- * Coach travel
- * Accommodation in Nazareth and Bethlehem
- * Entrance to the holy sites in Nazareth, Bethlehem and Jerusalem

All these can be cancelled with a full refund up to 1 week before travel should the situation in Israel deteriorate once again.

Flights will be separate. When these are released by the airline, we will book them ourselves as a group through a travel agent. Having insurance in place will be imperative, not least to cover the possibility of last-minute flight cancellations and refunds. What to do now:

- * Start saving
- * Ensure we have your contact details (with the Parish Office)
- * Get ready to take out travel insurance



Quiz Night for Mission Disbursements

Join us for the annual quiz, organised by the Missions Committee.

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

Donations £5 per person.

Last September a number of parishioners who were interested in joining our Parish Visiting Team attended an information evening in the Parish Centre. The good news is that we now have a willing team of men and women keen to visit some of the housebound members of our Church family.

The volunteers were asked if they would consider calling in on one or more parishioners on our visiting list and accordingly they were matched up with people to visit. Visiting is a practical way of showing God's love to those who can no longer attend Church and it can be a fulfilling and rewarding experience. A lot of the more senior members of our Church family can feel lonely or isolated and would greatly appreciate having a friendly face calling in with them from time to time.

A few months have now passed since the Parish Visiting Team got underway and we are meeting on Thursday 1 February at 7:30pm in the Kajiado Room to offer one another support and share our experiences of how things are going.

If you are interested in finding out about becoming a Parish Visitor we would love you to join us. There are as many people to be visited as there are visitors so extra volunteers are always very welcome.

Also, if you know of someone you feel would benefit from a home visit please contact Heather McKee in the Parish Office Tel:02891-274912



World Day of Prayer

Friday 1st March 2024

The 2024 World Day of Prayer service will be held in the Church of Ireland in Groomsport on Friday 1st March 2024. Details of the time and the coffee morning are not yet finalised. These will be announced in Church nearer the time.



“Feed the hungry ,and help those in trouble. Then your light will shine out from the darkness and the darkness around you will be as bright as noon.” Isaiah 58:10

Thank you for your continued support in 2023.

Your generous donations to our November appeal meant that we were able to give each of the 40 refugees living in the Marine Court Hotel a small Christmas present of warm outerwear and toiletries. (See photos on page 3)

Every week you continue to donate food and household items to our Storehouse trolley. Your contributions are gratefully received and are a lifeline for many local people who are struggling at the minute.

The number of people depending on food banks continues to rise and from January we would like to supplement our donations with

Bring a tin,

Put it in!

The idea is that every household coming to church on a Sunday would bring a tin - it could be a small tin of beans, peas, tuna - anything that can be part of a meal.

These items can be put in the Storehouse trolley and will be delivered as usual to Storehouse by Trevor.

The Mission Committee



Festive Fun

It may have been chilly outside on Monday 4th December but it was cosy and warm in the Parish Centre for MU Festive Fun!!

We had all sorts of rounds of Christmas Trivia Quizzes (beware I have some left!!) some beautiful music-themed Angels to make and much chat along with a few carols thrown in!! Christmas presents were sorted for delivery to some of the older members of the Parish.

The highlight of the event had to be THE SUPPER!! A big thankyou to our marvellous bakers ... scummy apple creams, mince pies, 15's and shortbread, washed down with some gently warmed Christmas Festive Cup! A really splendid night, thanks to everyone involved!

Remember our Annual Dinner will be on Wednesday 10th January 2024, if you want to attend and have not yet booked make your menu choice and pay £23 cash into church office please.

The next meeting is Monday 5th February, please remember to bring items for Women's Aid or Hospital wash bags.

Advance Notice

MU Afternoon Tea will be held on Saturday 9th March, tickets will be on sale soon, why not gather some chums and make up a table?

Best Wishes and New Year Joy

Yvonne & MU Team.





This is Your New Year Church Checklist

3 Ways you can help us at the start of 2024.

Tick as you complete

- Transfer your Standing Order from BOI to Danske

Check if you have moved your Standing Order to our new bank account. If you have not or are not sure, please contact the Parish Office.

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

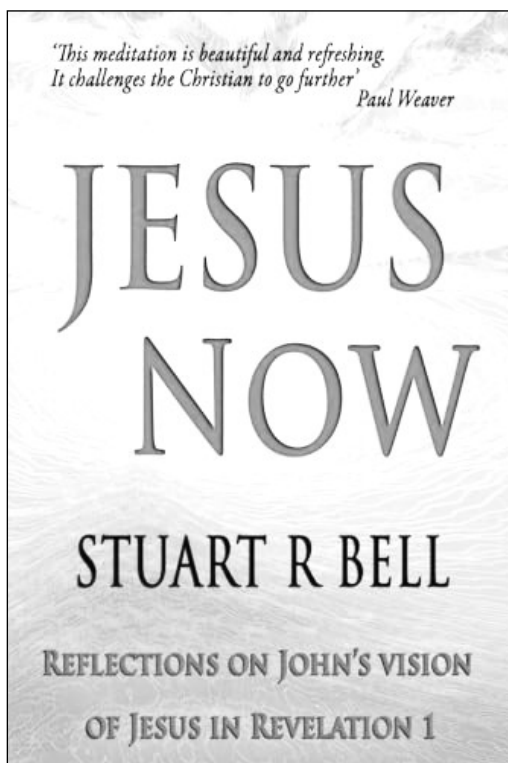
Danske Building Fund Account "Parish of Ballyholme"
Sort Code 950229 Account Number 51121367

- Make sure we have your correct details

This includes change of addresses, phone numbers, and also please tell us if anyone is in hospital or a nursing home/care facility.

- Look out for our church census forms later this year

To keep our records up-to-date and help support you as best we can. Please complete one form per household and return as soon as possible.



Jesus Now

New book from our old friend Stuart Bell

Jesus is the central figure in the Christian's life and the focus of the church's existence. Or is he?

In this book Stuart Bell describes the ways in which the individual Christian and the church at large remake Jesus as they would like him to be.

By contrast, meet in these pages the Jesus of John's vision in the first chapter of Revelation.

Read this book to walk with the author through John's compelling vision, and along the way meet searching questions about our response to Jesus.

Available from Amazon UK

Paperback edition £4.99

Kindle edition £3.99



Drumkeeragh Forest near Slieve Croob was a new venue for the Walkers in November. From the aptly named Viewpoint Trail there were stunning views across County Down towards Slieve Donard and Dundrum Bay to the south, and towards the Castlereagh Hills and Scrabo Tower to the north.



Betty

October - The historical guided tour of Groomsport



The biting cold day didn't deter the walkers when they took part in the historical guided tour of Groomsport, led by member Peter Gibson, from the charity Discover Groomsport. The outing was followed by a lovely lunch at Bangor Golf Club



Children's Gift Day

Sunday 10th December 2023 was Children's Gift Day in Church.

Pictured is the haul of toys, games etc which were brought to the services. These will be passed to the Salvation Army and to St Vincent de Paul for distribution to children in families which are facing financial problems this Christmas and cannot afford to buy toys for their Children.

YOUTH-news

youth [youth] (youths) news [nooz]

A With the Christmas term 'wrapping up' (pun intended), there's plenty to look back on from the last few months in terms of youth!

We had a great term at our **weekly Bible studies!** Across our various groups, I do Bible study every Tuesday and most Fridays, and these are an invaluable time for them to grow in their understanding of their faith. There's also always some variation of brownies, hot chocolate or watermelon!

With **Confirmation classes** having finished at the end of November, Wednesday nights are now much quieter. Needless to say, though, we're still working hard with those young people, seeing them regularly and praying for them!

Our **Thursday Drop-in** has changed venue this term, with Ross hosting at Ballyholme Presbyterian. It remains as popular (and fun) as ever.

Our **youth praise band** have grown in skill and confidence so much over the past few months, both at our bi-weekly practises and in playing; I'm sure you've loved them at Café Church just as much as I have!

At **Emerge** this term we've been learning about key beliefs in Christianity, and that's been a great time for all of us as we seek to go deeper in our faith. Afterwards, we cook up some bacon for the teenagers who have come to church and have a nice brunch with the 6-10 who are there.

YF has been quieter this term with many of the schools having exams pre-Christmas; however, it has still been a lovely time and we're blessed to have dozens of young people coming through our doors every Sunday night.

Saturday 2nd December was a huge day (as was the setup the night before), where a successful **Christmas Bazaar** brought in over £800 for the youth and children's work here. We're so grateful to everyone who donated their money or time to make it possible! On the Saturday night, then, we took some young people out for pizza and then into Belfast for a **diocesan youth night** – that was really lovely and we had a brilliant night!

That's all for this term – now here's to 2024!

Andrew



JANUARY 2024**Wednesday 3rd January**

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 7th January Epiphany 1

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Cafe Church - Parish Centre

11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 10th January

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 14th January Epiphany 2

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Good News at Ten & Children's Church

11.30 Parish Communion

6.30 United Service Ballyholme Presbyterian

Wednesday 17th January

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 21st January Epiphany 3

8.30 Holy Communion

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

11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 24th January

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 28th January Epiphany 4

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Parish Communion & Children's Church

11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 31st January

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

FEBRUARY 2024**Sunday 4th February****2nd Sunday before Lent**

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Cafe Church - Parish Centre

11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 7th February

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 11th February**The Sunday next before Lent**

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Good News at Ten & Children's Church

11.30 Parish Communion

6.30 United Service - Ballyholme Parish

Wednesday 14th February**Ash Wednesday**

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 18th February Lent 1

8.30 Holy Communion

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

11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 21st February

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

Sunday 25th February Lent 2

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Parish Communion & Children's Church

11.30 Morning Prayer

Wednesday 28th February

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

FUNERALS**November**

3rd: Noel Tumilson - late of Warren Road

10th: Robert Graham McDowall Robertson, late of Meadowlands

December

1st: James Kenneth Taylor, late of Warren Road

January 2024

7th Susan Stockton

14th Jacqui Devlin

21st Agnes Officer

28th Jenny Kelly

February 2024

4th Jean Law Taylor

11th Cathy Body

18th Ann McMurray and Marie McKee

25th Lillian Finch

