

# St Columbanus

Ballyholme



Easter Vestry Reports  
Changing Faces  
Mothers' Union Events



# The Parishioner

..On the way  
*together..*

May/June 2024

## The Rambling Rector

The Reverend Jan's Stevenson's appointment as Rector of St Donard's in Belfast brings to an end nearly five years of ground-breaking ministry. It leaves behind a string of creative initiatives now running well with volunteers, plus a whole new network of contacts in the wider Ballyholme neighbourhood. Coming out of the Pandemic, God's timing could not have been better. He sent us a Community Pastor with a vision to make fresh and meaningful local connections, and if ever someone had the personality and energy to make a real impact in the role, it was Jan. And then there was ever-supportive Dr Sam, commissioned as a Diocesan Evangelist while with us, and not forgetting Ruth and Hope – they threw in their lot as a family, and the benefits are plain for all to see. Jan's service of Institution will be on the evening of Thursday 27 June and no doubt St Columbanus will be strongly represented by well-wishers. In the meantime, please pray for the Stevensons' move to Bloomfield, and that God would raise up the right assistant clergy-person to join our team once they have gone – as He has done, so graciously and consistently, since the foundation of our parish.



**SED**

### Our New People's Glebewarden

Glebewardens are appointed to assist with the care and management of the glebe house (or rectory) and lands. Given the size and complexity of our church buildings there is nearly always some maintenance issue to be addressed.

At Easter Vestry Steven Nickell, our Rector's Glebewarden, paid tribute to Ivan Humphreys who, after five years of dedicated service, had decided to step down as People's Glebewarden and his successor is David Moorehead.

Some of you may know David and his wife Margaret who are regular attenders at the 8:30am Holy Communion services.

David is a keen gardener and thanks to his green fingers we have been able to give the parishioners who attend our Communion lunches lovely gifts of seasonal plants and flowering bulbs.

He is no stranger to hard work and has been involved in several of our church-grounds work-parties. Most recently he helped tame the garden at Beverley Gardens which was beginning to resemble a jungle having been sadly neglected for quite a while. David was also part of the team that did all the heavy lifting and digging required to mount and cement the new metal sign at the front of the church.

### Easter church flowers

A big thank you to Anna, Christine, Heather, Leanne, Vicky and Adeline for all their help and skill in decorating the church for Easter. I really appreciate it. Also thanks to everyone who contributed.

**Irene**



Thank you to everyone who attended the Communion lunch on 20th March 2024, and also our volunteers who made the event such a success. We were delighted to welcome 25 senior members of our congregation to celebrate Holy Communion together, followed by a light lunch. We met the week before Holy Week and the service of worship was very poignant in the lead up to Easter. A bunch of daffodils was given to everyone to enjoy over Easter.

Our next **Communion Lunch will take place on Thursday 13th June at 12.30pm.**

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 required

I look forward to seeing everyone in June.

## **Margaret**



## **Parishioner Cost/Envelope**

As you know, The Parishioner comes to you free of charge. To help with our overheads we enclose an envelope once a year by which we hope you can make a contribution towards our running costs.

Although the gifts are anonymous and unrecorded we are allowed to aggregate them for Gift Aid purposes. If all of our recipients gave £5 we would certainly cover ourselves, but please bear in mind that less than 25% usually make a gift.

A quarter of you are paying for the other threequarters, give or take! Please return your envelope by the collection plate on Sunday and do bear in mind that the full text of the magazine is now available on the parish website.

If this is the format that best suits you why not consider cancelling your paper copy and you won't have to worry about the envelope at all. What a difference it would make if everyone that read The Parishioner made a contribution towards it!

## **Cricket Match**

A Cricket Match is planned for Thursday 20 June 2024. The Venue is to be confirmed and details will be announced in Church nearer the date.

# Muddy Church



Our youngest group have been having lots of fun at Muddy Church dramatising bible stories, re-enacting the Last Supper, and preparing for Palm Sunday. These children have the spirit of generosity and have loved making gifts that they can give out to the main congregation when they go into church for Communion. In the run up to Easter they prepared Easter capsule gifts, which included a rock, a cross, an egg and a celebration.



## Blast!

We have continued to practice our new song for Palm Sunday, whilst spending time reading the Bible. They particularly enjoyed making resurrection buns to illustrate the story of Jesus being anointed by Mary in preparation for his death and burial.

## Tune Tots

This group now has a strong core, with a few new families coming along most weeks. The song time is still the main focus, however the little ones have particularly enjoyed our new bubble machine and the crafts.

## Paula

## Jumpin' Dates

**Summer Jumpin' 12th-16th August**

Registration:

Sunday 23rd (after Muddy Church)

Wednesday 26th June (evening)





I am a member of the Parish Visiting Team and one of the ladies I visit has recently celebrated a significant birthday. Her son Bruce McCormack very kindly wrote the following about his mother:

'Helen Templeton, one of the senior members in the parish, marked a big milestone when she turned 100 years on the 26th of March. She enjoyed a family party with son and daughter, Bruce and Lynda and their families, plus nieces and nephews from mid-Ulster and Wales. With four grandchildren and their families, including three great-grandchildren, there was a fair crowd! Her great-grandchildren helped blow out the candles, but Bruce confirms "the old girl's still got a lot of puff herself!"

Originally a farmer's daughter from the village of Bellaghy, Co Londonderry, she was the youngest of four siblings, and her two brothers and eldest sister all lived to their mid-90s. Helen trained as

a nurse at Purdysburn Fever and Belfast City hospitals, lived in Belfast and helped with her husband Tom McCormack's business. In 1973 they retired to Bangor (blow-ins as they say) - both had been keen bowlers (Helen played for the Irish Ladies Indoor International team for a few seasons in the 1960s) and they joined Pickie Bowling Club. After Tom died, Helen did auxiliary nursing in Bangor Hospital, continued bowling, including church indoor bowls, and subsequently met and married widower George Templeton of the parish, thus becoming a member of the Coulter family of William and Iris, well known members of St Columbanus.

Helen very much enjoys the support of Rev Simon and pastoral visits from Christine (Johnstone), and although not now attending Church on Sundays, she will hopefully continue to get to the quarterly, or occasional weekly, Communion Services for a while yet!



## Wednesday Club

Our March meeting was held in the Kajiado room as usual, but this month it was our Bingo hall! Our ladies were keen to get a winning card and kept their eyes glued on their numbers as Ann did caller duties.

We managed to get three games completed before it was time for a well earned cup of tea with hot cross buns. We welcomed Diana to our group this month, and what do you know, she won the monthly draw!

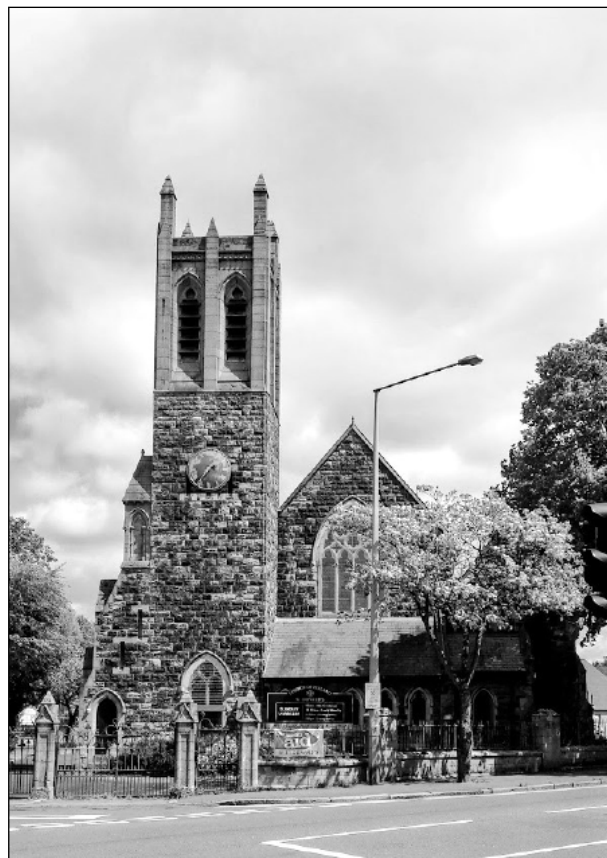
There will be no meeting in April, as it is Easter week, so we will all meet up again on 1st May at 2.00pm. Why come and join us and see what we get up to.

**Sue**

## Our Community Pastor, Jan appointed Rector of St Donard's

Standing at the crossroads of the Bloomfield and Beersbridge Roads the congregation seek to use this vantage point at the heart of the community to help people find in Jesus the new life He came to bring. I am delighted to be appointed the new Rector of this vibrant and outward looking church.

I felt a mixture of different emotions on Sunday 24th March when Simon stood up to announce the news that I had been appointed to this post. Even having prayed and waited for God's guidance and having been through the selection process, it was with joy and sadness that I listened to the news being read out. Ballyholme parish has been a wonderful place to serve Jesus among truly lovely people. I have loved getting to know you and I am truly grateful for your involvement in all the things I helped develop under God's wonderful provision.



My thanks to Simon, the staff and the select vestry who have encouraged what was a pioneering new post in Ballyholme. God guided and resourced this work in often remarkable ways. Love Ballyholme was born, Café Church developed, Alpha, new house groups, the Prayer ministry team, Prayer & Praise, Peaced Together...for all this and more we give you thanks Heavenly Father!

My Institution is on Thurs 27th June in the evening, please put this date in your diary as I would love as many of you as possible to join us then. Sam and I would really value your prayers as we get ready to move as a family to Belfast and another part of God's mission field.

**Rev Jan (Community Pastor) &  
Sam Stevenson (Diocesan Evangelist)**

### FUNERALS

#### February

**23rd:** Joan Douglas, formerly of Waverley Drive

**29th:** Eileen Collins, formerly of Gilbert Crescent

#### March

**8th:** Harry Thompson, formerly of Riverside Rd

**15th:** Ellen Osborne, formerly of Montgomery Court

**22nd:** Mabel McKeown, formerly of Rathmore Road

### Farewell to the Stevensons: Sunday 23 June

Please plan to join us as we thank God for Jan's ministry on her last Sunday with us.

We will say our farewells in the usual Ballyholme way, over refreshments in the Parish Centre between the 10 and 11.30 services.

See you all then!

What a blessing and pleasure it was to have the Reverend Peter Lyle back and well again, to lead us through Holy Week 2024 at Ballyholme Presbyterian.

The Reverend Jan led on Monday and Thursday, Sr Maura Gallahue of the Holy Redeemer led on Tuesday and the Rector led on Wednesday and Friday, with members of all three congregations reading and praying. Throughout the week, a mixture of organ, worship band and solo praise was offered, making the most of both old and new Passiontide favourites.

Peter's preaching was characteristically pastoral and personal, and shaped by the central Bible image of God the potter. By way of a reminder for those who were there: 'Ready for God' was Monday, 'A purpose to Fulfil' was Tuesday, 'God's Pruning' was Wednesday, 'Purifying' was Thursday and 'Restoration' was Friday. Peter's stories and examples came thick and fast and were often extremely touching.

With a children's programme at Ashley Drive for 60 on Good Friday, we were pleased to have our ecumenical friends join us at St Columbanus that afternoon. After the service in Church, we moved outside in silence to pray together around our new Cross. There could have been no better commissioning and no better day. It's a measure of how expertly selected and designed the Cross is, that it looks as though it's always been there.

We always get such a warm welcome from Ballyholme Presbyterian, not least when it comes to Maundy Thursday and sharing in Holy Communion, Presbyterian-style. On two of the evenings, Palm Sunday and Holy Wednesday, we had the chance for fellowship and supper before leaving for home. Our Easter morning hospitality after the dawn service offered a final chance to break bread together and to issue the invitation to St Columbanus for 2025.

Peter reminded us on one of the evenings, and some might be surprised to learn this: there was a time when the churches coming together in Ballyholme was controversial and even met with protest. It's a sign of how far the Lord has brought us, and indeed Northern Ireland, that the idea now of not doing so, is even more unthinkable.



**Local businesses, crafts,  
clubs and societies**

**FREE ENTRY**

**Kids activities**

**Live entertainment and  
refreshments**

**LOVE BALLYHOLME COMMUNITY FAIR**  
Ballyholme Presbyterian Church, 11 May 2024, 1-4pm

## Love Ballyholme Community Fair

We're very excited to announce our first Love Ballyholme Community Fair!! Find out about everything that is going on in your local community - do you know what clubs and societies are available right here in Ballyholme? And this is your chance to meet local businesses and craft's people so you can shop local and support small businesses based here in Ballyholme.

Save the Date! Saturday 11 May!

If you are a Ballyholme-based business, club or society and you want to get involved, email us - [helloloveballyholme@gmail.com](mailto:helloloveballyholme@gmail.com)



## Christian Aid Week

Christian Aid week is 12th to 18th May this year. We would really appreciate help with delivering envelopes in the Ballyholme and Ballycrochan areas. We have designated roads to deliver to.

Again this year we are only delivering envelopes with collection points to be confirmed.

If you would have a little time to help deliver envelopes please leave your name and contact number with the Parish office.

Thank you

Susan and Jonnie Stockton, Fiona Oliva



“When you think you have had the best Alpha course ever, the next one comes along and trumps it!” a quote from one of the Alpha leaders. We finished the most recent Alpha course with a Pot-luck Supper on Wednesday 20th March. Natalie made an Alpha cake and the stage was set for a grand finale to a wonderful course. We have all grown closer to God and feel more assured of his individual love for us. We have realized how real and personal Jesus’s offer of salvation is.



We plan on starting another new house group after this course and we would like to say to anyone interested in joining a house group please speak to Simon or Jan. Ian and Candice Foster’s house group is also keen to welcome new members. We plan on running Alpha again in January 2025 and we have people signed up already. If interested please speak to any of the Alpha leaders, Don Todd, Michelle Savage (Churchwarden), Billy Davidson or Nuala Duffy



**House Group**

PSALM 119 V105

*“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path”.*

In October 2023 a new house group began. Mainly formed from a group who had recently attended an Alpha course. The group meet in the choir room on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm.

We have been reflecting on a number of Psalms and have been greatly blessed as familiar psalms have week by week challenged us to reflect and appreciate the power of God’s word.

We begin again on Tuesday 23rd April and we would welcome anyone who would like to explore God’s amazing word with a group of people of various ages and at various stages in their walk with God. You will receive a warm welcome and we would love you to join us.

Candice and Ian Foster

The traditional Easter General Vestry agenda of reports, accounts and elections also included the following remarks by the Chair, Canon Simon Doogan:

## New Faces



Praise God 2023 has been a year of new faces at St Columbanus. Traditionally, welcoming new members was such a normal part of life for us in Ballyholme that it went largely unremarked upon. Like many seaside towns, Bangor can feel like a place with a more-or-less constant turnover. The 'For Sale' signs seem to appear and disappear, with removals vans coming and going pretty much all the time. Yet it reveals much about the strangeness of the Covid experience, that suddenly this last year as things have settled down again, we have received a lovely influx of new parishioners, enough for all of us to notice. Please Lord, they will very quickly feel a proper sense of belonging to our church family.

Among these new parishioners, it's been good to see a number of former members from our much-missed neighbours at Ballyholme Methodist, Brooklyn Avenue. Many feel like old friends, as we knew them from our United Services and Christmas and Holy Week get-togethers, but they still bring valued new energy to our worship and fellowship. Some are coming at 10'clock and others at 11.30 and they have also been joining in our weekday programme. A number have added their names to the Register of Vestry Members – which is something lots of our Sunday regulars still haven't quite got around to, so there's an example to follow when the Register opens again next January!

## New Volunteers

New faces at Church also make for new volunteers, and this has been a year for getting involved and rolling our sleeves up for God. We did not anticipate the extensive repairs required at Beverley Gardens and nor had we budgeted for them. Thank God so much of the money came in by parishioners' gifts, but we made a significant saving through the expertise and elbow-grease of our Glebewardens, especially Steven Nickell – and through the wonderful team who re-tamed the garden. This is such a positive sign of life in our Church. More and more of us turning out to help is good, but really all of us should see it as our responsibility to lend a hand with the jobs that need doing and the roles that need filling around the parish.



Our Youth and Children's programmes continue to be such a blessing and have benefitted richly from a great new cohort of leaders. The re-boot of our Sunday Coffee Rota has also seen a willing new team of servers and washer-uppers. But from Choir to Sound Desk to Café Church, across-the-board people are stepping-up to become givers rather than merely takers. Church-grounds work parties are a regular part of our calendar and if you've yet to help with this important twice-yearly tidy-up, let's be having you please! It's the sort of gardening chores we all do at home so don't leave someone else at church to do them, come along and take your turn. The larger the turn-out, the shorter the shift.

## New Arrivals

To come completely clean with you, part of what's prompting these remarks this year, was my trip to the Marine Court Hotel with the Missions Committee back in December. The 'Dwelling Among Us' (John 1) hampers of woollens, toiletries and treats for the 39 asylum seekers were received so gratefully, but it led to a response I hadn't been expecting and which caught me somewhat off-guard. As we left the hotel, a spokesperson for the migrants approached the Chair of our Missions Committee wanting to know could they volunteer for us in any way? I know. Here's a group of vulnerable, in-limbo men, thousands of miles from home and family, and who face a masked protest outside the hotel at their presence, every single Friday night.



Yet they want to show practical appreciation for our kindness and with so much time on their hands, they feel it is the least they can do. Naturally we told them that reciprocation was the farthest thing from our minds, but as I've thought about it since a plan has started to form. As ever this summer we will have two church-grounds work-parties but we also plan to repaint the Parish Centre in July – several of you have remarked on how unloved it's been looking this last 12 months. At this stage, I don't see how we will go about this exactly, but I visualise asylum seekers buddying-up with parishioners in groups of 3s and 4s so that personal stories can be

shared, and then when the job's done, if possible, we will share lunch together.

## New Motivation

Many though not all the asylum seekers, are from a Muslim background and I'm sure they could confidently root their offer to volunteer for us in chapter and verse from the Quran. As Christians, we might cite Proverbs 11:24: 'One person gives freely, yet gains even more'. Then there's 1 Peter 4: 10 'Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as



faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.' Likewise, Ephesians 2:10 'For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.' Many of us love Hebrews 13:2 'Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it'. The list goes on.

For our part, it all comes down to motivation. Is the time God blesses us with our time, to do with solely as we please? Or is it God's time, to pass on some of the love we have received from Him to others? We're all busy, most of

us would probably say too busy. But is any of what we're busy with aimed more widely than at ourselves or our immediate friends and families? If we ask Him, God will give us eyes to see people and needs all around us. My own experience is that when we do finally reach out, it tends to turn out that we were the only ones who could have helped all along. The care called-for in that instance was uniquely ours to give, and without us would have gone un-offered and un-received.

## Heather Whitfield, Michael Hatch & Ivan Humphreys

The same applies to our key parish 'roles'. Though both our two Churchwardens are long-standing members, a list of other commitments meant neither of them was free to serve up until last Easter. Both would now very readily tell you what a fulfilling experience it has been and how glad they are they said yes – at least that's what they've told me! Thank you to both Heather and Michael and to Ivan Humphreys who stands down this year as People's Glebeward. Work responsibilities have been piling up for Ivan, who has indicated he will be glad to serve again down the line (for a third time, incidentally!) but meanwhile he remains available, especially for anything in the electrical engineering line.



Which leaves two questions to pray about in closing: under God, what is your line and when is your time?

The following is a summary of the report given by Liz Grant, Honorary Treasurer, at the Easter Vestry on Sunday 17th March 2024.

In addition to the management accounts that were presented at the Easter Vestry, *The Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015*, relating to charity accounting and reporting commenced on 1 January 2016.

Even though the Parish income was less than £500,000 the Parish:

- \* Prepare accruals accounts.
- \* Will have accounts audited and this must be in compliance with Section 65(2) of the Charities Act NI.
- \* Complete a trustees' annual report that also reports on how our charity has met the public benefit requirement.
- \* Complete an annual monitoring return.

The Parish accounts, Auditors report and Trustee Annual Statement will be submitted online to the Charities Commission NI this year.

## **Unrestricted Funds**

Overall the Parish income (excluding Missions, Youth and Pastor accounts) this year was £263,053 increasing by £32,411 (£230,642 in 2022). Expenditure increased from £228,505 to £248,711, this was mainly due to the increase in building and property expenses, the bulk of these were for Beverley Gardens. This gave the Parish a closing surplus balance of £14,342. We have some accrual to make for Gift Aid for Free Will Offerings for the three covid years which was not claimed as the data was not keyed into the system.

### **General Fund Income**

General income is from the following sources:

- \* General giving increased from £180,525 to £198,385.
- \* Property related income, which includes renting the Curatage in Beverley Gardens and the Bay decreased from £14,597 to £12,279.
- \* General Parish income from sources such as hall rental, magazine donations, catering was up from £11,613 to £18,090.
- \* The Parish did not receive any unrestricted legacies.

### **Expenditure**

Overall expenditure very similar to last year increasing from £228,505 to £248,711.

The main areas of expenditure are:

- \* Clergy and staffing costs which increased marginally from £138,649 to £139,861.
- \* Repairs and maintenance increased from £16,097 to £25,738.
- \* Premises costs, including heating, lighting, rates etc. increased from £23,900 to £27,168.
- \* General Parish expenses e.g. consumables, postage and printing increased from £17,055 to £35,635.
- \* The Diocesan levy increased from £13,175 to £15,550.

## **Restricted Funds**

### **Development Funds**

The Development fund started in 2016 and throughout the year voluntary giving to the restoration project by way of monthly standing orders, donations or fund-raising events came to £38,144 including gift aid. The Parish did not receive any legacies in this financial year. We have seen a

reduction in the amount of standing orders for the development fund in the last year and, on average, there is £2,600 (£2,700 in 2022) of monthly standing orders going into the Development Fund, amounting to approx. £30,670 for the current year. The balance in the Building Fund is just under £400,000.

### **Missions**

Income into the Missions fund was £6,604 and outgoings of £9,073 were given to charitable causes.

### **Youth Fellowship**

Income into the Youth fund was £18,214 and £16,404 was used for activities relating to youth.

### **Pastor Account**

A pastor account was set up last year to keep income and expenditure separate from the church funds. Income was £2,165 and expenditure was £755.

### **Look Ahead**

The following are financial priorities for the Select Vestry and Parish in the coming year:

#### **“Though He Was Rich”**

- \* Continue to push the generous giving initiative with the aim of aiding recovery from the effects of Covid-19 and offsetting inflationary pressures on finance.
- \* Continue to move away from Free Will Offering envelopes to electronic giving and continuing the move from giving into Bank of Ireland to Danske Bank.
- \* Continue to plan for the next phase of the development plan to build the link between Church and Halls.



Our Honorary Secretary Christine Johnstone, Honorary Treasurer Liz Grant and Honorary Young Person Erin Grant enjoying lunch at the Easter Vestry



The following is a summary of the report given by Steven Nickell, Rector's Glebewarden on behalf of himself and Ivan Humphreys, People's Glebewarden at the Easter Vestry on Sunday 17th March 2024.

## **Church**

Planning was granted for a new signage frame which has been erected in the grounds fronting the Church. The intention is to advertise upcoming events to Ballyholme residents and passers-by.

There continue to be several Church clean-ups in and around the grounds through the year and we wish to take the opportunity to thank all the volunteers and helpers for their invaluable hard work and elbow grease to keep our grounds and buildings looking so well.

## **Defibrillator**

The recently deceased Harry Thompson, a valued and much-loved member of our congregation as well as a member of the Health and Safety Committee, was instrumental in funding the acquisition of a second defibrillator for the Church.

We now have a defibrillator machine within the Parish Centre and on the outside of the main Church building.

We had good coverage in the local press and this location now serves the wider Ballyholme community as an essential first aid resource.

## **Parish Centre**

Maintenance work has been necessary on the Parish Centre boilers and we have used the opportunity to combine the maintenance contracts for both buildings with one provider as a point of call.

Similarly we have one service contract now in place for the security and fire alarm systems which have incurred costs for remedial works over the past 12 months.

High level works such as gutter cleaning and the installation of bird guards around the solar panels have been carried out.

We continue to be kept busy with a variety of minor running repairs to the Parish Centre and we wish to thank the diligence of the Sexton and staff who keep us informed of any items requiring attention.

## **Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)**

PAT testing of all fixed, moveable and handheld appliances was completed in December 2023.

## **Electrical Wiring and Emergency Lighting Testing**

The five yearly test of the electrical wiring and emergency lighting installations in both buildings have been completed with remedial works identified in the Parish Centre.

Quotations and an action plan to tackle a range of attendances are underway and we are communicating closely with Select Vestry.

## **Outdoor and Internal Lighting**

We have been repairing outdoor lights attached to the Parish Centre. The lamps are becoming increasingly difficult to source as most are now discontinued so we have obtained quotations and are recommending they be replaced with LED fittings.

Similarly, we will face this problem with internal lighting within the Parish Centre so we are obtaining quotations for replacement and will prepare an action plan in the coming months.

## **Automated doors**

We have obtained quotations for replacing the Parish Centre entrance double doors and intend to fit automated aluminium doors with a suitable canopy.

This work is being generously funded by a Parish family and will be undertaken in the coming months.

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### **Sandringham Court Apartments**

It has been brought to our attention that remedial works have been undertaken at Sandringham Apartments. This follows a leak from oil tanks located on their side of our boundary wall.

Whilst we have no evidence of any contamination, we are consulting with our Insurers to investigate and rule out the potential we could encounter issues in the future.

### **Rectory**

Nothing to report on the Rectory this year apart from routine maintenance. We intend to review the findings of the Diocesan Surveyors Quinquennial Report and give consideration whether we now attend to a number of recommendations.

### **34 Beverley Gardens**

We gained vacant possession of Beverley Gardens at the end of August 2023 and have undertaken extensive renovation works including a complete re-wire, the introduction of additional insulation and the installation of a new kitchen and bathroom.

We also converted from oil to gas as the primary heating source, re-decorated inside and out and laid new floor coverings throughout.

Work was completed this week and is being placed on the market through John Minnis Estate Agents to let with a considerable increase in monthly income anticipated.

None of this would have been possible without the generous financial support and assistance from a number of Parish families.

### **The Bay Apartment**

The annual rent was increased in line with current market expectations late last year and the existing tenant signed up for a further 24 months.

Some minor maintenance items have been reported and addressed directly by the managing agents. This included replacing the tilt and turn mechanism on the sliding doors.

Finally, a big thank you to Ivan who is stepping down as Glebewarden this year.

His knowledge of the Church buildings, his guidance and support have helped me to keep calm and carry on when we have been confronted with everything from pigeon evictions; church bells going silent; Christmas time call outs; floods, power cuts and boiler breakdowns,

We braved working at heights, birds in the bell tower and leaking pipework and throughout Ivan took everything in his stride.

I wish Ivan well and hope we can maintain the friendship and fellowship that we have forged over the past five years.

We welcome David Moorehead, who steps into Ivan's shoes, and I am looking forward to working with David in the coming months. May he get the same satisfaction as I have getting to know our buildings, their workings, the grounds that surround them and the people who use them.

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## **Easter Vestry Elections and Appointments**

**Churchwardens** - Michelle Savage (Rector's) and Neil Devlin (People's)

**Glebewardens** - Steven Nickell (Rector's) and David Moorehead (People's)

**Select Vestry** - Ann Adams, Stephen Baker, David Crooks, Billy Davidson, Liz Grant (Honorary Treasurer), Carl Griffin, Ivan Humphreys, Christine Johnstone (Honorary Secretary), Roy Lawther, Yvonne Manogue, Trevor Smyth and Heather Whitfield.



## Michelle Savage – Rector’s Churchwarden

I am Bangor born and bred. I am wife to Mark, and mum to Amy and Ian. Without these three I would not be able to take on this role. They have been amazing in supporting me in all my pursuits and are my biggest encouragers. I cannot thank them enough. We normally attend the 10am service so I’m very much looking forward to getting to know people at the 8:30 and 11:30 services too.

Growing up I attended St Andrew’s Presbyterian Church on the Clandeboye Road, but after we were married we decided to find a church that was a good fit for us both. We attended pretty much every Presbyterian in Bangor and the surrounding area and just couldn’t find where felt right. My friend Dawn suggested we try her church, Ballyholme Parish. I have to admit to being a little hesitant. Wasn’t there an awful lot of standing up and sitting down in the Church of Ireland? That first Sunday we parked in the car park and were greeted by the late-lamented and much-loved Renee Bradley. Renee gave us the biggest welcome and gently tugged at my elbow every time we were to stand and gave me a gentle nudge when I should be sitting down again. Little did Renee know it at the time, but that welcome was exactly what we were looking for and Ballyholme Parish became our new home. She was the warden when my daughter was baptised, along with Meg Barnard, and my family all remember their warm welcome as visitors. My hope, as warden, is to pass this along and to do Renee proud.

I am a primary school teacher, most recently taking on the role of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENCo) in the school. My lovely P1s keep me on my toes and fondly call me ‘Mrs Cabbage’ at the beginning of every school year, which has never failed to make me smile. (I think it is as close to ‘Savage’ that their wee mouths can manage!)

I am currently studying at the Church of Ireland Theological Institute with the hope of becoming a Diocesan Reader. I am thoroughly enjoying the course, and when I’m not at work or prepping for school, you’ll find me either studying for my latest assignment or getting ready for the next Café Church service.

I am nervous and excited to take on the role of Churchwarden. Please do introduce yourself, and re-introduce yourself often, as I get to grips with everyone’s names. Thank you for all the encouragement so far.

**Michelle**

## Neil Devlin – People’s Churchwarden

It is an honour and a privilege to be asked to serve as the People’s Churchwarden for the coming year. I have been a member of St Columbanus Church for the last 13 years, along with my wife Jacqui and our three children, Callum, Jude and Lydia.

I was brought up in Warrenpoint where it happened that the minister was Canon Tyney, before he moved to Groomsport. I attended Kilbroney Primary School in Rostrevor and then Kilkeel High School. My family moved to Donaghadee when I was 15 and I went to Regent House School, Newtownards. As a family we worshipped at Donaghadee Parish Church. After finishing school I spent several years working in Belfast for John Kelly Ltd, before starting a business with my brother in Bangor, called Charisma Blinds.

In 1996 I met Jacqui and we were married in September 1998 at Donaghadee Parish Church. We lived briefly on the Gilnahirk Road in Belfast before moving to Morningside in Ballyholme where our three children have grown up. When our children were small, I gave up work to be a house husband (a job I would highly recommend to any father) for four years and then I started working as a Classroom Assistant in Bangor Academy where I am at present. I have previously served on the Select Vestry at Donaghadee Parish and I have been on the Board of Governors at Ballyholme School for the past 10 years.

Many of you will know my wife Jacqui a lot more than you know me as she served as



Rector's Churchwarden a few years ago and she is also a Lay Reader in the church. Jacqui currently works as the head of Safeguarding for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. In 2019 she completed her Phd before studying the Lay Readers course with the Church of Ireland.

Our eldest son, Callum, has completed his Master's degree at Queen's University and is now working in England with Williams Formula One Racing. Our second son Jude is currently completing his degree course with the University of Cornwall and the youngest, Lydia, is in sixth form at Strathearn School. In my free time I enjoy watching rugby and playing golf.

I am looking forward to meeting and getting to know many of you at the Sunday services during my year as People's Churchwarden.

**Neil**

## **Carole Caruth**

Bangor born and bred, Carole, together with husband Hugh, has lived for many years in Ballyholme, worshipping at St Columbanus and being involved with the Vestry for over forty years. Whilst they would formerly attend Holy Communion at the 8.30am service on Sundays, both now enjoy the Wednesday morning services of Holy Communion and Prayers for the Sick.

Carole has vivid memories of a happy, carefree childhood, feeling that there was greater freedom for children to play outdoors than there is today. Educated at Bangor Collegiate, which merged with Glenlola Collegiate in 1957, Carole forged friendships which have endured throughout the years. Leaving school at seventeen, she joined the Civil Service, where she became a Medical Referee at Tyrone House. This position required great sensitivity when patients were required to undergo medical examinations.

In 1964, Carole and Hugh were married. His career in the Merchant Navy involved lengthy absences from home with long journeys throughout the world. As they started to welcome additions to their family, Carole readily embraced full-time motherhood, instilling into their three daughters and son the values inculcated by both her's and Hugh's families. Since Hugh's service with the Merchant Navy came to an end, both have continued to devote themselves to family and Church life. With one daughter and her family now resident in Australia, Carole and Hugh enjoyed a visit with them and created fond memories.

The advent of Covid, with its many challenges and lockdowns, changed our lives in so many ways. Carole reflected on this, and how a slow return to normality is welcomed; to be able to attend church, to meet up with lifelong friends for coffee or a lunch, her home once again a place for family gatherings. On Christmas Eve, 2023, a very special celebration was held to mark Carole's 80th birthday, where she was surrounded by family, friends, beautiful gifts and warm wishes.



## Spring with MU

Hello everyone, there is a Springtime feel to the evenings, as I reflect on MU through March - such busy, enjoyable times we have shared in.

For our March meeting we prepared the large hall ready for Patrick, our "kilted teacher"! What fun we had with those circle dances, many steps to remember, such patience and good humour exuded from patient Patrick our teacher.

He even invited any of us to classes on Tuesdays from 10.30am to 12 noon at the Hub on Hamilton Road, just £2pp and a cuppa too! Something any of us in the Parish could consider?

Thank you to Adeline, one of our members, for suggesting the activity. (Sorry you missed it, but hope New Zealand was great!)



Our next event was an Afternoon Tea which we hosted on Saturday 9th March. What a memorable afternoon it was, cake stands gleaming, sweets and savouries tempting us, Ian Bell 'tinkling the ivories' adding extra pizzazz to the event. Thank you to all our guests, you helped us raise remarkable funds for MU Projects at home and overseas!

I must endorse tremendous thanks to all the MU Team for all their hard work and great humour, making it a real pleasure to host this event, thanks girls! (oh and not forgetting some gentlemen chair movers and bunting hangers!)

On March 21st we attended our Diocesan Service in Dromore Cathedral, Anne carried our banner high. A long drive, but great to meet up with other MU members over a lovely supper! (which someone else made!)

On 25th March we attended Holy Week Service (as is our tradition) in Ballyholme Presbyterian Church.

Our 8th April meeting was a Cinema night. We watched the film "Ladies in Lavender" starring Dame Maggie Smith and Dame Judi Dench, enjoying the film while eating sweets and Choc-ices. This was followed by light refreshments.

Our next meeting will be on Monday 13th May at 7.30pm.

We hope to visit Dromore Cathedral on Friday 10th May to view a wedding dress exhibition!! Coffee stop en route, traveling by car and possibly some retail therapy.

Our final meeting before the Summer will probably take place on 10th June but we will announce details at the May meeting or in Church.

Well I guess that's all the MU catch up for now; hope to see you at Monday Coffee - the scones and the craic are mighty!

**Many Blessings Yvonne & The Team.**



## **St. Columbanus Walkers**

### **March - Coastal Path from Helen's Bay to Holywood**

The early March walk had been planned for Raholp and St Patrick's country but a recce by Peter and Miriam found a very muddy area so the relatively dry Coastal Path from Helen's Bay to Holywood was the alternative. Travelling to Helen's Bay by train followed by a walk to Holywood proved popular as did the lunch in Holwood.

**Betty**



**MAY 2024****Wednesday 1st May**

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

**Sunday 5th May - Coronation Sunday  
Easter 6**

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Cafe Church - Parish Centre

11.30 Morning Prayer

**Wednesday 8th May**

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

**Sunday 12th May****Easter 7**

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Good News at Ten & Children's Church

11.30 Parish Communion

6.30 United Service - Ballyholme Presbyterian

**Wednesday 15th May**

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

**Sunday 19th May****Pentecost**

8.30 Holy Communion

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

11.30 Morning Prayer

**Wednesday 22nd May**

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

**Sunday 26th May****Trinity Sunday**

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Parish Communion & Children's Church

11.30 Morning Prayer

**Wednesday 29th May**

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

**JUNE 2024****Sunday 2nd June****Trinity 1**

8.30 Holy Communion

10.30 Cafe Church - Parish Centre

11.30 Morning Prayer

**Wednesday 5th June**

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

**Sunday 9th June****Trinity 2**

8.30 Holy Communion

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

11.30 Parish Communion

6.30 United Service - Ballyholme Parish

**Wednesday 12th June**

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

**Sunday 16th June****Trinity 3**

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Good News at Ten Children's Day

11.30 Morning Prayer

**Wednesday 19th June**

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

**Sunday 23rd June****Trinity 4**

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Good News at Ten Communion & Children's Church

11.30 Morning Prayer

**Wednesday 26th June**

10.30 Holy Communion - Kajiado Room

**Sunday 30th June****Trinity 5**

8.30 Holy Communion

10.00 Wholeness and Healing

11.30 Wholeness and Healing

**May 2024**

**5th** Heidi Doogan

**12th** Libby Beech

**19th** Joan Larmour

**26th** Trevor Smyth

**June 2024**

**2nd** Olwyn Aiken

**9th** Pat Davidson

**16th** Lillian Ward

**23rd** Barbara Wallace

**30th** Adeline Cully