

St Columbanus

Ballyholme



Brownies Visit Church
Confirmation
Afternoon Tea
Christian Aid Week



..On the way
together..

The Parishioner

July/August 2026

Record spring temperatures cheerfully promised sunshine this summer. Alas, sobering news accompanied them. Bridget Jones famously dismissed the El Niño phenomenon as “a blip... Latin music’s on its way out.” If only. Forecast, instead, is a once-in-a-century Super El Niño that risks a 40°C summer in 2027. Psalm 84 feels relevant: *For the Lord God is a sun and shield (v11)*. Spiritually, God is our ultimate source of light and protection. Throughout our lives, God guides and defends in ways invisible and sometimes imperceptible but look back later and His provision is plain to see. Yet scientifically too, God is both sun and shield. We’ve come a long way since poor Galileo’s seventeenth century heresy trial for proposing that God made the earth to revolve around the sun rather than the other way round. But God also made the shield we call the ozone layer, without which life on earth is unsustainable. We must draw hope from recent dramatic reductions in ozone shrinking chemicals: the hole above us is repairing itself. Let’s pray that a similar effort can arrest global warming. Meanwhile, keep the Factor 30 handy this holiday. Should 2027 prove hotter still, pre-order your total sunblock now.



SED



8.30am Holy Communion Order One

10.30am Summer Combined Service

(Followed by coffee in Church. Children’s activity on Communion Sundays)

7.30pm United Epilogue Service

(12 July & 9 August Ballyholme Presbyterian; 26 July & 23 August St Columbanus)

Malachi 4:2

***the sun of righteousness shall rise,
with healing in its wings***



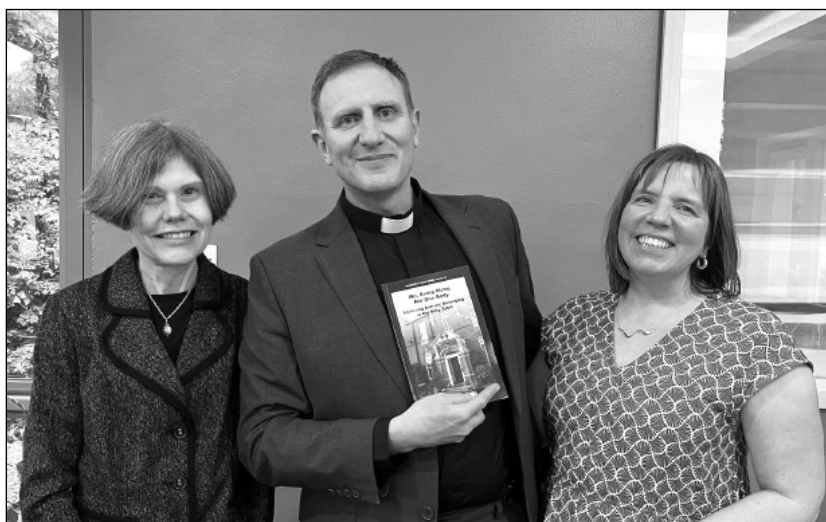
27 May 2026 saw a new addition to the much-admired and steadily expanding Braemor Studies Series. Every year the best final year student dissertation is published. The class of 2025 produced not just one but two titles, the first by our very own Rev Jonny Watson!

'We being many, are one body' is a line familiar to us from the Prayer Book Communion service. But since Jonny became a dad, it has carried for him a distinctively personal resonance.

The sub-title is 'Fostering Autistic Belonging at the Holy Table' and it's a thoroughly researched reflection on the challenges autistic individuals face within church settings where they are expected to conform to neurotypical behavioural norms to find acceptance. Jonny advocates that contemporary celebrations of the Lord's Supper should embody Jesus' radical hospitality. In his own remarks at the podium, Jonny made an impassioned plea not to dismiss as 'vain repetition' the consistency and stability of more traditional liturgical forms of worship.

The Church of Ireland Theological Institute has become the annual setting for this important celebration, indeed the building's front door (metaphorically open in the picture) features on the cover of each volume. After a welcome from Institute Director Dr Maurice Elliott, and some background on the Braemor Studies Series by the Secretary of the Church of Ireland's Literature Committee Dr Raymond Refaussé, Jonny's book was paid a warm academic tribute by Dr Jacqui Wilkinson from Dublin City University. All are pictured above together with the Reverend Kyle Flannigan author of the second title 'The Spiritual Quotient of Leadership' alongside Dr Millie Bellew who introduced it.

Copies of Jonny's book and the other new title can be purchased online (Jonny receives no royalties!) Either side of Jonny in the second picture is (left) his supervisor Dr Bridget Nichols and (right) his sister Dr Fiona Watson who made the trip specially from Manchester.



Also available in the library are contributions from two other fondly thought-of Ballyholme clergy: Reverend Cameron Mack's *Collision of Worlds: Counter-Formation Through Interactivity with Scripture in Deuteronomy and the Daily Office* (2025) and the Reverend Alistair Morrison's *The New Masculinity Movement: A Viable Model for Engaging Men with God and the Church?* (2013).

FUNERALS

May

1st: Josephine Alexander Payne formerly of Montgomery Court

BIBLE WEEK 2026 WITH DR TIM ROBINSON



Tim is Assistant Professor of Pastoral Ministries at Dallas Theological Seminary. He was born in Belfast and pastored within the local church in Northern Ireland for 12 years. Tim is passionate about teaching and preaching the Scriptures in a way that is true, clear, relevant, and interesting. His greatest desire is that he might encourage and equip others to faithfully feed souls the word of God, and form hearts into the likeness of Christ.

1-4 SEPTEMBER | HOLY TRINITY BANBRIDGE AT 7.45PM

TUESDAY 1 SEPTEMBER

Surrendered in Prayer & Worship (Acts 13:1-3)

WEDNESDAY 2 SEPTEMBER

Surrendered to the Word & Spirit (part 1) (Acts 11:19-26)

THURSDAY 3 SEPTEMBER

Surrendered to the Word & Spirit (part 2) (Acts 13:1-5)

FRIDAY 4 SEPTEMBER

Surrendered in Radical Discipleship & Worldwide Mission (Acts 13:6-12)

SURRENDERED

**Christian Aid Week**

A total of £3,000 was donated this year, with a further £660 received through Gift Aid. Overall £3,660 was raised.

A big thank you to everyone who assisted with the organising of the

collection. Also thanks to all our parishioners who donated to this very worthy cause, helping to ensure Christian Aid can continue to carry out their good work.





In May, we welcomed the talented 'Swing Duo', Dave Arthur and Ada Storm, who entertained us with their enjoyable singing, whilst our June meeting took the form of an afternoon tea party where everyone had a chat and a nibble.

Our next meeting will take place on Wednesday 2nd September at 2.00PM, following our usual summer break.

As always, we look forward to seeing everyone again. New members are welcome, and transport can be organised, if required.



Take a left at the signs for Camphill and Rockport (coming from Belfast), and the first thing you will see is the tower of Holy Trinity Church Glencraig. With the sun making an un-forecast appearance, we could not have asked for a prettier setting, nor for a warmer welcome for our three Ballyholme Confirmation candidates: Lisa Sorrell, Eleanor McKeegan and Philip Sorrell.



In what turned out to be the second Confirmation of Bishop David's Easter season, his theme was 'Shine Spiritually'. The candidates were called to shine unashamedly, spontaneously and sacrificially. Ahead of our own October Confirmation service in Ballyholme, one further adult has already come forward so the Rector is anxious to include any other adults who might be interested. If you are even half thinking about it, please speak to Simon or to Eleanor, Lisa and Phil who will

be only too pleased to share their journey.

Eleanor McKeegan

12 April marked a big step in my faith journey and an all round exciting day as I was Baptised in the morning and Confirmed in the afternoon. It was a journey that started with me having no interest in anything to do with Church, before conceding that faith seemed like a nice thing for other people to have, and eventually wanting to explore more for myself. I still feel like a bit of a reluctant passenger (my old cynical world view was very comforting to me), but I'm very grateful for everyone's welcome and support since I started attending the 11.30 service a few years ago, and more recently during the Confirmation classes with Simon, Phil and Lisa.

Lisa Sorrell

The decision to be Confirmed wasn't something I thought would happen yet. One Sunday after the 10am service, my husband Phil mentioned that he wanted to do it. I was really happy for him, but if I'm honest, I didn't feel ready myself. Then, not long after, something just clicked. I realised I wanted to take this step too, and to do it alongside him. The Confirmation journey itself was thought provoking and genuinely enjoyable. We met every Thursday evening with Simon and Eleanor, and those evenings quickly became something I looked forward to. Finishing work early and walking up to Ward Avenue, the sessions felt relaxed and open, with space to ask questions, talk things through and reflect on our faith. I love learning, and the conversations helped deepen my understanding of why this journey felt important to me.

On the day itself, Holy Trinity Glencraig felt so welcoming, with the church filled with parishioners, family and friends from the participating Parishes. Even though there were thirteen of us being confirmed, the experience felt very personal. When Bishop David laid his hands on each of us and spoke a few words, he told me that I was "a number". I didn't quite understand it at first, but it made me smile. To me, it came to mean being one of many, and very much part of a loving church family. Overall, it was grounding, affirming and joyful, and it meant so much to share that moment with Phil.

Phil Sorrell

I would like to share a few words on my recent journey on being Confirmed this year, and

what a beautiful spiritual journey it was. It began quite simply with our Minister/Canon Simon mentioning it on his opening address at the 'Good News at Ten' service, to stepping up and embarking on what was to be a wonderful experience indeed. Once embarked on the Confirmation journey, my wife Lisa and fellow parishioner Eleanor met with Simon each Thursday at the Rectory, where we would have structured lessons in preparing and educating us for the Confirmation day. The sense of unity during those evenings was very special and deepened my gratitude for belonging to such a loving and supportive church community. As we gathered with the wider church community at Holy Trinity Glencraig for the Confirmation itself a sense of calm and peace was felt as the afternoon unfolded. The service was presided over by Bishop David and all preparations were immaculately done. As I was called up for the placing of hands and to be Confirmed by Bishop David, I felt a deep sense of awe, gratitude and reassurance with my faith. Looking back, it was not just a wonderful service, but a humbling and enriching journey – one that I will always treasure, and one that has left me feeling truly thankful to be part of this church family.

Confirmation at St Columbanus Ballyholme, Sunday 11th October 2026 6pm

Back in early January when Bishop David's email landed in our inbox announcing Confirmation season, Simon and I put our heads together and decided on a date that would suit for us to host it. Unfortunately, most other parishes did the same thing, managing to get in the door slightly ahead of us! Thus, instead of our preferred time of April or May, we ended up with one of the last available dates – Sunday 11th October. On reflection, however, this date works much better with regards to the exam schedules of 14–16-year-olds!



So now that you know when it is, let me clarify exactly what Confirmation is. Whereas in Baptism, parents make promises on behalf of their child about raising them in the Christian faith, Confirmation is the moment when the young person says, "yes, I choose Christ for myself." It is a deeply personal moment in a person's life and faith and is, therefore, entirely their choice whether or not they do it. For those who choose to do it, we hold Confirmation classes in the weeks before and after the service where we dive into what we believe as Christians, discussing things like the Trinity, Jesus, sin, the Bible, prayer and Church. The classes are really fun, as I'm sure our previous confirmees will attest to, and it's a great time to ask questions, learn things and make friends. The classes will be in the Parish Centre, last about an hour and a half and will begin on Wednesday 9th September, running every week until Wednesday 28th October. If your child is interested, then please contact the office or talk to Andrew.

CLASSES START: Wednesday 9th September 7.30pm

Your 2025 Parish Census forms have now been processed and we want to pursue as many non-replies as possible over coming months. Spare forms are available from the Office if you have not quite had a chance to complete and return yours yet.

In terms of keeping you informed of our finances, our aim is to generate a bi-monthly standardised report to be carried in each edition of the parish magazine. This should help us all get a feel for where we are as the financial year progresses with incomings and outgoings.

As for every charity, Gift Aid remains something we need to be taking full advantage of. The census information will help us overhaul our spreadsheets so that we can make as full and accurate an application for Gift Aid as possible, as regularly as possible.

Heather has been receiving a steady stream of enquiries recently from people setting up Standing Orders with their banks for Free-Will Offering. She has prepared a new card containing all our bank details (see picture) and these are available from the office.

The summer is often a time we catch up on jobs we've been meaning to get around to. It's also a time when parishioners review their giving. Just as everything has gone up in price for all of us, that's no less true for Church. Whatever little bit more you can give will be extremely welcome.

DANSKE ~ PARISH OF BALLYHOLME

MAIN ACCOUNT
SORT CODE: 95-02-29
ACCOUNT NUMBER: 11063162
 PLEASE REFERENCE STANDING ORDERS WITH YOUR SURNAME

BUILDING FUND
SORT CODE: 95-02-29
ACCOUNT NUMBER: 51121367

YOUTH/CHILDRENS ACC
SORT CODE: 95-02-29
ACCOUNT NUMBER: 41094807

MISSIONS ACCOUNT
SORT CODE: 95-02-29
ACCOUNT NUMBER: 00052523



Samuel extends a welcome

Samuel Graham from our parish has just completed a placement at Bangor Elim Church and Conference Centre. With other pupils from Killard House School, Samuel was on a revolving work shadowing scheme, taking turns in helping at the foodbank, the car wash and the Source Café. Guess who turned up to see Samuel on his final day at Source? Samuel extended a warm welcome to Jonny, Andrew and Simon who agreed that his service was top notch!



On Saturday 25th April we held our fundraising "Afternoon Tea" in the Church Centre, the hall was decorated with flowers and bunting and music was provided by Ian Bell.

Everyone enjoyed sandwiches and sausage rolls along with scones, traybakes and cream cakes while chatting with the people at their table and catching up with old friends.

Everyone had a great time and met people they had not known previously. As they say here in Northern Ireland "it was great craic". There were lots of prizes for the Ballot to raise additional funds. A grand total of £845 was raised, some of which will go to the Mothers' Union Overseas Fund which supports grassroots, community-led initiatives in over 80 countries worldwide.

Photos from the "Afternoon Tea" are on the next page.

Our final meeting before the Summer Break was held on Monday 1st June in the Church Centre. An evening of games and food was a great way to finish off our programme.



The evening started with a Sweets quiz with clues and anagrams to help identify the 24 varieties of sweet. This was followed by the savory part of our supper with chicken pie, quiche and salads etc. Next was two rounds of "Double Pass the Parcel" with two parcels being passed at the same time so four members received prizes.

After this was finished we had our desserts, with rhubarb crumble, sponge pudding, brownies etc served up with cream or custard if desired. A fun night for everyone who attended with each member receiving a small gift at the end of the evening. Have a great summer.



Many Blessings

Yvonne & The MU Team.



Cara out delivering envelopes for Christian Aid

There was a wonderful sense of excitement recently as a lively group of Brownies visited the church for an evening of discovery, laughter, and adventure. Hosted by Rev Jonny, the girls took part in a teddy bear-themed scavenger hunt, exploring the building, solving clues, completing challenges, and learning more about the life and work of the church.

Their journey took them to all corners of the building, with each stop offering something new to discover. One of the most memorable moments came at the font. As the Brownies learned about baptism, a surprise water pistol made an unexpected appearance! Amid squeals, laughter, and a few rather soggy participants, they discovered in a very memorable way the significance of water in Christian worship.

At the prayer desk, the energy continued with a lively game of Simon Says—a particularly fitting choice given that our Rector is Simon! As they played, the girls reflected on the importance of listening and responding, before learning more about the role of the celebrant in leading worship, presiding at Holy Communion, and guiding the congregation in prayer.

Another clue led the group into a conversation about favourite books, which naturally opened up discussion about the



Bible—why it is so central to Christian faith, and the stories and teachings it contains. The Brownies shared their own knowledge and ideas, contributing enthusiastically to the discussion.

The evening also included an opportunity to explore the colourful world of clergy vestments. The girls enjoyed seeing the different stoles used throughout the church year, and learning how colours help mark seasons and special occasions.



Throughout the evening, creativity was also encouraged as the Brownies worked on colouring sheets featuring St Columbanus, to whom our church is dedicated, while also exploring the saints depicted in our stained glass windows.

The evening concluded with a quieter moment of reflection, during which the group prayed for family, friends, and all those in need of support, kindness, and love.

It was a joyful evening, full of activity, learning, creativity, and thoughtful conversation. We were delighted to welcome the Brownies into our church and hope they left with happy memories, new insights, and a deeper understanding of the Christian faith and the church's role in the community.

If any other youth groups would be interested in an interactive tour of the church, please contact the parish office.

Rev Jonny Watson

Every twelve months, all parishes are required to submit an online Safeguarding Return. The meeting to work through the in-house audit took place on Sunday 31 May and present were Paula Lown our Children's Worker, Andrew Watson our Youth Worker and Rev Jonny Watson. Also in attendance were the members of our new Parish Panel: Stanley Officer, the Rector, and Jacqui Devlin who is now replacing Libby Beech.



Important changes to the Church of Ireland's Safeguarding policy were passed at the most recent meeting of the General Synod. The most significant of these relates to disclosures. Formerly, disclosures were brought to local Parish Panels. The Panels then decided how to respond to the matter raised and whether or not it might be serious enough to pass on to the Social Services Gateway Team. Not any more.

From May 2026, all suspicions, concerns, knowledge of allegations – child or adult – can still be brought to our Parish Panel, but these will then be reported to the Church of Ireland's Safeguarding Casework Officers, who will decide how to respond. The intention is to make responses more independent, and to bring a greater level of consistency and professional insight to bear. However, the major role of our Parish Panel, going forward, is to deal with other enquiries and ensure that all aspects of our youth and children's ministry comply with central church Safeguarding policy.

Staff members and Parish Panel members are still your first port of call should you wish to discuss any aspect of how we run our programmes. Youth and children remain a core priority for us in Ballyholme. We know how much our parish families and those in the wider community value what we offer, and the care, effort and capital we invest in creating a safe Christian space in what is an ever more dangerous and secular world. Please help us keep it that way.

New volunteers are always welcome and if you would like to get involved you are encouraged to talk to Paula or Andrew to see where you might best be able to contribute. Paula and Andrew will help you with Access NI clearance and access to training – much of which these days is available online by Zoom.

CASEWORK OFFICER – for all suspicions, concerns, knowledge of allegations
TELEPHONE: 07907 319085

PARISH SAFEGUARDING PANEL – for all other matters
Jacqui Devlin 07813 373935 Simon Doogan 07760407139
Stanley Officer 07748 272330



On Wednesday 15th April, Bangor Golf Club was the venue for the club's annual dinner and prize giving. Canon Simon Doogan gave the Grace and a superb meal was then partaken by all.

The following trophy winners were:-

Ladies Singles -	Roberta Munnis	Runner up -	Shirley Palmer
Mens Singles -	Marty Bleakley	Runner up -	Harry Browne
Handicap Singles -	Shirley Palmer		
Pairs -	Roberta Munnis and George Palmer		
Rinks -	Alan Long		
Special award -	Tommy Quigley		

The bowling season resumes on Wednesday 16th September at 7.30pm and new members will be very welcome and the club does have bowls for those who wish to give it a go. Why not come and try.

Roberta Munnis (Chairperson)



**May - Delamont Country Park and Finnebrogue Woods**

Fourteen walkers spent a sunny Saturday in early May walking in Delamont Country Park and, across the causeway, onto Gibb's Island. After lunch at Fodder they admired the drifts of bluebells during a walk at Finnebrogue Woods.

Peter**June - Howth Summit and Village**

Seven walkers traveled south under cloudy skies and rain. They arrived at Howth to find it basking in sunshine which lasted for the whole visit. Having reached Howth Summit by two different routes, they walked back down to the village together and enjoyed fish and chips, without being bothered by the seagulls.

Peter

SUMMER

YOUTH-news

youth [youth] (youths) news [nooz]

We are officially over half way through 2026, and the summer time is always a great chance to reflect on the year that's passed. Looking back on 2026, we made some pretty big changes to the cornerstone of our youth programme – Sunday night YF.



Over the Christmas break, for reasons both negative and positive, we as leaders had all felt that something needed to change. Perhaps our biggest concern was that we had many young people who wanted to grow in their faith and wanted to know what it practically looked like to follow Jesus, and we weren't really offering them much by way of that. Thus, we made the hard but necessary decision to pivot and change YF from an unstructured 'youth club' into a more traditional 'youth fellowship', with group games, worship, teaching, prayer and some more games to round it off. It hasn't been easy, and we're still learning and fine-tuning, but 6 months in, we feel that it has been a success. The ones who come have really loved it, and there's much more opportunity for real depth and community.

Heading into September, we will be thinking about how to support young people who prefer a 'youth club' to a 'youth fellowship', though in the meantime there is always our Thursday after-school Drop-In. The mission, as ever, is to create a supportive space for young people to get to know Jesus, have fun and make friends. Your prayers and support in that are very much appreciated.

Andrew



JULY 2026**5th Trinity 5**

8.30 Holy Communion
10.30 Summer Sunday Service

12th Trinity 6

8.30 Holy Communion
10.30 Summer Sunday Communion Service
7.30 United Service Ballyholme Presbyterian

19th Trinity 7

8.30 Holy Communion
10.30 Summer Sunday Service

26th Trinity 8

8.30 Holy Communion
10.30 Summer Sunday Service
7.30 United Service Ballyholme Parish

AUGUST 2026**2nd Trinity 9**

8.30 Holy Communion
10.30 Summer Sunday Service

9th Trinity 10

8.30 Holy Communion
10.30 Summer Sunday Communion Service
7.30 United Service Ballyholme Presbyterian

16th Trinity 11

8.30 Holy Communion
10.30 Summer Sunday Service

23rd Trinity 12

8.30 Holy Communion
10.30 Summer Sunday Service
7.30 United Service Ballyholme Parish

30th Trinity 13

8.30 Holy Communion
10.30 Summer Sunday Service

July**5th** Cathy Body**12th** Heather Copelton**19th** Janice Hewitt**26th** Maureen Johnston**August****2nd** Anne Adams**9th** Pamela McNutt**16th** Elizabeth Adams**23rd** Ella Walker**30th** Tracie Andreasson**Appeal for Storehouse**

The trolley will be in the Church over the summer for you to bring your donations on Sundays for the North Down Storehouse. They currently need:-

Cooking oil, Coffee etc

Tinned meals to have with potatoes eg chunky chicken, mince steak, stewed steak etc

Tinned meals to have with rice, eg curry, chilli etc and long grain rice

Breakfast juices and diluting juice

Tinned tomatoes, tinned meat eg ham, corned beef etc

Ladies shampoos, conditioners and deodorants

Cleaning products

As children will be off school for the summer and not receiving free school dinners, extra food and treats would be much appreciated.

