



# An open door to friendship, fellowship and faith



Dear Parishioner,

#### ADVENT

Advent marks the beginning of a new church year. Throughout these four weeks of reflection and anticipation, we will be preparing ourselves for the coming of Christ on Christmas Day. Following the many challenges and

uncertainties of this year, the hope, joy and love of the Christmas message will provide us all with much needed comfort. This will be specifically reflected in the Blue Christmas service which takes place on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December at 10.30am when we will have an opportunity to bring along our loneliness, sadness and concerns and to present them to God for His healing and help. We also take time to remember those whom we have lost and to ask God for strength.

It is also important during these days of Advent that we practically support those in our own community who are in such great need as an integral part of our preparations for the birth of Christ. As these words from the Bidding Prayer at the beginning of the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols direct us:

"...let us remember in His name, the poor and helpless, the cold the hungry, and the oppressed; the sick and them that mourn, the lonely and the unloved..."

To give us all an opportunity to respond in a practical way the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols will take place on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm with the collection being allocated to the Larder the following day. This money will enable them to provide much needed support before Christmas to those experiencing real hardship in our community. I invite you to join us for this traditional service of inspirational music and familiar readings, and to be generous in your giving, as together we reach out to support our community.

For your convenience please place your contribution in the enclosed Gift Aid envelope which should be completed in full and can be placed on the collection plate on any Sunday before the Carol Service should you be unable to attend it. Cheques to be made payable to *Boring Wells*.

#### CHRISTMAS

In response to many requests there will be a Midnight Eucharist on Christmas Eve at 11.15pm when we celebrate the birth of Christ, the Light of the world in the midst of darkness. When the Christ candle is lit the light from the Advent Wreath will be at its strongest, shining brightly from the front of our church. What a powerful symbol that is reminding us all of how through Christ we can find hope even in moments of darkness. At our Family Communion service at 10.15am on Christmas morning we look forward to our Sunday School children leading us in our readings and prayers as we sing the familiar carols.

Caroline, Charles and Henry join me in wishing you God's richest Blessing for Christmas and throughout 2023. May we all experience the joy and hope of Christ throughout the season.

Yours in His service.

ft K. f

#### **PARISH PRAYER**

God, our Heavenly Father, make the door of our Church wide enough to welcome all who need human love, fellowship and a Father's care; but narrow enough to shut out all envy, pride and hatred. Here may the tempted find help, the sorrowing receive comfort and the penitent be assured of your mercy. And here may all your children renew their strength and go on their way in hope and joy; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.* 

Bishop Thomas Ken 1637-1711

# **SERVICES IN DECEMBER**

Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> 10.30am	Holy Communion followed by refreshments		(Purple)
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup> 8.15am	The Second Sunday of Advent Holy Communion <i>(Side Chapel)</i>		(Purple)
	Epistle Romans 15: 4-13	The inclusive chu	rch
	Gospel Matthew 3: 1-12	The proclamation Baptist	of John the
10.30am	All Age Worship followed	-	
	Gospel Matthew 3: 1-12	The proclamation Baptist	of John the
Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup>			(Purple)
10.30am	BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVIC	<b>E</b> followed by refresh	hments
Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> 8.15am	The Third Sunday of Advent Holy Communion ( <i>Side Chapel</i> )		(Purple)
	Epistle James 5: 7-10	Patience in sufferi	ng
	Gospel Matthew 11: 2-11	Messengers from Baptist	John the
10.30am	Holy Communion		
	Epistle James 5: 7-10	Patience in sufferi	-
	Gospel Matthew 11: 2-11	Messengers from Baptist	John the
Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup>			(Purple)
10.30am	Holy Communion with Carols for Senior Parishioners followed by seasonal refreshments		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup>	The Fourth Sunday of Ad	vent	(Purple)
8.15am	Holy Communion (Side Cl	hapel)	
	Epistle Romans 1: 1-7	Good News abou King	t the new
	Gospel Matthew 1: 18-25	The birth of Jesus	

10.30am	CHRISTINGLE SERVICE		
7.30pm	FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS		
Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> 10.30am	Holy Communion followed	d by refreshments	(Purple)
Saturday 24 <sup>th</sup> 11.15pm	<b>Christmas Eve</b> <b>MIDNIGHT EUCHARIST</b> Epistle Hebrews 1: 1-4 Gospel John 1: 1-14	God has spoken b The word became	•
Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> 10.15am	<b>Christmas Day</b> <b>Family Communion</b> Gospel Luke 2: 8-20	The shepherds and	<b>(White)</b> d the angels
10.15am	Family Communion	(transferred)	

## **Private Holy Communion Services**

It is always a privilege for the clergy to conduct private Holy Communion services for those housebound parishioners who are unable to attend Christmas services in St. Columba's.

Please telephone the Parish Office (Tel: 9065 6891 Monday- Friday 9.00am – 1.00pm) by Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, to make an appointment if you would like a private Holy Communion service in your home.

# **SERVICES IN JANUARY**

Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> 8.15am	The Namin Holy Comr	ng and Circumcision munion	n of Jesus	(White)
	Epistle	Galatians 4: 4-7	The Son and th	ne Spirit
	Gospel	Luke 2: 15-21	The naming of	Jesus
10.30am	All Age Wo	orship		
	Reading	Luke 2: 15-21 The	naming of Jesus	
Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> 10.30am		any (Transferred) nunion followed by	refreshments	(White)
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>		unday after the Ep m of our Lord	iphany	(White)
8.15am	Holy Comr	nunion		
	Epistle	Acts 10: 34-43	The heart of th	e Gospel
	Gospel	Matthew 3: 13-17	The baptism of	f Jesus
10.30am	Holy Comr	nunion		
	Epistle	Acts 10: 34-43	The heart of th	e Gospel
	Gospel	Matthew 3: 13-17	The baptism of	f Jesus
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup>		·····	un fun ale un anta	(White)
10.30am	Holy Comr	munion followed by	retreshments	
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> 8.15am	The Secon Holy Comr	d Sunday after the nunion	Epiphany	(White)
	Epistle	1 Corinthians 1: 1-9	Salutation fron	n Paul to the
		Corii	nthians	
	Gospel	John 1: 29-42	The first discip	les of Jesus
10.30am	<b>Morning P</b> Railway & N	r <b>ayer</b> followed by rea 10del Club	freshments hoste	ed by the
		lsaiah 49: 1-7	The servant's n	nission
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading	g John 1: 29-42	The first discip	les of Jesus
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> 10.30am		<b>nunion</b> followed by	refreshments	(White)

Sunday 22nd	The Third C	under ofter the Eninhous	()A(bite)
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> 8.15am	Holy Comn	unday after the Epiphany	(White)
0.15um	Epistle	1 Corinthians 1: 10-18	Divisions in the Church
	Gospel	Matthew 4: 12-33	Jesus calls the disciples
10.30am	<b>Holy Comn</b>	nunion	
	Epistle	1 Corinthians 1: 10-18	Divisions in the Church
	Gospel	Matthew 4: 12-33	Jesus calls the disciples
Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup>	<sup>•</sup> The Conve	rsion of St. Paul (Transferre	ed) (White)
10.30am	Holy Comn	nunion followed by refreshm	ients
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup>	The Fourth	Sunday after the Epiphan	ıy (White)
8.15am	Holy Comn	nunion	
	Epistle	1 Corinthians 1: 18-31	The power of God
	Gospel	Matthew 5: 1-12	The Beatitudes
10.30am	Morning P	rayer	
	1 <sup>st</sup> Reading	Micah 6: 1-8	God challenges Israel
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading	Matthew 5: 1-12	The Beatitudes
		<b>Online Services</b>	
	-	r 10.30am service each Sun	

on our parish website www.stcolumbas.down.anglican.org under "Church Service Recordings".

# Holy Communion for senior parishioners

OMMUNION

#### in St. Columba's Parish Church

## on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December at 10.30am

With Christmas carols and seasonal refreshments

Everyone welcome!



## Invitation to our Annual Christingle Service (A Festival of Light)

## Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December at 10.30am

#### What is a Christingle and why do we celebrate it?

The word 'Christingle' comes from the German word of 'Christkindl' which means 'Little Christ Child'. The Christingle is used to celebrate and symbolic Jesus Christ as the Light of the World.

We invite *everyone – not just children -* to make their own Christingle at home and bring it along to the service! We especially look forward to seeing our younger members of the parish bringing along their Christingles!

#### How to make a Christingle

The candle is placed in an orange, which shows that Christ came for the whole world.

The **red ribbon** is wrapped around the orange to represent the blood that Jesus shed when he died on the cross to save us all.

The ribbon is held in place with **four wooden sticks**. These represent the four corners of the earth, and the four seasons - because Jesus came for people everywhere and all year round, not just at Christmas.

**Fruit and nuts** are placed on the sticks to show the fruits of the earth that God has provided for our food. **Then sweets** were put on to represent the good things he has given us.

The candle itself represents the great light shining in the darkness when the baby Jesus was born.

*Tip: a little amount of tinfoil wrapped around the base of the candle will collect the hot wax from the candle!* 



A reality today is that the holidays can be difficult times for anyone who has suffered loss, deep concerns or hurt. Blue Christmas is a service of comfort and reflection. It is a way in which we can recognize the depth of worry or sadness and help process those negative feelings of loss or grief. By doing so, we can embrace the love and light of God, and make our peace with our circumstances. It provides us with hope for the future and comfort in knowing that we are not alone in our pain or suffering.

Everyone is welcome – bring along friends or family members if you wish, and help to make peace with your sadness, grief or worry.

Join us on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December at 10.30am for our Blue Christmas service.

## **MUMS AND TOTS**

We will be making Christmas decorations in Mums and Tots in December. Our last date in 2022 will be Friday 16th and we will return on Friday 6th January 2023.

Wishing all our families a very happy Christmas

Joyce (07772 128944)

## **A Christmas Reflection**

#### **Canon Walter Laverty**

For several years our Diocese enjoyed a very active link with the Diocese of Albany, up-state New York. During those years many friendships were formed, and visits made to and fro.

Groups came over to join us in our conferences in October or to experience St Patrick's Day celebrations in Down Cathedral. Guests were hosted by rectory families and were often taken out to visit local attractions like the Giants Causeway. On one of these visits Barbara and I took a visitor along the scenic



route of the Antrim coast and travelled out to Tor Head to enjoy the view. As many of you know these roads can be very narrow! Our American guest could not believe that a road could possibly be so narrow; but when I explained that it was also for 2-way traffic, I think I increased his prayer life that day.

Sometimes I think the gospel message is like a 2-way sign. One of our famous hymn writers, Mrs Cecil Alexander, has composed some excellent hymns explaining the Christian faith in simple terms and I wish to reflect briefly on two of them and unite their themes.

In the Christmas hymn "Once in Royal David's City" (No 177) verse two begins "He Came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all".

In the Easter hymn "There is a green hill far away: (No 244) the words "That we might go at last to heaven, saved by His precious blood."

Now we find the 2-way messages of the gospel "He came down....that we might go"

The whole message of the gospel is that God sent His Son down to earth that whoever believes in Him will go to heaven and have eternal life. Therefore, Christmas and Easter become one in purpose. This is our faith and the hope of our calling. Through Christ's birth, death, and resurrection we have access to the throne of God's grace.

"When the fullness of time had come, God sent His Son...so that we might receive adoption as children ... also heir, through God." (Galatians 4. 4-7).

God's 2-way traffic!

May you and yours have a blessed Christmas and a happy new year.

#### Walter and Barbara

#### **Church hall cleaning rota**



December 3<sup>rd</sup> Jayne and Ronnie Martin December 17<sup>th</sup> Isobel McDowell and Nan Hillier

#### 2023

January 15<sup>th</sup> Patricia and Adrian Clements January 28<sup>th</sup> Christine and Ian Johnston

## The parish Christmas card

This year we have a captivating Christmas card conveying hope to sustain us throughout the challenges of these days. It depicts the bright light of the star shining on the cross, which is encircling the globe. Though there are shadows the light is shining brightly.

The Cross around the world indicates the love of God, wrapped around His people. God loved the world so much that He sent his only Son, born into the world, to live among us, and to ultimately die on the Cross for our sins. How we need to be reminded that we are not on our own, but that God is with us. This is the essential Christmas message.

We can see the darkness of shadow at the bottom of the card, which signifies our worries and concerns –

financial issues, heating, food and mortgage or rent pay....., ...

well as those requiring shelter or suffering from war, famine or drought around our world. It also shows the world slowly and cautiously emerging from the Covid pandemic and all the sadness, worry, death and fear which went along with it. The darkness has not prevailed, nor has the shadow dimmed His light. Here is our hope this Christmas and for the future.

I thank the Art Club for the submission of their work for consideration, and especially thank Graham Hogg for his most thought-provoking and inspirational artwork which was selected for our parish Christmas card this year.

The Rector



# Thought for the Month

#### **The Church's One Foundation**

My earliest memories were built upon a foundation of strong family friendships and shaped by my experience as a member of the Christian family and was composed of the small community of

Newtownbutler in Co. Fermanagh where both of my parents were born. With my grandparents being parishioners of Galoon



lan Johnston

and Drumully, two of the three Church of Ireland parishes in Newtownbutler, and both grandfathers serving as wardens under the Reverend Cannon Neville O'Neil – the church has been a constant in my life from a very young age.

Although born in Belfast, out of respect and due to the lack of transport, I was christened in Galoon Parish surrounded by my extended church family. As I grew up, I spent a lot of time in both churches with aunties and uncles who were in the choir, being given boiled sweets in the choir stalls, along with my cousins, in order to keep us on our best behaviour.

When I think back to my childhood, I find that so many of those memories are tightly interwoven with the hymns sung in church. Most vividly, I recall hymns such as The Church's One Foundation, Abide With Me, and Onward Christian Soldiers. All of which established, for me and others, a strong sense of belonging and respect for those who laid down the foundations for the way in which we live out our lives today, and of appreciation for those whose work on the church building and its surroundings, provided us with an inviting place to worship.

We are relatively new members to the parish



community of St Columbas. We have received a great welcome and have made many new friends and both of us feel very much at home. We both appreciate the willing contribution that the choir bring to our parish worship of which Christine takes an active part in.

I have always enjoyed taking an active role when it comes to the church grounds, be that in my past parishes and now here in St Columba's. I am proud to be part of the team here that look after the well-established gardens that surround our traditional parish church building.

I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all those who answered the call and played such a vital role in sprucing up the church grounds throughout the spring and autumn months, ensuring that our environment remains a welcoming one. My contribution gives me a great sense of belonging, allowing me to appreciate being a part of the extended church family, and playing my role in welcoming others into the church community.

Our sincere thanks to lan for sharing this 'Thought' with us.

The February 'Thought for the Month' will be written by Melissa Rutherford.

#### PAUSE

I think that each time a candle is added to my birthday cake time speeds up! We are almost at the end of 2022. What have I been doing all year? We have had a few difficult years and we don't know what the future has in store for us. We are now in the season of Advent, preparing for Christmas Day. The shops are preparing as well! PAUSE provides an opportunity for parishioners and friends to meet and chat together over tea/coffee and scones, away from the hustle and bustle which is going on all around us. We are not meeting again in 2022.

In January 2023 we are meeting on :

Tuesday 10th January in the Stormont Hotel for tea/coffee and scones at 10.30am.

Tuesday 24th January in The Poet, Kings Square for tea/coffee and scones at 10.30am.

If you are free on one or both of these dates do come along. I do not know who will be there. All are welcome.

If you need help with transport please contact me.

May I wish all of you a peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Eileen (9020 3684)

## Mothers IN ON Christian care for families

## **December/January**



Members with Sheran Harper and June Butler.

elen Setterfield our November eaker who had attended the Queen's neral shared her impressions and emories of that event with us. She ad been seated adjacent to the tomb The Unknown Soldier and from that intage point had memorable insights share.

ne members attended the Overseas eeting in Carryduff Parish. It was a ivilege to listen to Sheran Harper, ur worldwide president, shared her nique insights and experiences as she

travelled to support and encourage the many and varied countries within the MU Fellowship. It was good to note the impact that is being made by members locally as we each address many problems facing families in our local areas.

Our meeting on Tuesday 6th December will be in the church hall at 8.00pm

We will be joined by Creagh Bell Ringers. There are 18 members in this group who will entertain us with their hand bell ringing skills. This will be an open meeting and we look forward to being together this year over a light supper.

" At Home "our January meeting is on Tuesday 10th in the church. Please note this meeting is one week later than usual due to the holiday period.

Have a happy and blessed Christmas and a peaceful new year.

Barbara

Prayers for your thoughts and comfort



Almost exactly 150 years ago, a respected poet wrote the words 'In the bleak mid-winter'. Some years later, her words became associated with a popular Christmas Carol. As you would expect, it focuses on the birth of Christ in humble circumstances in Bethlehem. As she composed the poem, the writer may have been aware of her own surroundings in mid Victorian Britain. It was mid-winter when the days are short and the temperatures are low. That was a period, as we know from the writings of people like Charles Dickens, of poverty and misery for large sections of the population. Today, we are in the darkest months of the year. For those, who are concerned about rising inflation and a shortage of money, it can seem to be a bleak mid-winter. However, that is set at the beginning of a new Christian year when we will celebrate the birth of the Lord who is honoured as 'The Light of the World.'

Some of the prayers in this issue of the Columban have been chosen for use during Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. There is a recognition that we live in challenging economic times when we are urged to use our resources responsibly and generously. Christmas is a family time for many people when we pray for our loved ones at home and overseas. Of course, it can be a difficult and stressful period for some readers. Finally, you may wish to use the Grace which is printed here ( or any other of your choice) when you gather with family and friends at Christmas.

Hopefully, you will find some of the material helpful and encouraging.

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'For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven' Eccles.3

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#### Advent season (commences on 27<sup>th</sup> November)

Grant, O God, that as we rejoice in the hope of the coming of our Saviour, we may seek to prepare the way of His coming by advancing His kingdom in the world, and caring for the needs of all our fellow men and women, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen** 

#### Christmas season (commences on 25th December)

Lord, as we sing the familiar carols, hear the familiar readings and reflect on familiar mysteries, give us the gift of pure worship. Teach us how to express your love as we think of your goodness to us – that you have come to be our light in darkness, our hope in despair, our strength in weakness, and our shelter in the storm of life. **Amen** 

#### **A Christmas Blessing**

May the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherd, the perseverance of the wise men, the obedience of Joseph and Mary, and the peace of the Christ child, be yours this Christmas.

#### **Christmas Day prayer**

Help us to understand and share with others the profound mystery of Christmas Day. We live in a fearful and divided world which seeks your peace and which you alone can give us. At moments in life when we walk in darkness, help us to see that great light which enlightens everyone who comes into the world. We ask this through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen** 

#### A GRACE for Christmas and other occasions

Lord, for food in a world where many walk in hunger For faith in a world where many walk in fear For friends in a world where many walk alone We give you thanks. **Amen** 

#### A GRACE from the 16<sup>th</sup> Century

To God who gives our daily bread A thankful song we raise And pray that He who sends our food May fill our hearts with praise **Amen** 

#### Epiphany season (commences on 6<sup>th</sup>.January)

God, who by a star guided the wise men to the worship of the infant Jesus; we pray that the wise and the great of every nation may work to bring about peace and good will amongst all people through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen** 

#### **Days of significance during Advent, Christmas and Epiphany** We think of the following:-

**St. Andrew** (30<sup>th</sup> November) Andrew and brother, Simon Peter, were the first to respond to the call of Jesus to become His disciples. Read **St. Matthew** 4 v18-20

**St. Stephen** (26<sup>th</sup> December) The first Christian martyr Read Acts 7 **St.John the Evangelist** (27<sup>th</sup> December) Thank God for St.John's Gospel **The Innocent Day** (28<sup>th</sup> December) Read St.Luke 2 v.16 The abuse of innocent children in every age.

**The Naming of Jesus** (1<sup>st</sup> January) Honour his name as a baptised Christian

The Conversion of St.Paul (25th January) Read Acts 9 v.1 to 9

#### Week of prayer for Christian Unity (18th-25th.January)

O Lord Jesus Christ, who prayed for the disciples that they might be one, even as you are one with the Father. Draw us to yourself, that in common love and obedience to you, we may be united to one another, in the fellowship of one Spirit, that the world may believe that you are Lord, to the glory of God the Father. **Amen** 

(William Temple Archbishop of Canterbury died 1944)

#### A prayer for family and friends

Lord, we thank you for our family and friends in all parts of the world. We are grateful that many enjoy happy and fulfilled lives and good relationships with us. We think also of any with whom we may have quarrelled that there may be an opportunity for reconciliation. We pray for those who are living in new homes including those who may miss friends and family. Encourage us to befriend the friendless that we may become to them and any in distress or, who live in fear, true and loyal friends. We ask it in your name. **Amen** 

#### Social Justice at a time of considerable financial and economic uncertainty

Lord Jesus Christ, you were born in poverty into an unloving and uncaring world. When we are fearful of the future because of financial turmoil and the threat of war, give to us in times of anxiety, serenity: in times of hardship, courage: in times of uncertainty, patience: and, at all times, a quiet trust in your wisdom and love. We ask it in your name **Amen** 

#### An ill divided world

Lord, our world is in turmoil. Half the world diets, while the other half hungers. Half the world is housed, while the other half is homeless. Half the world pursues profit, while the other half senses loss. Redeem our souls, redeem our peoples, redeem our times. **Amen** (A prayer of John Bell ex leader, Iona Community)

#### In Conclusion.....

'Trust in God. Let nothing disturb you. Let nothing frighten you. All things pass but God never changes. Patience achieves all for which it strives. They who have God find they lack nothing. God alone suffices.'

## **DECEMBER FLOWER ROTA**

Sunday 4th	Christine Johnston	
Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Barbara Laverty	
Sunday 18th	Karen Patterson	
Sunday 25th	Christmas Flowers	

	JANUARY FLOWER ROTA
Sunday 1st	David Deane
Sunday 8th	Christine Johnston
Sunday 15th	Geoff and Eleanor Launchbury
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	The Mason Family
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup>	Railway and Model Club

## **Ladies Guild**



There was a fine turnout of members for our meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> October held in the comfortably warm church.

With our thoughts already turning towards the festive season, menus were distributed for our proposed Christmas lunch which will be held on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December at Shandon Park Golf Club. Anyone who has not received a menu but who would like to join us, please contact any member of the committee. Menu choices should be returned <u>no later than Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December</u>.

The subject for the afternoon was Quizzes and Quizzing. To start the ball rolling members, using the central aisle as the dividing line, were given a sheet with some general knowledge questions to complete. There followed a great 'buzz' of discussion before sheets were taken way for marking, the left hand side emerging as the winners.

Eleanor then gave a talk on her experiences of taking part in three of the most popular television quiz shows, showing some facts, figures and photos on the big screen.

The committee would like to wish our members and their families all the Blessings of Christmas with, we pray, a brighter and healthier New Year to come for us all.

Eleanor

## **ART CLUB**

Our thanks to Julian Friers (past President of the Royal Ulster Academy) who on 3<sup>rd</sup> November gave a very interesting and informative demonstration on portrait painting and also to his sister for being such a good model.

If you receive this magazine before Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> November do please come along to the church hall on that day (10.00am – 4.00pm) to view our exhibition/sale of paintings.

Our programme for the remainder of 2022 is:

1<sup>st</sup> December......video of various painting techniques

8<sup>th</sup> December......Christmas lunch in the Royal Northern Ireland Yacht Club, Cultra

15<sup>th</sup> December.....Visit to the R U A exhibition in the Ulster Museum

The club reopens on 12<sup>th</sup> January.



## **Church Flower Rota**

It is that time of year again when the new Flower Rota appears. Throughout the past two difficult years members of the congregation have been steadfast in providing donations which enabled us to have flowers in church every Sunday. These were particularly appreciated during the time of pre-recorded services. As we return to more normal methods of operation anyone wishing to bring along their flowers of choice are welcome to do so. I am usually at the church each Saturday morning from 10.30am and shall be happy to help in arranging flowers if required. I will, of course, continue to purchase flowers for anyone who would prefer that method of donation.

The new rota will be displayed on the notice board adjacent to the Baptistry. Just add your name to the list against the date of your choice.

The little table beside the side chapel is once more available. Should a special date already be taken on the main rota, flowers may be placed on this table on that date.

I am grateful to Rosemary Simpson who has once again agreed to assist with the flowers.

Eleanor





#### **FEBRUARY PARISH MAGAZINE**

Any articles or photographs for publication in the **February** parish magazine should be handed or emailed to the editor, **Billy McAlpine**, by **Wednesday**, **11**<sup>th</sup> **January**.

His contact details are:- **10 Old Quay Court, Holywood BT18 0HT** Tel: **9042 4390** Email: colmaged@outlook.com

We all love to see photographs of people enjoying our Church activities. So we can all benefit fully from this and for reproduction purposes, it is very important that photographs are clear and in focus.

Many thanks

## **Christmas Reflections from Canon Ken Smyth**

In recent days, I've set about reading, for the first time in years, a few of the novels written by Charles Dickens. He is regarded by many people as the greatest novelist of the 19<sup>th</sup>. Century. Millions, including the impoverished and those unable to read, paid to have the contents of a novel read to them.

Without doubt, Dickens' most popular novel is 'A Christmas Carol'. Like other novels, it evokes images of extreme poverty and deprivation. The narrative is set at a similar time to the Famine in Ireland which resulted in misery, starvation and death on a widespread scale.

As many readers will know, A Christmas Carol recounts the story of a fictitious character, Ebenezer Scrooge. I will not set out the detail which it's likely you will be able to see during the next month on television, except to remind you that, at the conclusion of the novel, Scrooge was transformed into a kinder and more generous man than at its outset. There is discussion as to whether the novel is a secular story or a type of parable designed to highlight truths about the practical side of the Christian faith. I'll leave that to you to decide!

In the commercial world, it is suggested that the period leading up to Christmas with the sound of music and the glitter in the shops and streets of our towns, brightens dark winter days. Up to a point that is necessary, nobody wishes to be a kill-joy, but the background to Christmas is one where millions of people are deprived of basic human rights such as work, food and shelter. While global issues may be beyond our reach, rightly expecting that governments and international organisations will be proactive in addressing them, we can do something – very little I accept – to reduce the plight of the marginalised we encounter locally. Responding to human need is a core Christian duty, which is either central or incidental to the theme of some of Dickens' novels.

The philosopher, Bertrand Russell, an avowed atheist, said:-"I am almost ashamed to mention it for fear of the smile with which wise cynics may greet my words, but what is needed in our world is greater Christian love and compassion." The rituals of Christmas are familiar to all of us: the singing of carols, the giving of presents and the school or church Nativity play. Perhaps we are so accustomed to it that we rarely step back and consider the extraordinary significance of it all. In fact, it is literally so incredible that, if it was not for the eye witness accounts from the time, we might dismiss it as nothing more than a seasonal fairy tale. However, the message of Christmas is a profound one – of eternal life, of pain, of humiliation, AND, of endless love. All that surely should evoke a response from you and me.

At Christmas, I hope you will have an opportunity to enjoy time with loved ones, or, if circumstances are difficult, to find encouragement in the essential message that 'love has come amongst us.'

In extending the wish from my wife Jenny and me, that you will experience a peaceful Christmas, I encourage you, whatever stage of a journey of faith you may have reached, to reflect on what the festival means for you, your loved ones, and the complex and divided world in which we live.

In January 2023 I will be spending a week in Brasov, Romania with a group of pupils from my school, Methodist College Belfast, along with 20 pupils from St Patricks Maghera.



Working with School Aid Romania, we will be supporting families living in poverty. We will visit a home for the elderly, a children's home, a school and a village in need.

We are fundraising ahead of our trip to pay for aid that we will distribute when we are there. We plan to buy much needed supplies like clothing, food, cleaning products, toiletries, towels and games.

The Rector has kindly agreed that I can fundraise after the family service on December 4<sup>th</sup> with proceeds from the coffee and refreshments that morning going to School Aid Romania. We aim to raise as much money as possible, so all donations are greatly appreciated.

**Michael Armstrong** 

#### MARMALADE

Many thanks for all your support over the years. £378.00 has been raised in this current year, giving a grand total of £1518.00.

Marmalade is for sale on the 3rd Sunday each month or by contacting me on 9048 6622.



l appreciate your support.

Maureen

## **ORGAN SCHOLARSHIPS**

The Down, Dromore and Connor Organ Scholarship Choral Evensong service was held In St Columba's Parish Church Knock on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2022. A Bach prelude, played with confidence by Tanya Zachara, a 3<sup>rd</sup> year scholar from St Mark's Dundela opened this very special service.

The Rector, Chancellor John Auchmuty, Chairman of the Board welcomed the scholars and all those who had come to support them along with Canon David Humphries, the Secretary of the Board.

Sean Turner, from the Parish of Ballymoney was then presented with his award from Canon Humphries following his three years tuition under the direction of Dr. Joe McKee.

The scholars, past and present led the Service of Choral Evensong directed by Dr Joe McKee and accompanied on the organ by Mr Alfred Casement. Mr Brain Clements, Mr Ronnie Drury and Rebekah Wilson, past recipients of the award sang with the present scholars. Canon Walter Laverty intoned the Service. Lessons were read by the Rector and Mr Gerald Hill, Organist Emeritus of St Columba's and Canon Humphries led the prayers.

In his sermon Chancellor Auchmuty reminded us to give thanks for the gifts Almighty God has given to us, especially through the Ministry of Music which inspires, encourages and lifts our spirits in our churches and cathedrals throughout the opportunities and challenges of these days. He reminded us how music can provide much needed strength to support us through the challenges we are living through and facing on a daily basis- economically, increasing cost of energy, high interest rates, the unsettled government both in Northern Ireland and at Westminster, difficult times at home or in employment. On a positive note he referred to the quote that "Music is the bicycle on which the liturgy rides" but Chancellor Auchmuty emphasised that the bicycle must be kept well-oiled! Music does not just happen. There is always the need for constant rehearsals. Organist's posts are increasingly difficult to fill and this is where the Organ Scholarship scheme comes into play.

The Board of Management of the Dioceses of Down, Dromore and Connor Organ Scholarship scheme invites applications for Scholarships which are awarded annually. This scheme is in its 32<sup>nd</sup> year and helps provide and equip organists for public worship. It was established in 1990 when an anonymous benefactor, recognising the importance of the ministry of music in parish life and worship provided a very generous endowment to train organists in these Dioceses. A trust was set up and administered by the Church of Ireland Trustees Board of Management. The aims of any Organ Scholarship scheme are to provide firstly training in organ playing, choir accompaniment, choral direction and vocal techniques and secondly experience a wide variety of liturgical music. An organ scholar's life is a busy one especially if you are balancing it along with university or school studies or indeed in a busy family situation.

The United Kingdom's church music tradition is arguably the finest in the world with choirs and organist providing music of an exceptionally high standard to enhance the liturgy but there is ALWAYS the need to train more young organists who can ensure its future.



The benefits of music study are well known. The study of music fosters concentration, discipline and confidence. Music making promotes good mental health, feelings of self-esteem and the knowledge that we are contributing something of beauty and value to society.

The following are the current Organ Scholars:

Lucy Steele(1st)GlenavyClare Kelly (2nd)JordanstownLarissa Fleck (2nd)ArmoyDr Mark McKinty(2nd)Larne and InverGrace Steed (2nd)DundelaTanya Zachara (3rd)DundelaDavid Dunlop (3rd)All Saints & St. Nicholas

To conclude: Every organ in every church or cathedral is a different instrument and opens up a new world. If the idea of playing one of these on a regular basis sounds exciting and your keyboard skills are pretty good, why not consider training towards an Organ Scholarship?

Angela Kerr St Columba's Knock

## **Chorister's dream**

In the choir we raise our voices; psalms and canticles; Amen Sometimes wonder at the choices: "Why on earth that one again!" Now and then a sermon's boring theologically deep. Could that sound be someone snoring rather more than half-asleep? Must confess I was the culprit; well deserved the slap on wrist. "Pay attention to the pulpit; not a single word be missed"

But my dream was something special; *I am on the Marble Stair, Climbing as it stretches upward, endlessly, through empty air. Then, approaching me, a stranger; lovely suit by Saville Row; Gleaming shoes, silk tie and hankie; cuffs that just discreetly show. "Please", he says, "I'd like to join you; still a little way to go; Sudden thought has crossed my mind; sure that you would want to know.* 

"Heading up to Heaven ... right? Perhaps you'd better stop, For if this stair is endless you will never reach the top. So here's a question you should ask, and please don't think it odd, It's whether God created Man, or Man invented God The more you come to think of it, the more you'll find it's Man; There isn't any top to reach; so turn back while you can."

But even as he speaks the Pearly Gates come into sight, Beyond them Heaven, never-ending, bathed in wondrous light. I turn to answer my new friend; he's nowhere to be seen, With nothing but the rancid smell of brimstone where he'd been. Then looking up again I see Saint Peter standing there... And that was when I woke to hear the sermon's closing prayer.

I really should be sorry that I'd had that little nap, And dozing off that morning did deserve the gentle slap. But that small glimpse of Heaven in a stolen moment's sleep Meant more than many a sermon theologically deep!

**Tony Greeves** 

## Your Christmas Gift to St. Columba's

In December, white envelopes are in your box of church envelopes to make a final Christmas gift to the parish.

This year, we will be using the white envelopes towards our Building Fund so that we can tidy up any outstanding issues within our beautiful church building and make further improvements to the church fabric for future years.



Thank you for all of your incredible financial support during 2022, and for your loyal support of the ministry of St Columba's.

Wishing you and your loved ones a peaceful and blessed Christmas.

**Karen Patterson** 

**Parish Administrator and Financial Giving Secretary** 

## **THANK YOU**

I thank our hard working and dedicated Columban editor, Billy McAlpine, for all his conscientious work throughout this year. How we value immensely our first class parish magazine and look forward to receiving it at the end of each month. It is full of informative articles written by parishioners and is always accompanied by photographs of parish activities reflecting the busyness of our parish life. However, it doesn't just appear! Billy works tirelessly fully supported by Ann month by month editing all the articles and making sure that each edition of the Columban is fully complete with a delightful cover which connects with the magazine contents.

I am personally most grateful to Billy and Ann for their essential contribution to our parish as through their work we are, as a parish kept together with our professionally produced colour magazine. Effective and clear communication in a well-presented format is essential to keep us all informed of parish news.

I also thank those who contribute articles, our Magazine Distributors who personally deliver the magazines to your home together with our Graphic Designer, Mike Fee and the staff at Minprint for such wonderful support.

We are indeed most fortunate.

The Rector

## **PARISH FINANCES - A YEAR END CHECKLIST**

As we approach the end of another year, the Select Vestry would like to take this opportunity to thank parishioners sincerely for their continued financial support throughout 2022. Without that support, St Columba's would not be able to flourish, to grow or to be the beacon that it is across the Parish and beyond. As the year now draws to a close, there are a number of points you may wish to check:

**I have donated all my intended 2022 contributions before Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> December 2022**. Parishioners are reminded that any financial contributions for the 2022 year <u>must</u> be received by Thursday 29th December 2022. Any contributions received after that date will be allocated to the 2023 year.

**If I am a UK taxpayer I have completed a Gift Aid form.** Any UK taxpayers who have not already completed a Gift Aid form are reminded to do so. Gift aiding means that the Parish can claim up to a further 25% of the value of contributions at no additional cost to the parishioner.

**I contribute to Parish funds by Standing Order**. The Select Vestry is very grateful for all financial contributions regardless of how those are made and is mindful of personal preference regarding the means of contributing. Nonetheless, the majority of parishioners now contribute to Parish funds by standing order. This is the preferred method for regular giving as it is both secure and cost effective, attracting lower bank charges than cash or cheque equivalents.

If you require either Gift Aid or Standing Order forms, please contact Karen in the Parish Office Phone: 9065 6891 or e-mail: office@coiknock. org.

Thank you again for your continued support.

Brian Acheson (Honorary Treasurer)

Victor Dukelow (Assistant Honorary Treasurer)

# **PARISH ORGANISATIONS**

	1		
Sunday	<b>Sunday School</b> Candles (3 – 5 years) Lamps (6 – 10 years) Torches (11+ years)	2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> Sundays 10.30am	Superintendent: Linda Wilson 07850 309097 Deputy Superintendent: Lynn Ryan 07955 479065
	Crèche	2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> Sundays	Lindsay Rothwell 07710 590574
Monday	Craft and Hobby Circle	1st and 3rd Monday each month 10.30am	Carol Willis 9079 9997
	Railway and Model Club	2.00pm	David Beattie 9028 5868
	MU Afternoon Group	2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday each month 2.30pm	Joy Montgomery 9029 5427
	Mens' Club	7.30pm	John Robb 9058 1438
Tuesday	Ladies Badminton	10-30am	Gillian Popplestone 9080 3799
	Ladies Guild	3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday each month 2.30pm in the church	Eileen Anderson 9020 3684
	Activity Group	Except 1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday 7.30pm	Maureen Irwin 9079 5155
	Mothers' Union	1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday each month 8.00pm	Barbara Laverty 9573 8743
Wednesday	Bible Study Group	2.30pm - 4.00pm	Eileen Anderson 9020 3684
Thursday	Art Club	9.30am	Vida Shaw 90655063
	Choir	7.30pm	Dr Joe McKee 07976 294574
Friday	Mums and Tots	10.00am	Joyce Stevenson, 9058 3381
<b>Bi-monthly</b>	Pause	As arranged	Eileen Anderson 9020 3684
Monthly	Youth Etc. (11-15 years)	As arranged	Jonathan Martin, 07980 885990
	Young Families	Social events as arranged	Rachel Stewart 07812 247343

#### New members are always welcome at any of our organisations!

# WHO'S WHO IN ST. COLUMBAS Parish website: www.stcolumbas.down.anglican.org

Rector	The Reverend Chancellor John R AuchmutySt. Columba's Rectory 29 Kings Road BT5 6JG 028 9047 1514 rectorknock@down.anglican.org	
Assistant Priests	The Reverend Canon Ken Smyth	3 Mount Royal Bangor BT20 3BG 028 9145 8706
	The Reverend Canon Walter Laverty	6 Hanwood Heights Dundonald BT16 1XU 028 9573 8743
Diocesan Lay Reader	Karen McAlpine	readercolumba@gmail.com
Rector's Churchwarden	Jim Stevenson 028 9058 3381 07973 392 448	
People's Churchwarden	Mark Wilson	07714 658911
Rector's Glebewarden	David Kelly	028 9079 6658
People's Glebewarden	lan Johnston	07850 999909
Honorary Sexton	John Proctor	028 9087 0526
Assistant Honorary Sexton	Geoff Launchbury	028 9028 1204 07814 498 241
Select Vestry	Rector, Churchwardens, Glebewardens, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, Assistant Honorary Treasurer, Suzanne Allen, Richard Caldwell, Andrew Hirst, John Kerr, Jonathan Stewart, Gillian Sadlier, Martin Moore, Nigel Morrow, Scott Rutherford	
Honorary Secretary	John Macpherson John Macpherson 10 Sandhill Gardens BT5 6FF 028 9028 2076 jdmacpherson@hotmail.com	
Honorary Treasurer	Brian Acheson	028 9042 4892
Assistant Honorary Treasurer	Victor Dukelow	028 9029 0625

Gift Aid Secretary	Jack Dunlop 028 9065 4103		
Parochial Nominators	Victor Dukelow, Patrick Good, Elizabeth Leonard, Linda Wilson		
Diocesan Synod members	Patrick Good, Elizabeth Leonard Hollie Wilson (under 30)		
Organist and Choral Director	Dr Joe McKee	07976 294574	
Assistant Organist	Brian Clements	028 9079 3641	
Sidesperson's rota Co-ordinator	Rosemary Coffey	028 9754 2198	
Magazine Editor	Billy McAlpine	028 9042 4390 colmaged@outlook.com	
Parish Webmaster	Ivan Roche	028 9514 0141 ivan.roche@me.com	
C of I Gazette Distributor	Moranne Noad	028 9079 3704	
Bible Reading Fellowship notes	Joan Madill	028 9065 6591	
Church flowers	Eleanor Launchbury	028 9028 1204	
Premise's Convenor	Stewart Beckwith	028 9048 6622	
Crucifer	Mark Laverty	028 9573 8743	
Parish Office Administrator/ Financial Giving Secretary	Karen Patterson Office hours: Monday to Friday 9.00am-1.00pm	028 9065 6891 office.knock@down.anglican.org	

Safeguarding Panel The Rector, Select Vestry and parish leaders are committed to upholding good practice in the parish's ministry with children and young people. Should you have cause for concern or suspicion regarding child welfare in the parish please contact: The Rector 02890471514 Patrick Good 02890656908 Elizabeth Leonard 02890653162



# An open door to friendship, fellowship and faith

YOUR attendance can strengthen YOUR parish!



## **CHURCH CAR PARKING**

When parking to go to church services or Parish Organisations please be sensitive to the residents in the local community by taking care not to block entrances or pavements. Thank you!



## Facebook

St Columba's Knock is now on Facebook. **'Like'** our page to see updates on events, services and photos. Search coiknock on Facebook or Messenger to find us easily.

For those who are new to St Columba's and would like more information about the life and membership of the parish, please give your name and phone number to our Churchwardens or contact the Parish Office during office hours Monday-Friday, 9.00am-1.00pm on 028 9065 6891.



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