

The Columban

ST. COLUMBA'S CHURCH, KNOCK, MARCH 2025



LENT:
A season for praying, serving, fasting

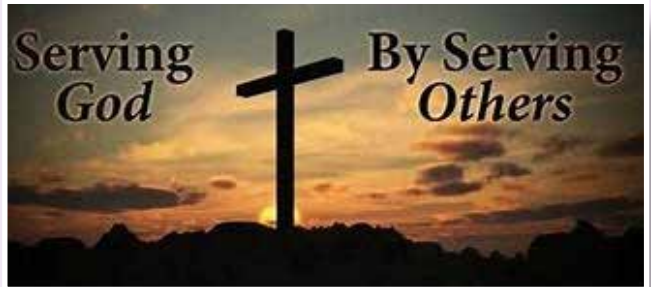


Easter Vestry Address 2025

As a church, we work hard to provide **service** and outreach to parishioners in our local community and beyond. We welcome many new people at various times. Each person receives our very warm St Columba's welcome, which is an essential facet of our church.

2024 has been a wonderful year for completing projects and building on our successes on many fronts. Our theme this year is "Service". Service to God and each other is the greatest gift we can give.

As a busy and enthusiastic parish, St Columba's endeavours to deliver **service** in many forms to parishioners, local community and overseas outreach. **It is only made possible by the work of all of our parishioners and those who help, working diligently and kindly in so many ways.**



Mark 10:45 *"For even the Son of Man came not to be **served** but to **serve**, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

CHURCH SERVICES

We are now using our Church and Hall much more frequently. Services, concerts as well as use of the church and hall by other local organisations have been greatly appreciated by our local community and beyond.

Each year we have a busy schedule of **services**, particularly at both Easter and Christmas. The attendance at these **services** has been gradually increasing, and I am delighted to report that our **Service** of Nine Lessons and Carols on Sunday 22nd December was packed to capacity. Family and friends gathered to prepare for Christmas and to enjoy the wonderful music and singing, all carefully led by our Parish Organist and Choral Director, Dr Joe McKee. We have also seen increasing numbers at our Midnight Eucharist on Christmas Eve and our ever-popular Christingle **service**.

Joe's enthusiasm for music excellence has been greatly appreciated by those in attendance. It is due to our wonderful musical heritage that we also hosted the BBC Radio Ulster live broadcast recording of another **service** here in St Columba's on Sunday 13th October.



Joe is supported by our Assistant Organist Brian Clements, Organist Emeritus Gerald Hill and Guest Organists Alasdair Maclaughlin, Graeme McCullough, Tristan Russcher and Phillip Elliott, our Parish Choir and our Cantors, who all provide such a wonderful musical tradition in St Columba's. **Our music has attracted many visitors who enjoy our traditional liturgical Anglican services.**

I thank those who lead the prayers and who read the lessons on Sundays, as well as our young parishioners who

participate at our All Age Worship **services**. It is wonderful that so many people are willing and able to assist!

On Sunday 19th April, we held a **Service** of Confirmation, where twelve candidates from St Columba's and one candidate from St Mark's, Dundela were confirmed by Bishop David McClay. This outreach to our young parishioners, as well as incorporating other churches, strengthens our **Service** to God and prepares the path for a strong future for St Columba's.



We enjoyed two parish concerts, on Wednesday 26th June and Saturday 16th November. Each recital was followed by refreshments, which lasted longer than the actual concerts!

Both were very well supported and enjoyed by parishioners, friends, neighbours and the greater community in attendance. The friendships and fellowships which naturally occur after our concerts and **services** binds people together and allows them to see what a **wonderfully engaging and friendly church we have**, all dedicated to the **service** to each other and to God.

Following a delightful Harvest **Service** on Sunday 6th October, our Harvest Lunch was served in the church hall by our wonderful and hard-working Catering Committee. We welcomed parishioners, family, friends and neighbours, and the hall was packed! The atmosphere was relaxed and fun, **and the lunch was exceptional!**



We held our annual **Service** of Remembrance and Thanksgiving for Those Who Have Died on Sunday 3rd November, as well as our **Blue Christmas Service** on Thursday 5th December. These reflective, quiet **services** were both well supported, and they provide a peaceful way to deal with sadness and stress during the dark months of late autumn and winter. We welcomed family, friends and neighbours to join us, and several people remarked how beneficial these **services** have been to them.

On Thursday mornings 10.30am, our Holy Communion **service** continues to grow and thrive. It is a short 30 minute **service** which includes a reflection, organ voluntaries and is followed by refreshments which are kindly hosted by members of the congregation. We use the Prayer List, which is a list of first names, (no surnames for privacy except when praying for bereaved families), kindly supplied by **Liz McCaughey** who manages the names each month and emails them to a group of prayerful parishioners who want to help. Everyone is welcome to join us – it is a friendly way to attend church midweek.

We thank our Audio Team who attend to our sound system during various services and events: David Deane, Alan Bijo, Caroline Fairley, Ian Johnston and Alan Boyd. The recorded **services** are sent to **Jonathan Stewart (our Webmaster)** who very kindly uploads them onto our website, so that those who cannot attend for whatever reason are still able to benefit from them. I thank Jonathan for all his great work.

The sharing of **services** during Holy Week with Knock Methodist Church is a wonderful blessing and source of outreach to incorporate members of our local community.

In addition to **services**, we also have a church Decorating Team, who kindly take the time to “dress” the church for various occasions and services. *This team, led by **Fiona Haldane and Eleanor Launchbury**, quietly meet and along with a willing team of helpers, they decorate the church to enhance the atmosphere at our **services**.* We thank everyone involved in this aspect of our worship.



Church flowers are an important way to remember or celebrate occasions and our flower rota is busy with people wanting to donate flowers. Here is a photo of flowers from the wedding of Jason and Hannah Patterson in December, kindly donated to the church. Donating bouquets and floral arrangements following a wedding is one way to allow the stunning flower arrangements to be enjoyed by many other people! We thank those who have done so in recent years.

ORGANISATIONS

Following on from our Service of Dedication for our Parish Organisation leaders on Sunday 1st September, we held our annual meeting of Organisational Leaders on Wednesday 11th September 2024. The aim of this is to remind everyone about our housekeeping and data protection guidelines. We provide information regarding many aspects, and the meeting was well-attended and enthusiastic.



In 2024, we were delighted to welcome the 4th & 24th Belfast Scouts to our church in September. Since they have joined us, they have worked very hard at clearing out the church hall, selling old chairs,

tidying up around the grounds and assisting at our **services**. They have brought great joy and delight to our parish, all under the careful leadership of Iain Hall and his team of assistants. I thank them all very much for their hard work, and for their assistance in the hall as we do our best to make use of our hall facilities in a regular way.

Scouts have made a huge positive impact to our church, and so it was with great delight that we then welcomed Cub Scouts in January 2025. The Cubs meet on Wednesday evenings, under the guidance of Gareth McAuley and his assistants. They have brought even more enthusiasm and provide a warm and friendly way for our young people to meet and engage while **servicing** God.



It is a great blessing to have both of these organisations in our parish. It is important to build for the future, and having young people involved is one way in which we can build and strengthen our parish for future generations, as well as reaching out to serve our community more effectively.

We have also seen a transition from Men's Club, which was focused on indoor bowling, to Men's Forum, where the focus is in providing a space for the men in our parish to share time, activities and fellowship together. They have a new and updated range of activities and encourage new members to join!

This year marks the 10th Anniversary of our **Railway & Model Club**, who enthusiastically support our church in many ways. The team engage with local churches and businesses as well as other Railway and Model clubs, hosting and attending exhibitions and spreading

good will and outreach to the greater community. The success of this club is down to this enthusiasm and positive attitude of the club members.

Our organisations have all had successful meetings and events during the year, and I thank all of our Parish Organisation Leaders and their committees for their hard work and effort as we continue to welcome guest speakers and guests to our church.



FINANCE

I am delighted to report that despite many issues facing financial institutions, St Columba's has continued to maintain a steady and secure financial position. While this is a wonderful position to be in, ***we cannot become complacent.*** We need to continue to build on our hard work by encouraging families to set up Standing Orders to financially contribute to our work here at St Columba's.

We are very pleased to support the work of some parishioners who have worked overseas on projects, including **Lucy Armstrong** who travelled to Romania with Methodist College for *School Aid Romania* in January; **Hazel Macpherson** who will be going to Nairobi with *Jengana* during the summer, and **Patrick Whiteside** who will be going to Tanzania with *GOMAD*, to work in the slums and assist with local projects. These young people need our support as they go out into the world to see poverty and hardship on a huge scale, and to help where they can as they work with others in the **service** to these communities.

We were also in a position to donate £1,000 using our Charity & Mission contributions to 13 charities before Christmas. These charities have been extremely grateful for your support, and I thank you for your kind donations on a regular basis.



During our Patronal Festival on Sunday 9th June, I dedicated the new space at the front of the church in memory of Hazel Reid, who's generous bequest made this work possible. The new front space has now been furnished with beautiful chairs, which allows for better use of the space. This is especially true at our large **services** and on Thursday mornings. We can allow people to sit with their families instead of sitting in the aisles if they are wheelchair users. Providing this dignified and comfortable space has been a goal of our church for many years, and so it has been warmly welcomed by many. This wonderful

space is being used more frequently in new and refreshing ways, continually changing to suit the parish needs.

The chairs were the extremely kind gift of David Craig and his family in memory of his wife Louise, who was a most loyal and dedicated parishioner. We thank them most gratefully for their generosity and support.

I thank both **Brian Acheson**, our Honorary Treasurer, and **Victor Dukelow**, our Assistant Honorary Treasurer, along with our Gift Aid Secretary **Jack Dunlop**, for all of their hard work during the year, making sure that we have completed all relevant paperwork for claims, paid our suppliers and trade workers, and kept a tight rein on our finances by meeting with the Select Vestry and Finance Committee to make sure that we are using the best ways to save money and cut costs.

I thank the members of our **Counting Team** who carefully count and lodge our money. This is a very important part of our work, and the team diligently and quietly perform their duties in a most professional way.

I also thank our members of the **Finance, Property, Cleaning and Catering Committees as well as our Select Vestry**, who so generously give of their time and talents in **service** to St Columba's.

While we will always accept cash, our preference is for Money Transfers or Standing Orders, as this means that less cash is required, and the money is quickly and securely transferred directly into our accounts. There will be much more work on this aspect of giving as we examine new ways to contribute and so reduce cash handling. This will roll out this year as we are required to make changes to our financial software where we record our donations. Keep an eye out for more information soon!



We are extremely grateful to those parishioners who Gift Aid their donations. Gift Aid is a wonderful way to enhance your gift to St Columba's by 25%, without having to spend your own money. It is a government scheme which boosts our income greatly. **In 2024 we claimed £33,469.12** in Gift Aid, and *we encourage anyone who is eligible but who has not yet signed up, to consider enhancing their gift to the church in this way.* Karen Patterson, our Parish Administrator would be delighted to discuss this with you. Tel 02890 656891 Monday – Friday (9am-1pm). **We continue to ask those who do not contribute financially to assist us by considering the use of Standing Order, which allows us to plan financially, as well as those who can Gift Aid to do so.** *If you need to check any details with our Parish Administrator, Karen Patterson, please contact her as she is the only person with access to our financial giving records. Thank you.*

NATIONAL CHURCHES TRUST

We received a very generous grant of **£25,000** from the National Churches Trust for our Roof Project and welcomed visitors to our church on Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th September. Part of our obligation for this grant is to make our church more accessible to the wider community. We have been fulfilling that mandatory



requirement by using our church building in various capacities- not just for **services**, weddings, funerals and baptisms.



The church has hosted many meetings of local clergy, and also guest speakers at some of our organisations meetings and church **services**.

(Photo: Men's Forum talk by Peter McCabe in church)

Belmont District of Churches have held **services**, meetings and lunches in our church, and continue to do so.

Bloomfield Collegiate use our church each Christmas to host their annual Carol **Service** and they have very kindly offered us the use of their carpark for large events as our own carparking spaces are extremely limited. This sharing of space will allow us to be more courteous with our parking off the Kings Road. **We kindly request that parishioners**

and visitors continue to park cars carefully and be considerate of our neighbours and road safety for all.

Many people enjoy visiting St Columba's, not just for the fantastic welcome, but to also see the stunning stained-glass windows and oak furniture, our World War 1 and II remembrance plaques and the flags for Mothers' Union. It is an opportunity to furnish them with a copy of our Columban magazine and showcase how well maintained our beautiful church is. This is a wonderful way to share our heritage with the community and beyond.



We still have copies of our parish history book, "An House Not Made with Hands", which was updated by **Gerald Hill**, as well as our "Stained Glass Windows" book by **Alasdair and Wendy Maclaughlin**, and notelets of the church created and sold by **Ladies Guild**. These are available to buy at the back of church and they all help us to celebrate everything St Columba's has to offer!

THE COLUMBAN MAGAZINE AND FACEBOOK

Effective communication is essential, and we have several ways to enhance this. Our *Columban* magazine is carefully edited by **Billy McAlpine** assisted by his wife **Ann**, and it is a wonderful gift to every visitor to our church as well as additional reading for those who use our website. We thank Billy and Ann for their hard and dedicated work, along with those parishioners who contribute articles; **Mike Fee and the team at MadColour** for their layout coordination of the magazine and their printing expertise, and our wonderful **Magazine Delivery Team** who deliver magazines to each household in our parish.

We also thank **Emma Ryan** and her parents **Mark and Lynn**, who manage our Facebook page so effectively.

GOALS FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR

As with many churches, it is good to set out our goals for the coming year to allow for planning, investment of time and effort, and for focusing our minds on what we would like to achieve.

We cannot simply become complacent - we still need to keep moving forward and raise funds for the continuing work required by our church.

Our goals for 2025-2026 include:

- **Developing our Sunday School and Creche**
- **Improving our church and hall fabric to facilitate our increased schedule of **services** and activities**
- **Increasing our outreach by focusing on what we can do to **serve** our community more effectively**
- **Refurbishing the Gents toilets in the hall**

I hope you can join in as we continue to work hard to provide welcoming spaces and time for those who require our assistance. I am extremely grateful to all those who assist with the work and **service** of St Columba's in any way possible.

CONCLUSION

2024 has been a very busy year in our parish where we have grown our congregation, embraced change in schedules to our **services** and organisations, enhanced our church building and furniture with the new front area, and welcomed visitors from near and far. We have done all of this while also keeping a close eye on our finances, providing care across the parish, community and overseas, and making better use of our properties. This work could not be done without your kind gifts of time, money and skill. *I thank each and every single person who have contributed to our thriving and generous parish, whether that is by attendance at church **services**, donating financially, giving of your time and skills or simply by words of encouragement.* Each individual has a role to play, and if you are not involved, we encourage you to consider how you can help. A parishioner is not just a name on a database, it encapsulates involvement and consideration of what you can do to help.



Our Parish Logo pays great respect to our wonderful parish of St Columba's, and "an open door to friendship, fellowship and faith" is what we continually keep in our minds. The warm welcome is becoming almost legendary in our local community as we

continue to work with neighbours, local businesses and beyond, providing our buildings and spaces and wherever we can to help. **Serving God and Serving Each Other** is a key message to everyone to remember, and it is only by building on our legacy that we can continue to **serve**.

Thank you to each and every parishioner who has provided the warm welcome we know so well and who contributes to the ministry of St Columba's in whatever way.

May we always go out from our church and hall to live and work to God's praise and glory. Every single positive act can enhance someone's life, so let us share our work with others, doing unto them as we would have done unto us.

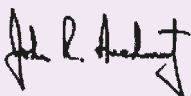
1 Peter 4:10 "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace"

St Columba's have a small but enthusiastic team of Clergy, Staff and Office Bearers who provide invaluable assistance to me and the parish. I am extremely grateful to them all for the effective and conscientious manner in which they all carry out their respective duties.

- It is a very great privilege and joy for me to share ministry with our Assistant Priests and our Diocesan Lay Reader. I thank **Canon Ken Smyth, Canon Walter Lavery and Karen McAlpine**, for all their support and encouragement, which I greatly appreciate.
- I also thank our **Parish Administrator Karen Patterson** for her dedication and great attention to detail. Karen diligently carries out her duties to the highest of standards and is greatly valued by parishioners, Parish Organisations and myself.
- I thank our **Sexton John Proctor and our Assistant Sexton Geoff Launchbury** for all their hard work and assistance with the preparations for our church **services** and ensuring those arriving for funerals can easily access the church.
- I also thank **John and Yvonne Robb** for helping with the altar cloths, changing the colours when required.

In conclusion, I thank **Caroline, Charles and Henry and my extended family** for their wonderful love and support to me, and for their patience due to my diary schedule. They also provide great help to the parish on a regular basis assisting in so many different ways.

As we give thanks to God for all his many blessings to us and St Columba's in the past year, we pray for his guidance and direction as we move forward to embrace future opportunities and challenges with confidence. **May our service always be the best we can offer.**



SERVICES IN MARCH

Sunday 2nd The Sunday before Lent (White)

8.15am Transfiguration Sunday

Holy Communion

Epistle 2 Corinthians 3: 12- 4: 2 Ministers of the New
Covenant

Read by Ronny Martin

Gospel Luke 9: 28-36 The Transfiguration

11.00am All Age Worship - followed by Lent Lunch

Reading Luke 9: 28-36 The Transfiguration

Read by Alexandru Brown

Wednesday 5th (Purple)

10.30am Service for Ash Wednesday with Holy Communion

8.00pm Service for Ash Wednesday with Holy Communion

Preacher: The Very Reverend Henry Hull

Thursday 6th (Purple)

10.30am Holy Communion *followed by refreshments*

Sunday 9th The First Sunday in Lent (Purple)

8.15am Holy Communion

Epistle Romans 10: 8b-13 Confess and be saved

Read by Michael Sadlier

Gospel Luke 4: 1-13 The Temptation of Jesus

10.30am Holy Communion

Epistle Romans 10: 8b-13 Confess and be saved

Read by Andrew Hirst

Gospel Luke 4: 1-13 The Temptation of Jesus

Intercessions Elizabeth Leonard

Wednesday 12th (Purple)

8.00pm Compline

Preacher: The Very Reverend Henry Hull

Thursday 13th (Purple)

10.30am Holy Communion *followed by refreshments*

Sunday 16th The Second Sunday in Lent (Purple)

8.15am Holy Communion
Epistle Philippians 3: 17-4: 1 Dweller on earth but citizen of Heaven

Read by Karen McAlpine
Gospel Luke 13: 31-35 Courage and Tenderness

10.30am Morning Prayer *followed by refreshments hosted by Art Club*
1st Reading Genesis 15: 1-12, 17-18 The Covenant with Abraham

Read by Billy McAlpine
2nd Reading Luke 13: 31-35 Courage and Tenderness

Read by Jayne Martin
Occasional Prayers Clergy

Monday 17th Saint Patrick (White)
10.30am Holy Communion *followed by refreshments*

Wednesday 19th (Purple)
Preacher: The Very Reverend Henry Hull

Thursday 20th St. Joseph of Nazareth (Transferred) (White)
10.30am Holy Communion *followed by refreshments*

Sunday 23rd The Third Sunday in Lent (Purple)
8.15am Holy Communion

Epistle 1 Corinthians 10: 1-13 A warning against over-confidence

Read by Ronny Martin
Gospel Luke 13: 1-9 The parable of the barren fig tree

10.30am Holy Communion
Epistle 1 Corinthians 10: 1-13 A warning against over-confidence

Read by Martina Whiteside
Gospel Luke 13: 1-9 The parable of the barren fig tree

Intercessions Heather Brehcist

Wednesday 26th (Purple)
8.00pm Compline
Preacher: The Very Reverend Henry Hull

Thursday 27th **The Annunciation of our Lord (Transferred)** **(White)**
10.30am **Holy Communion** *followed by refreshments*

Sunday 30th **The Fourth Sunday in Lent** **(Purple)**

8.15am **Mothering Sunday**
Holy Communion

Epistle Colossians 3: 12-17 God's chosen ones

Read by Alan Boyd

Gospel John 19: 25b-27 Jesus speaks to Mary

10.30am **Morning Prayer with the Commissioning of the Newly Elected Office Bearers and Select Vestry Members**

1st Reading Exodus 2: 1-10 Moses in the bulrushes

Read by Laura McCombe

2nd Reading John 19: 25b-27 Jesus speaks to Mary

Read by: Rachel Wilson

Occasional Prayers Barbara Laverty

Online Services

The audio recording of our 10.30am service each Sunday can be found on our parish website www.stcolumbas.down.anglican.org under "Church Service Recordings".

From the Registers

Our Sorrows

Funeral Services

Saturday 1st February

Elizabeth (Kyleen) Kyle Clarke

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

LENT MID-WEEK SERVICES

ASH WEDNESDAY 5th MARCH – WEDNESDAY 9th APRIL AT 8PM

PREACHER THE VERY REVEREND HENRY HULL

I encourage you to attend our mid-week services each Wednesday night at 8pm throughout Lent, beginning on Ash Wednesday 5th March. This will be a timely opportunity for us to allow our Christian Faith to grow and develop to sustain us in the opportunities and challenges of daily life. *I am delighted that the former Dean of Down Cathedral, The Very Reverend Henry Hull will be the preacher at these services. I hope you will be able to join us in St. Columba's throughout Lent.*

The Rector



This introduction gives information about Dean Hull and about his series of sermons.

Very Reverend Henry Hull retired from full time ministry last year after serving as Dean of Down since 2006 and the Rector of the Lecale area since 2001.

Henry is originally from Belfast and was educated at Grosvenor High School and Queens University.

Prior to ordination he had been a teacher of RE in Portadown, and for some years served on the staff of the General Synod of the Church of England, where he was member of the Council

for Christian Unity.

He was ordained in the Diocese of Southwark and was a Team Vicar in South East London before his appointment to the Diocese of Down and Dromore.

Henry has on previous occasions enjoyed sharing in services in St Columba's.

He is married to Geraldine, they have four grown up children and recently welcomed their tenth grandchild.

They are now living in Dundonald and currently Henry is assisting in St Molua's during their vacancy.

The theme for our six Wednesdays in Lent is "Living out our faith amidst the challenges of daily life".

We hope to briefly consider a number of topics including family life; integrity in the workplace; anxiety; health; generosity and service.

Each evening there will be a short scriptural reflection linked with some suggestions as to how we might apply it in a practical way in our lives.

We begin on Ash Wednesday considering how to put into practice the Lenten themes of prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

Thought for the Month

When my family first moved to Ballyhackamore, we never imagined how much our neighbours

would come to mean to us. We arrived with the usual mix of excitement and apprehension that comes with settling into a new house and neighbourhood. However, to our surprise, it was the blessing of good neighbours that truly made us feel at home.



Laura Wells

Our neighbours didn't just welcome us with a friendly smile or the occasional chat in passing, they embodied the very spirit of community. One moment in particular stands out as a testament to them. During the lockdown in 2021,

when the world felt uncertain and celebrations seemed out of reach, our neighbours Hugh and Elizabeth Miller stepped in to create something very special. Knowing how much Easter means to children, they organised a surprise Easter egg hunt for my son. He woke up that morning to find clues and chocolates hidden throughout their garden, all planned with love and care. In a time of isolation, their kindness brought joy and reminded us that even in the hardest times, we are never alone.

In fact, it was an invitation from Hugh and Elizabeth, that first brought us through the doors of St Columba's for a Christmas Tree Festival. Having been a parishioner of St Columb's Cathedral in Londonderry before I moved to Belfast, I was drawn in by the warm welcome at St Columba's. While our journey with St Columba's began with an introduction from our neighbours, it has continued because of the support and sense of belonging.

Beyond grand gestures, it is the everyday support that truly makes neighbours a blessing. Simple yet thoughtful acts of kindness strengthen our faith and sense of purpose. It is in the reassuring wave across the street, the unexpected offer of help when a DIY project goes awry, the spontaneous conversations that turn into shared wisdom and laughter. It is in knowing that no matter what



life brings, there are people nearby who care.

May we all strive to be the kind of neighbours who uplift, encourage, and reflect Christ's love in all that we do. For in the simplest gestures, in the quiet moments of care and connection, we have the power to transform lives including our own.

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

The April 'Thought for the Month' will be written by Marjory Stewart

Sunday 2nd March

11.00am All Age Worship followed by



Lent Lunch in the Church hall **Come along and join us!**

Admission: Voluntary contributions in aid of the Church Hall Refurbishment Fund.



A gentle reminder to everyone: Please do not forget to use your white Lent Lunch envelopes from your pack of church envelopes on Sunday 2nd March!

Thank you.

Prayers for your thoughts and comfort



Many readers of the Columban will recall being introduced at school to the writings of William Shakespeare. Amongst his writings that I was obliged to study was 'Julius Caesar' with its famous quote to the ruler of ancient Rome that he should 'beware of the ides of March'. It was prophetic because on that day Julius Caesar was assassinated in 44B.C.

The ides of March marked the beginning of a new year (15thMarch) and was observed throughout much of the ancient world until the introduction of the Julian calendar, when the new year was fixed on 1stJanuary.

March was named after the Roman god – Mars. Incidentally, we are reminded of the ancient calendar each year between September (the seventh month) and December (the tenth month).

March marked the beginning of the season of growth. Today, many people consider it to be the beginning of Spring.

This year, 2025, we will observe the beginning of Lent in March on Ash Wednesday (5th.March). A few prayers have been chosen to coincide with these events.

In March, we celebrate the festival of Patrick, our national saint, and also the Annunciation to Mary (25thMarch) that she would be the mother of Jesus. Prayers are included in recognition of these dates and also a prayer appropriate for use on Mothering Sunday (30thMarch)

Regardless of the month, many subjects and petitions are worthy of note. Some are included in this issue. Should you wish any other subjects to be highlighted, please discuss the matter with the Rector.

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

PRAYERS for use ANY DAY, and in the month of MARCH

Lord of all time, help me to enter each day in peace. Thoughtful of who I am to myself, and others, and mindful that my words may influence positively those I meet, help me to walk gently, and to speak only after I have listened well. Enable me to enter each day without fear, remembering your gifts to me, and looking forward to many blessings to come. May I welcome your love today, and, in the days to come. **Amen**

Father, thank you for carrying me through life's winter season, and bringing me into the new springtime season of hope. Thank you for lessons I have been taught in winter, including lessons of perseverance, rest and trust. Thank you for encouraging me to look ahead, and for your love which never changes. **Amen**

PRAYERS in SPRINGTIME

Lord God, I pray that the season of Spring will be one of growth in my life. Let every bloom and emerging flower remind me of your grace. Let the months ahead give birth in my soul to warm thoughts and kind gestures. **Amen**

Lord, thank you for Springtime and the hope of warmer, longer and brighter days. Thank you that things are coming alive around us. Now, we ask that we may see in the sunlight and rain and wind, reminders that you bring renewal into our world and lives, and enable us to walk with you into new moments of opportunity. **Amen**

ASH WEDNESDAY

God our Father, as we begin our Lenten journey, help us to see that your love is always with us. During these forty days, change our hearts Lord, so that, by our prayer, and above all the deep well of your grace, we may greet one another, transformed as your Easter people. **Amen**

Grant Lord, that by the observance of this Lent, we may advance in the knowledge of the mystery of Christ, and show forth his mind in conduct worthy of our calling, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

ST. PATRICK

God our Father, you sent Patrick to preach the Good News of the Gospel to the people of Ireland. With your help, may all Christians proclaim your love. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen**

ANNUNCIATION to MARY (25th) and MOTHERING SUNDAY (30th)

God our Father, we celebrate the news given to Mary that she would be the mother of Jesus.

We thank you for all those who have mothered us throughout our lives. We think of those who have held us, fed us, cared for us, comforted us, challenged and encouraged us.

We think of new mothers, experiencing changes in their lives: mothers who may be raising children on their own: mothers whose relationships are going through difficult times: mothers who suffer from abuse: all men and women who have assumed the role of a parent or carer: those who grieve the loss of a mother or child. Grant all for whom we pray, joy, courage, hope and healing. We ask this in the name of the one who knew a mother's and parental love, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

(Think of the Mothers Union in your prayers)

PRAYER for our PARISH

Loving God, you gather us as your people. You have formed us into a parish and community who worship at St. Columba's. May we be truly a people of faith, hope and love.

Guide our parish leaders, including our Rector, those who have been elected to serve on the Select Vestry, and all who contribute to our faith community in any capacity. Inspire more of our people to offer their time, talents and resources for the growth of your Kingdom in this place. May the Holy Spirit enlighten us to participate in the mission you have entrusted to us and bring us to even closed relationships with churches and people throughout our parish and community. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

PRAYER for PEACE amongst NATIONS

Lord, forgive any hatred and intolerance to others we may think or express. It seems that many feed on hatred towards others, endlessly suppressing the truth of our common humanity. Give courage and compassion and opening of heart and mind and freedom from fear, so that we may respond to prejudice and intolerance with love, and to injustice, with dedication to displaying sympathy and compassion to those who are the victims of bitterness. We ask this through Christ, who is a stranger to no one person, race or country, and who proclaims peace to all nations. **Amen**

THE SERENITY PRAYER

Lord, grant me the serenity of mind to accept that which cannot be changed, courage to change that which can be changed, and wisdom to know the difference, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

FINALLY - A few Biblical thoughts in Lent!

Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting, and sackcloth and ashes. *Daniel 9*

For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self discipline *2 Timothy 1 v.7*

God is our refuge and strength – an ever present help in trouble *Psalms 46*

Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying *Romans 12*



CHRISTIAN AID 2025 - 11th - 17th MAY

Christian Aid week is still a few months away but we are already making plans. Firstly, there is a Christian Aid Conference in Carnmoney Presbyterian Church on Saturday 15th March 10 am - 1.30 pm. These are always informative and interesting events and I can offer a lift to anyone wishing to attend. Secondly, I want to announce a new fundraising event for 2025 in St Columba's

PRE-LOVED SALE OF LADIES CLOTHING and ACCESSORIES

in the church hall on **SATURDAY 17th MAY** 2 pm - 5.30.

Hopefully this will give you a chance to spot suitable items when changing from winter to summer wardrobes in the next few weeks. Accessories will include handbags scarves, hats and jewellery.

After Easter we will have collection boxes in the church and church hall for your clothing / accessory donations and would like items that would suit all generations so, please spread the word to friends and family. There will be more information in the April Columban.

Joyce (07772 128944)



COLUMBAN DEADLINES

Magazine deadlines are always clearly noted in each edition of *The Columban*. The purpose of the deadline is to facilitate editing and printing of the magazine.

We are now asking for your helpful cooperation - if you wish to submit an article for inclusion, it needs to be with the Editor BEFORE the deadline. From April 2025, if the article is after the deadline unfortunately we will not be able to include it. Timely submission is everyone's responsibility – otherwise please keep the article if you wish to include it in the following month's magazine.

Thank you very much for your kind assistance with this.

Rector



Thursday 27th March

at 7.30pm

in Church.

All parishioners are encouraged to attend, however only those who are registered can vote at the meeting.

Each year at our Annual Easter General Vestry, the following elections take place for a twelve-month period:

1. People's Churchwarden
2. People's Glebewarden
3. Select Vestry Members
4. Appointment of Auditors

The Honorary Treasurer, Mr Brian Acheson will present the audited financial accounts for the year ended 31st December 2024 on behalf of the outgoing Select Vestry, which clearly reflects the income and expenditure of the parish along with the many charities which we have generously supported.



Ladies Guild

As we, hopefully, leave Winter storms behind us, the emergence of bloom in our gardens and parks brings the hope of Spring and brighter days.

We send prayerful good wishes to our members, present and past who are ill in hospital, or recovering at home or in care. You are remembered.

On Tuesday 18th March we will have our Charity Meeting for this year. The speaker will be Carol Noble who will tell us about the Dementia Friends Scheme. There will be a voluntary collection for the Alzheimer's Society on the day. I hope you will be able to attend. Visitors are always welcome to join us.

A little reminder that there will not be a meeting in April as our day falls on Easter Tuesday.

Eleanor

PAUSE

Doesn't time fly! I think that it accelerates each time I have a birthday . I welcome clear nights when I can see the night sky but at present there is a lot of cloud around. Not quite so cold but much less interesting.

PAUSE continues regardless of the weather. This month we are meeting on two occasions.

Tuesday 4th March at 10.30am at Binkys, Dundonald for refreshments.

Tuesday 18th March at 10.30am at The Poet in King's Square for coffee and scones.

If you need further details or help with transport please contact me.

Eileen (028 9020 3684).



Joyce sharing details of her journey in Christian Aid and exploring ideas for the future.

Our March meeting on Tuesday 4th, Shrove Tuesday, is a Pancake Extravaganza at 2.30pm in the church hall. All welcome.

Wednesday 5th Ash Wednesday

Sunday 30th Mothering Sunday

Friday 7th The World Day of Prayer meeting is being hosted this year by

the Sydenham Salvation Army Corp based on Station Road Belfast. More details can be found on the notice in the magazine or poster in church. If anyone wishing to attend needs transport let me know and we will organise it.

Barbara



Church hall cleaning rota

March 9th

Christine and Ian Johnston

March 23rd

Joyce Stevenson and Yvonne Robb



St Columba's Parish Church, Knock
27 King's Road, Belfast BT5 6JG

THE CRUCIFIXION



by John Stainer

St Columba's Cantors & Choir

Joe McKee *director*

Sunday 13th April 2025 at 7.30pm

Voluntary Donations to Church Funds

Clergy Parish Visiting

It is always a great privilege for the Clergy to visit parishioners in their homes. If you would like to request a Clergy Visit, please telephone the Rector (028 9047 1514) or Canon Walter Laverty (028 9573 8743). In addition to requested Parish Visiting, the Clergy will be visiting parishioners in the following districts during February:

Rector

Casaeldona Rise

Castlehill Park

Castlehill Park West

Castlehill Road

Cherrytree Walk, Cherryvalley

Canon Laverty

Cherryvalley

Cherryvalley Park

Circular Road

Clara Park

Clara Road



Hospital Visiting

It is also a wonderful privilege for the Rector to visit parishioners when they are in hospital. This is only made possible by keeping the Rector or the Parish Administrator informed of when people are admitted, which ward they are in, and when they are discharged.

PLEASE HELP US TO HELP YOU by keeping us up to date. While we appreciate that this can sometimes slip parishioner's minds in the stress of hospital life and illness, it is important that we are kept up to date so we can schedule visits. St Columba's has a wonderful church family which we always want to help, and this is only made possible when we are kept informed of changing circumstances.

Contact:

The Rector: Tel 028 9047 1517 or email rector.knock@down.anglican.org

or

Karen Patterson: Tel 028 9065 6891 Monday- Friday, 9am-1pm or email office. knock@down.anglican.org

Thank you.

Karen Patterson

Parish Administrator

The Forty Prayers of Lent

A prayer for each day in Lent 2025

CONNECT TO GOD



The password is:
PRAYER

Prayer is our direct communication with God and is an important time of day for Christians. Prayer can be long or short, and each prayer is YOUR personal time to spend thanking God for his blessings and asking for his help.

I am delighted to be able to include a little booklet with this magazine, called ***The 40 Prayers of Lent***, which I have prepared to assist you in daily devotions during this time of Lent. I hope it is helpful.

Thank you.

Karen Patterson

40 Items in 40 Days!



This year, we challenge you to clear out items in your home which you no longer use or wear and donate them to a local charity!

Each day of Lent, remove one item in your home which you no longer need or use, and place it into a bin bag. At the end of the 40 days of Lent, you will have helped others by clearing out your own home.

This is a great way to get children involved also, while sharing the items with someone who can really use them. A wonderful way to support our local charity shops for the benefit of our community!

Karen Patterson



MEN'S FORUM

Busy time so far within the club. Keeping ourselves occupied each evening with a variety of activities. We were delighted to welcome Alan Martin along as a new member in February. Plenty of room for anyone interested in finding out more of what we are about and our goals for the future. Feel free to drop in any Monday evening at 7.30pm or chat with any of our current membership. Likewise, you can contact me

direct. Details listed in the Columban. By the time you get this we will have hosted the after service refreshments on Sunday 16th. Confidently I will thank you all now for your support. Our next talk is in process of being organised. Details will be available either in Columban or on church notice board.

John Robb

St Columbas Afternoon Group

Monday 10th March at 2.30pm

Speaker: Noel Spence

Topic:

The cinemas of East Belfast

Followed by afternoon tea

Everyone is welcome to come and enjoy this very interesting speaker

Just bring your sense of humour and a bit of craic

Joy



APRIL 2025 MAGAZINE

Any articles or photographs for publication in the **April** parish magazine should be handed or emailed to the editor, **Billy McAlpine**, by **6 pm Wednesday, 12th March**

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



Each month we have a list of first names for those who would benefit from prayerful support. If you are interested in praying privately at home, the list is available from Liz McCaughey (tel. 07849 554079) each month, who will email or text you the list of names. We would be most grateful to anyone who would be willing to join the prayer chain and receive this list and pray for those on it during their own daily devotions.

Liz is also available to add names to the Prayer List if you have someone who would benefit from prayers. The list of first names is also prayed for at our 10.30 am Holy Communion service on Thursday mornings.

Contact Liz to discuss joining this prayer chain – do not underestimate the power of prayer!!



Women's World Day of Prayer

Women's World Day of Prayer is on **Friday 7th March at 7.30pm in the Salvation Army, Sydenham**. The theme "**I made you wonderful**", has been written by the women of The Cook Islands.



This group of 15 islands in the South Pacific Ocean has a rich and colourful Māori heritage and a deep connection to nature. We are grateful for the arrival of Christianity to our shores 200 years ago. The gospel of Jesus Christ brought hope, peace and light. In time, our cultures have interwoven with Christianity, and the blessings are evident today. As guardians and caretakers of God's marvellous works, we always treasure these words, **'I made you wonderful'**.

Contact the Rectory (02890 471514) if transport is required.

Railway and Model Club 2014- 2024

Happy New Year to you all.

March is upon us already. In a few short weeks we will be in throes of setting up our Coffee Morning and Railway Model Exhibition in celebration of our 10th Anniversary as a club. It will showcase the talents of our members with completed railway layouts in what we call OO gauge and N gauge.



We will be displaying a selection of Finescale models from brands as Airfix,

Tamiya and Revell to name a few built by members. On sale will be kits to entice budding modellers along with some railway items both old and new. Visiting exhibitors will be showing off their efforts. DAME (Dolls House and Miniature Exhibitors) will show some Lego gardens and miniature houses.



Hope to see you all on the 29th

By the time you read us we hopefully will have undertaken a day trip by rail to the Foyle Valley Museum in Londonderry on Saturday 22nd February for a model railway exhibition. Details to follow in next Columban.

John Robb. Chairman 07956061929

MARCH FLOWER ROTA

Sunday 2nd	Rosemary Simpson
Sunday 9th	Donald and Angela Kerr
Sunday 16th	John and Sandra Little
Sunday 23rd	Karen Patterson
Sunday 30th	Betty Gregory

St Columba's Parish Church

(29 Kings Rd, Belfast BT5 6JG)

Railway & Model Club invites you to a **10th ANNIVERSARY and Exhibition**

**Showcasing Model Railway and Fine scale
modelling.**

Saturday 29th March 2025.

10am - 4pm



“OO” and “N” Gauge Model Railways

- **Guest Exhibits. Model railway items for sale (New and used)**
- **Diecast models, Plastic model kits and books for sale.**
- **Display of Trains, Aircraft, Boats and Military models**
- **Displays by DAME showcasing Lego Gardens and Miniature dolls houses and dioramas.**

“Just the ticket” for some fun!

*Watch for further details to follow nearer the date. Enquiries to John Robb
07956061929 or Email john.robby@gmail.com.*

*Admission by voluntary donation (min suggestion £3.00), proceeds in aid of the
Church Hall Fund.*

SUNDAY SCHOOL & CRECHE

We have quite a busy March. We will be looking at Lent and the Easter story. We will also be making something special for Mothering Sunday and make a start on creating some lovely crafts to display in church. We hope to see many of our young people out over the next few weeks.

2nd March – All Age Worship

9th March – Sunday School & Creche

16th March - Sunday School & Creche

23rd March - Sunday School & Creche

30th March – Sunday School & Creche

Looking forward to seeing everyone!

Lynn



PARISH ORGANISATIONS

New members are always welcome at any of our organisations!

Sunday	Sunday School <i>Junior nursery to P5</i> <i>Senior P6 and over</i>	2 nd , 3 rd and 4 th Sundays at 10.30am	Superintendent: Lynn Ryan 07955 479065
	Crèche	2 nd , 3 rd and 4 th Sundays at 10.30am	Lindsay Rothwell 07710 590574
	Choir	9.30am	Dr Joe McKee 07976 294574
Monday	MU Afternoon Group	2 nd Monday each month 2.30pm	Joy Montgomery 9029 5427
	Men's Forum	7.30pm	John Robb 07956061929
Tuesday	Ladies Badminton	10-00am - 12 Noon	Gillian Popplestone 07730479478
	Ladies Guild	3 rd Tuesday each month 2.30pm in the church	Eileen Anderson 9020 3684
	Activity Group	Except 1 st Tuesday 7.30pm	Maureen Irwin 9079 5155
	Mothers' Union	1 st Tuesday each month 8.00pm	Barbara Laverty 9573 8743
Wednesday	Bible Study Group	2.30pm - 4.00pm	Eileen Anderson 9020 3684
	Cubs	6.45pm – 8.15pm	Gareth McAuley 07884411354
	Railway and Model Club	2.00pm to 4.30pm	John Robb 07956061929
Thursday	Art Club	9.30am	Carole Crothers 07979093956
	Scouts	7.30pm to 9.30pm	Iain Hall 07799 474111
Friday	Mums and Tots	10.00am	Joyce Stevenson, 07772128944
Bi-monthly	Pause	As arranged	Eileen Anderson 9020 3684
Monthly	Youth Etc. <i>(11-15 years)</i>	As arranged	Jonathan Martin, 07980 885990
	Young Families	Social events as arranged	Rachel Stewart 07812 247343

WHO'S WHO IN ST. COLUMBAS

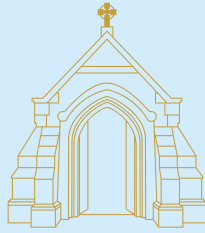
Parish website: www.stcolumbas.down.anglican.org

Rector	The Reverend Chancellor John R Auchmuty	St. Columba's Rectory 29 Kings Road BT5 6JG 028 9047 1514 rectorknock@down.anglican.org
Assistant Priests	The Reverend Canon Ken Smyth The Reverend Canon Walter Laverty	3 Mount Royal Bangor BT20 3BG 028 9145 8706 6 Hanwood Heights Dundonald BT16 1XU 028 9573 8743
Diocesan Lay Reader	Karen McAlpine	readercolumba@gmail.com
Rector's Churchwarden	Rosemary Allister	07880 504928
People's Churchwarden	David Connery	07801 738114
Rector's Glebwarden	Ian Johnston	07850 999909
People's Glebwarden	Mark Wilson	07714 658911
Honorary Sexton	John Proctor	028 9087 0526
Assistant Honorary Sexton	Geoff Launchbury	028 9028 1204 07814 498 241
Select Vestry	Rector, Churchwardens, Glebwardens, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer, Assistant Hon. Treasurer, David Craig, David Kelly John Kerr, Louise Mercer, Martin Moore, Nigel Morrow, Scott Rutherford, Jim Stevenson, Richard Whiteside	
Honorary Secretary	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 , Dr. Elizabeth Leonard Charles Auchmuty (Under 30)	
Organist and Choral Director	Dr Joe McKee	07976 294574
Assistant Organist	Brian Clements	028 9079 3641
Magazine Editor	Billy McAlpine	028 9042 4390 colmaged@outlook.com
Parish Webmaster	Dr Jonathan Stewart	office.knock@down.anglican.org
C of I Gazette Distributor	Moranne Noad	07754523065
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



ST COLUMBA'S KNOCK

*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.

