

# ***Parish of Kilconriola and Ballyclug***

**PARISH MAGAZINE**

**DECEMBER 2013/JANUARY 2014**



*Diocese of Connor - Parish of Kilconriola and Ballyclug*



## WHO'S WHO IN OUR PARISH

### CLERGY

#### Rector

Canon S G E Lloyd, B.A.  
St Patrick's Rectory  
102 Galgorm Road (Tel 2565 2253)  
Email [sgelloyd@btinternet.com](mailto:sgelloyd@btinternet.com)



#### Curate Assistant

The Revd Iain Jamieson  
38 Ballee Road East (Tel 2564 7049)  
Email [i.jamieson@hotmail.com](mailto:i.jamieson@hotmail.com)

### LAY READER

Mr J Perry, 261a Galgorm Road, Ballymena

### YOUTH WORKERS

Lucy McLaughlin  
3 The Commons, Broughshane  
Tel 2586 1524  
Mobile 077 5995 0497

Alan Ross  
70 Maine Road, Shankbridge, Ballymena  
Tel 2589 2740  
Mobile 077 5991 6755

### PARISH OFFICE

St Patrick's Hall - Tel 2563 0741 E-mail - [kilconriola@btconnect.com](mailto:kilconriola@btconnect.com) OR [ballymena@connor.anglican.org](mailto:ballymena@connor.anglican.org)  
Web Site - [ballymena.connor.anglican.org](http://ballymena.connor.anglican.org) and Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/ballymenaparish>

Open - Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings

**PARISH ADMINISTRATOR:** Mrs Lorraine McBride

### CHURCH WARDENS

St Patrick's	Rector's	Mrs Patricia McWhirter
	People's	Mrs Rosalie Grainger
Ballyclug	Rector's	Mr Eric McKee
	People's	Mr Jackie Greer
St Columba's	Rector's	Mrs Hilary Strain
	People's	Mr Ivan McCombe
Glebe Wardens	Rector's	Mr Kenneth Hughes
	People's	Mr Peter Chestnutt

### SELECT VESTRY

#### Clergy, Church Wardens, Glebe Wardens and:

Mr Alan Adair, Mr Bill Balmer, Mr William Burnett, Mrs Anne Crawford, Mrs Debbie Crawford, Mr Barry Duke, Mr Dessie Dunlop, Mr Alastair Marrs, Mr Alex McKay, Mr Jackie McMaster, Mrs Adelaide Nimick and Mrs Loraine Watt.

Honorary Secretary:  
Honorary Treasurer:

Mr A Marrs  
Mr J Carson

32 Granville Drive, Ballymena  
19 Valley Road, Ballymena

Sextons

St Patrick's  
St Columba's  
St Patrick's  
St Columba's

Mr John Linton  
Miss Margaret Mawhinney  
Dr Jonathan Drennan  
Mrs Sandra Montgomery

Organists

THE RECTOR WRITES



# The Rector Writes

I am not long returned from India where Ian McKay and myself were able to do quite a bit of work for St Columba's Hospital and assure them of our continued support. As is the case with many other mission hospitals St Columba's is struggling to survive. One of the great challenges is obtaining staff and holding on to them. Mission hospitals cannot compete with government hospitals when it comes to staff remuneration even if the level of care in mission hospitals is often better than elsewhere.

A nurse in St Columba's Hospital is paid in our money about £70 - £80 a month. The auxiliary staff who were looking after us get about £30 a month. Now granted the cost of living is less than here but nevertheless such remuneration entails a much lower standard of living than here. True, India launched a space probe towards Mars while we were there which clearly cost a huge sum of money and there are many in India who are doing very well as their economy grows, yet still there are vast numbers who live at a very low standard. It is hard to credit that the population of India is 1,200 million people - in Northern Ireland it is about one and a half million. While technically speaking government hospitals supply free care, in reality you are required to pay for many things. Very many people cannot get the help they need simply because they are poor. Even in St Columba's, where fees are kept to a minimum and some costs are met from a charity fund, many stay away from hospital because they know it will cost something. Whatever we may think of the National Health we are spoilt in comparison to literally millions of others in so many parts of the world. Time spent in other countries alerts us to how blessed we are - most of us have a reasonable standard of living.

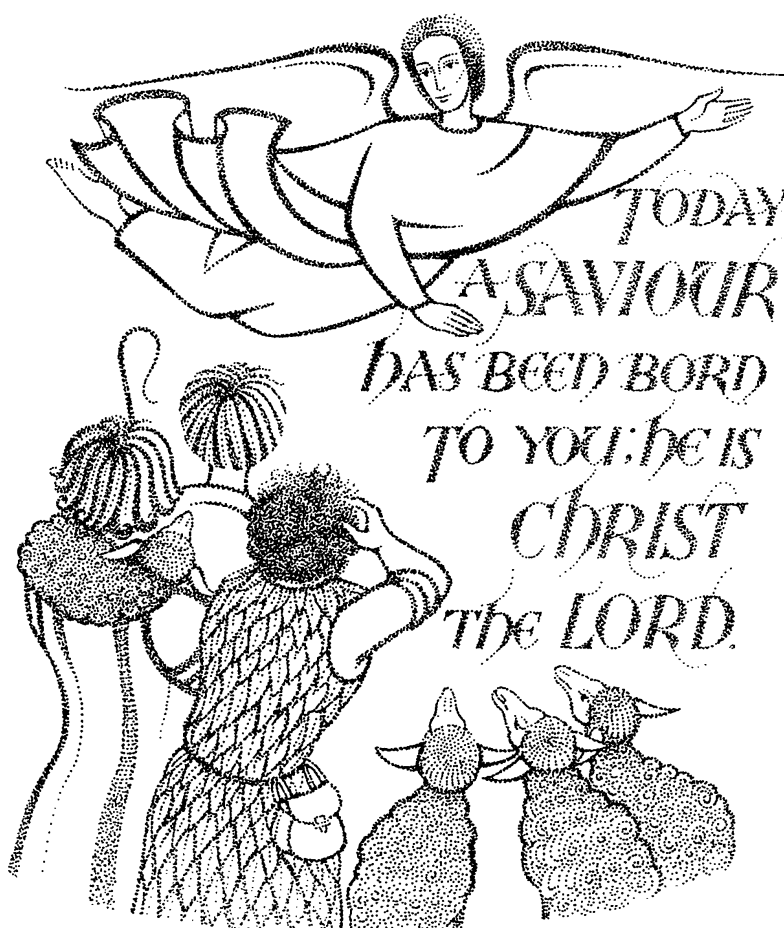
Recently in the parish we had a collection for those suffering in Syria - it yielded £616. At the time of writing we are having a further appeal for the victims of the typhoon in the Philippines. On top of these special appeals we will, before Christmas, have our annual Bishops' Appeal which

goes towards development work in the Third World. Of course at home our people have been generous in continuing to contribute to the Ballymena Foodbank and we will have the usual Christmas Appeal for toys which is channelled through the Salvation Army

In the midst of all of this and much more we could easily suffer from charity fatigue. We do need to continue to remember just how blessed we are and the standard of life most of us enjoy. In this season we will be encouraged to spend and yes it is good, for the economy and traders do need our support. Yet in the midst of all our spending in line with our standard of living, we must remind ourselves how fortunate most of us are in comparison to others and continue to support those others in whatever way we can.

During this coming month we celebrate how Jesus left the richness of heaven and came down to share in the comparative poverty of our life here on earth. He gave up so much that he might give so much. *"You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich."* May we be prepared to give of our riches so that others may have a measure of the life we have.

*Stuart Lloyd.*







# Parish News

## BUILDING COMMUNITY

Four churches in the town are cooperating in a new initiative to help build community. It started with 5 local clergy participating in the North East Peace 3 Clergy Project and now it is taking root with lay people from those churches taking a lead. There was an overnight conference back in August which encouraged about 30 folks representing the churches to consider how we can improve relationships within the town and improve the quality of community life. At that conference people were open and frank in their sharing.

Some of these folks and a wider group from the churches then participated in a day conference at which the key note speaker was Terry Waite. Then on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November we gathered together for breakfast and discussion to see what practical steps we could take to move things forward. There were many ideas and much enthusiasm. Recognising the time pressures on many

one event is being planned before Christmas and several projects are being considered for 2014. The event before Christmas, because of its nature, is to be a surprise! This group of 4 churches - Methodist, 1<sup>st</sup> Ballymena, All Saints and ourselves will be supporting other groups and people working in the same area of community relationships but it is an area of ministry we also want to do together and to involve our own people.

## GIVING

Focused around the harvest we have been encouraging an increase in the giving to our General Fund through the Christian Responsibility Envelopes - the blue ones. We sought to emphasise the 'grace of giving' as well as bringing before parishioners the challenge of our income falling short of our outgoings. It is good to report an increase in the giving. Since the beginning of October to the third Sunday of November the comparative figures are - 2012 £16,333: 2013 £18,486.

It is to be hoped that this increase will continue because we can be sure that costs will continue to rise. Also we have to recognise that it is the General Fund that provides the clergy for the parish. At the moment this supports one curate. If consideration is to be given to the provision of our usual team of 2 curates then we will have to find the means of funding this.

The church envelopes for 2014 are in the process of being distributed. If you are in an outlying area it may well be that your envelopes will be at the back of the church you attend, rather than being delivered. If you have not got envelopes by mid December please let the office know.

The giving for 2013 will close on 31<sup>st</sup> December. In the past we have given a few weeks grace but this only complicates matters. Please make sure any money you wish recorded for 2013 is in the church before the end of the year. Quite a few people do make up their giving at the last moment - do please try to help by having that with us as soon as possible.

## **AN OPPORTUNITY**

An opportunity exists for young people and perhaps not so young to assist with our worship in St Patrick's. We try to record the

service once a month and this is delivered to elderly folk. We would like to increase the number of these recordings. Already we have a parishioner who is adept at recording but we would like some others to assist him and to help keep an eye on the sound desk. This playing with sound might be something which would appeal to young people but clearly any help would be welcome - please do consider this appeal and speak to the clergy or churchwardens.

## **ADVENT**

During Advent we will be having our mid week evening service in Ballyclug. This will take place on the 3 Wednesdays in Advent at 8 pm. We are taking the theme of waiting - waiting in the Old Testament, waiting in terms of the incarnation and waiting for the last days.

Also during Advent, as in the last few years, the Ballymena Church Members Forum is hosting a series of Advent Reflections in 4 of the local churches. Each lasts about 30 minutes starting at 12.30 pm and is followed by refreshments. The details are -

- 28<sup>th</sup> November, All Saints
- 5<sup>th</sup> December, Ballymena Methodist
- 12<sup>th</sup> December, St Patrick's
- 19<sup>th</sup> December, West Church

## **BISHOPS' APPEAL**

Yes we have had several special appeals lately - for Syria and for the Philippines. Yet still we should not drop this year the annual Bishop's Appeal which is the Church of Ireland's World Aid and Development Programme. Thus there will be envelopes for this and information leaflets in the churches on the first three Sundays in December. While resources may be tight, and many are the charity pleas that come before us we usually still have the capacity to lend another helping hand.

## **ST COLUMBA'S COFFEE MORNING**

St Columba's hosted a very successful Coffee Morning on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November. Many members of the congregation brought tray bakes, pastry and scones enabling all the 'customers' to decide whether to just indulge or to over indulge. Thank you to all our bakers and also to St Clair Beatty who donated one of his paintings for the raffle and to Robin Cherry who donated several bags of his Sun-beam potatoes.

Entertainment was provided by Chloe and Danielle Peachey, Dana Kernohan, Arran School of Irish Dancers and St Columba's Guide Leaders 'Sister Act'.

The response from all three churches was very encouraging and a total of over £640 was raised towards upgrading the sanctuary lights.

The Committee wishes to sincerely thank all who contributed in any way.

## **CHRISTMAS PRESENTS**

This is the theme for our Christmas morning service in St Patrick's. We are encouraging the children to bring some of their presents to church and these will be brought into the service. We will try to make the service 'child friendly' within the context of a shortened form of Holy Communion 2. We appreciate that there are those who can't get to the late night or early communion services and so want their Christmas Communion at a suitable hour. Bringing children to church on Christmas Day gives them an invaluable present - an understanding that at the centre of Christmas is the Christ child.

## **FIRST AID COURSE**

A six hour First Aid Course for Youth Workers will run on:-

- **Monday 3rd February 2014**  
from 6 - 9 pm and
- **Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2014**  
from 6 - 9 pm

Those in need of a Refresher Course will be notified individually but, if anyone else is interested please inform **Oliver Reid** on **2565 5439**.

## **THANK YOU FROM THE CASTLE PLAYERS**

The Castle Players want to thank all of those involved in making our first production such a success. The future of the group depended on the outcome of those two nights and the outcome of those two nights depended on the hard work and commitment of those involved both on and off the stage.

The cast, a mixture of young and old, inexperienced and experienced, worked hard to create an entertaining evening.

However, this would not have worked without all the backstage help and those who supported us on the two nights. Sincere thanks are due to Liz and Les Hughes and the catering team in the kitchen especially Vera Greer and Liz Bodel, as well as Alex McKay in the car park.

During the week and at all the rehearsals we could not have succeeded without the co-operation of Alan and Lucy and the Youth Club, the Bowling Club, the Badminton Club and Kenneth Hughes with St Columba's Scouts. Thanks

also to Lorraine McBride and John Linton who gave us a lot of help during the week. St Clair Beatty not only helped with our set but also recorded the performances on video.

Our stage set would not have been complete without the help of Valerie Penney (Specsavers), West Church Office and Blythswood Care.

We must also thank the Select Vestry for their permission and support in our venture and we hope they feel their decision justified.

Last but not least thank you to all who came to enjoy the plays and the stew!

Hopefully this gives us the basis both financially and emotionally to grow and establish the Castle Players as a broadly based drama society.

## **A NOTE OF THANKS**

I would like to thank everyone who phoned me, sent cards, and offered prayer for my recovery, when I was in hospital for a hip replacement.

My special thanks to the Healer Prayer Group for their friendship and prayers at this time. I have made an amazing recovery, and I

know this is because of the caring support and the power of prayer.

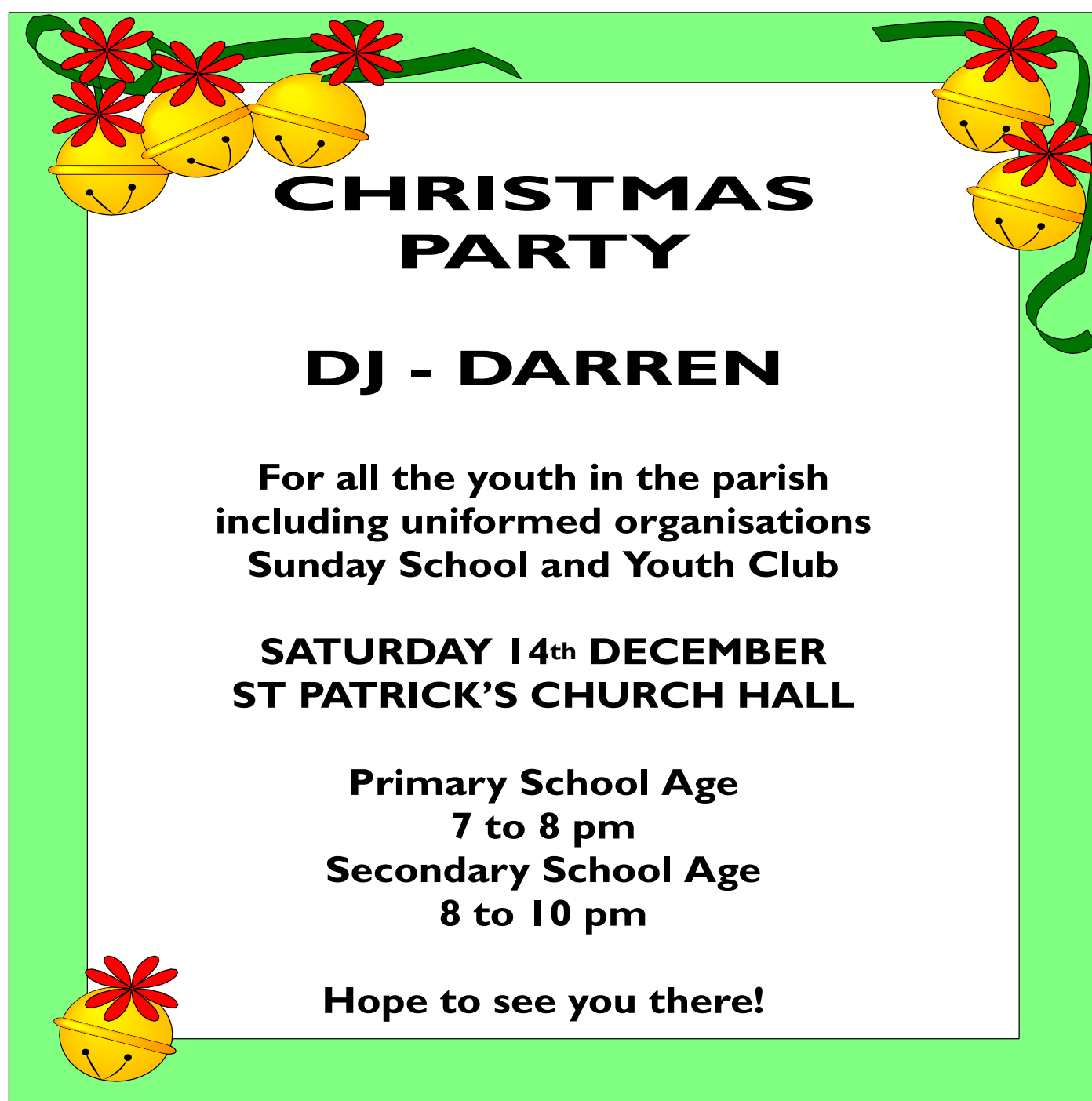
With humble thanks to everyone.  
*Maureen Curry*

### **SHOE BOX APPEAL 2013**

Approximately 120 shoe boxes were received from the Parish. Many thanks to all.

We would also like to thank all those who made a donation for the covered boxes. Special thanks go to Andrew Clarke and Kathleen Thompson for their help with the covering of the boxes. The donations this year amounted to £105 which will be split between St Columba's Hospital in Hazaribagh in North East India and the Northern Ireland Kidney Research Fund.

*Les and Liz Hughes*



**CHRISTMAS  
PARTY**

**DJ - DARREN**

**For all the youth in the parish  
including uniformed organisations  
Sunday School and Youth Club**

**SATURDAY 14<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER  
ST PATRICK'S CHURCH HALL**

**Primary School Age  
7 to 8 pm  
Secondary School Age  
8 to 10 pm**

**Hope to see you there!**

# **LINDA'S TOURNAMENT**

**Bowling Tournament**  
**St Patrick's Hall, Ballymena**

**30th December 2013-**  
**9th January 2014**

**All proceeds in aid of**



**Northern  
Ireland  
Hospice**

**&**







# Around the Parish

## SQUIRRELS

The Squirrels have now finished their fundraising for Guide Dogs for the Blind and were delighted to hand over £220 to their representative, Liz Taylor. We'd like to thank the boys and their families for their generosity. November also saw the Squirrels taking part in the Youth Promise Service in St Columba's.



As we are fast approaching Christmas the boys are making decorations and Christmas chocolate logs, and of course we are all hoping that special visitor will be able to join us for our party night.



*Squirrels presenting cheque to Guide Dogs for the Blind*

2013 was a very busy year for us, we saw some of our boys move away to Beavers and lots of new faces coming along to join us. This year our

leader, Paul Houston, was appointed as Mid-Antrim District Representative for the NI Squirrel Association. Congratulations to Paul, they couldn't have appointed a better Representative as his enthusiasm and dedication is second to none.



All that remains is for us to wish our Squirrels, families and friends a very Happy Christmas. We look forward to seeing you all in 2014.

*Paul, Ann and  
Mr Squirrel*

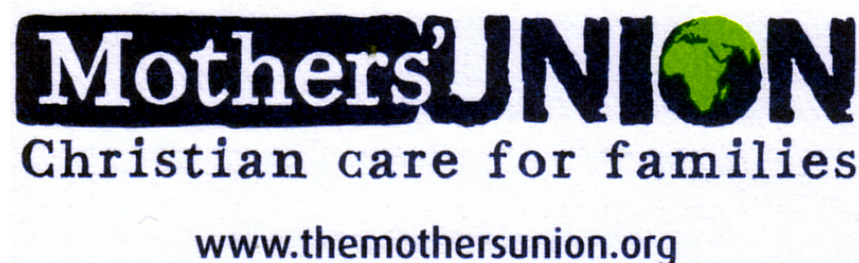
## CHURCH LADS' BRIGADE

The boys enjoyed a night at NERF shooting. Thanks to Cliffy Adams at the Sports Hut.

**Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December** is the Brigade Christmas party night - usual times - no uniforms required.

Our annual Jumble Sale will be held on **Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March**. This will give everyone more time for a good spring clean around the house - more details in February magazine.

All the leaders would like to thank you for your continued support throughout the year and wish all your families a very happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.



Brigade recommences on **Friday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2014**.

*Alan Ross*

## MOTHERS' UNION

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December** - Christingle Service at 3.30 pm in the Parish Centre, All Saints, Antrim. Please support this diocesan family event - husbands, children, grandchildren, friends - all welcome.

Branch Meeting - **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December**. We will join the Advent Service in Ballyclug at 8 pm. Supper will be served after service in Ballyclug.

**2014**

**Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January** - Annual Dinner.

*Jean Kennedy*



## CHOIR TRIP TO EDINBURGH

On 25<sup>th</sup> October some members of the choir travelled to Edinburgh for a week-end break. Most of the group had visited this beautiful and vibrant city before, knowing we had the choice of the medieval Old Town or the splendour of the Georgian New Town - a chance to visit museums, churches, the castle, Royal Yacht Britannia or do some shopping. After dinner on Saturday we attended the Festival Theatre where we listened to songs from the 'Three Phantoms'.

We made our way to St Mary's Cathedral (Episcopal Church) on Sunday afternoon for Choral Evensong. The Provost, The Very Rev. Dr Graham Forbes CBE welcomed us before the service and told us of the work that the choir did in preparation for each day of the week. The choir, made up of men, boys and girls is widely known for its excellence and broadcasts regularly and travels the world. The young choristers are educated at St Mary's Music school which is across the road from the cathedral.

We listened intently to the choir as they sang an introit 'Prevent us O Lord', the psalm, responses and an anthem 'All wisdom cometh from the Lord'. As we left the cathedral we could only pray that some day we would have young boys and girls with us in St Patrick's to make such a harmonious sound. Later in the evening we all dined at a Spanish Tapas restaurant. This was a new experience for some and we thoroughly enjoyed our meal and the craic. Many thanks to Laverne for suggesting the restaurant and making the reservation (Gracias).

We thank Moyna for organising our travel arrangements, the hotel which was very good and the tickets for the Tree Phantoms.

*Ella Duddy*

## MOTHERS AND TODDLERS

In November we had our usual fun activities of crafts, toys, singing and healthy snacks. It's great to see so many parents, carers and children each week enjoying themselves. We would like to say a special thank you to the ladies in the kitchen, at the welcoming desk and the gentlemen who are bravely marshalling the car parking.



In recognition of the help we receive week by week we will be inviting you to lunch in January DV. If there are any gentlemen who are free on a Tuesday morning between 9 and 10.30 and willing to help with the car parking, please give Dorothy a ring, we would be very grateful for your help.

Our Christmas Party and Carol Service will be held on **10<sup>th</sup> December** and this will be our last day until the New Year - **7<sup>th</sup> January 2013**, once again we say thank you to Les Hughes for agreeing to do a very important job that day. We would like to wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

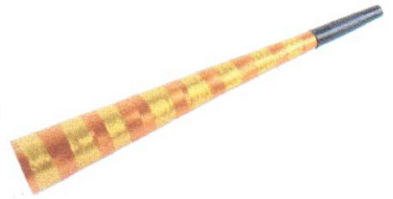
Rota for December:-

DATE	NAME	FUNCTION
3 December	Rosemary Stacey, Sandra McKay and Mary Cochrane	Tea
	Bee Robinson	Welcoming
	Alex McKay	Car Park
10 December	Evonne Stinson, Eleanor Burnett, Rosalie Grainger and Vera Owens	Tea
	Martha Caulfield	Welcoming
	Oliver Reid and Robert McGimpsey	Car Park

*Dorothy (2589 2740),  
Anna, Anne and Liz*



# ENERGIZE GETS SOCIAL!!!

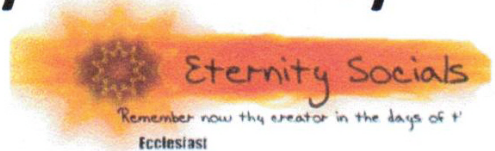


Christmas Party

7pm-9pm 15/12/2013

Portglenone Parish Centre

Entertainment by Eternity  
Socials



Loads of banter to be had,  
including best Christmas  
jumper competition.

facebook.com/  
Energize.Ballymena



# **CHRISTMAS**

## **St Patrick's, Ballymena**

### **Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2013**

8.15 am Holy Communion

11.30 am Sunday School  
Nativity Service

6.30 pm Festival of Nine  
Lessons and Carols  
by Candlelight

### **24<sup>th</sup> December - Christmas Eve**

11.30 pm Holy Communion 1

### **Christmas Day**

8.15 am Holy Communion 1

10.30 am 'Christmas Presents'  
a shortened form of  
Communion 2 for all  
ages

### **Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> December 2013**

8.15 am Holy Communion 1

11.30 am Service of Carols and  
Reflections

6.30 pm Reflections and  
Carols

### **31<sup>st</sup> December 2013**

11.15 pm Watchnight Service



# **SERVICES**

## **St Columba's, Dunclog**

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2013**

11.30 am Morning Prayer

7.00 pm Service of Nine  
Lessons and Carols  
by Candlelight  
followed  
by refreshments

**Christmas Day**

10.30 am Family Communion 2

**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> December 2013**

11.30 am Carols and  
Reflections

## **St Patrick's, Ballyclug**

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2013**

10.00 am Service of Lessons  
and Carols

**Christmas Day**

10.00 am Holy Communion 1

**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> December 2013**

10.00 am Carols and  
Reflections



# St Columba's Hospital, Hazaribagh

I, and a parishioner Ian McKay, have just returned from the hospital after a stay of two and a half weeks. We went to find out more about the situation at the hospital and especially about its future, to do some practical work and to provide moral support to those who are still maintaining the life of the hospital.

The hospital is still operating but at quite a limited level. The shortage of doctors greatly limits the service that can be provided. It would appear that up to 100 babies are still delivered each month and there are several operations each day, very often caesarean. The numbers attending outpatients varies greatly from a handful to 40 on any day. The number of inpatients would seem to be small.

The hospital also provides immunisation clinics for children. People still come from quite a distance to the hospital, bypassing other hospitals and health facilities, and so St Columba's still has a good reputation and its care is valued. Nevertheless compared with 2001 when I first visited the hospital the level of activity is greatly reduced.

There is still a great deal of uncertainty about the future, not least because Dr Pushpa Dass the medical superintendent and Shirley Imam, the administrator retire next Easter. It is now the responsibility of the local diocese to consider the hospital's viability, but it has been slow in revealing its intentions. The diocese has set up a committee to consider the future and the hospital has met with them and given their views.

Although the hospital is only functioning at a limited level it does employ over 100 people including about 50 nurses so the livelihoods of all of these are in question. We can only pray that the diocese will ease the frustration and concern by making some decisions.



While we were there we did undertake practical work. Pushpa and Shirley have built a house for when they leave the hospital. They call it the matchbox - it is very small and basic. We were able to clean out the matchbox, to paint it all, to put in a sink unit and to clear the ground around the house. Certainly when we had finished, the building such as it is looked far more attractive.

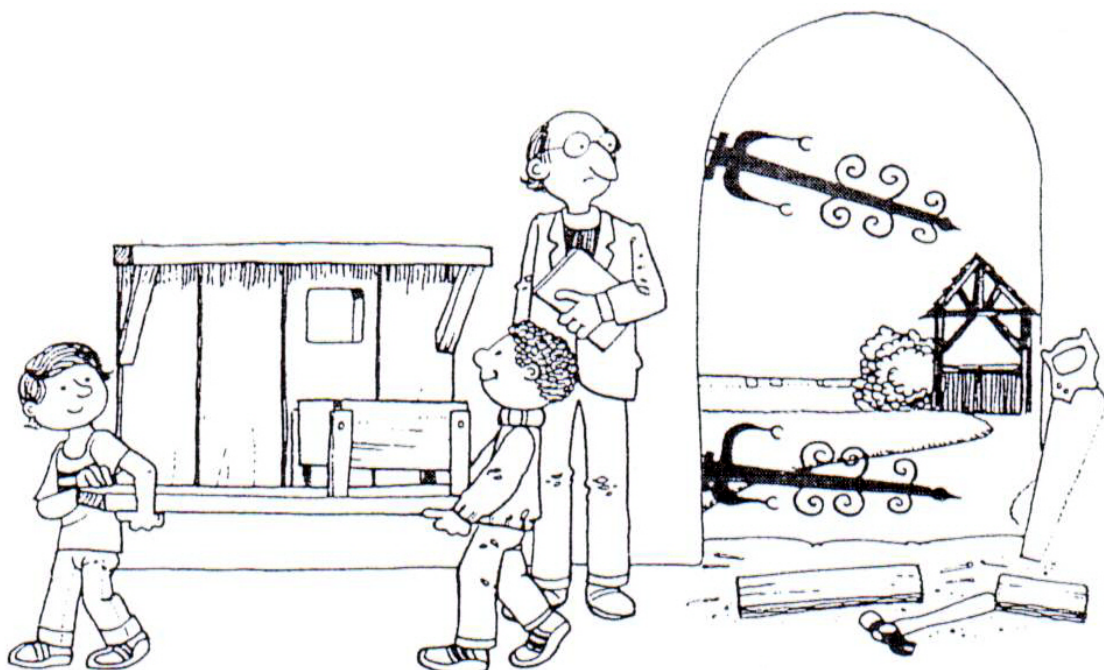
When we were last out at the hospital in 2010 an electric chain saw had been bought and we cut wood for the hospital. We were surprised that since then Shirley was afraid to let any of the staff use the saw so when we arrived we were once again given this task. Quite a few fallen trees and branches were to be found around the grounds so again we were able to provide the hospital with a considerable supply of wood.

Pushpa and Shirley I think valued our work and encouragement. Before we left, because we might be the last face-to-face Irish contact before they leave we did formally on behalf of all those in Ireland thank them both for their service over so many years.

The hospital supplied us with bicycles and we cycled to work each day, got out into the countryside and also got to know the town of Hazaribagh itself. We enjoyed dealing with the chaotic traffic!

Please keep the hospital in mind during this uncertain time.

*Rector*



‘It’s a lovely crib, boys, but . . .’



# Honorary Secretary's Notes

After the completion of the work around Ballyclug and St Columba's we have now entered a quiet time, with no other large jobs now needing to be urgently done around any of the churches. Another month has passed and it is unhappily true to say that there still isn't any sign of the east wall at Ballyclug drying out, so it may well be that more work will be needed there again after the winter.

At the moment the rectory is receiving some much overdue attention, in particular replacement windows, in the hope that some modern double glazing will help reduce the cost of heating this house.

With the same reason in mind the Glebe Wardens are investigating the possibility of installing some insulation above the ceiling in the minor hall, where there is a great big void between the current suspended ceiling and the actual ceiling of the room. There will also be some remedial plumbing necessary in the church halls for the rooms behind the stage (office and youth room).

We have also requested permission from the R.C.B. to take out two pews in the north transept of St Patrick's in order to create some more open space at the top of the nave for the Music Group and Choir at the Living Faith Services, and for the use of the Healer Prayer Group after morning and evening services. We cannot remove those until we get permission from the R.C.B. (that is the Representative Church Body for those who don't know, the legal entity which owns all of the property of the Church of Ireland). If you are interested in seeing into some of the workings of the church as an organisation have a look at the Church of Ireland website which you'll find at [www.church-of-ireland.eu](http://www.church-of-ireland.eu).

For the future, first we will wait to see what the five yearly inspection (currently underway) by the Diocese turns up that will have to be done, and I hope I'll be able to report to you on that in the February issue. After that is dealt with our wish list includes improving the main entrance to the Chancellor Craig Hall to make it a little less 'institutional' and a little more welcoming, and perhaps trying to do something with the floors in St Patrick's where the lino is wearing out and the underlying tiling is broken and uneven in several places, but those things we will come to in their due season, God willing.

All the Best,  
*Alastair*





## YOUTH CLUB

Some of the young leaders from the Youth Club enjoyed a night out at Frankie and Benny's on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November. A good night was had by all. We value our young leaders and thank them for their help throughout the year. The Youth Club like to think of others less fortunate than themselves and contributed to the shoe box appeal by bringing in items for the boxes and also donating £50 towards the Children in Need appeal and the Philippines Appeal. We are all looking forward to Christmas and especially the Christmas Party on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December, 7 - 8 pm for primary school age and 8 - 10 pm for secondary school age. This will be the last night of Youth Club for 2013 - we will start again on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2014.



## SUNDAY SCHOOL



Some Sunday School teachers went to an Essentials Ministry Course in Belfast run by the Diocese of Down and Dromore. This was an excellent course as it was Church of Ireland based and the topics were very relevant to us. We also went to a Children's Ministry Conference called Building Blocks in Wellington Church where we participated in different workshops. The

speaker was John Hardwick who is a singer/songwriter and storyteller and his aim is to present the Christian faith in an exciting and relevant way. The Sunday School teachers hope to enjoy a Christmas dinner together in early December and we are all practicing for the Carol Service on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> at 11.30 am.

There will be no Family Service on **Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December** - Sunday School instead. This will be the last day of Sunday school. We will restart on **Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2014**.

### CHRISTIAN AID FAMILY APPEAL

Sunday School teachers and children will receive envelopes in which they can give a donation towards the Family Appeal - instead of the giving and receiving of presents. These can be given at the Carol Service on **Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December**.

### CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

Please can you bring presents unwrapped for **Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December**. These will be given out to the Church Army Christmas Appeal and then distributed to needy children.

Happy Christmas to all young people and leaders of the parish and a peaceful New Year for 2014

*Lucy and Alan*

## AULD TIME AND SEQUENCE DANCE



St Patrick's Parish Church Hall  
Trostan Avenue, Ballymena  
on

Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> December, 2013  
8.00 pm – 11.30 pm

**Music by Sammy Miskelly**

Admission £5.00 including supper - **NO** Raffle  
**Proceeds in aid of Alzheimer's Society**  
***Antrim and Ballymena***



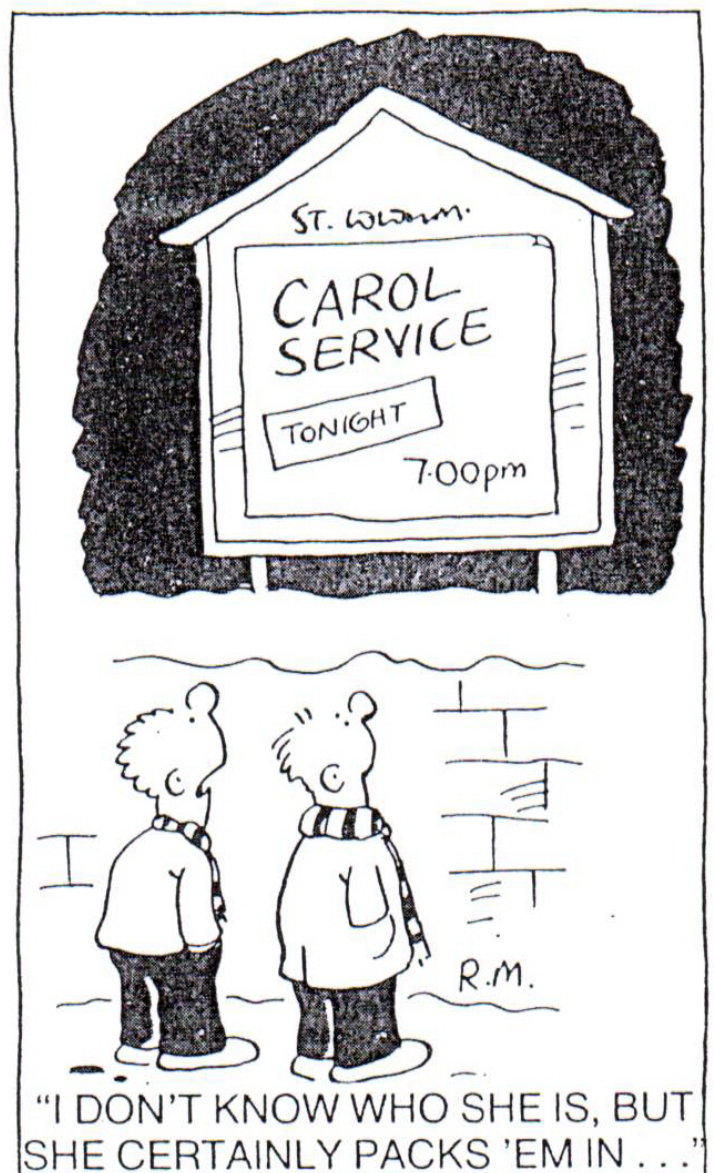


# Ballyclug Notes

Harvest time was as usual very busy again this year at Ballyclug with our Service on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October and the preacher being the Rev. Ron Elsdon. St Patrick's Choir under Dr Drennan's leadership led the singing and sang a very moving anthem, so our grateful thanks to them and all those who helped decorate the church so beautifully.

Then we had the annual Ballyclug Harvest Supper that took place on 9<sup>th</sup> October in St Patrick's Church Hall and was a very successful night. A large audience enjoyed a good night's programme of various artists including the rector and curate Iain, St Patrick's Choir accompanied by Dr Drennan and two wonderful violin solo performances from his wife. Our thanks to Bill Balmer for doing compère. The cake stall was also well supported. We are greatly indebted to Jackie and Vera Greer for the hard work organising the whole event and thanks also to those who provided and served an excellent supper, not forgetting the car park attendants, who braved the cold night outside. As there is still money coming in a final total is not yet available.

**William Burnett**



**CHRISTIANS**  
**AGAINST POVERTY** **UK**



**CAP**

What is CAP? It stands for Christians Against Poverty, an organisation which attempts to come alongside those suffering from debt and help them plan to make their way out of debt. At the last meeting of the Select Vestry the organiser of the Ballymena branch of CAP spoke of the work and challenged us as to how we might support it.

The first branch of CAP was set up in England in 1996. Today there are over 200 branches in Great Britain and it is now being established in other countries. Some statistics show the value of this work. Approximately 11,000 families are being helped each year. CAP handles over £73 million of clients debt and 94% of clients say that the service of CAP was a great help. On average 138 families become debt free every month and 96% stay debt free.

We may not always appreciate it but real poverty exists here in our country - the uptake on the local Foodbank is proof of this. Debt is a major contributor. For people living on a low income and struggling to make ends meet, debt repayments can mean they are unable to afford the basics of life - regular meals, heating, clothing or medication. Debt causes relational poverty too. Stress, sleepless nights and constant arguing about money put a massive strain on marriages and families. This all results in emotional poverty - bitterness, depression and even suicide attempts.

However because we are following Jesus' mission there is hope:-

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.”



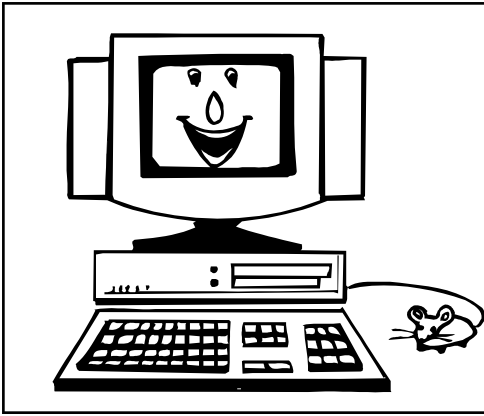
CAP is rooted in the Christian gospel and debt centres are always opened in partnership with local churches. When clients ask for CAP's help they also meet the church! Indeed many clients have come to living faith simply through the care of others.

The local branch of CAP is looking for further support. A few at our meeting expressed an immediate interest. It would be good for others with any such interest to come forward - please speak to the rector or Hilary Strain.

There may also be those who would value the help of CAP. The local branch can be contacted through Valerie Roebuck, the centre manager at 077 1817 5891 or of course you could speak to the clergy.



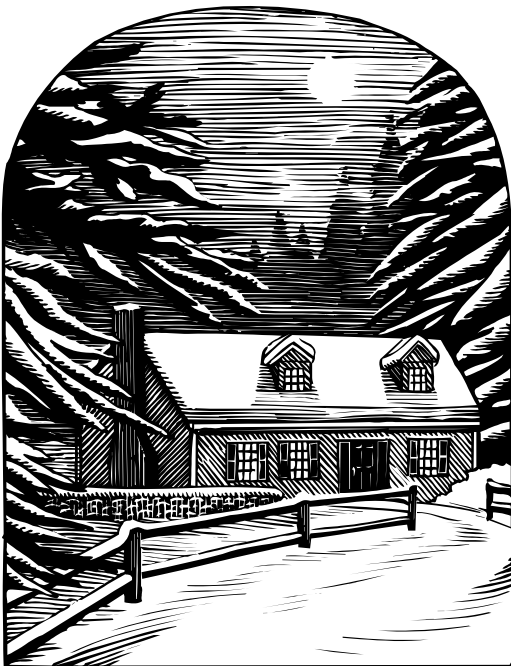
*Rejoice* *Glory*  
IN THE OF CHRISTMAS



# The Curate's Letter

**May the Force be with you this Winterval**

It is not uncommon at this time of year to hear ministers, in sermons and magazines, lamenting that the 'real' meaning of Christmas has been lost. They say things like there is too much pleasure seeking and commercialism, and people are too busy with questions like, "Where are the mince pies?" and "How much Bailey's can I legally get away with drinking?" instead of thinking about the big questions like, "Why am I here?" and "Does God exist?"

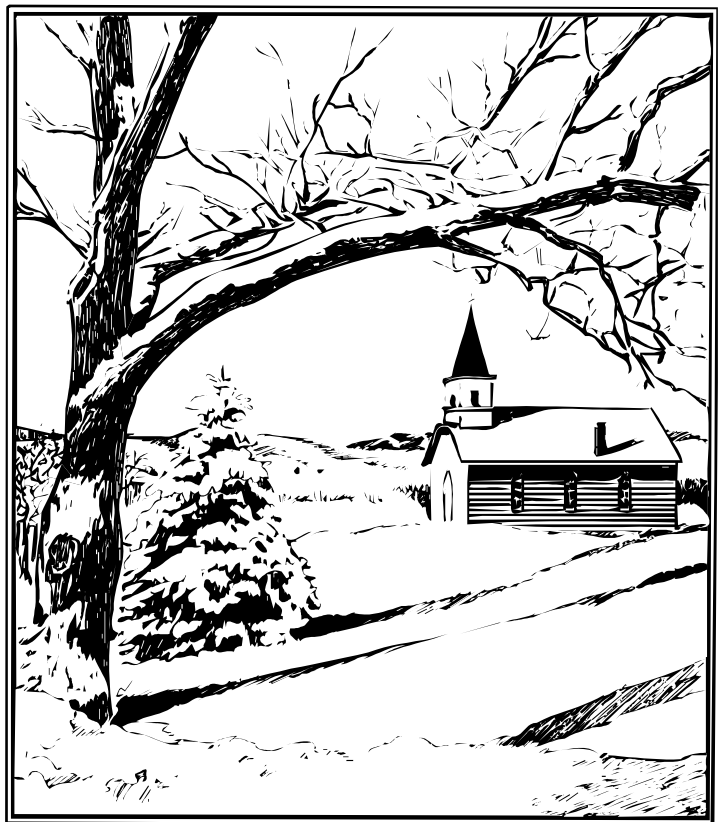


I don't agree with this. I feel certain there has been a big winter festival/celebration (and probably booze up) in the middle of winter in these islands since the beginning of time. Christianity may have brought innumerable benefits to Ireland, but I very much doubt that Christmas was one of them. I am sure the ancient Irish needed no Christians to teach them how to party. It was not Christmas that was celebrated in those days of course, but the winter equinox, the shortest day/longest night, the very centre of winter darkness. The time furthest away from the health-giving benefits of the sun. The midwinter celebration was a thanksgiving for having survived the winter so far (no central heating and antibiotics in those days!) and it expressed a hope that the winter would eventually go to be replaced with spring, and that people would make it to the summer. It expressed a hope in other words in an *ultimate goodness* behind the cold and darkness. So in one sense the big winter party was actually spiritual. It was a thanksgiving, and petition to God (as he was then understood) to bring us out of darkness into light.

Although Christians saw the benefit of a big winter celebration, they didn't approve of its rampant paganism, all that talk about nature and no talk about God, and so the Christians turned it into a celebration of the birth of Jesus, (which actually probably happened in April). And because the Christians became a big and powerful group their version of truth came to be accepted and we all started to think that the big winter festival had always been about Jesus.

Most people are not celebrating the birth of Jesus at Christmas. That's simply recognizing facts. However, Christianity has much to *add* to the festivities. Such as this: without faith in God what exactly is it that brings us out of darkness? Without God it can only be the blind impersonal force of nature, simply *rolling on* like a steam roller from winter to spring to summer to autumn, in an endless cycle. A nature which cares nothing for you or me, only cycles, sex and reproduction.

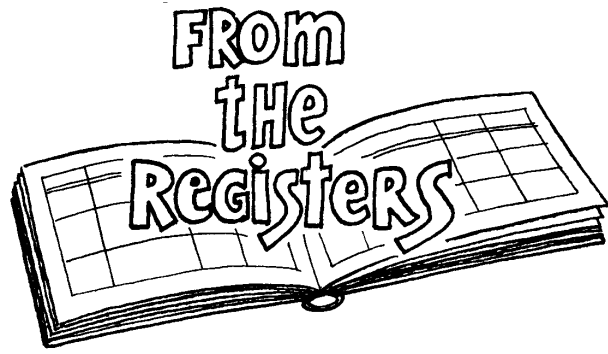
We Christians, however, know that there is really no such thing as impersonal 'nature'. Nature is in fact 'creation', and behind this world there is a great and powerful Creator-God. And God is not only big and powerful but *personal*. Nature may not give a damn about us, but God does. The big powerful God is still interested in



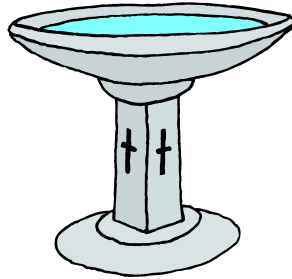
YOU. And we can speak to him and he will listen. And God's love for each one of his creatures (that means you and me) is best seen in his sending Jesus, his Son to be a Man. Because Jesus came back from death, we know that we can come back from death too and that the darkness has been conquered once and for all.

So let's have a party, I will certainly be stuffing my face on lots of tasty food. But remember it's not only food that's good but also God. And God's goodness is eternal and meets more needs than food. I hope you will enjoy both this Christmas.

*Jan Turner*



## HOLY BAPTISM



17<sup>th</sup> November

Luke Daniel  
Cunningham  
Harry David Finlay

9 Shona Green,  
Ballymena  
8 Rossdale, Ballymena

## HOLY MATRIMONY



20<sup>th</sup> November

Robert Wilkinson  
  
Nadia McMurray

17 Woodlands,  
Broughshane  
17 Woodlands,  
Broughshane

## CHRISTIAN BURIAL



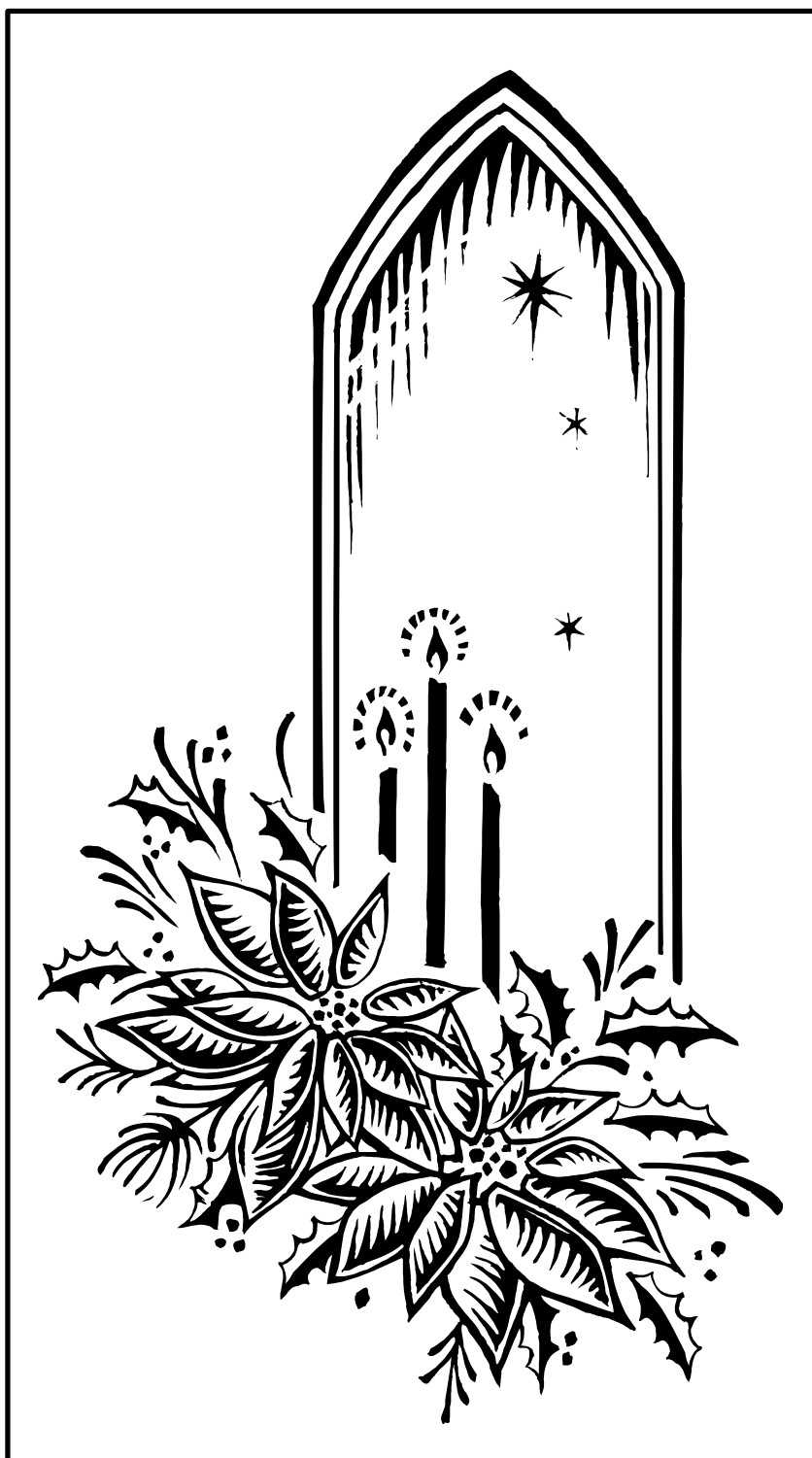
25<sup>th</sup> October

Hugh Herbison

141 Ballymena Road,  
Cullybackey

## Hugh MacDonald (Don) Herbison

Don was born in 1937 and was educated at Miller's Academy in Ballymena. As a young man he served time as a builder's apprentice and later became a successful builder who won an architectural award for his work on Galgorm Castle. He was married to Finola and was a close family man. He served his country in the Ulster regiments and was a member of St Patrick's Orange Lodge. Our sympathy goes to Don's children, Johnny, Grace, Tracey, Cathy and Virginia and to his sister Isobel and to his brothers Johnny and Jimmy as well as the wider family circle.





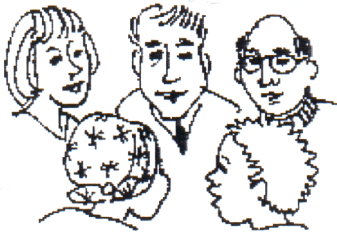
# OUR ACTIVITIES

## SAINT PATRICK'S

	Day	Time	Venue
Bellringers	Friday	7.30 pm	Tower
Bible Fellowship	Tuesday	8.00 pm	Choir Vestry
Church Choir	Thursday	7.30 pm	Choir Vestry
Church Lads' Brigade			
YBC	Friday	6.45 pm	Parochial Hall
JTC	Friday	6.45 pm	Parochial Hall
CLB	Friday	8.00 pm	Parochial Hall
Girls' Friendly Society	Tuesday	7.15 pm	Minor Hall
Healer Prayer Group	Tuesday	7.15 pm	Church Vestry
Indoor Bowling Club	Monday	7.30 pm	Parochial Hall
	Thursday	7.30 pm	Parochial Hall
Mothers and Toddlers	Tuesday	10.00 am	Parochial Hall
Mothers' Union	2nd Wed.	8.00 pm	Minor Hall
Still Active Club	3rd Wed.	2.00 pm	Minor Hall
Youth Club	Saturday	8.00 pm	Parochial Hall
Junior Youth Club	Saturday	7.00 pm	Parochial Hall
Youth Fellowship	3rd Sunday	7.30 pm	Parochial Hall
Badminton	Wednesday	7.30 pm	Parochial Hall
Theology Group	1st Thurs.	7.45 pm	Jubilee Room
Sewing Group	Thursday	10.00 am	Parochial Hall

## SAINT COLUMBA'S

	Day	Time	Contact
Beavers	Monday	6.30 pm	Mrs L McCullagh
Ladies' Circle	4th Monday	8.00 pm	Mrs L Beatty
Brownies	Tuesday	6.30 pm	Mrs S Foster
Guides	Tuesday	6.30 pm	Mrs K Black
Squirrels	Wednesday	6.30 pm	Mr P Houston
Cubs	Thursday	6.45 pm	Miss H Hughes
Choir	Sunday	10.15 am	Mrs S Montgomery
Rainbows	Friday	6.30 pm	Miss E Peachey
Scouts	Friday	7.45 pm	Mr K Hughes



# OUR WORSHIP

## ST PATRICK'S PARISH CHURCH

### SUNDAY SERVICES

8.15 am		<i>Holy Communion</i>
10.15 am	<i>3rd Sunday in the month</i>	<i>Family Service</i>
11.30 am		<i>Morning Prayer</i>
	<i>1st Sunday in the month</i>	<i>Parish Communion</i>
6.30 pm		<i>Evening Prayer</i>
	<i>3rd Sunday in the month</i>	<i>Holy Communion</i>
	<i>4th Sunday in the month</i>	<i>Living Faith Service</i>

### EVERY WEDNESDAY

10.30 am	<i>Holy Communion</i>
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## ST PATRICK'S, BALLYCLUG

### SUNDAY SERVICES

10.00 am	<i>Morning Prayer</i>
	<i>Holy Communion</i>
	<i>4th Sunday in the month</i>

## ST COLUMBA'S, DUNCLUG

### SUNDAY SERVICES

8.30 am	<i>1st Sunday in the month</i>	<i>Holy Communion</i>
11.30 am		<i>Morning Prayer</i>
	<i>2nd Sunday in the month</i>	<i>Family Service</i>
	<i>3rd Sunday in the month</i>	<i>Family Communion</i>

## SUNDAY SCHOOLS

### ST PATRICK'S

11.30 am	<i>Church</i>	<i>Leaders - Mrs L McLaughlin and Mr A Ross</i>
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### ST COLUMBA'S

11.30 am	<i>Church</i>	<i>Superintendent - Mrs S Foster</i>
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## HOLY BAPTISM

*At Sunday services by arrangement*