

Parish of Kilconriola and Ballyclug

PARISH MAGAZINE

MAY 2015



Diocese of Connor - Parish of Kilconriola and Ballyclug

WHO'S WHO IN OUR PARISH



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Open - Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR: Mrs Lorraine McBride

CHURCH WARDENS

St Patrick's	Rector's	Mrs Stephanie Johnston
	People's	Mrs Rosalie Grainger
Ballyclug	Rector's	Miss Nicola Burnett
	People's	Mr Jackie Greer
St Columba's	Rector's	Mr Jimmy Tuff
	People's	Mr Les Hughes
Glebe Wardens	Rector's	Mr Kenneth Hughes
	People's	Mr Peter Chestnutt

SELECT VESTRY

Clergy, Church Wardens, Glebe Wardens and:

Mr William Burnett, Miss Ruth Dixon, Mr Barry Duke, Mr Ronnie Fleming, Mrs Liz Hughes, Mr Stuart Jackson, Mr Alastair Marrs, Mr Alex McKay, Mr Jackie McMaster, Mr Jonathan Nevin, Mr Oliver Reid and Mr Richard Todd.

Honorary Secretary:

Mr A Marrs

32 Granville Drive, Ballymena

Honorary Treasurer:

Mrs L McBride

11 Ballyloughan Park, Ballymena

Sextons

St Patrick's

Mr John Linton

St Columba's

Miss Margaret Mawhinney

Organists

St Patrick's

Dr Jonathan Drennan

St Columba's

Mrs Sandra Montgomery

THE RECTOR WRITES



The Rector Writes

I am at my desk and doing some reading. From nowhere comes a tiny insect and proceeds to walk from one side of the book to the other. This insect fascinates me. It is to me nothing and yet probably all the scientists in the world could not bring into being such an insect able to function as this one does.

I think he deserves a name so we will call him Izzy. Now I don't know anything about insects but I'm sure that someone who does study them - and I'm sure they have a name - could tell me some marvellous facts about Izzy. If Izzy was to be put under a powerful microscope a



whole tiny world would be revealed and Izzy undoubtedly has a whole way of life to himself. So in himself he is a wonder and yet without any effort I can squash the life out of him. Just resting one finger on his delicate body and that wonderful little lad is no more. That is how superior I am to him and how much power I have over him.

Yet Izzy is there to teach me a lesson. His world is very limited - limited in terms of physical space and in terms of knowledge and understanding. Ballymena means nothing to him and he has no idea that we are approaching a general election. He cannot conceive of a wider world of millions of people and the great issues of the day. Talk of stars and galaxies are far beyond him. His ability to take in the world, his understanding of life is very restricted.

So what is Izzy going to teach me. He teaches me that just as he cannot conceive of the world as I do so I cannot conceive of the world as God does. Yes, under God I am wonderfully made but there is so much that I cannot hope to understand simply because I am a human creature and I am not God. So much will blow my mind, indeed will be far beyond the reach of my mind. My mind cannot deal with the majesty of God and much else. Recognising who I am I can only bow in reverence and humility and worship - I can only wonder and go on in faith.

So Izzy thanks for the lesson - you may get on with your life and I will get on with mine.

Stuart Lloyd.





Parish News

U3A

The University of the Third Age (U3A) is a nationwide organisation based on local groups providing opportunities for retired and semi-retired people to come together and develop their interests. Members take part in activity groups doing everything from art to zoology, with walking, photography and Scrabble and pretty much everything in between. Groups range from learning based on traditional subjects (thinking), studying local history and environment (looking), creative pursuits (making), games (playing), and various kinds of physical exercise (doing). Above all, the U3A exists to help make friends, develop interests and provide enjoyment. Local details can be accessed through the web site www.u3a.org.uk

HOUSE OF PRAYER

Apart from Sundays many churches remain closed during the week. It is good that St Patrick's remains open each day from 10 am - 5 pm.

People do come into the church to sit and reflect and sometimes to pray. People do appreciate the holy space and the quiet. Perhaps there are many who have never been in the church apart from services and thus have not experienced this atmosphere. If you are about why not consider dropping in to the church for such moments of quiet.

Each day we try to offer a time of prayer between 1.15 pm - 1.30 pm. A rota of people lead the prayers. Of course so often there are no others present, except that is the angels and archangels, but what counts is that prayers are offered up. Again it would be good if people who are about the town might drop in to share in this prayer time.

SUMMER SEATS

There are 4 summer seats around the triangle at the front of St Patrick's. These are part of the entrance to the church and are used by different folk. They are a little worse for wear - they need

to be sanded and re-varnished. A worthwhile job for someone or for a group of people - any volunteers?

JOINT SERVICE

For some years now we have had one joint service during the year when the 3 churches come together. It seems appropriate to have this when we are welcoming outsiders to the church for the Civic service. This will be held on Sunday 31st May in St Patrick's at 11.30 am. Thus on that Sunday there will be no service in Ballyclug or St Columba's.

FAMILY SERVICE

After Messy Church in place of the family service in April, in May on the third Sunday there will be the usual Family Service in the church at 10.15 am. At that service we will be following through on the theme in Messy Church of eating and drinking.

NEW TEAM

The Annual General Vestry of the Parish met recently and a new team was chosen in terms of church wardens, glebe wardens and Select Vestry. The names of

the new team appear on the inside cover of this magazine.

At another meeting in St Columba's the parishioners there also chose new members for the St Columba's Committee. As well as the new church wardens Jimmy Tuff and Les Hughes these members are:-

- Stephanie Allen
- Stephen Andrews
- Barry Duke
- Sandra Duke
- Kenneth Hughes
- Caroline Kernohan
- Ivan McCombe
- Sandra Montgomery
- Elizabeth Peachey
- Hilary Strain
- Alan Sutters
- Liz Taylor

THE CASTLE PLAYERS

It is the intention of the Castle Players to perform another Sam Cree Play entitled 'Widows Paradise' in St Patrick's this November and, with this in mind, we are on the look-out for additional members (both on and off stage).

Anyone interested should contact Lorraine Clarke on 074 4921 7349.

SAINSBURY'S ACTIVE KIDS VOUCHERS

Sainsbury's



Vouchers are only available at Sainsbury's stores and petrol stations until 5th May 2015.

St Columba's Scout Group (Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts) are taking part again and hope that you are bringing your vouchers to the collecting boxes at the back of each of our three churches. The boxes will be there until the end of May.

Thank you for your support. Look out for another report in the autumn to learn what equipment the group was able to obtain with your vouchers.

Christie Colhoun



*The churchwardens perfected their
routine for the Archdeacon's
visitation.*

Afraid, alone, in pain

Be the answer to Loko's prayer this Christian Aid Week.



This Christian Aid Week, you can help transform the lives of women like Loko.

From 10-16 May, churches the length and breadth of Britain and Ireland will come together to pray, campaign and raise money to improve the lives of people like Loko.

Every year, 100,000 volunteers demonstrate God's love for the poor by taking part in house-to-house collections for Christian Aid.

This fantastic witness is a chance to take the mission of the church into your community.

Loko's choice in life is simple: 'If I can't collect firewood, my children will die.'

Four times a week, in a remote corner of Ethiopia, Loko makes a back-breaking eight-hour trip to gather wood. It's a task she dreads, but she steels herself to do it because if she doesn't her children will starve.

She prays to God as she walks. 'I ask him to change my life and lead us out of this,' she says.

Just £5 could give Loko a loan to start her own business buying and selling tea and coffee, freeing her from her desperate task and allowing her to spend more time caring for her family.



Find out how you can play your part at www.caweek.org



UK registered charity no. 1105851 Company no. 5171525 Scot charity no. SC039150 NI charity no. XR94639 Company no. NI059154 ROI charity no. CHY 6998 Company no. 426928 . The Christian Aid name and logo are trademarks of Christian Aid. Christian Aid is a key member of ACT Alliance. © Christian Aid November 2014 15-J3099. Photo: Christian Aid/Andrew Testa/Panos

Christian Aid Week 2015 - Your parish needs you to help!



Christian Aid Week this year runs from 10th to 16th May and many of us look forward to supporting the two special lunches at St Patrick's and St Columba's on **Sunday 10th May**. Many more parishioners will also be contributing to the valuable work undertaken by **Christian Aid** by putting money into the special envelopes in church.

Our contributions will assist **Christian Aid** as it seeks to eliminate poverty by assisting individuals in many parts of the world to develop small enterprises which help them to feed and educate their own families and to develop their communities. The money we give will also enable **Christian Aid** to respond to the initial problems following natural disasters - and then to give follow-up assistance as well.

The money **we** give is vital to the work of **Christian Aid** - but we are also asked to collect from others as well, so that there will be even more funds to be used. As a parish we are allotted an area of the town in which to carry out a door-to-door collection. This collection is very important because it not only enables non-church-goers to contribute a considerable sum to **Christian Aid's** work but also shows our commitment and witness to a wider public.

Some of the very longstanding members of our band of willing helpers for the door-to-door collection have had to drop out over the last few years and, although some new people have come on board, we are badly in need of new collectors. This is a **whole parish effort** and going out to collect in twos and threes allows us to get to know one another better as well as assisting **Christian Aid's** work. Please think about joining us in this valuable work and then give your name to one of the clergy or ring me on 2564 6701.

Mary Campbell



On Good Friday we had a great turnout of young people after the Family Service for 'Buns and Crosses' in the hall. We were delighted that the bishop could join us as we walked through the Easter story and had an Easter egg hunt.



Good Friday - Buns and Crosses in St Patrick's Hall after the Family Service

The Sunday school are still collecting 20 pence pieces for the CMS project in their Smartie tubes and are doing well. Any others please bring in as soon as possible.

Messy church took place on Sunday 19th April. A lot of work was put into preparation so we were glad to see so many people (104) of all ages turn

up. The theme was feeding the 5,000 and eating together. We started with some singing then watched a video clip of the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000. We then altogether moved around the different craft and games that were related to the story. After we had finished we had a talk and then some food. We ended the session with a lively action song and the Messy Church grace. The atmosphere was great with a feeling of togetherness. We had some new faces with us and we hope they felt welcome. We received good feedback from many who feel that this is a worthwhile ministry. Thanks to all the Sunday School teachers, Liz, Anna and Anne in the kitchen and any others who helped. We are considering doing the whole thing again in St Columba's before the summer and having another one in St Patrick's in October.



Messy Church in St Patrick's Hall on Sunday 19th April

Well done to all those who took part in the GFS and CLB displays and especially all the leaders. This year we give special recognition to Alan Ross who has contributed 40 years of service to the CLB and was given an award by Ballymena Borough Council for his outstanding service to young people in the community.

YOUTH CLUB

The Youth Club will be having a fundraising night in May by holding a board game night in aid of NSPCC.



Alan Ross and the rector

Some of those who are being confirmed this year met on Sunday 19th April. We joined with St Colmanell's, Ahoghill for Energise. We are hoping to meet every month before classes start as part of confirmation preparation.

Lucy

CHILDREN'S WEEK

POLAR EXPLORERS



Monday 15th - Friday 19th June
7 - 8.15 pm

For all primary school children

We will be going on a expedition into the polar wilderness as part of God's Big Expedition and will find out what it is to be a friend of Jesus and go out and help other people be friends of Jesus too.



The Curate's Letter

There was an article in the paper recently saying that most cosmologists (that's scientists who study the universe to you and me) think it is only a matter of time before we find life on other planets. I could have told them that, of course, but they didn't ask me. I have always believed that earth-dwellers who believe they are the only intelligent life in the universe are like natives of tiny south sea islands who say there are no other islands. Believe me it's coming and what a moment it will be when the tiny scrap of creation we call earth with its inhabitants called people meet up with another branch of God's creation. It will make the meeting between Livingstone and the inhabitants of Central Africa seem like a quick visit round to the neighbours.

An interesting question of course is why if there is intelligent life elsewhere in the universe that they haven't been to see us already?

There are four possible answers to this:

1. There is no other intelligent life (I dealt with that above).
2. There is but it's too far away, maybe billions of light years away, and there's just no means known yet to cover such vast distances even for advanced civilisations until someone invents the equivalent of 'warp drive'.
3. They have visited (or maybe they're here already) but we didn't/don't recognise them, maybe because they're hiding. That's certainly possible.

How about this one? 4. - a possibility I only came across recently when reading the Cosmic Trilogy, CS Lewis three science fiction novels - they're very good by the way, think Narnia for grown ups, I challenge you to put them down - Lewis' possibility is that the rest of intelligent life doesn't want to come to earth, that earth is the very last place they would want to come. (Imagine how you'd feel if your husband or wife suggested a fortnight in Chernobyl for your next holiday) - maybe our planet is in

inter-galactic disgrace. Maybe the earth is known across the universe as a foul and fallen planet because the rest of creation is still in the primal state which God wanted for it and has never 'fallen'.

I really hope this is true. Maybe the entire universe is like one big garden of Eden, except for us. One day I think we will find out, unless God has put permanent barriers around us. If we do find out that the rest of creation like ourselves is also fallen, we will need to re-examine our notions of salvation, and ask whether Jesus death on earth saves the whole universe or whether Jesus comes to all places where there is intelligent life in a variety of different ways (that's too complicated for me to get my head round just at the moment).

I know many of you will say what does all that have to do with life in Ballymena? In one sense you'd be right of course, but in another sense you'd be wrong. All of creation is interconnected. And of course you might say what do Bethlehem and Jerusalem have to do with us? Strange places a long way away to which most of you have never been.

Shalom.

John Mann

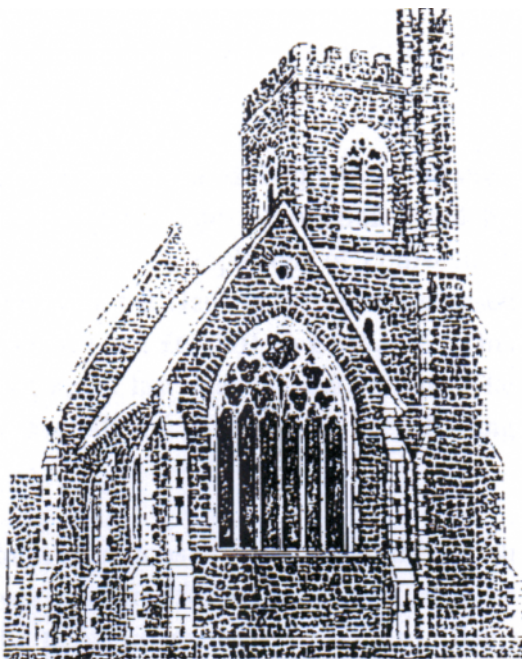
Annual Civic Service

*Sunday 31st May
at 11.30 am in St Patrick's Church*

*PREACHER -
The Very Rev. John Mann,
Dean of Belfast*

*This is a joint service for the parish -
No service in Ballyclug or St Columba's*

*Parishioners are requested to invite
someone from the wider community to
this service*



Ten reasons why Christians should vote

1. Voting publicly recognises that we submit to the authority of the political system in our nation as established by God. (Romans 13:1-7)
2. Voting recognises the equality of all people and their right to speak and be heard. (Deuteronomy 10:17-19)
3. It is one way that we can obey God's command to seek the good of those around us and our nation as a whole. (Jeremiah 29:5-6)
4. It shows that we care deeply about who our leaders are as we are urged to offer prayer and intercession on their behalf. (1 Timothy 2:1,2)
5. It is a simple yet significant way we can do something about politics in our nation. 'All that is required for evil to prevail is for good men to do nothing', Edmund Burke. (Psalms 34:14)
6. It makes a difference the way a grain of salt makes a difference, and that is how we are to influence our society for good. (Matthew 5:13)
7. It is a privilege not to be taken for granted. Those of us who reap the benefits of living in a democracy should play a part in upholding democracy.
8. Not voting is a form of voting, as it will influence the outcome. We need to take responsibility for our actions, as well as our lack of actions. (Luke 10:25-37)
9. Voting has biblical precedence for example Acts 14:23 describes that the early Christians elected elders by voting.
10. Voting is part of our stewardship to use all the resources we have been given in ways that honour God; to waste a vote is to squander a gift.

Church Wardens

ST PATRICK'S



Stephanie Johnston

Stephanie is married to Brian and has two children, Connor and Shannon. She has been actively involved in St Patrick's Church for 22 years. As a passionate reader, she is delighted to work for the Education and Library Service promoting books and awaking adventure and imagination in children. An active member of animal re-homing charities, Stephanie has rescued her two beloved greyhounds, lurcher, Patterdale terrier and two budgies. Stephanie is honoured and blessed to

serve God, clergy and parishioners of St Patrick's Church as the Rector's Church Warden.

Rosalie Grainger

Originally from Whitehead, Rosalie moved to Ballymena in 1976. In 1980 she joined St Patrick's Branch of the Mothers' Union and has been a parishioner for 18 years. She is currently secretary of Ballymena Church Members' Forum and enjoys working with members from all the churches in the town. Rosalie has been involved in Girl Guiding for over 60 years, having progressed through Brownies and Guides to become a Brownie Guider and to hold many County posts and is presently the Trefoil Guild Chairperson for North Antrim. As a member of the Open University Geological Society, she leads branch members from throughout UK and Ireland on field trips to the North Antrim coast. Rosalie is also a fellow of the Edinburgh Geological Society and a member of the Belfast Geologist's Society. While presently studying for a Theology Certificate, Rosalie's hobbies of photography, fossil collecting, knitting and tapestry have been sadly neglected. It is a great privilege to be People's Church Warden and Rosalie would like to thank the clergy and parishioners of St Patrick's for allowing her to take up this position for a second time.



2015/2016

BALLYCLUG

Nicola Burnett

Nicola grew up in the parish attending GFS, youth group and was involved in Sunday School for many years continuing on as a teacher after confirmation. She studied Finance at Queens University and had the opportunity to spend a year in the USA. Nicola returned to the States after graduating where she spent 2 years working for an Irish company in New York. She has since settled back in Northern Ireland working for Caterpillar, Belfast as



an accounts payable manager. Nicola is still a keen traveller and particularly enjoyed being part of the parish team that went to Nepal in November 2014. This was a very rewarding experience and she had a memorable time working in the various projects in both Kathmandu and Jiri. Nicola is looking forward to the year ahead serving as Church Warden in St Patrick's, Ballyclug and would like to thank all who have encouraged and supported her since taking up the new role.

Jackie Greer

Jackie served his time as an engineer with the Merchant Navy and has worked with several local companies since leaving the Navy. He became a member of St Patrick's when he met his wife. They have three grown up children and two grandchildren. He would like to thank the congregation of Ballyclug for choosing him once again to serve for another year and for their continued support. Jackie thoroughly enjoys his role in the Parish and his involvement with the various work parties where he uses his many skills in the upkeep of the church and graveyard. His hobbies are music and caravanning.



ST COLUMBA'S



Jimmy Tuff

Jimmy is married to Jill and has two daughters, Emma and Susan, and two sons, James and Simon. This is his third term of office as Church Warden having served as both Rector's and People's in

the past. His hobbies and interests include watching football in general and supporting Manchester United in particular, gardening, DIY, reading, crosswords and quizzes.

Les Hughes

Les Hughes originally hails from Holywood, Co. Down, where he was a member of St Philip and St James Church. He is married to Liz and has two grownup children, Kenneth and Heather. They also have one granddaughter Ellie, who is 13 years old. Les worked in the motor trade and this brought him to Ballymena in 1982. He has worshipped in St Columba's since then. Les is retired and enjoys DIY and sea fishing.





Around the Parish

CHURCH LADS BRIGADE

Our Annual Parents and Friends Evening was held on Friday, 27th March 2015. A very large crowd enjoyed the fun filled programme. Thanks to Mr and Mrs Ronnie Fleming for presenting the following awards:



MARTINS SECTION

Boyd Shield for P. E. and Games

Eli Culbertson

Runner Up **Kayden Wilson**

Hamill Shield - Best Squad

**Jamie Quigley, Corey Black,
Josh Livingstone, Callum Abernethy**

Stinson Shield - Best New Recruit

Jude Crawford

Runner Up **Matthew Johnston**

Scripture Competition

Josh Livingstone

Runner Up **Alayna Wilson**

Gillespie Cup - Best Overall

Natalie Norris

Runner Up **Callum Abernethy**

Special Achievement Award

Joe McGrattan

Willie Nelson Memorial Cup
Church and Sunday School
Attendance

Josh Crawford

All boys received their badges, attendance awards and Easter eggs.

Y.B.C. SECTION

Andrew Dennison Shield for
P. E. and Games

Michael Leetch
Runner Up **Harry Lamont**

Black Cup - Best Squad

**James Johnston, Wyatt Lorimer,
Euan Hamill, Alexander Bell,
Dan McGrattan, Carson Hume**

McBride Shield for Scripture

Dan McGrattan
Runner Up **Thomas Adair**

Elliot Cup for Best Boy

Wyatt Lorimer
Runner Up **Alexander Bell**

All boys received attendance awards and Easter eggs.

J.T.C. SECTION

Burnett Shield for P. E. and Games

Joe Monaghan
Runner Up **Adam Lamont**

McCullough Shield - Best Squad

**Aaron Adair, James McIlfatrick,
Adam Lamont, Adam Boyd**

Rodgers Cup for Scripture

Adam Boyd
Runner Up **Aiden Hoey**

McCready Cup - Best Boy

John Young
Runner Up **Joe Monaghan**

All boys received attendance awards and Easter eggs.

C.L.B. SECTION

O'Hara Centenary Shield for
P. E. and Games

Matthew Boyd
Runner Up **Anthony Shaw**

Perry Cup - Best Squad	Callum Ross, David Leetch, Adam Reynolds, Adam Smith
Nevin Cup - Best Boy	Callum Hamill Runner Up Simon Bennett
Ann Johnston Cup for Scripture	David Leetch
Sally Ross Cup for Best Sportsman	Anthony Shaw
Sittlington Cup - Brigade Week	Adam and Matthew Boyd Runner Up Alexander Bell
Penny Cup for Church Duty	Simon Bennett
Barr Cup - Best Boy overall in Company	Adam Smith
Five Year Service Medals	Luke Cunningham, Callum Ross, David Leetch, Anthony Shaw
Ten Year Service Medals	Conor Ross
Special Officers' Service Medal for over forty years service	Alan Ross

The Company presented the Rector with a weed sprayer for twenty-six years as Company Chaplin.

The C.L.B. presented £300 to parish funds and £150 to the Leprosy Mission.

Events during the summer:-

- Saturday, 6th June - Sports and Athletics Competition - Antrim Forum.
- Saturday, 20th June - 5-a-Side Football - Lisburn.

Over the summer break we are on the look out for parents or parishioners who would be willing to help with C.L.B. for one hour on a Friday evening. This is not a big commitment and it would make a huge difference to have an extra pair of hands. Please consider this and contact a leader or speak to the Clergy so that we can have you in place for September.

Thanks to all parents and boys for their continued support over the year. We hope you have a nice summer break and we hope to see you all back on **Friday, 11th September, 2015.**

Alan Ross (Tel. No. 2589 2740)

MOTHERS' UNION

13th May at 8 pm - 'The Parable of the Scones', speaker Meta Preston. (Supper Nina Marrs/Lynda Brooks).



Annual Afternoon 'Tea Party' will take place on **Friday 22nd May** at 2.30 pm, when we hope to have friends, lapsed members and indoor members - everyone will be made welcome. Contact Ann Adams/Jean Kennedy or any MU member if interested.

*Jean Kennedy
Hon. Sec.*

MOTHERS AND TODDLERS



We hope everyone has enjoyed their Easter break. In April we had a day of Easter fun and some braved the cold to roll their eggs. After Easter Audrey Vance came along to give a talk and demonstration of baby resuscitation. Unfortunately the lady from the library had to cancel her visit but we hope it will be rearranged before we finish in June. In May Surestart will be coming for craft and we hope to have someone from Sainsbury's to talk about healthy eating. We will continue our usual crafts, singing and healthy eating in May.

We would like to thank Jimmy Coleman for stepping in to help with parking.

Rota for May:-

DATE	NAME	FUNCTION
5 th May	Rosemary Stacey, Sandra McKay, Mary Cochrane and Jean Cunningham	Tea
	Bee Robinson	Welcoming
	Alex McKay and Eddie McClelland	Car Park
12 th May	Evonne Stinson, Eleanor Burnett, Vera Owens and Marlene Gray	Tea
	Mary Steele	Welcoming
	Oliver Reid, Robert McGimpsey and David Oliver	Car Park
19 th May	Dorothy Hegan, Isabel Halliday, Karin Agnew and Sandra Duke	Tea
	Ann Fisher	Welcoming
	Jackie McMaster and Jimmy Tuff	Car Park
26 th May	Ruth Murray, Isabell Adair and Nell McIlwee	Tea
	Liz Peachey	Welcoming
	Bob Peachey	Car Park

Our thanks to you all for your continued support.

Dorothy (2589 2740), Anna and Liz





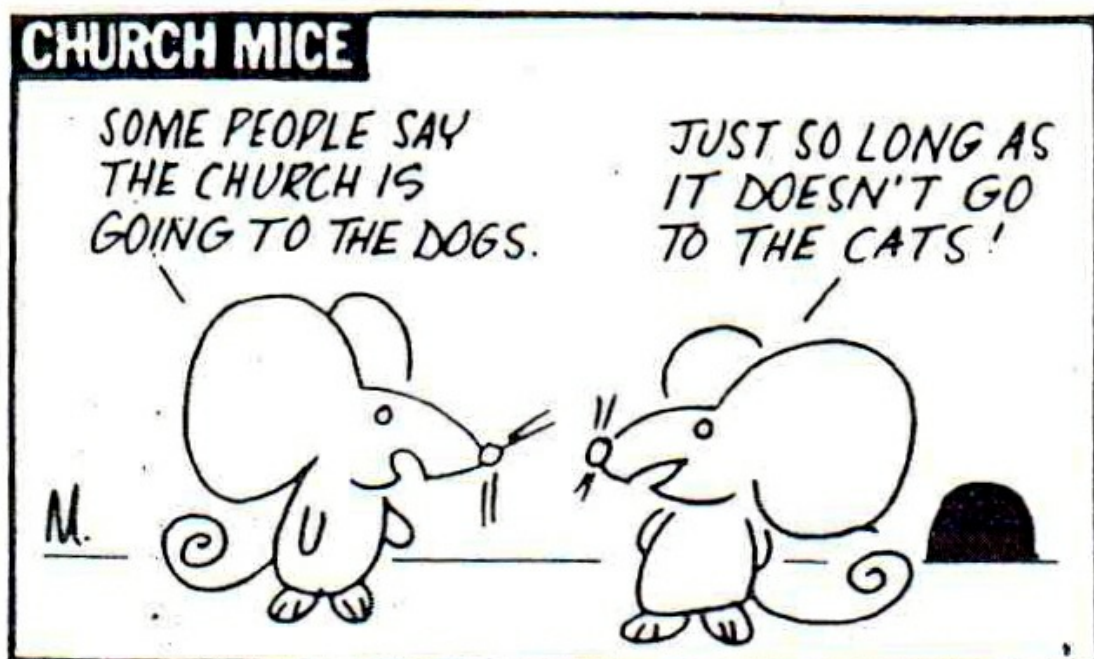
Ballyclug Notes

With the Annual Easter Vestry over we are pleased that Jackie Greer has continued as People's Church Warden and welcome Nicola Burnett as the Rector's Church Warden. We also welcome Stuart Jackson as a new Vestry member, whilst Jackie McMaster and William Burnett were re-elected to the Church Vestry. We wish to thank the outgoing Church Wardens for all their hard work over the past year.

With spring now upon us the grass is growing at Ballyclug and therefore we need some volunteers to cut it. If you are free on a Thursday evening please come and help - it would be greatly appreciated.

Although it may only be spring time Jackie Greer is preparing by sowing his seed for harvest - the Harvest supper! This year it will be held near the end of October, date to be confirmed. Entertainers are required, so if you want to take part or know of someone who would, please contact Jackie on 077 1061 8196.

William Burnett





Missions

This link letter was written before Nepal was hit by an earthquake which caused so much death and destruction.

*But God demonstrates his own love for us in this:
While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*
Romans 5:8

Dear Friends,

25 March 2015

In Nepal, especially in the rural places, God really shows you how miraculous and amazing he is. From going on a field trip with my Dad, I also really learned that God loves all people. Whether it's Bill Gates (the richest man in the world) or a millionaire, or even, though it's sometimes hard to believe, He even loves the man leading the Taliban. But in this prayer letter I'm going to focus on poor Nepalis who only have about a couple hundred dollars. But, yes, God still loves them as much as me and you.



On this trip we would catch a flight to Nepalgunj, a city in the south of Nepal, then drive three hours to that day's destination, Surkhet. But that wasn't all. The next day we would have a 10-hour drive to our final destination, a place in the remote mountains called Kalikot.

Anyway, that first morning after all our farewells we left our house at about 8 o'clock. We caught a taxi to the airport, which we got for less than 2 dollars. We went through the airport in about 10 minutes. It would be my first time being on a flight inside of Nepal. Surprisingly the flight took off on time and at 9:15 we were flying out of Kathmandu. (Usually in Nepal, flights take off at least 15 minutes late if not later). On the plane they handed out candies because the air pressure make your ear pipes close and sucking on something helps make them open. The flight felt mainly the same as an international flight. One of the differences was that the take-off was a lot shorter because the plane was lighter. The mountains we saw while flying were spectacular, reminding me of God's amazing creation. My Dad pointed out some famous mountains I had never seen before. It was marvellous to see such beautiful objects for the first time. Since the plane was lighter it also meant that it was very bumpy when there were clouds.

We landed in a place called Nepalgunj, which was quite chilly. There we met our driver Nabin and continued on our journey with a film crew who my Dad's office had hired. The film crew were going to capture an emergency case such as a lady needing to have her baby taken out by an operation. After driving for about 15 minutes we stopped at the driver's office to have an Asian drink called 'chee-ah' - basically moderately sweet milk tea. It warmed us up in the cold weather.

We continued through fog for about 2 hours before stopping for a tasty, hot lunch. We ate the traditional Nepali food called 'daal bhaat', which is rice with lentil soup poured on top with vegetable curry to mix in. Achar is another side dish; it is a spicy, thick dish mixed in in small amounts. After lunch we drove for another hour to a place called Surkhet.

The next day we got up at 5:45 am and left Surkhet at 6:30. We had a very long bumpy ride ahead of us. Our first stop was for breakfast at about 8:00. From there on, I rode most of the way in the back of the pick-up truck. We stopped for lunch at 12:30. While I was waiting for lunch I climbed a small hill and came back to a tasty daal bhaat lunch. We would stop a couple more times to relieve ourselves on the trip.

Besides that we had to stop more for bulldozers, each time waiting for about 20 minutes for them to work on the road. Our last stop was to say hi to the doctors at the hospital. Then we came to the place we would stay, 'The White House Guest House.'

I slept well and the next day we got to the hospital just as the doctors finished rounds on their patients. Two of the most severe patients we saw were human beings in the first stage and in the last stage of life. The one was a baby who had an extremely swollen belly. His crying showed how sore it was for him. His mother seemed desperate for any help she could get. Another was a man who had heart failure. He had come in the night before and was literally drowning in the fluid inside his body. The main doctor there was a Christian named Dr. Suman and he tried to convince the family to keep the man at the hospital. The family was almost sure that he was going to die so they wanted him to die in the comfort of his home.

That day, while my Dad went to see the Chief District Officer, the driver Nabin, some of the film crew and I ate lunch together. Later in the afternoon, Nabin and I went walking up a small hill, followed later by my Dad.



Mark, Benjamin and Nabin

That night before dinner the film crew received word from the doctor that an emergency case was about 3 hours drive away. We all ate dinner and then my Dad and I decided we would go down to the hospital with the film crew. I fell asleep for a while and my Dad woke me up when it was time to go down to see the emergency case. At about 9:00 pm we went down to the hospital road and about an hour later the vehicle came up the hill. The film crew was filming when it arrived.

The men inside the vehicle put the lady on a stretcher and took her into the hospital. We found out that the men who had carried the lady 6 hours to the road were drunk. First the doctors checked the lady out and decided to operate to take the baby out. Then they did the Caesarean section (C-section). I got to watch from a distance. It was amazing seeing someone new come into the world. The baby was a girl. Finally we got back to the guest house at 11:45 pm.

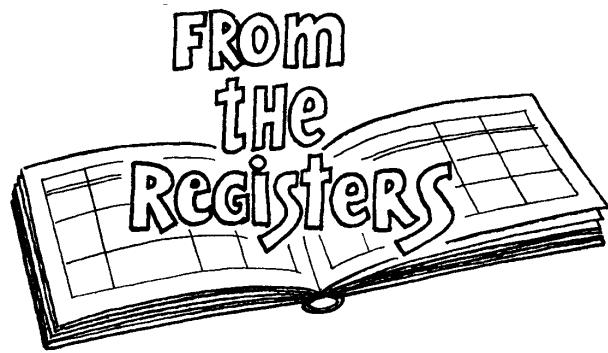
Praise God! The next day both the baby with the swollen belly and the man with heart failure were still alive. We visited the lady who had come in for a C-section the night before and she and the baby were both healthy. That day, after my Dad's work was done at the hospital all of us except for one of the film crew went on a long hike. It was fun and we got great views of the mountains.

The next day we left Kalikot. We stopped at the hospital before leaving. We drove for 10 hours again before arriving in Surkhet.

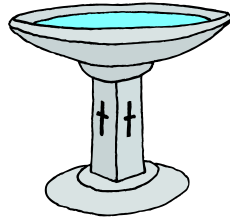
The next day we ate breakfast and then left Surkhet. After saying goodbye to our driver Nabin (who was now a great friend of mine), we drove to Nepalgunj and got a flight at 5:00 pm. We were reunited with our family again at about 6:00.

I hope this has brought you closer to the Lord and how great His love is for all. You also have a bit more knowledge of Nepal and its wonder and amazement.

Love,
Benjamin,
Mark, Deirdre, and Zachary



HOLY BAPTISM



5th April

Daniel Miller

5 Glenaan Park, Kells

CHRISTIAN BURIAL



12th April

Martha Caulfield

3 Hope Street, Ballymena

15th April

Joan Wright

62a Royal Court, Gracehill

17th April

Robert Irons

27 Gloonan House, Ahoghill

Martha Caulfield

Although Martha's health had not always been the best it was during the last 7 months that she was in poor health following a fall while on holiday in Turkey. For most of these months she was in hospital and it was a difficult time for herself and her family. Married to Billy for nearly 50 years, perhaps her chief role in life was caring for her 6 children, being involved as well in their adult lives and taking to do with grandchildren. She did not spare herself in this regard and was always there for the family and along the way there must have been worries and concerns. She was an able homemaker ready to tackle anything from baking to decorating. Yet she also had a life outside the home. When the children were up she did a course in book keeping and went on to keep the books for several businesses. She also learned to drive and to swim and was into amateur dramatics - Martha was a natural actor. There was nothing

dull about Martha - she had a lively personality and was good fun. With the years the church came to play an increasingly important part in her life. Confirmed as an adult she came to participate in the Healer Prayer Group, the Prayer Support Teams, the Bible Fellowship and any other nurture courses that were organised. She served as Church Warden on two occasions and took on the heavy responsibility of Parish Treasurer for 7 years. In these ways and as a regular worshipper she was very much part of the parish family and she loved the company about the church. We remember Billy, daughters Deborah and Jacqueline and sons Ivan, Thomas, John and Alan.

Joan Wright

The clergy had come into contact with Joan when 3 years ago they were called upon to bury her husband David. She was diagnosed with a terminal illness 7 weeks ago and despite the news just got on with life. From Lisburn, most of her married life was in the context of the army in which David served. She very much enjoyed army life whether in Germany, Gibraltar, England or here at home. She saw herself as a traditional mum not going out to work but giving herself to the care of her children and grandchildren. She was related to a former curate the Rev. Eddie Coulter. We remember her two sons John and Gareth.

Robert Irons

Bobby as he was known died suddenly while seemingly in good health. Having lived for many years in Tullyglass Park he had recently made the move to the Fold at Gloonan House, had settled in well and was getting out and about - the morning of his death he was due to attend Probus. Bobby was brought up in the Market Road area of the town, attended Ballymena Academy and went on to qualify as an accountant. He set up the firm Irons and Agnew and this proved to be a respected and good accountancy firm over many years. As a dad it was left to him to raise his son Robin and he undertook this responsibility with great care and devotion. As a member of the Board of Ballymena Academy he served as Secretary for many years and did so with his usual efficiency and graciousness. He enjoyed his sport - snooker in earlier days and later golf. He was also a regular patron at Tullyglass House Hotel and through all his contacts he made a wide family of friends. In life he did suffer sadness and hurt but he never complained. To all he was a true gentleman. He was a life long member of the parish and loved to come to early communion. Also for many years he used his accountancy skills to serve as Parish Treasurer. We especially remember his son Robin.



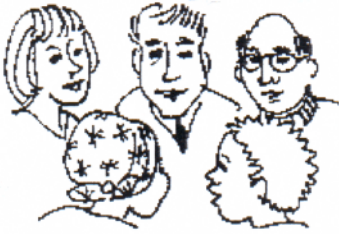
OUR ACTIVITIES

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	7.00 pm	Parochial Hall
JTC	Friday	8.00 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
Sewing Group	Thursday	10.00 am	Parochial Hall

SAINT COLUMBA'S

	Day	Time	Contact
Beavers	Monday	6.30 pm	Mrs L McCullagh
Cubs	Monday	7.00 pm	Miss H Hughes
Ladies' Circle	4th Monday	8.00 pm	Mrs L Hughes
Brownies	Tuesday	6.30 pm	Mrs S Foster
Guides	Tuesday	7.30 pm	Mrs K Black
Squirrels	Wednesday	6.30 pm	Mr P Houston
Choir	Sunday	10.15 am	Mrs S Montgomery
Rainbows	Friday	6.30 pm	Mrs H Strain
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