

Columba News

October
2024
No. 260



Time to remember



*Crystal stream
forever
floweth from
Heaven it
came to
Heaven it
goeth*

See page 15

Waiting to welcome you

Sundays	Team	Leader
October 20	Team 9	I Sutherland
October 27	Team 10	A. Swan
November 3	Team 11	K. Muirhead
November 10	Team 12	G. McMillan
November 17	Team 1	B Cowan
November 24	Team 2	G. Mackenzie
December 1	Team 3	M. Johnston
December 8	Team 4	I Storm
December 15	Team 5	A. Mooney

Evening Services:
November 24, Team 2



From the manse

October 2024

Dear Friends,

It seems almost no time at all since the last edition of Columba News! I hope this finds you well.

In public worship recently, I have been sharing some of the signs and symbols used by the Christian Church over the last 2000 years. We are familiar with the cross, the Celtic cross, the fish, and the dove. Dating from around 1800 years ago in the city of Rome and, in particular, in the catacombs that ran beneath the city, there survives some of the artwork depicted by the earliest Christians.

The catacombs are sometimes thought to have been hiding places for Christians during periods of persecution. There were not many periods of persecution and, even if there had been, I'm sure the Roman Army would have worked out where the Christians had fled. Instead, more likely, the catacombs were used by Christians as places of worship: places where they could pray, sing, and share bread and wine. It is believed that, as the catacombs were primarily burial places, it is possible that the worshipping Christian community sat at table not only with one another but, spiritually, with the dead; with the dead who are alive in God. I often feel that we have lost so much over the centuries. In our services of Holy Communion, do we have sufficient sense that we sit at table with those who have died, but are alive in Christ?

One symbol painted in the catacombs is a dolphin. The dolphin represented Jesus, the Christ. Many of the first disciples of Jesus were fishermen. Out on the same waters most days, the fishermen would begin to recognise individual dolphins. More than that, it was thought that the dolphins recognised specific fishermen. As the dolphins 'knew' each fisherman and, on occasion, guided, accompanied, and protected fishermen, so dolphins became a symbol for Jesus. He too was a constant companion, who guided and protected. The ancients used the natural world as a constant reminder of the Presence of God, of God's providential care, and the



fact that we are held constantly.

Each country, continent, and culture have its own treasured symbols. In parts of Peru, the bull is a symbol of health, wealth, and fertility. In some towns and cities, most houses have two bulls positioned on the roof: that's two model bulls, often made from wood. Due to Peru's rich Catholic history, in addition to the bulls there are other symbols: a cross, a ladder, a cockerel, and a jar. The cross is the symbol of the crucifixion; the ladder is a reminder of the dead Christ being taken down from the cross; the cockerel brings to mind the three denials of Peter; while the jar may be a sign of the wedding at Cana where water was turned into wine.



On our spiritual journey, it is important to be constantly nourishing ourselves. Whether that is attendance at weekly worship; savouring the Sacrament of Holy Communion; reading Scripture; or, walking along the front, in a park, or on a golf course, in a state of mindfulness, aware that we are held and embraced by Mystery. St Bernard of Clairvaux said that we are to practice the Presence.

Be assured of my prayers and very good wishes.

Scott

Revd Dr Scott S McKenna

Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be celebrated in the church on Sunday, October 27.

There will be a service 10.30am and an evening Communion service at 6.30pm.

[Please also note the clocks move back an hour that weekend.](#)

The small capsules of bread and wine the church used during Covid will also be available at the door if some members would prefer to use these instead of the common plate.



New session underway for the Monday Fellowship

As I write this the Monday Fellowship is gearing up to resume it's meetings for the period October 2024 to March 2025.

We start on Monday, October 7 at 2pm in the Midton Hall. This is the time and venue where we meet throughout the session.

Our opening speaker is Christine Murray. Clerk to the Presbytery and she will be telling us about her life and the goings on at Presbytery both currently and during the setting-up of the South West Scotland Presbytery.

Following Christine and by the time you will be reading this, our following meeting on October 21 our guest speaker will be the Rev. Jill Clancy, Chaplain to Barlinnie and Kilmarnock Prisons. This promises to be a very captivating talk!

All our meetings are open to any who wish to join us and they will be made very welcome. We look forward to seeing you.

John Ferguson
Secretary

A copy of the recent letter to the congregation from the session clerk

This text was sent by congregational email on Tuesday, September 24. It is published here for non email members

Dear Members of the Congregation,

Many of you may have questions relating to the future of Ayr St Columba Church now that our Minister, Scott, has announced that he will be leaving at the end of the year and as we move towards union with our partner churches. There are many things we do not know at this point, but a few that we do know. I feel it would be helpful to bring you up to date on some of these.

i. Firstly, and in my view most importantly, Ayr St Columba is a very strong church. We have a loyal and committed congregation and our

average attendance and our generosity in financial giving are close to the highest in the country and well ahead of other local churches. The strength of our church community will be an important asset as we navigate some uncertain times which lie ahead.

ii. Our Minister, Revd Dr Scott McKenna, will take up a full-time post with the Ayrshire Hospice in January 2025.

iii. At this point we have not been able to determine if or when we will be allowed to call a new Minister.

iv. In the meantime, we will be seeking an Interim Moderator and will be supported by our Assistant Ministers and others well known to the congregation.

v. Separately, you may already be aware that in the Presbytery Mission Plan, which determines the future of local churches, Ayr St Columba has been partnered with St Andrews Church and with the Auld Kirk. The plan is that the three churches will eventually come together in a union to form a single church. At this point no discussions have taken place regarding either the timing or the process of the union.

vi. The St Andrews Church buildings have been marked for closure by 2027. Neither the Auld Kirk nor Ayr St Columba buildings have been marked for closure, though there will be regular reviews of buildings in Ayr.

vii. Under the Presbytery Mission Plan, responsibility for Lochside Church will transfer from Ayr St Columba to Newton Wallacetown Church at a date still to be determined.

viii. Once the three churches unite, we will not need three Ministers, so some decisions will be required regarding the current Ministers in post.

ix. Any new Minister can only be appointed to Ayr St Columba if a majority of the congregation indicate support for him or her. This applies to Ministers from our partner churches and to any person who might be identified by a Nominating Committee. We cannot be forced to accept any individual who does not have the support of our congregation.

x. It is probable that, if we are permitted to form a Nominating Committee to search for a new Minister, such Committee will include members from each of the three partner churches.

While it is tempting to speculate on matters on which we await information, please keep in mind that our church will prosper for as long as we retain the support of our members. The Kirk Session contains many tal-



ented individuals who are focused on our well-being and our long-term future. Going forward, we will keep in touch with regular updates or when there is significant information to impart.

In the meantime, we have several more months in which to enjoy the excellent preaching and wisdom of our current Minister. There will be time ahead to acknowledge Dr McKenna's contribution to our church's story, but for now we should appreciate his presence amongst us. Personnel may change, but our story will go on and the St Columba sanctuary will continue to be a place of peace, happiness and togetherness for us all.

With best wishes to all our members,

Bob Bartholomew

Session Clerk

Flower ladies meet for lunch



The Flower team ladies met at Corrie Lawrence's house for lunch on August 23 and despite the weather they had a lovely time, with great chat and fun games organised by Muriel. It was also lovely to welcome some previous members too

**Copy
Deadline**

**The copy deadline for the Christmas issue of
Columba News will be Sunday, November 17**

IT'S TIME TO GATHER
TOGETHER FOR OUR
CONGREGATIONAL
CHRISTMAS LUNCH

We are getting the Christmas celebrations underway this year with lunch at

Western House, Ayr

***on Sunday, December 1
noon for 12.30pm***

Main Course/ Dessert
Soft drink or a glass of wine
Tea/coffee and mince pie
Cost €35

If you would like to join in the festive lunch please place your name on the list in the Carrick Park vestibule from October 19 until November 17



Tribute to Anne McNair, inducted elder of Ayr St Columba

Anne was born on the 11th May 1939 in Stewarton. Tom and Jenny Mackie were her parents. She was one of three - an older brother Jim and a younger sister Marjory.

Her schooling was in Stewarton. In 1954 she was crowned Corsehill Queen which was a singular honour for her. Her dad who was Provost at the time stood proudly beside her on the stage at the Crowning ceremony. Last year Stewarton had its 90th year celebration of the Bonnet Guild and as part of these celebrations people that had been previously crowned were invited back to take part. Anne loved that day. It brought back many happy memories - she enjoyed the day reminiscing and felt quite emotional being part of the procession down the Main Street following the newly crowned Queen. Everyone got such a wonderful reception from the people who were lining the street.

In 1956 after leaving school Anne attended Jordanhill Teacher Training College in Glasgow and it was here that she met Betty who was to become a close lifelong friend. Anne's first teaching job was in Stewarton Primary - the school she had attended as a child.

She met Sam at a Young Farmers Dance - love blossomed and they were married in 1961. I think it would be true to say they were utterly devoted to one another. Their first home was in Stewarton and in the fulness of time the children arrived on the scene. Alison in 1962 and Martin two years later. She was a superb wife and mother. The family always came first in her life and she was at her happiest when they were around. She was also close to Geoff, Alison's partner and Gaynor, Martin's wife.

In 1981 the family moved to Ayr and Anne worked for a while as a supply teacher at Ayr Grammar School. There is a lovely story - sometimes she taught her own two children at the school which obviously was strange for them. They regularly got told off for shouting "Mum" instead of "Mrs McNair". She then got a job teaching at St Leonard's Special Needs School and spent many happy years there. She loved that job and being with the children. Anne was very conscientious, was greatly loved by all her pupils and highly respected by her colleagues. She retired when she became 55.

She and Sam were lucky enough to enjoy many wonderful holidays. Two very special ones were a South African Safari and an Arctic Cruise. When the family were young, Anne's parents had a holiday home in Ar-

ran. The whole family including Anne's sister Marjory, brother-in-law Colin and their children Alasdair and Jenny used to spend the summers there together for many years. These times in Arran held special memories for her and the whole family

As Anne and Sam got older they joined the OIR group. They went walking with them and also group holidays. She loved the theatre, eating out and socialising. She had many friends and made friends easily. Two of her lifelong friends were Margaret Clarke whom she got to know when she was only in Primary One and a penpal in America, Carol. These were special friends, indeed she and Sam had several wonderful trips out to America to see Carol and her husband Jim.

Anne loved her church and her Lord. She was seldom absent from her pew - that is until a few years ago when she was simply unable to come. She served as an elder in St Columba Church for 30 years - carried out her duties in an exemplary way. She was very well liked and appreciated by all. She was a member of the Guild, the Inner Wheel and Soroptomists for many years. One thing I will never forget when visiting her and Sam was the number of Cactii that they had. Sam had over 700 of them in greenhouses. She allowed him to keep some in the conservatory as long as they didn't grow too big. He had 8 and they grew from the ground to the ceiling - so much for small ones. Sam loved his garden and his plants and on her 65th birthday a special cake was commissioned for her. It showed a man working in the garden, and she on a deckchair sipping a gin and tonic. But she was also a collector - of teddy bears. I remember going to the house for the first time - you could hardly move for them. Anne was also an avid reader, enjoyed her soaps on the television, going out for meals and of course enjoying the music of Andrea Rieu. She was also a shopaholic. Alison said she had more clothes than Marks and Spencer.

Sadly Sam died in 2017 and she moved from the family home into a flat on the seafront. She loved being there watching what was happening in the Low Green and also out at sea. She had several falls and as her mobility went downhill she sadly made the difficult decision to go into Creggan Bahn. She was well looked after by the staff there for 5 years. She loved to sit out when it was sunny - be taken out along the seafront and enjoyed her musical afternoons in the Care Home. Went to all the church services there and knew the words of all the hymns. I loved visiting her there. She was always utterly charming, very appreciative of my visits. She would be there in bed with her glass of wine at her side, and never once complained.

We shall miss Anne McNair but she is now with her dear one who went before, and she will live on in the hearts and minds of all who knew and loved her. We will never forget her.

Revd David Ness



Seniors Christmas Party



*Join us on Saturday, December 14
from 2pm until 4.30pm*

*Enjoy a festive afternoon with good company,
afternoon tea, music and best of all Santa*

*The entertainment will be provided by
Isobell Montgomerie and the Rural Revellers*

*It's guaranteed to start those toes tapping
ready for Christmas*

If you would like to join the festivities, please
complete the form below and return it to the office
or the posting box in the Carrick Park corridor

Seniors' Christmas Party

Please reserve.....a place
at the Seniors' Christmas party on Saturday, December 14

Fiona would like to say thanks

Fiona Boyd would like to say a warm thank you to the Minister and congregation for their concern and good wishes for healing after she suffered a fall three weeks ago, resulting in a black eye and fracture at the side of the right hand.

Fiona was also delighted and uplifted by the beautifully worded card from the Guild and the gorgeous flowers she received on Sunday, September 12.

Healing is going well and grateful for your prayers and kindness.

Check out the South West Presbytery news

Note of the Presbytery Meeting of the South West which took place within the Howard Centre, Kilmarnock on 14 September 2024.

Girvan Valley Parish Church: Presbytery agreed to the sale of Girvan South Church, two halls and a manse.

Ayr St Columba Parish Church: Presbytery approved the replacement boiler and associated works and commended the team at the church for a very professional approach and detailed tender procedure and report.

Safeguarding: Presbytery noted that this year's Safeguarding Sunday is 17 November and all ministers and locums are encouraged to participate, the emphasis this year is "Let's Talk about it".

Presbytery Planning: Presbytery noted that the Planning Committee will give consideration to the adjustments of relevant Parish Boundaries as a result of receiving updated census data. It was noted that 80% of the Presbytery Mission Plan will be implemented by December 2024.

Felicitations: A representative from the Malawi Women's Guild gave an outline of the work of the Guild where there are 45,000 members in her synod. In addition, there are also a Men's Guild and a Youth Guild active in the synod.

Faith Action Programme Leadership Team: The Rev James McNay outlined the work being undertaken by the national Faith Action Programme



Leadership Team. They recognise that the church has been going through a hard time and have been taking the time to reflect where the church has been before going for growth. They feel that they are currently keeping the plates spinning. Their remit is to provide a vivid vision for the future of the church from 2027 and beyond. In this connection, a number of road shows will be taking place to assist in shaping the vision.

Mission Presentation: The Mission Presentation was given by representatives of Scripture Union Scotland who spoke about connecting with schools by the use of local ministry hubs. Led by a Regional Worker, Associate Worker, SU Scotland volunteer or youth worker from another Christian youth organisation, a hub meets once or twice a term to pray for the schools in the cluster. The group talks and prays together about how to serve the schools. This could be SU Groups or Bible Alive or chaplaincy. It might be something else that builds relationships and opens doors. It also opens up opportunities for gathering local Christian young people from different churches to connect, socialise and gather around God's Word whether in person or digitally. There are currently over 700,000 children and young people in Scotland; 2,500 schools with over 355 High Schools and their associated Primaries. This is where the young people of Scotland are.

George Park, Presbytery elder

Remembrance Sunday

Our Remembrance service will be held in the church on Sunday, November 10.

The Service will commence at 10.30am and there will be a two minute silence at 11.00am.

All welcome.

Fire drill planned for church

The church will be holding a fire drill on Sunday, November 3.

This is to help the congregation to note what exits to use in case an evacuation is required.



Walkers on the coast

Here are some pictures from September's Friday walk along Prestwick shore across the Pow Burn to the dunes for our coffee break and then back round Prestwick Golf Course.

All walks are on the last Friday of the month starting at 10.30 - in October we will meet in the car park at Dumfries House, and in November we will be walking around Irvine beach park, meeting outside Greggs in the Asda car park in Irvine.



Our heating costs and carbon footprint have been reduced at Ayr St Columba

You might be able to do the same at home

At Ayr St Columba church, we ran Heathack in order to reduce our carbon footprint and save some money in 2023.

Our savings were around 25% without any draft proofing or insulation.

In the church, we made our old boilers work more efficiently by replacing the room thermostats in the two main areas with new ones incorporating clever electronics called “optimum start” and monitoring temperature more closely.

. I wrote this up and recommended Jean Carletta for the Green Church awards. She won her award against stiff competition and is now advising many more congregations on the way forward.

The boilers in Ayr St Columba wore out. They have now been replaced. This has been a testing process led by John Ballantyne. Inevitably we have learned a lot about how heating systems work. Much of this material is transferable to domestic heating.

Do you want to reduce your gas consumption at home and save money? If so please read on.

First the technical bit! The various controls for your heating system are very confusing! Their correct use is vital for making your home comfortable and reducing gas consumption. Here are the various different controls that you should have.



- 1) On the boiler itself, the temperature of the circulating water can be adjusted.
- 2) The timer allows you to adjust the time that the boiler switches on and off.
- 3) You will probably have a room thermostat.
- 4) Your radiators should have a thermostatic radiator valve at one end with settings of one to five and various other markings.
- 5) At the other end of the radiator there is a “lock shield valve”.

Today’s tips are in relation to the settings on the boiler itself.

Some people thrash their boiler by running it too hot. Imagine if you buy a car with a small engine and then “thrash” it by accelerating and braking hard, before racing up the motorway. You will not be surprised to find that the fuel consumption is high and it breaks down frequently. You should avoid “thrashing” your heating system for the same reason.

Most homes have a modern combi condensing boiler. It will have separate adjustments for hot water and heating. Turn off the hot water preheater (unless you are on a water meter or your boiler is at risk of frost). It will take a little longer before water heats up at the tap but saves gas.

You should check your boiler manual (available online with model number, if needed) for instructions on how to adjust hot water and heating temperatures.

Some homes have a “system boiler” with a water cylinder that is heated by the same flow of water as the heating system. System boilers are beyond the scope of this article..

Set the hot water temperature for your combi boiler as low as possible

It is important to keep your hot water temperature as low as possible. If you routinely mix cold water with hot at the sink, you can probably reduce the hot water temperature. 50 degrees centigrade (or even less) is usually acceptable for combi boilers. The hotter the water, the less efficient is the heating by your boiler. If you prefer showers to a bath, this should be no problem. If 50 degrees is not enough for your bath, then try 55 degrees but try to avoid going higher. With no storage tank, the legionella risk is vanishingly small.

Is the flow temperature regulated by your “room thermostat”?

Have you fitted a modern room thermostat (heating controls)? If so, check if you have “weather compensation” or “load compensation” built into your room thermostat (controls). Your manual should tell you this. The flow temperature of the circulating water will be adjusted automatically if you have load or weather compensation. If not, then you can adjust the



central heating flow temperature on the boiler.

How to set the central heating flow temperature yourself

Many plumbers will set your heating flow temperature to 70 degrees centigrade, which is an industry standard. That means water is heated to 70 degrees before it is pumped around the radiators, which is always enough, even when it is frosty outside. The result is that most of the time you will be “thrashing” your boiler and burning excess gas. In autumn and spring, a low circulating temperature (around 55 degrees centigrade) is plenty in most homes. Your home will still reach the target room temperature but will take a little longer to get there. In summer, heating is not needed. On frosty days, you can turn up the flow temperature to 65 degrees if heating your home takes too long. You should return the flow temperature to a lower setting as soon as the weather warms. You will save gas, wear on your heating system and therefore money. The boiler adjustments need to be done according to the boiler manual.

Why does a lower flow temperature save money?

There are plenty of radiators that predate 2007 still around. There are hardly any domestic gas boilers still around that were installed before 2007, when the use of condensing boilers became compulsory. The inefficient old style boilers heated water to 70 degrees centigrade. The radiator sizing was based on an assumed 70 degree flow temperature at -2 degrees centigrade outside. Modern condensing boilers only condense as intended, when water returning to the boiler is 55 degrees centigrade or less. This means that the radiators must emit sufficient heat to drop the temperature of returning water to 55 degrees, which might not happen. A high flow temperature could cancel out the efficiency of the condensing feature of a modern boiler (worth 15% of fuel consumption). A lower temperature is more forgiving. [The energy saving trust](#) also advises turning down flow temperatures.

Why does a lower flow temperature prevent wear?

Your car has several “gears”, so does your boiler. Many homes are fitted with a gas boiler that has a maximum output of 35KW. It can operate flat out or it can reduce to 1/3rd of its maximum (11.5KW). In addition it can “modulate” or switch between these two outputs and also between 11.5 KW and off. If switching is frequent, the boiler wears out quickly. If you want to reduce modulation, reduce the circulating flow temperature. Fi-

nally, I have found that if I heat only part of my home in the day, a high circulating temperature saves very little gas. A lower flow temperature allows a proportionately low gas consumption when the heated area is reduced.

It is well worth looking at one of these Mark Ballard YouTube videos before you start making adjustments. It takes 17 minutes, so grab a coffee and settle down in a comfy seat! He explains what to do clearly. [One for Ideal boilers](#) or [one for Vaillant](#).

Andrew Muirhead a.g.muirhead@googlemail.com.

I am collecting heating stories. Please contact me if you would like to discuss your heating system.

References

Mark Ballard video <https://youtu.be/7bk-wtFj3NA?feature=shared>

Mark Ballard video 2 [How to Operate Your Vaillant EcoTec PLUS Combination Boiler, Adjust Hot Water & Heating & Lots More \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7bk-wtFj3NA)

Energy saving trust <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/should-i-turn-boilers-flow-temperature-down/>

Boxt guide <https://www.boxt.co.uk/boilers/guides/what-is-a-condensing-boiler>

Glossary of terms

1. Flow pipe

This is the pipe which takes the heated water from the boiler to the radiators.

2. Return pipe: This is the pipe which takes the water from the radiators back to the boiler. The return pipe water is cooler than the flow pipe water.

3. Combi boiler: A combi boiler, or combination boiler, is a single unit that combines a

water heater and central heating boiler. A full explanation from Boxt is available.

Always time for tea

Fancy a cuppa, well St Columba is the place to be.

You can enjoy a cuppa in the hall after the morning service every Sunday. As well as the tea you will enjoy the fellowship of other members of the congregation.



**Copy
Deadline**

The copy deadline for the Christmas issue of
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Big thank you from Christian Aid

I recently received a letter from Christian Aid thanking St Columba for the contribution of £800 which was collected during Christian Aid Week. I have posted the letter on the Carrick Park notice board for you to read.

Personally I would like to thank everyone for your generosity as this money will help families around the world improve their quality of life.

It always amazes and pleases me how very generous our congregation is when asked to help those in need and for that many families are indebted.

Sincere thanks.

Mo (Howie) C.A. Rep.

Congregation and Parish Register



September

DEATHS

Anne McNair

Muriel Laurie

NEW MEMBERS

Jean McClure

Leslie-Anne Macrae

Margaret- Anne Leslie

Who to contact

Minister:

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scottsmckenna@aol.com
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Tel:- 07847639528

Church Office: Carrick Park, Ayr.
Tel:- 269524 Office hours: 9am-noon, Mon,
Tues, Thurs and Fri

Church Charity Number: SC014338

Church Services (Midton Road):

10.30am - Morning Worship;
10.30am Sunday School,
6.30pm - Evening Services
(Last Sunday of the month)
2pm: HOLY COMMUNION
(Last Wednesday of Month)

Church Services (Lochside):

10am Morning Worship

Webmaster: Iain Bartholomew,
email: website@ayrstcolumba.co.uk
www.ayrstcolumba.co.uk

What's on in the halls

MONDAY

5.30pm **RAINBOW BROWNIES**
Aynsley Bell, 07914 842118

2pm: **MONDAY FELLOWSHIP**
(fortnightly):

Mr T. R. Swinn, 441896

TUESDAY

10am: Knit and Natter

Carol Morrison, 07999444200

WEDNESDAY

2pm: **HOLY COMMUNION** (4th Wed):
Church Office, 269524

2pm: **FITNESS with FRIENDS:**
Mrs Margaret Doncaster, 477381

5.45pm: **9th AYR BROWNIES,**
Sally Bentham 07817169436

THURSDAY

10am-noon: **OASIS CAFE**

Mrs M. Doncaster 477381 Mrs P. Naylor
570020

6.30pm: **CUB SCOUTS:**
Mr Jereon Bolte 07511489755

7.30pm: **SENIOR CHOIR:**
Matthew Hynes, 870449

FRIDAY

6pm: **BEAVER SCOUTS:**
Fiona Wilson, 290414

7.30pm: **SCOUTS:**
Jereon Bolte, 07511489755



Choir visit from Northern Ireland

We have the good fortune to welcome back the singers from **Ballyclare Male Choir**, for a concert on Saturday, October 19 and it will commence at 7.30pm in the church.

The choir made a previous visit to St. Columba in May 2018.

Admission will be free, with a retiring offering towards expenses.

Matthew Hynes

Copy deadline for the Christmas issue will be **Sunday, November 17**
Copy should be emailed to editor.columbanews@gmail.com

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OCTOBER 2024
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A life transformed by God

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