St Philip and St James
Holywood Parish Church

Holywood Parish

The First Sunday of Advent · Sunday 29th November 2026



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FROM THE VICAR

Lights that are spent in doing their work

Dear friends,

People love candles! I think our most exotic is called 'Black Grapefruit' while Ruth seems to favour Rhubarb. Apart from the aroma they are good to look at and replace ornaments in many homes. Their primary purpose, of course, is to be lit and the inevitable consequence is that they are spent in doing their work.

Sunday 29th November sees us enter Advent and we will begin to light the Advent Wreath. We don't have a lack of light but we value the reminders to God's faithfulness and the unfolding of his work of salvation. The first candle points us back to the early patriarchs that, even in the book of Genesis, God's word points us to the coming of Christ. Let's take heart in what we read in 2 Corinthians 1:20–22:

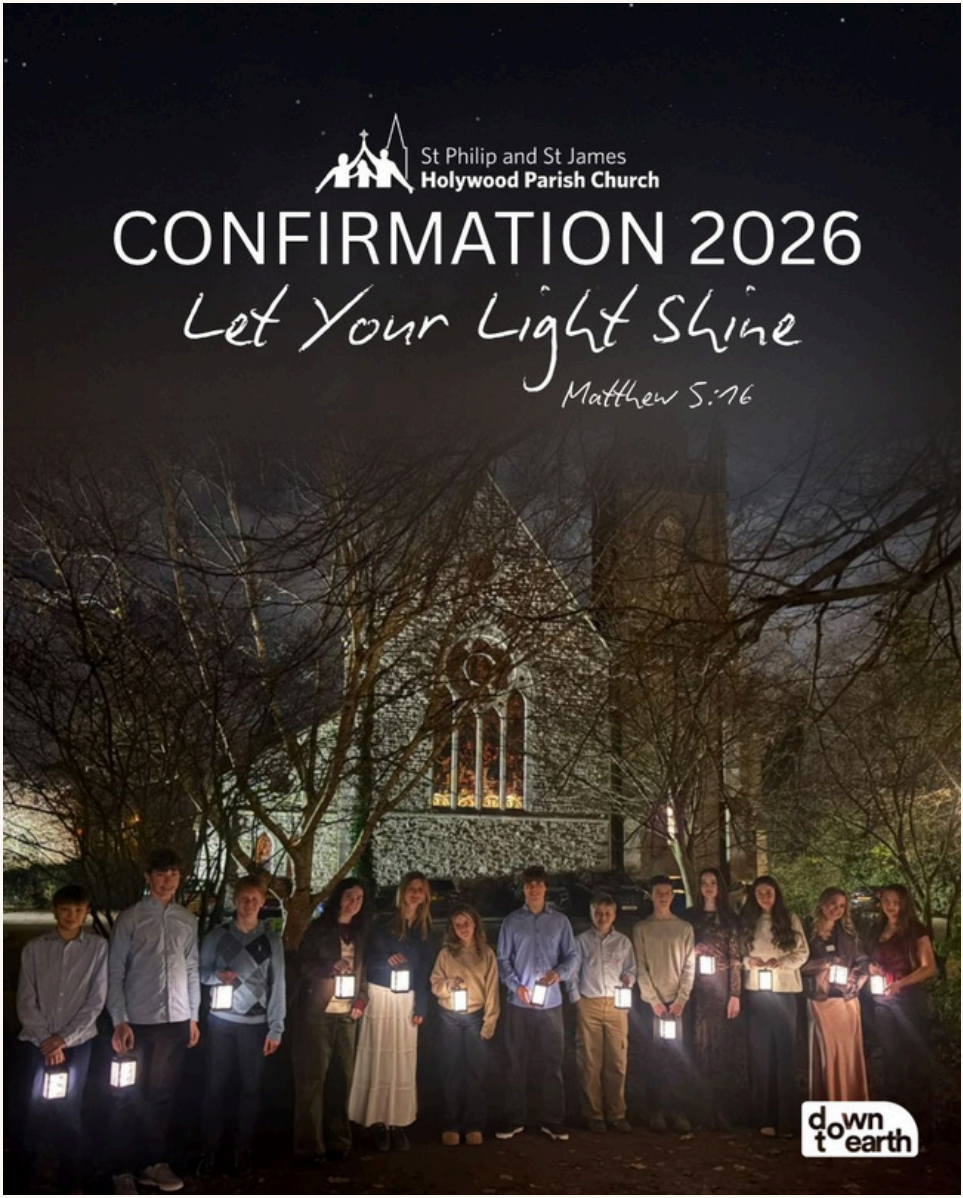
> "For no matter how many promises God has made, they are 'Yes' in Christ. And so through him the 'Amen' is spoken by us to the glory of God. Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come."

The theme of light and the work of the Holy Spirit was very prominent in this year's Confirmation service. I was very impressed with Lorcan's great photograph of the newly confirmed young people with their lanterns showing us the way. Let's emulate their example, stand up in our faith and shine wherever we are too.

I hope you can make it to services to mark the beginning of Advent and encourage you especially to try and get along to 'Darkness to Light' at 6.00pm.

Yours in Christ,

Gareth





Diocesan Youth Event
Here in Holywood
Friday 4th December

Greenhouse Christmas Party
Friday 11th December

HPY

THIS WEEK AND BEYOND

Church Notices

SUNDAY 29TH NOVEMBER · 6.00PM

Darkness to Light

We mark the beginning of Advent with a special service of readings and music which introduce the themes of the season. It is amazing how dramatic and atmospheric this service can be. Please join us.



MONDAY 30TH NOVEMBER · 8.00PM

Prayers for Holywood

We are hosting this gathering of members of local churches in the parish centre.

TUESDAY 1ST DECEMBER · 7.30PM

Men's Society

Lauren Shaw explores Strokes and what they have to do with the Stormont Assembly. In the parish centre and open to everyone.

WEDNESDAYS 2ND & 16TH DECEMBER

Wednesday Lunches

Christmas Dinner is served on the 16th. Places are limited, so please book in good time. Thank you to all our caterers this year. To help grow our lunch teams, contact the parish office.

STOREHOUSE APPEAL

This month's request

Jams, shampoos and liquid soap. Thank you for your generosity.



Opportunities to pray together

All in the parish centre

Monday–Saturday	7.30am	Morning Prayer
Monday	7.00–7.45pm	Parish Fellowship Prayers
Friday	8.45–9.30am	Friday Focus Prayers

GIGGLE

CHRISTMAS

At Holywood Parish Church

Friday 11th December 2026
3:00pm

Meet at the parish centre for hot dogs, crafts, action songs, stories and Christingles!

Learn about how Jesus can be our source of light.

Sign up using the QR code or contact emily@holywoodparishchurch.co.uk

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KIDS





Parish Book Club

Autumn/Winter 2026

18th December	*The Things We Never Say*	Elizabeth Strout
29th January 27	*Farewell to Eden*	Sebastian Faulks

Meeting in Holywood Parish Centre at 3.00pm

71 Church Road, Holywood, BT18 9BX



WORSHIP WITH US

Sunday and Midweek Services

Sunday 29th November

First Sunday of Advent

8.00am	Holy Communion (Form 1)
9.45am	Morning Worship
11.30am	Morning Prayer
6.00pm	Darkness to Light

Sunday 6th December

Second Sunday of Advent

8.00am	Holy Communion (Form 1)
9.45am	Holy Communion at Morning Worship
11.30am	Holy Communion (Form 2)
5.30pm	Choral Evensong for Advent
7.00pm	Evening Worship

MIDWEEK

Holy Communion

Wednesdays at 10.30am

WATCH AGAIN

downtoearth tv

Service recordings on YouTube: @HolywoodParish

Prayer focus

Please pray for those recently baptised and confirmed, and for our preparations as we begin Advent.

GET INVOLVED

Volunteer Opportunities

Sound and visuals

Would youliketobe trained to run the church's AV? Speak to Simon or visit the desk on a Sunday.

Sunday tea and coffee

Helppreparetea and coffee or clear up afterwards. Just let us know in the office.

holy giving is giving wholly

Financial support

Thank you for your financial support of the parish. To discuss standing orders, Gift Aid or other matters, contact our Honorary Treasurer, David Clements, through the parish office.

IN CONFIDENCE

Safeguarding

Ifyouhave asafeguarding concern, contact a member of our panel.

Gareth Harron	07711 885317
Gillian Cloke	07811 982249
Lucia Speier	07956 925718
Jonny Hooper	07793 061456

CONTACT US

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