

**THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND
ST COLMON (Arnshean Barrhill and Colmonell) PARISH CHURCH**



**CONGREGATION REFERENCE NUMBER: 100591
SCOTTISH CHARITY NUMBER: SC014381**

<http://www.stcolmonparishchurch.org.uk/stcolmon/>

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Introduction

St Colmon (Arnsheen Barrhill and Colmonell) Parish Church is linked with Ballantrae Parish Church and the minister resides in the manse in Ballantrae.

St Colmon Parish is one of the largest rural parishes in Scotland and within its boundaries are the villages of Lendalfoot, Colmonell, Pinwherry and Barrhill, with many outlying farms.

Our Mission

We aim to be an active, caring congregation providing fellowship and love to all people in our Church, the wider community and the world, in any way possible.

A Church where everyone is assured of a warm welcome.

A Church with eyes and ears open to be aware of, and offering support to, those in need.

For centuries, our beautiful church building has been a beacon of God's presence in our community. The walls are soaked in the prayers of the saints, and we aim to continue a mission based on prayer, with Jesus as our guiding light and hope.



History



The name of Colmonell village is derived from the church, which in the 12th century was called Kirk-Colmonell in memory of the patron Saint Colmon of Ella. Saint Colmon is reputed to be a nephew of St Columba and brought Christianity to the area around the year 600AD.

In 1872 Colmonell and Arnsheen Barrhill Churches were formally disjoined and then reunited in June 2007 to form St Colmon (Arnsheen Barrhill & Colmonell) Parish Church.

On 3rd June 2008 St Colmon parish was linked with Ballantrae, bringing together two distinct parishes: one coastal and the other rural, with the minister residing in Ballantrae.

At least three churches have existed on the present site since around 1179 and there are records of ministers recorded as far back as the 1400s. In 1772 a church was built then, being too small, it was recast in 1849 to seat 400 worshippers. In 1899 the church chancel was renovated by Robert Lorimer, the renowned architect and furniture designer, with “linen fold” panelling and fine carvings which are of considerable historic value. The church and churchyard were listed as grade B in 1971.

(A building of regional or more than local importance, or major example of some particular period style or building type which may have been altered.)

The churchyard holds many early gravestones, including an Adam & Eve stone, a Covenanter stone, Pictish designs and Commonwealth War graves.



The church benefits from internationally recognised stained-glass windows created by renowned artists such as Douglas Strachan and Louis Davis.



The Good Shepherd window

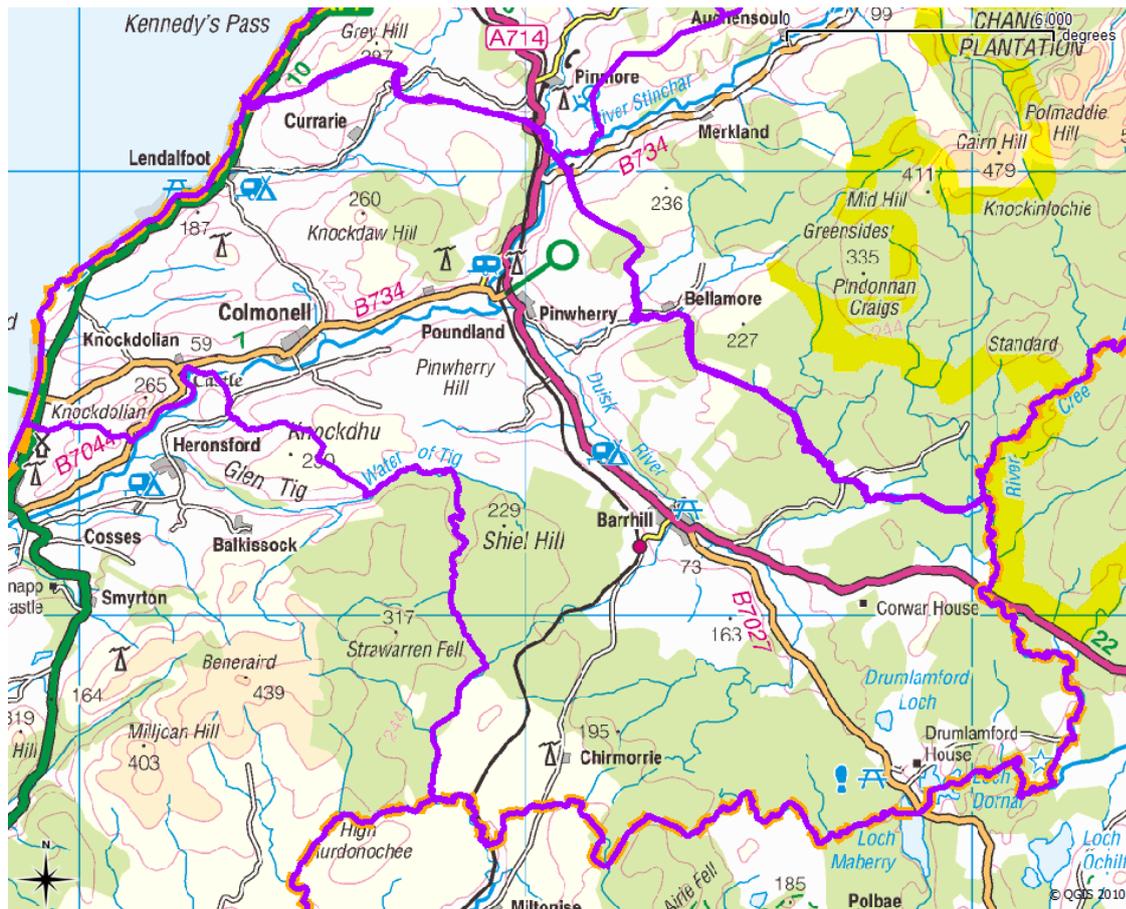
The pipe organ installed by Norman and Beard in 1908 has been awarded the highest grade possible by the British Institute of Organ Studies.

The original manse was built on the glebe, close to the kirk hall. The last manse was built in 1822 at the end of Manse Lane and was sold in 2009 following the parish linking.



Kirk Hall

Geography and Environment



St Colmon (Arnshean, Barrhill and Colmonell) Parish covers a wide geographical rural area (**purple line on the map**) with a relatively small population of 952 persons. Full details of the statistics for mission can be found on the Church of Scotland's website http://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/statistics_for_mission/parish_profiles/100591.pdf

Within St Colmon parish lie four villages:



Barrhill village is an active community with a recently upgraded and extended primary school and a newly refurbished community centre. Also, a satellite GP surgery, shop, pub, bowling green and large modern play park.



Colmonell is a conservation village on the banks of the Stinchar, whose praises are recalled in a song “A beauty, in a beauteous dell. Serenely fair sits Colmonell”.

The primary school was rebuilt a few years ago and the village has a community centre, play park, hotel/pub, fire station, bowling green and St Colmon Church and Kirk Hall.

Pinwherry is a small village where some residents are working towards building a new community hall.



Lendalfoot is a small village on the coast with a village hall and a high percentage of holiday accommodation.

Throughout the parish the local economy is mainly based on agriculture and allied support businesses. Tourism also plays a part through rural activities e.g. fishing, shooting, walking and cycling.

For over two centuries the Stinchar Valley has been recognised as one of the most unspoilt and prettiest areas in Ayrshire. Renowned for its scenery, flora, fauna and mild climate throughout the year, the area is the perfect spot for the outdoor enthusiast. A haven for walkers, fishermen and anyone interested in natural history and cultural heritage, the area also has great historic and architectural interest. The Scheduled Ancient Monument and Archaeological Sites form an important part of our heritage.



The River Stinchar is famed for its salmon fishing and the minister of St Colmon Church has the salmon fishing rights for the stretch bordering the Glebe. The river is joined by its tributary, the Duisk from Barrhill, and flows through the beautiful and varied landscape of the Stinchar valley to the sea at Ballantrae.

In a small adjacent glen, the Water of Lendal flows to meet the sea at Lendalfoot.



Kirk Session and Administration

The charge of St Colmon Parish Church is linked with Ballantrae Parish Church and the manse is in Ballantrae village.

St Colmon Church is administered in accordance with the terms of the Deed of Constitution (Unitary Form). The kirk session meets at least six times a year and is responsible for the spiritual and financial affairs within the Church. While observing the formalities of acting as a court of the Church, meetings are relaxed and congenial, where elders are encouraged to share their thoughts openly. Members of the kirk session are also encouraged to feed back the views of the congregation.

All kirk session meetings are open meetings unless members of the kirk session decide a topic should be discussed in private.

Volunteer elders and members of the Church form two committees who look after the day to day financial and property matters, reporting back to the kirk session.

Services of Worship

Worship is conducted every Sunday at 10.00 in St Colmon Church in Colmonell with refreshments in the kirk hall after each service.

Times of fellowship over a “cuppa” are seen as an essential part of refreshing and strengthening ourselves, and each other, in our faith and commitment.

St Colmon church has a sound system including a loop for the hearing impaired. Text and images for services are projected on to a screen, with hymn books available for those who wish.

The church currently has no disabled access but is taking advice on possible solutions and a portable ramp is available if required. Meanwhile once a month the Sunday service is held in St Colmon Kirk Hall to enable those with mobility problems to worship.

A service is also held once a month at 3pm in Barrhill Memorial Hall to ensure a Church presence continues in the village, whose church building closed in 2007, and to accommodate those who may find it difficult to travel to Colmonell.

The Sacrament of Communion is celebrated four times a year in St Colmon Church and twice a year in Barrhill Memorial Hall. If required for the mobility impaired, a Communion service is also held in the kirk hall.

Non-alcoholic wine is served at Communion to ensure no one is excluded.



Children are welcome in church during services and following the children’s address Sunday Club meets in the kirk hall with stories, crafts and activities for children up to 12 years of age. Those under 3 years must be accompanied by an adult.

Fresh Expressions of Church have been held for several years and currently include Messy Church which is held four times a year. With crafts, music, stories and refreshments it is open to any family.

Other regular gatherings include Bible Study, Prayer and Praise and Potluck Suppers. Alpha and Christianity Explored courses have also taken place.

Community

St Colmon Church aims to support all community-based activities, by attending, offering resources, and helping where possible. Members of the congregation in all the villages tend to be involved, and there is a Church stall at each village Gala Day.

There has always been a close relationship between the Church and the local primary schools through services, assemblies and fund-raising activities.

Also involved in the work of the Church is Ayr Presbytery's Pioneer Farming Minister, Rev. Chris Blackshaw, who is based at Ayr Farmers' Market and works with parish-based ministry to support farmers and their families.

Members of the congregation participate in worship with some trained to lead services. Some with musical talents help to provide music for events and services.



A rota of members delivers the Bible readings at Sunday services.

The Church assists with the community carol singing at Christmas.

An annual Christmas Concert is held in St Colmon Church with performances by a local choir, musicians and

children from the primary schools. Refreshments are served in the kirk hall. A carol evening is also held in Barrhill Memorial Hall.

St Colmon Church is working with the Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum which aims to re-establish and use pilgrim routes passing through our area. The Church is represented on the Whithorn Way Steering Group and pilgrims visit the church and use the kirk hall as a refreshment point on their local pilgrimages.



St Colmon continues to support others through prayer, donations and written campaigns e.g.

- Crossreach
- Church of Scotland World Mission
- Poppy Scotland
- Malawi Mission
- Blythwood Shoe Box Appeal
- Local Food Bank

Fundraising and Fellowship

The kirk hall, built in 1921, was extensively refurbished and extended in 2011. It is now a busy hub of the Church family and is also used regularly by other community groups e.g., Colmonell Baby and Toddler Group and visitors e.g. genealogists and historians.

The kirk hall has a small library of Christian and general books to be purchased or borrowed.



Opening the Kirk Fair

A variety of events are held throughout the year including:

- Annual Kirk Fair in Colmonell
- Annual Fundraising Auction
- Annual Open Weekend with organ music, guided tours and refreshments
- Coffee @ Kirk every Wednesday morning in the kirk hall is open to everyone
- Podiatry clinic in the kirk hall
- Colmonell Circle fellowship group
- The kirk hall can be hired for meetings and social events.

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