

Saltcoats St Cuthbert's Church Magazine



December 2018

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Minister's Letter

You may have heard of the important campaign which seeks to remind the people of Britain that "Christmas starts with Christ".

All those Christmas cards with snow and robins, decorated trees and cosy fireplaces, penguins and polar bears, reindeer and a man in a red suit, may be colourful and cheerful, but from a Christian perspective they are missing the whole reason for our celebrations at this time of the year.

We don't know, of course, the exact date of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, but the choice of 25 December by the Western Church was highly symbolic, taking over and transforming a midwinter pagan tradition looking for light in the darkest time of the year.

As Christians, we often describe Jesus as the Light of the World. In Him we see the reflection of God's love smiling upon our world. How appropriate, then, for those of us who live in the northern hemisphere, to celebrate His coming into the world during the darkest time of the year. Paul's words in his second letter to the Corinthian Christians are helpful here, reminding us that God is making His light shine in our hearts, bringing us the knowledge of His glory shining in the face of Christ Jesus.

This Christmas let us rejoice in the light of God's love and mercy coming into the darkness of a suffering and broken world in the miracle of a special Baby. Christmas is about His birth and the life He would go on to live and sacrifice.

This Christmas let us remember that as Christians we are called to witness to others that for us, Christmas starts with Christ, and that Christmas is not the end of the story.

As the “Christmas starts with Christ” campaign says within its website, “Jesus is who, what and why we celebrate. The real story, the full story, begins with a manger and a birth, and ends with the cross and a resurrection. Without the cradle, there can be no cross. Without Christmas there can be no Easter; and without Easter there is no point in Christmas.”

May God in Christ be at the heart of all our Christmas activities. May His love, joy and peace fill our hearts, homes and church, radiating out from us to touch the life of our community, bringing others closer to the heart of the real Christmas celebration.

With every blessing,

Sarah Nicol.

Christmas Greetings from the Manse

Sarah, Stewart and Deborah send their love and prayerful good wishes to the family of St. Cuthbert’s Church at this joyful time of the year. We have appreciated your kindness to us during our first few months here, and we look forward to sharing our first Christmas with you.

May God bless you and your loved ones with His peace and hope as we celebrate His coming into the world in Jesus Christ.

Love from Sarah, Stewart and Deborah.

Blythswood Shoe Box Appeal

54 filled shoe boxes were collected from the church at the beginning of November together with a large bag of further donations.

Many thanks to all who contributed

Ann Turner

From the Treasurer

At the recent meeting of the Congregational Board I presented estimated accounts to the end of December 2018. These show an estimated deficit for the year in the region of £3000. This roughly equates to the nonrecurring expenditure of our minister's removal costs and other vacancy expenses.

Costs are however always increasing and together with Ministry and Mission cost increases it is expected that we will require an addition of at least £6000 but possibly £8000 of income in 2019 to maintain the current position in our unrestricted funds.

I would therefore appeal that you consider increasing your regular weekly, monthly or annual if at all possible. An extra £1 a week from every member would give an increase of £14000 in 1 year. An extra 50p per week would give £7000 in 1 year.

Additionally we are facing some major costs for the repair to the fabric of our buildings over the next year or so. Although we have reasonable reserves at present the necessary expenditure will probably not be covered by these reserves.

It is roughly 15 years since we asked the congregation for additional monies to be set aside for fabric purposes and it is expected that we will have to initiate an appeal specifically for fabric expenditure in 2019.

Lastly I would like to thank all of you for your financial support to our church throughout the year and in many other ways.

Ann Turner Treasurer

Welcome

It is a particular pleasure to have new members join our church. Over the last few weeks and months regular attenders will have been getting to know Mrs. Margaret Tulloch and Mr. and Mrs. Roy and Margaret Kelso. We are delighted that they have asked for their names to be added to the Roll of our beautiful place of worship. We warmly welcome them to our church family and look forward to their wider participation as we move forward to fulfil our vision for the future of St. Cuthbert's.

Ayrshire Hospice

A new CD entitled "A Christmas Song for the Ayrshire Hospice" has been released by the Ayrshire Hospice. It features 18 tracks and all the vocalists are from, live or work in Ayrshire and have all donated their time and recorded their songs free of charge.

CDs are £10 each and are available from Ayrshire Hospice shops, the fundraising office at 29 Miller Road, Ayr and a full list of local stockists is available on the Hospice website.

Men's Club

On 6th Nov. we joined with "The Friends of the Museum" for a talk on "The Titanic - The Untold Story". This turned out to be a most interesting and fascinating twist as to what actually happened to the Titanic. A fortnight later Bea Nicholson assisted by husband Ray took the members on a pictorial and musical journey around Scotland. There will be a Games Night on 4th Dec. and after the Festive break we will start the New Year on 8th Jan when Mr. Alex Hall's topic will be "The Battle of Flanders Field - WW1"

Tom Sommerville

Sunday School

Our gift service is on the 9th December when gifts can be given for children which will be passed on to the Social Work Department for distribution to families in our area. Over the years the congregation have been very generous with their donations and we would like to thank you for your support.

On the 16th December we will be having our nativity play with the help of the choir. Numbers may be small but the enthusiasm is great!

The Sunday School will then be on holiday until 6th January.

Best wishes to everyone for the festive season.

Sunday School Teachers

Community Café

This popular addition to our Church life continues on **Wednesday 12th December**.

There will then be a break and our routine opening on 2nd & 4th Wednesdays will recommence on 9th January.

Congregational Christmas Lunch: Sunday 16th December

To assist Angela in planning the catering please ensure that your name is on the list on the notice board if you plan to attend.

The Guild

The ladies of the Guild look forward to being entertained by the Caledonia School choir. We are always impressed by the good behaviour, and talent of the children. This concert was held during Guild Week; this was how we reached out to the Community, when we invited people to come along. Refreshments were provided.

On December 5., all the Guilds in the Ardrossan Presbytery will be joining us in the Church for a Christingle Service. Once again, the school children will be taking part.

We then break until January 16. At the first meeting of the New Year, we will be hearing from William and Muriel, on their "Travels with a Camera".

Sheila Sarginson

Choir

We are delighted to welcome Lesley Boyle to the soprano section of the choir. We can still accommodate a few more to assist in leading the praise.

December 2/12. Hurry the Lord is near

Anthems 9/12. The Angel Gabriel

16/12. One day an angel here on this earth.

23/12. From the squalor of a borrowed stable

24/12. Light the candles.

Rosemary Smith

Afternoon Club

The Afternoon Club stops on the 10th of December for the Festive Holidays and will resume again on the 7th of January 2019. We wish everyone a very merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous new year.

Nan Smith

Fundraising

Christmas Fair

This was very much a family time and special thanks to all the stall holders. They and the contributors spent many, many hours in preparation for the usual success and we are indebted to them all for their hard work and commitment. We are grateful to everyone who supported the event in any way.

A huge thank you to Santa for finding time to visit the children and also to the tearoom ladies who were kept busy.

Over £1300 was raised on the day but by the time of going to press the total had risen to almost £1700.

Well done everyone.

Fashion Show update

The final total for the Fashion Show was a whopping £688. Amazing. Thank you to all who took part and to everyone who came along to support the event.

The Fundraising Team wish you all a very Merry Christmas.

Death

Jesus said, "In my Father's house are many mansions"

November Mr. J. Gray, Saltcoats

Snippets from Presbytery

Following the Constitution of Presbytery the Moderator, Rev. Tanya Webster congratulated Rev. Andrew Taylor on his recent 90th birthday.

Ardrossan and Saltcoats Kirkgate Parish Church have been given permission to call a minister under the terms of an Unrestricted Tenure as in the current Presbytery Plan.

Rev Jeanette Whitecross, minister in Kilwinning Old has intimated her intention to retire on 3rd March 2019 and Rev Alan Ford has been appointed Interim Moderator with immediate effect.

Thanks were given to all members who sponsored Mary Ford in the absence for CrossReach. To date the sum raised from all sources is almost £1800.

Last year 8000 people joined the world's largest sleep out to raise £4 million and call for an end to homelessness in Scotland. Rev. McDonald, minister in Beith Parish Church intends to participate again this year on Saturday 8th December in Princes Street Gardens in Edinburgh

William Parker Presbytery Elder

Did you know that:

- 1. Psalm 118 is the middle chapter of the entire Bible?*
- 2. Psalm 117 is the shortest chapter in the Bible?*
- 3. Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible?*
- 4. The Bible has 594 chapters before Psalm 118 and 594 chapters after Psalm 118?*
- 5. If you add up all the chapters except Psalm 118, you get a total of 1188 chapters.*
- 6. 1188 or Psalm 118:8 is the middle verse of the entire Bible? Should the central verse not have an important message? "It is better to trust in the Lord than to depend on human beings." Psalm 118:8*

Diary Dates at a Glance

Men's Club	Tuesday	4 th December
Guild	Wednesday	5 th December
Christmas Concert	Saturday	8 th December
Community Café	Wednesday	12 th December
Congregational Lunch	Sunday	16 th December
Men's Club	Tuesday	18 th December
Family Service 7pm	Monday	24 th December
Watchnight Service 11.30pm		
Men's Club	Tuesday	8 th January
Community Café	Wednesday	9 th January
Guild	Wednesday	16 th January
Community Café	Wednesday	23 rd January