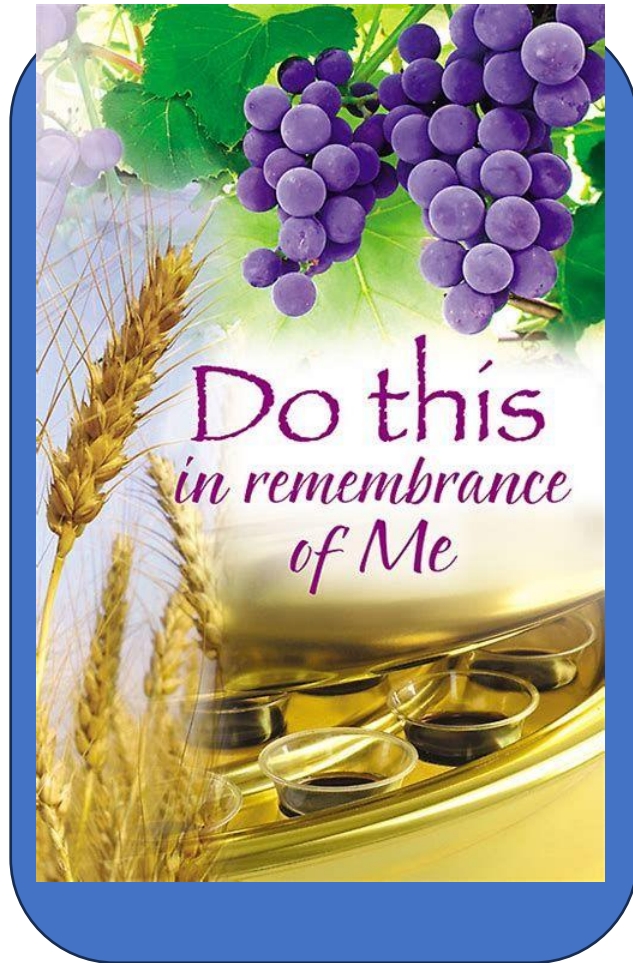


# St. Cuthbert's Church Magazine



## February 2024

Website: [www.saltcoats-stcuthberts.org.uk](http://www.saltcoats-stcuthberts.org.uk)

Scottish Charity Number: SC002905

## From our Interim Moderator

Dear Friends,

I am delighted to have been appointed as Interim Moderator at St. Cuthbert's and I look forward to getting to know you better during my stay with you, however long that might be.

When I get the time, I enjoy reading. My wife, Isabel, works hard in trying to make me use the local library rather than just go out and buy books. The problem is that I have "favourite authors" and I need to read their books as soon as they appear in the bookshop. I like to read stuff written by Stuart McBride and Alex Gray, good Scottish writers, along with Simon Scarrow and C.J. Sansom who write historical novels; then there are books by Terry Brooks and the late Terry Pratchett which are Science Fiction.

One thing that they all have in common is that they use the same characters who appear over and over again, so much so that you feel as if you know them personally as the stories unfold. As soon as I finish a book by one of these writers I cannot wait for the next book to be published in order to find out how the life stories of the various characters develop.

I think the Christian story is very much like that. This wonderful story which began on that first Christmas with the birth of Jesus. The story unfolds as we read of Jesus growing up in Nazareth and then as a thirty year old he begins his public ministry, a ministry of teaching, preaching and healing. During three years of ministry he call twelve disciples, whom he prepared to carry on his ministry. After his arrest, death and resurrection he gave his followers the Commission to "go everywhere and make disciples." After the Ascension his followers continued to make known the message of the Gospel. And throughout the ages followers of Jesus have continued his ministry right up to the present.

While I might never write a book I have the privilege of being able to play a part in the greatest story ever told, and do my bit to make known God's love to others. And the amazing truth is that each one of us have the privilege of playing our part in the Jesus' story.

As members of Christ's Church we have the privilege and responsibility to share with others the Gospel's message of forgiveness, reconciliation and acceptance.

May we be willing to continue to follow and serve Jesus and so continue his ministry to our community and beyond.

Yours in Christ

Andrew R. Black.

### Church Register

#### Deaths *"In My Father's house are many mansions..."*

Dec. Ms. Lesley Reid, Saltcoats.

Jan. Mrs. C. Carswell, Abbotsford, Ardrossan.

#### Readers

Feb 4	Rosemary Smith
11	Graeme Sutherland
18	Gillian Morrison
25	Tom Sommerville

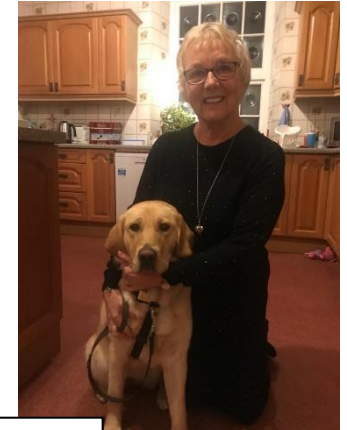
Mar 3	Annita Gillespie
10	Elizabeth Barclay
17	Tom Macintyre
24	Bea Nicholson
31	William Parker

### Pulpit Supply

Feb 4	Rev. A. Black	Feb. 18	Mr. Jim Morrison
11	Rev. A. Sorensen	Feb. 25	TBC.

### DEE THE GUIDE DOG PUPPY

Dee, our guide dog puppy, is now 10 months old. She has benefitted greatly from the experience of lying down quietly in church every Sunday, making no noise, apart from the chewing of her bone and the occasional snores (no reflection on any of our visiting ministers)!



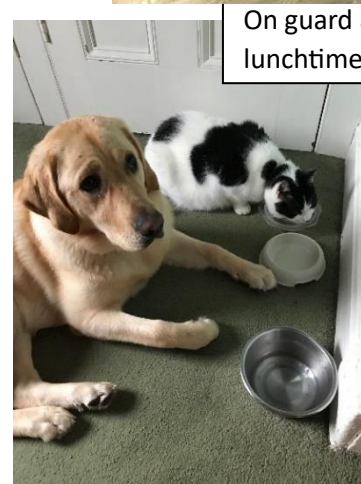
Annita and Dee at home



Dee's first Christmas



3 puppies in a crate?



On guard at lunchtime

Being a puppy raiser is very different from having your own puppy. I have to constantly remind myself that she is not ours and in a few months she'll be given back to the Guide Dog Association.

We have regular visits from puppy development officers who monitor Dee's progress and provide guidance on training required. It feels a bit like an exam and I find myself muttering "She's usually better than this!"

In addition to Sunday mornings at St Cuthbert's Dee regularly visits the Park Hotel in Kilmarnock, house visits to friends and family, bus and train journeys plus training and social meetings with other guide puppies and their trainers.

She will go to a training centre for professional training at approximately 15 months and after 3 or 4 months will be introduced to a blind or visually impaired person. Training continues with that person and she will be almost 2 years old before being fully trained.

Not all puppies become guide dogs and might be better suited to being a "buddy" dog for a vulnerable person or be offered to other organisations to be trained as another type of service dog. Some "failed" puppies are offered for sale. A friend bought one some years ago and she was the most well-behaved obedient dog and excellent family pet. Difficult to imagine why she failed.

The Guide Dog Association is a huge charity providing not only guide dogs but a range of support services for young people and rehabilitation services for blind and visually impaired people including Sighted Guides for those who are unable to have a guide dog. They are always looking for volunteers to train as Sighted Guides.

Needless to say a huge branch of the Association is fund raising including the opportunity to sponsor a puppy.

Dee will continue to attend church with me for the foreseeable future and we both thank you for your continued support.

*Annita and Dee*

## **Holy Communion**

You are warmly invited to celebrate Communion on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> February at 10.45am. The service will be conducted by our Interim Moderator Rev. Andrew Black.

## **Presbytery Mission Plan.**

Following the rejection of the Basis of Union by St. Cuthbert's members a well-attended meeting with Presbytery representatives in early December failed to produce any clear picture of the way ahead other than that the church will continue to function as before until Easter. The following week the congregation in Park Church also voted against the Union and on Christmas Eve Rev. Nigel Chikanya of Ardrossan & Saltcoats Kirkgate intimated the he, as minister appointed with unrestricted tenure, was withdrawing his consent to being involved in any discussions about union. Saltcoats North Church held their last service on the 26 November. At the time of going to print no new proposals have been brought forward.

## **Sunday School**

It was good to have some visitors in Sunday School on the last day of the year including some of the Oxburgh grandchildren. We continue to operate while the church is open.

*The Sunday School*

## **Flowers & Books**

We are continuing to have flowers in the church every Sunday and I thank everyone who has donated money to the fund or purchased flowers. There are a large number of books available at a huge cost of 3 for £1.

*Annita Gillespie*





The team presenting the Carol Service



Ready for the singalong



60 years A "diamond" couple



Excited?  
Not me!



Christmas lunch supported by the Guild



Some of the party goers.



Come on ladies!  
Where are the  
party hats?



## The Guild

The Guild started their 2024 Programme with an informal get together planning future meetings. We received a thank you letter from the National Guild General Secretary for the donation we sent for the Ekwendeni Hospital in Malawi.

This was in response to a special appeal made at Christmas during the Big Sing held in Glasgow - 'A Christmas Gift for Jesus'.

Ekwendeni is legendary in the memory of the Church of Scotland for its pioneering work in Africa.



However, we heard recently from Karen Gillon, the General Secretary, during her visit to our Guild that due to the devaluation of the Malawi Kwacha, the hospital had not been paid its grant from the Government. The result was that their stock of supplies and medicine was very depleted and they were in urgent need of support. The Guild nationally responded generously and our Guild sent £5000 to help.

Our programme going forward is:

February 7 Mary Ford - Guild Project 'Home for Good'  
21 Lesley Boyle - Movement to Music  
Members - Travel reminiscences

Members of the congregations are always welcome to come and share these events - you will be most welcome.

*Tom Macintyre*

Thank you, Lord, for bringing us  
So safely through the night,  
Through all the hours of darkness  
Until the morning light.  
Thank you, Lord, for being near  
With love and healing touch  
To take away the anxious thoughts  
That trouble us so much.

Thank you for another day,  
Whatever lies in store,  
Please help us use it wisely  
Till night-time comes once more.  
Then help us with your presence,  
Your love and gentle care,  
Reminding us both night and day  
That you are always there.

*Iris Hesselden*

