



Chrystal Chronicle

December 2017/January 2018



St Mary's-Greyfriars' Parish Church

Minister: Rev David Logan

Tel 01387 270128

www.stmarysgreyfriars.org.uk

Scottish charity no SC009432



Marking 50 years of ministry

Guests from all over Scotland joined members on November 19 for a special service to celebrate 50 years as an ordained minister for Rev Bill Holland.

Addressing the congregation, Rev David Logan said: "Bill is a man of many parts, a minister, mine surveyor, husband, father, friend and a demon curler."

Sanquhar-born Bill was brought up in Old Cumnock where he attended Cumnock Academy. He was awarded the John Dick Memorial Prize for overall excellence in his third year studies before winning the Sir John Latta prize for excellence in his fifth year when he gained highers in English, Maths, French, Science, Chemistry and Physics. Despite having ample qualifications, Bill decided against going to university, opting instead to join the National Coal Board to train as a mining surveyor, which he qualified as in 1959.

Bill met his wife Helen through Cumnock West Church, where they were both Sunday School teachers and choir members.

In their spare time Bill was President of Cumnock Churches Youth Fellowship and Helen was Guide captain. They were married in 1960. Bill decided to complete his Mining Surveyors qualification before exploring his call to the ministry.

He graduated as a medallist from Glasgow University Arts and Sciences faculties before commencing his Divinity training at Trinity College and three years later Bill was licensed at Glasgow Cathedral in May 1967.

Towards the end of that summer Bill was asked to join the new concept of Team Ministry and he was off to the linked parishes of Mortlach and Cabrach in Upper Banffshire. After four years with the experimental ministry they were on the move again in 1967 this time to the Presbytery of Strathbogie and Fordice. Here, he became an accomplished fisherman and curler, which led to him becoming chaplain to the Royal Caledonian Curling Club.

Bill was called to the charge of New Abbey and Lochend in 1971 and it remains the talk of the village that the new minister arrived along with his wife, four children and a dog all crammed into a Mini Clubman just two days before Christmas.

During his time here he was part-time Chaplain to DGRI for 20 years, responding day or night to any emergencies, and this continued for a further nine years after he retired from the post.

He retired officially in March 2009 when Bill and Helen joined St Mary's-Greyfriars' linked with Caerlaverock, but he continues as interim moderator of Ruthwell, Mouswald and Cummertrees as well as giving valued backup at St Mary's-Greyfriars'. To commemorate the event Bill was presented with a watch and Helen a necklace and flowers.



From the Manse at Christmas

Dear friends,

It is always a joy to write a letter to you before Christmas. As I do so, I find myself anticipating the season to come. This year we have Noblehill Primary School visiting us at St Mary's-Greyfriars' for Christmas services for the staff and pupils. We have nativity plays, services of nine lessons and carols, a watch-night service, family services, Christingles, two baptisms, and a wedding. On Christmas Eve alone I have a total of five services between Caerlaverock and SMG. It is going to be an action packed few weeks!

Like most Scots, I also find myself looking towards the New Year. Not just Hogmanay but the new year as a whole. What is it going to bring? How will the church fare in 2018? It is an exciting time.

I said at the start of this letter, our next few weeks will be hectic, although our frantic activity has nothing to compare with the activity that was going on in Bethlehem all those years ago. Bethlehem was full to capacity; the streets and alleyways were a seething mass of humanity and in the midst of it were a young couple who had nowhere to go. Their child was about to be born and we can only imagine Mary's pain and Joseph's frantic attempts to find somewhere, anywhere, for her to give birth. And, from that shaky start a King was born, not just any King but the King of Kings, our Lord and our Saviour! That my friends is the true message of Christmas. The Christ Child was born, hallelujah!

By all means let us enjoy our twenty first century Christmas to the full, but let us pause to reflect on the true reason that we celebrate. It is the reason for the season after all!

Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year!

David and Catriona



Once again we collected Harvest gifts to send to the Food Bank. All the window sills were filled with displays of suitable produce. Thanks to all who supported this good cause.



Church register

Deaths – “I am the resurrection and the life”

October 3: Mrs Jane McLarty

October 30: Mrs Nora Wilson

New members – “Welcome!”

Mrs Victoria Gordon

Ms Carol Heeps

Please let me know of any changes of address: **Marion Bennett**, 2 Wolfgill Drive, Dumfries DG1 4XY. Tel: 263106.

What's on ...

December

Wednesday 6: Garden Club Christmas lunch

Monday 11: Buzz Christmas party

Tuesday 12: Arts & Crafts, 2-4pm in the hall

January

Monday 8: Buzz holiday

Tuesday 9: Arts & Crafts, 2-4pm in the hall

Wednesday 17: Garden Club – Garden Quizzing, Marie and Ann

Monday 22: Buzz – Burns Music and Poetry, Robert Lind

Tuesday 23: Arts & Crafts, 2-4pm in the hall

Monday 29: Service and soup, 12.15pm in the hall

Wednesday 31: Garden Club, Stephen McMinn, Growing Wild

February

Saturday 3: Buzz coffee morning

Monday 5: Buzz – Guide Dogs

Congratulations!

David and Moira Cannon celebrated their diamond wedding on Wednesday November 22. All best wishes for this joyous occasion from your church friends, and fellow elders in session.



More Tea (or coffee), minister?

Starting in December, we will be having tea or coffee after worship in the church. This is to allow us to get to know each other a bit better instead of rushing off after the service.

The minister is looking for groups of two volunteers to take a month where they run the refreshment table. The Manse family will take December.

Are there any volunteers for January? Please let David or Catriona know if you can help out.



About the magazine

Welcome to the last issue of 2017! The deadline for our February/March issue is **Sunday January 21** for items through the church – and 3pm that day for those sent direct. Many thanks as always!

Editor: David Bennett
Write: 2 Wolfgill Drive, Dumfries DG1 4XY
Call: 01387 263106
Email: magazine@stmarysgreyfriars.org.uk

Useful contacts

Minister
Rev David Logan 270128/07793 542411

Session Clerk
Anne Mackie 266186

Treasurer
Rod Williamson..... 251876

Gift Aid and freewill offering envelopes
Billy Simpson 252278

Data Protection Matters

(or why I cannot enquire after your health at the Church door!)

Over the last year or so, some members have challenged me as to why I do not enquire after their health at the Church door especially, if I have recently visited them at home or in hospital and now they have made it back to church.

The short answer is: I cannot. At the door all you see is me; I see you, and a queue of people close behind you waiting to leave the church and they are very much within earshot.

Data Protection legislation means that I cannot reveal anything about you to a third party without your permission and that includes persons overhearing my comments.

That is why I cannot ask you about your health – although I am obviously delighted that you are back to church. I hope you understand.

The Minister



Notes of thanks

Freda Hunter would like to say thank you for the flowers, cards and many good wishes from everyone after her shoulder surgery.

What a lovely surprise it was to receive flowers following my recent hospital stay. Thank you.

Margaret McKay

Miss Jean Low sends thanks for the church flowers she received recently. Thanks also for flowers from Bunty Sloan.

From the flower team

Recipients of flowers are very appreciative.

It would be of great help if we had more volunteers to participate.

Contact any of the flower team – Norna Francis (250199), Moira Cannon (720394) Betty Jardine (257691), Margaret Thomson (253484) or Maureen Wilson (255008) – if you are interested.

From the Buzz

On October 16 we had a talk from D&G Handy Van service. They give good advice, and will do jobs to help the elderly about the house. It's a very good service and we had a very interesting afternoon learning more about it.

At our meeting on October 30 we had a very interesting talk and slides from Bill Holland on old Dumfries buildings and old closes, some of which are no longer there. We saw an old map with plans of closes behind Queensberry Square before demolition in 1914, as well as Great King Street and the Midsteeple.

With many more pictures and lots of information to take in, it was a really good meeting.

Our talk on guide dogs on November 13 was sadly cancelled, but we still had a good afternoon, with three of our ladies making Welsh griddle cakes with different recipes from Isobel.

We had a lovely afternoon tasting all the goodies!

A Christmas Message

Christmas once again is here, a very special time of year.

For many there is not much happiness and very little cheer.

We should try to help those less fortunate with love and care,

Turning a sad time to one much happier, this is only fair.

Through faith and prayers, comfort and help can be found,

As Jesus our Saviour is always around.

Pierluigi Angelini

A new member writes ...

Having recently joined the church I wanted to introduce myself to all the members of St Mary's-Greyfriars'.

I am Victoria Gordon, 36 years old, born and bred in Dumfries – the happiest place in Scotland to live. I have always been a home-bird and a proud Scot and I make the most of living in a small community with family and friends around me. I went to St Mary's Sunday school for many years and have attended church for several family celebrations, including my own wedding in 2008 to my husband Allan.

When leaving school I was unsure as to the path I would take but while working at the hospital it soon became clear to me what my vocation in life was, so I started working with the elderly in a care home whilst waiting for a place at nursing college. I have now been a qualified staff nurse for 15 years and have worked in Dumfries Infirmary since qualifying. I currently work in paediatrics where I have been based for the last 7 years, I am excited for the new chapter in my career and look forward to moving with the trust to the new state-of-the-art hospital.

I recently had the happiest moment of my life when I gave birth to my beautiful little girl Quinn, I don't know where she's been all our lives but she has certainly made our life's complete. We are excited for her forthcoming baptism on New Year's Eve.

I look forward meeting you all and being part of the congregation at St Mary's-Greyfriars'.

Victoria





Blythswood update

A huge thank you to everyone who contributed to the Blythswood appeal. In all, 97 boxes were completed, £300 was donated plus lots of extra knitted scarves, hats, gloves, and baby clothes.

There were also surplus items like toothbrushes and toothpaste, shower gel etc, which were given to the Blythswood drivers – we know that they will be put to good use. A great effort.

World church committee



Gerry and James with Blythswood shoeboxes collected on November 13 for delivery in time for Christmas.



Christian Aid

Dumfries and District Christian Aid annual coffee morning was held in The Usual Place on Saturday September 23 and proved to be a busy venue, well supported by many churches. The stalls were varied and St Mary's-Greyfriars' manned the china, glass, gifts and jewellery stall, were responsible for tea and coffee making and assisted in serving etc.

The children's competition had a prize winner in one of the classes from Sunday Kids, Rosalie Hasler (the competition title was "What would you take if you had to leave home in a hurry?").