



**Christmas Chronicle
Newsletter
December 2019/January 2020**



Love came down at Christmas

**St Mary's-Greyfriars' Parish Church
Locum Minister Rev Douglas Irving**

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Scottish charity no. SC009432

From the Locum Minister

It will be a joy to lead Caerlaverock and St Mary's-Greyfriars' congregations through Advent and Christmas this year of our Lord 2019. Since my ordination and induction to my first charge, Kilbirnie: Auld Kirk, in 1984, many a happy season, among the seasons, with Jesus as the reason, has been cherished.

A Nativity Scene in the church, usually most innovative, was an annual feature of Christmas celebrations in Kilbirnie's pre-Reformation Church. I recall one such Nativity Scene in particular. Mary and Joseph were reproduced as near life-size papier mâché figures, seen under a palm tree, pushing baby Jesus in a pram. Sadly, it drew stern condemnation from one of the senior elders. He remarked that he had seen "saner" looking children in a mental institution, adding that they didn't have prams in Jesus' time! He gave warning that he was minded to consult with the Presbytery.

The following Sunday, however, it fell to me to preach on the passage from the first chapter of John's Gospel, John 1. 14 (Good News Translation): "The Word became a human being and, full of grace and truth, lived among us. We saw his glory, the glory which he received as the Father's only Son."

I explained during the sermon that the idea for the Nativity Scene had been that of a primary seven pupil at Glengarnock Primary School, Maris Pyper by name. She had won the school Christmas Art competition that year I had sponsored. The subject had been "The Incarnation", a truth which I had sought beforehand to explain to competition entrants. Maris had got the message. She portrayed Jesus as so much one of us that she had put him in a pram. "A little child shall lead them". (Isaiah 11.6). The senior elder didn't know what to say afterwards. The words of Psalm 8.2 (New International Version) come to mind "Through the praise of children and infants you have established a stronghold against your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger."

In awe, John Betjeman (1906-1984), in his poem “Christmas”, speaks for many of us of the unspeakable, that our Lord Jesus, born among us, crucified, died, raised, reigning, meets with us still.

“No love that in a family dwells,
No carolling in frosty air,
Not all the steeple-shaking bells,
Can with this truth compare –
That God was man in Palestine
And lives today in Bread and Wine”

This Advent and Christmas, may Holy Spirited reflection, yours and mine, on Jesus, bring us to adoration and to fresh receiving within the inn of our hearts. May we all experience a Jesus Christ-centred Christmas and may we with one accord offer plea - you in your small corner and I in mine - as well as in worship shared

“O holy Child of Bethlehem!
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in,
Be born in us to-day.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel”

A joyful Christmas to you and yours!

Douglas

Church Facebook page

There was so much material, including photos, submitted for this edition of the newsletter, that there wasn't room to include everything! Please see our Facebook page for the additional material. There's a link to it on our website.

Editor

Christmas Fayre Saturday 7th December – Noon-2pm



Our Christmas Fayre will be held this coming Saturday!

As in previous years, you will have the opportunity to have a soup and roll lunch, rather than a scone and cake, followed by a coffee or tea with mince pies and shortbread. We are hoping there will be the usual Fayre stalls, including a Christmas bric a brac - so have a rummage through your Christmas decorations, wrapping etc and, if there is anything you no longer want, we will be pleased to take it. If you haven't already committed but would like to be involved, please speak to Bette or Janette - the more the merrier!! Bette 07899 916 565 / Janette 07544 368 000

The Hall will be open from 10am on the day of the Fayre for setting up and donating.

Advent Studies 2019

A series of four Advent Studies led by Douglas Irving, our Locum Minister, under the heading "Advent Preparations", is being held in the Session Room on Wednesday afternoons at 2pm. Come along to any or all. Participants should bring a bible and have read the selected bible passages beforehand. All welcome. The last three meetings in the series are:

- Wed 4 December: Parents Prepare (Matthew 1, Luke 1 & 2)
- Wed 11 December: Pastoral Workers & Pilgrim Seers Prepare (Luke 2 & Matthew 2)
- Wed 18 December: Priest and Prophetess Prepare (Luke 2)

Christmas Music Night

This event will be held in the church hall on Friday 20 December at 7pm, presented by Robert Lind, choir and friends. This is always a most enjoyable evening, so please come and join us.

Christmas Services

A Christmas Family Service will be held in St Mary's-Greyfriars' on Sunday 22 December 2019 at 11.30a.m. and a Christmas Eve Service on Tuesday 24 December 2019 at 6.30pm in Caerlaverock Church, to which St Mary's-Greyfriars' members are warmly invited.

Church Register

Death – “I am the resurrection and the life”

November 15: Mrs Janet Templeton

November 18: Mrs Jean Hudson

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

What's on

December

Wednesday 4: Gardening Club - Rolf Buwert "Wood"

Saturday 7: Christmas Fayre 12noon - 2pm

Monday 9: Buzz Christmas Party

Tuesday 10: Guild Christmas Fun

Wednesday 11: Gardening Club Christmas Lunch in Crichton Golf Club

Friday 20: Christmas Musical Evening with refreshments 7pm in the church hall

Monday 30: Service and lunch in church hall

January 2020

Saturday 11: Bacon Buttie breakfast 9.30-11.30am

Tuesday 14: Arts and Crafts in the church hall 2-4pm

Wednesday 15: Gardening Club - summer outing reminiscences

Monday 20: Buzz restarts

Tuesday 21: Guild - Alison Burgess, Ewart Library Local Studies

Monday 27: Service and lunch in church hall

Tuesday 28: Arts and Crafts in the church hall 2-4pm

Parish Nursing St Mary's-Greyfriars'

As you all know, with deep regret we lost our minister, my husband, the Rev David Logan in August. After struggling with cancer for two years, he finally left us to be with the Lord. As his wife, I obviously had to be with him and support him throughout his treatment. Regrettably this required me to be away from the parish for lengthy periods of time. I can only apologise to everyone, as it became impossible for me to carry out my role as your Parish Nurse.

Now as the wife of the late minister, it is incumbent on me to move out of the manse. I am currently waiting for a house to become available on a new housing estate in Dundee and am looking to move in May next year. Thankfully, Session has very kindly said that I can stay in the manse until then. However, it does mean that I have had to resign as Parish Nurse.

I would, however, like to say how much I have valued my time amongst you all and how much I have appreciated all your love and support. It has been a precious experience that I will never forget. It is such a privilege to be allowed into people's lives when they are struggling through often very difficult, challenging situations. I will remember you all with much love and gratitude for my time with you all.

Catriona Logan

Blythswood Care

We are thankful that we have been able to contribute 62 filled shoe boxes, a large bag of additional items and additional monetary donations of £155 collected from members and friends. The lorry from Blythswood collected the donations on Monday 4 November – thus ensuring that all checking in Glasgow and transporting to Europe is completed to enable needy people in Eastern Europe to receive a gift and knowing that they have been remembered at Christmas.

Christian Aid

Dumfries and District Churches have raised for Christian Aid in the past year ending August 2019, £20,221 after expenses (£1,000 less than last year). A wonderful total and thanks to all contributors.

Christian Aid is taking part in the **Christmas tree festival** in St John's church 5–8 December.

Lent Lunches in 2020 in St John's church hall run from 20 February-3 April.

Flower rota

December 1: A Miller

December 8: Vacant

December 15 - 29: Christmas Arrangements

January 5: M Williamson

January 12: Vacant

January 19: R Chambers

January 26: H Little

February 2: L Bell

Flower team contacts: Norna Francis (250199), Moira Cannon (720394), Betty Jardine (257691), Margaret Thomson (253484) or Maureen Wilson (255008).

Thanks for flowers have been received from Bunty Hogg and Liz Tanner.

And from Janette and Ian Kirkpatrick – “Many thanks for the beautiful roses received on the birth of our Grandson Alistair. It certainly is much easier and stress free being a grandparent than a parent!!”

From the Gardening Club

On 25 September we started our activities with in-house material. Bill Holland showed a presentation based on the Invasion of Painted Lady butterflies which abounded this year, then Bette Archibald showed a DVD of Butchart Gardens in Victoria, Canada. It gave a record of the garden from its beginning as a quarry to its present position as a world-renowned garden.

On 9 October we were taken to the “Secret Garden” by Graham Finch and his wife. They have recently moved house and built up a garden in an out of the way place. It was very much enjoyed by all.

On 23 October Louis Wall spoke of the history of Dumfries Station Garden – but also took us on a trip to the other properties within the Southwest Gardening Group. His talk and photographs were very much appreciated.

On 6 November Bill Lawson took us on a tour of Cruck Cottage, Torthorwald. He took us through its history as well as its structure and spoke of the satisfaction with the hard work of restoration but the heartbreak of a deliberate fire in the roof.

Guild News

Fiona Dagleish from the Trussell Trust gave us a most interesting and informative insight into its work at our October meeting and Lilly Stevenson came in November to tell us all about the Guild Project in Zambia 'Journeying Together'.

We are now gearing up to helping with the church Christmas Fayre and getting fit for our Christmas party on December 10th! Our January meeting on 21st will be a talk by Alison Burgess from the Ewart Library entitled Local Studies - 'The Job'.

From the Buzz

On September 30 we welcomed Dorothy Edwards talking about Queen Victoria and her nine children. She outlived her husband, Prince Albert, by 60 years. It was an interesting talk.

On October 28 we had a talk from Trevor Muir about the Dock Park. In 2010 a group of people started fundraising for the Park Heritage Fund. At one point the Dock Park was full of artillery.

There were two big factories, one on each side of the River Nith – Rosefield Mills and McGeorge's factory.

November 11 was Remembrance Day. We had some nice music from wartime, with Anne Mackie playing the keyboard.. Eunice Sutherland read a lovely poem and Liz Tanner read from a book written by her father-in-law. Bette Archibald read a poem by John Crawford and Edna Wells told us about saving fuel in wartime. Other members brought some memorabilia, including ration books.

For reflection

Carols and candles,

Holly and mistletoe

Rejoice and be merry in songs and in mirth!

O praise our Redeemer, all mortals on earth!

For this is the birthday of Jesus our King,

Who brought us salvation - his praises we'll sing!

Immanuel 'The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son and they will call him Immanuel which means "God with us"

Shepherds and sheep,

Three Wise Men,

Mary and Joseph

Advent - our time of preparation for the birth of our

Saviour in a stable, so many years ago. Such a special baby who grew into such a special man.

Let us sing of his birth and rejoice.

Arts and Crafts Group

Autumn Projects:

Twiddle muffs

In the Arts and Crafts group, we have successfully completed another project. We've dispatched a beautiful batch of bright, cheerful twiddle muffs to Midpark Hospital and have since received a thank you letter from the ward.



Christmas Projects:

Hats for the Homeless

This season some of us have picked another knitting project. Following a request from the Bethany Christian Trust, we have picked up our knitting needles again, to knit hats for the homeless. Volunteers are always welcome.

Christmas Decorations: We have started getting ready for Christmas making decorations: wreaths, boxes, decorations extra. Out with the glue, the crayons and the scissors!

Visitors are made very welcome. Do feel free to drop by for a cuppie and a blether, see what we are up to. Why not come and try your hand at it? We meet on the **second & fourth Tuesday of each month from 2-4pm**. Tea and coffee provided.

Remembrance Sunday at Caerlaverock & St Mary's-Greyfriars'

The two minutes' silence was observed at 11am, following morning service in the Church, on Sunday 10 November 2019, at Caerlaverock War Memorial, under cloudless blue skies, with the road closed for the Act of Remembrance. Wreaths were laid, firstly on behalf of Dumfries & Galloway Council by Councillor Elaine Murray, Leader of the Council, secondly for Caerlaverock Community Association by British Legion member, Stephen Powell, and thirdly for Caerlaverock Primary School by school pupil Robyn Maxwell and Charlotte Wilson from Noblehill Primary. It was poignant to have a horse and pony in attendance at the War Memorial, a reminder of the millions of horses killed during the 1914-18 First World War conflict. This marking of Remembrance Sunday was followed by wreath laying at the War Memorial in the vestibule of St Mary's-Greyfriars' Church at 11.30am with two minutes' silence observed by the congregation. David Cannon, sometime of the 1st Battalion of the Cameronian and Scottish Rifles attached to 26th Gurkha Rifles, in which he undertook National Service in Malaya, laid the wreath. Looking on was Dick Geddes, Royal Corps of Signals, who saw service in Italy and Greece in the closing years of World War 2.

Next magazine

The deadline for our February/March issue is **Sunday January 19** for items through the church – and 3pm that day for those sent direct. Many thanks as always.

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Useful contacts

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Treasurer, Gift Aid and freewill offering envelopes

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