



St Paul's Milngavie Life Magazine December 2011

Christmas and Advent Worship at St. Paul's

Thursday 1 December	10.00am	Tree Festival Commences
Thursday 1 December	8.00pm	Prayer Meeting
Saturday 3 December	8.00am	Milngavie Churches Prayer Breakfast
	9.30am	Advent Service
		There Will Be Light: Douglas Muirhead
Sunday 4 December	11.00am	Morning Worship
	7.00pm	Evening Worship
Wednesday 7 December		Tree Festival ends
Thursday 8 December	8.00pm	Prayer Meeting
Friday 9 December	7.30pm	Christmas Praise Service Allander Evangelical Church
Saturday 10 December	9.30am	Advent Service
		God Will Be With Us: Fergus Buchanan
Sunday 11 December	11.00am	Morning Worship
	7.00pm	Evening Worship with the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
Thursday 15 December	8.00pm	Prayer Meeting
Saturday 17 December	9.30am	Advent Service
		There Will Be Singing: Stephen Thoms
Sunday 18 December	11.00am	Gift Service followed by Coffee & Mince Pies
	7.00pm	Christmas Readings and Music
Monday 19 December	7.30pm	Douglas Academy Christmas Concert
Thursday 22 December	8.00pm	Prayer Meeting
Saturday 24 December	9.30am	Advent Service
	4.30pm	There Will Be Peace: Robin Easton
		Carols in the Precinct
	7.00pm	Christmas Eve Family Service
	11.30pm	Watchnight Service
Sunday 25 December	11.00am	Morning Worship
		No Evening Worship
Sunday 1 January 2011	11.00am	Morning Worship
		No Evening Worship



Dear Friends,

Until a few days ago I had never heard of 'footfall'. Apparently this is a term used by the retail industry to describe the number of people who are visiting shopping areas. At this time of the year 'footfall' is always expected to be heavy but according to a recent report it has 'nose-dived' in comparison to last year. A spokesman for the Scottish Retail Consortium has blamed the growing strain on household budgets which is leaving people with less to spend on 'other needs and wants'.

We have our own 'footfall' problems in the Church. There are exceptions but by and large church attendance is not encouraging throughout the country, even at this time of the year. It would appear that Christmas services are no longer an essential part of the seasonal experience. I have certainly noticed a fall in attendance at our own Christmas services in the last few years.

Some of us might not be too concerned about this. The point has been made to me that seasonal attendance at Church never really leads to much. Personally, and this might not surprise you, I am always happy to see people at services whatever has brought them. And at this time of year there can be an openness to the message. People might come who have had a bad year and are looking for the assurance that there is a strength beyond their own strength. People might come to revive the dying embers of faith. People might come who have no clear idea why they are here but there is a constraint they cannot deny.

There has been evidence of all of this over the years and it has been moving for me to listen to people as they point to a Watchnight Service as an important moment on their journey of faith. Carol Ann Duffy, the Poet Laureate, has written a poem entitled 'The Christmas Truce' which tells the story of the unofficial ceasefire on Christmas Eve 1914. She writes:
'But it was Christmas Eve; *believe*; belief thrilled the night air.'

I know what she means. Sometimes Christmas creates an atmosphere where unusual things become possible. Sometimes Christmas speaks to deep feelings within us, longings, sadness, aspirations. Sometimes Christmas opens up the possibility of a new beginning. None of this should surprise us. It is a powerful story. An ancient Christian thinker described it as God coming down to our level in order to raise us to His level. As people gather for Christmas services throughout the country many will be giving thanks for this for they have felt its truth in their souls. Others will be hoping it is true. All are welcome.

*Yours in Christ,
Fergus C Buchanan.*

Book Club

This month we have been reading **The Hare with the Amber Eyes** by Edmund de Waal.

This book is in fact a memoir by Edmund de Waal who inherited 264 Japanese netsuke, which are wood and ivory carvings of animals, plants and people roughly about the size of your hand. The netsuke were left to him by his great uncle, Iggie.

The story begins in Paris where the carvings started their journey in 1870. Although some items were destroyed and others stolen, a large part of the collection remained intact during the German occupation of Austria in 1938. Originally designed as toggles, they were often played with by the children of the family. The netsuke continued their journey and were miraculously saved from the Nazis by a maid who hid them in her mattress. The author, who was studying pottery in Japan, first encountered them in 1991 at his great uncle's home.

There was a chart at the front of this book giving genealogy details which helped to make sense of what was quite a long, involved book. It was generally agreed that this was quite a slow book and something of a struggle to read as a result. Although the first half of the book could be compared to a trip to an art gallery and was mainly concerned with research, the second half was more concerned with the people involved in the story of the netsuke.

The group felt the book was overly long

and the story could have been condensed, which may have made it easier to read. It was also felt that the author had no particular literary skill and as one reviewer put it “there are only so many ways of describing the feel of carved wood”.

None of the group would feel happy about recommending this book.

Next time we are reading *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett and we are meeting on 20 December at the usual time of 7.45pm.

JOYCE CLARK

The Editor would like to thank all the faithful contributors who send in articles for *Life* every month and wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

If you would like to join our little band, please consider writing a short article and sending it in—we're always delighted to receive your items.

Huge thanks also to Helen Arnold in the church office for her patience and good humour in the face of provocation from the editor!

Thanks finally to everyone in the congregation who has prayed for the magazine—only you will know whether your prayers have been answered— but we know that the Lord has been at work. Ed



Japan Jottings



Dear Friends

December is a busy month for obvious reasons. For us here in Hiragishi, we are looking forward to various events and worship services but the month will start with the excitement of a baptism. On the 4th Hiroko will become the second person to be baptised here. Certainly we are not expanding at fast rate, but there is indeed much rejoicing in heaven over just one who turns to Jesus and receives the gift of salvation. What a wonderful way to start the month in which we celebrate the birth of the Saviour.

Recently we have been rejoicing too with Wataru, a 25 year old young man who has come to our service regularly since the end of last year and has now been studying the Bible with David and our colleague JP every week for almost a year. He was at first very resistant to the gospel. His self-proclaimed philosophy was 'Life is war'. Yet, over these months God opened his heart so that, like Hiroko, he has been able to confess his faith in Jesus. What a joy to welcome yet another new believer! In January we will also start Bible study with another man who is already saying he wants to believe and be baptised. It's great to have these encouragements.

Our big outreach is on the 10th when we hold our Family Christmas, mainly for children but for Mums and Dads too. Last year we had around 80 turn up and we'd love to see even more this time. As well as games, fun and singing, we will have a guest from another church who does ventriloquism and has a really great way of sharing the message of Christmas. On the 25th we will have a simple worship service in the morning in another building and have a time of games and food afterwards. We hope that this will be an opportunity to invite many friends and people we know in the area to come and experience what Christmas is all about. Before that we will welcome home Daniel and Matthew for the winter holidays.

We wish you all a Happy Christmas and Blessings for the New Year.

David, Lorna, Daniel, Matthew, Calum and Alistair

Thanks

I would like to thank the congregation for the kind thoughts and prayers during my stay in hospital. I am sure this helped greatly in my recovery.

Thank you once again,

Margaret Niven.

THE GOLD WRAPPING PAPER - An Inspiring Christmas Story

Once upon a time, a man punished his five-year-old daughter for using up the family's only roll of expensive gold wrapping paper before Christmas.

Money was tight, so he became even more upset when on Christmas Eve, he saw that the child had used the expensive gold paper to decorate a large shoebox she had put under the Christmas tree.

Nevertheless, the next morning the little girl, filled with excitement, brought the gift box to her father and said, "This is for you, Daddy!"

As he opened the box, the father was embarrassed by his earlier overreaction, now regretting how he had punished her. But when he opened the shoebox, he found it was empty and again his anger flared. "Don't you know, young lady," he said harshly, "when you give someone a present there's supposed to be something inside the package!"

The little girl looked up at him with sad tears rolling from her eyes and whispered: "Daddy, it's not empty. I blew kisses into it until it was all full."

The father was crushed. He fell on his knees and put his arms around his precious little girl. He begged her to forgive him for his unnecessary anger.

An accident took the life of the child only a short time later. It is told that the father kept this little gold box by his bed for all the years of his life. Whenever he was discouraged or faced difficult problems, he would open the box, take out an imaginary kiss, and remember the love of this beautiful child who had put it there.

In a very real sense, each of us as human beings have been given an invisible golden box filled with unconditional love and kisses from our children, family, friends and God. There is no more precious possession anyone could hold.

Author unknown.

LUNCH CLUB RECIPE BOOK

The recipe book had a slight hitch due to printing problems but we hope it will be available this week. We have improved the covers and layout but this has meant additional costs and the book will now be £3.00 which still makes it an inexpensive little gift which supports The Fergusons, our missionaries in Japan. Happy reading, cooking and eating!



Ann MacLeod

Three boys are in the school yard bragging about their fathers.

The first boy says, 'My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a poem, they give him £50.'

The second boy says, 'That's nothing. My Dad scribbles a few words on piece of paper, he calls it a song, they give him £100.'

The third boy says, 'I got you both beat. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a sermon, and it takes eight people to collect all the money!'

*A Sunday School teacher asked her class why Joseph and Mary took Jesus with them to Jerusalem ..
A small child replied, 'They couldn't get a baby-sitter.'*

Thanks to Anne Goodlet for raising a smile for us.

Flower donations—December

Mrs. R. Douglas, Mrs. R. Gilmour, Sunday School.

Please put donations in Flower rota pigeon hole at back of church or send to Mrs. Wilma Douglas, 34 Braeside Ave. Milngavie G62 6LJ. Phone 956 2630.

My thanks for all the donations for the church flowers this year and remember new donors are always welcome. To my team of willing helpers, well done and many thanks.



World Mission Diary for December

This month let us remember the people of Bethlehem . We would pray for our partners who work there ,Colin Johnston and The Rev. George Sand.

The World Mission Council wants to encourage people of Scotland to send Christmas cards to our partners in Bethlehem to let them know that we remember them at Christmas.

Address your card to the person or group and send c/o
Rev George Sand
St Andrew's Church
PO Box 8619, 1 David Renez St
Jerusalem 91086, Israel

A list of names can be found on the Church of Scotland website

Invest in Peace material

Here are 2 taken from the list
Ma`an lit-Hajat (a I Aicle Group) a wool felting project the members of this group made the doves which were on sale at the General Assembly in 2011. Send greetings to the manager Malera and members of the group

Send greetings to the Headteacher and pupils of The Shurooq School for the Blind . Some of the pupils will not be able to go home for the holiday.

The Guild

On Monday 7th November we were delighted to welcome our own Miss Mary Wood to speak to us on Tenement House in Buccleuch Street. With her chat and slides Mary knew all there was to know about Tenement House and if you haven't visited it think about doing so (after April) and I'm sure for the older members of the congregation it will take you back to your childhood! The following week we welcomed Mrs Maxie Richards who helps drug addicts by taking them into her own home and working with them. She answered many questions regarding the Foundation she has set up, the home she has in Tighnabruich, and of course, about how safe she feels having people in her home. Her family, who no longer live at home, worry about her but she feels very safe and knows the Lord is looking after her.



We held our Annual Coffee Morning on the 19th when we raised nearly £700 and our thanks go to everyone who contributed to this wonderful amount.

On the 21st we had a wonderful evening with Union 3 + 1 from Lenzie Union Church. Christine and Nancy entertained us with their great choice of songs, Morag with her fun readings and Bill, as well as accompanying the singers, gave us a few solo performances on the piano.

As Life goes to print we look forward to our Allocation of Funds, Bring and Buy and hearing Valerie Riley telling us about Christmas Customs and on Monday 5th December we will be having our Christmas Dinner and then we are on holiday until the New Year.

Our syllabus for January is as follows :

- 9th The 3 Crows – Musical Evening**
- 16th Captain Lucy Mann – Salvation Army**
- 23rd New Kilpatrick Ceilidh Dancers and Ceilidh Band**
- 30th Mr. Hutcheson – Who would be an Organist.**

As always a warm invitation is extended to all the ladies in the congregation to join us any Monday evening – you will be made most welcome.

Jean Scott

Editor's note

If you have any comments, criticisms or queries regarding the content of Life magazine, we respectfully request that you address them in the first instance to the editor, Rona Dawson, as she is responsible for all articles featured. Contact details on the back page.

“Be More Christian” says Muslim LinkedIn

The only Muslim Cabinet minister has said Britain should become more Christian.

Writing in *The Telegraph*, Baroness Warsi suggested it was OK for Christians to be proud of their religion and that having a strong faith identify could help people to better understand people of other faiths.

“We need to create a country where people don’t feel like they have to leave religion at the door. That means being proud of Christianity, not downgrading it,” she said. “It means encouraging people to say that their faith inspires what they do.”

Lady Warsi’s message will be assuring to many Christians who have felt under increasing pressure in recent years to keep their faith private, while others have perceived a tendency towards respect for Muslims and intolerance towards Christians.

Lady Warsi suggested that Christians should not feel they have to water down their faith.

It would be a “mistake to assume that you compromise your identity the more you try to understand others”, she said. “The stronger your understanding of your neighbour, the stronger your own religious identity becomes.

Instead of a “conflict of loyalty” between different faiths, Lady Warsi spoke of her desire to see people of faith engage in dialogue with one another to challenge the “assumption that some people of some faiths can be trusted while others cannot”.

She said: “Take it from me: there is nothing incompatible about a world of many religions and a world of strong, vibrant nation states.”

From www.christiantoday.com

LinkedIn is a social networking site (a bit like facebook but it’s generally more business orientated). As part of a discussion on the merits of “top tips” for this or that, the following tip for life – if one can really call something so profound that — was offered by Samantha Gluck, a member of a group I am part of.

Ed

“I have only one tip to offer. This tip will change your life and the lives of those around you:

Truly do to others as you would want them to do to you.

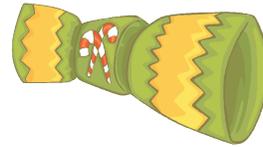
To really strive to live by this tenet is to really live, not simply exist. Often misinterpreted by mistake, or to make it fit personal desires and ego, this is the be all end all to the start of a fulfilling life no matter what your situation. Each day, several times a day (and night), I agree with my spirit that I will behave according to this rule. When I forget to actively agree, I fail. But those times when I am victorious over my own instinct of ME and I bend to the other guy, it’s really amazing to me personally and often visibly joyful to the other person.

Since I have truly attempted to hold my behavior, both public and private, to this standard I have grown in ways that I would never have imagined - it’s the times I fail that really drive that learning experience home - along with giving me a recharge on humility.”

Sunday Club Christmas Party

This year's party is being held on Saturday December 10th from 2.00 - 4.00p.m. in the Church Halls. The children should all have received an invitation and we would appreciate replies to help us with catering.

If you have any queries please contact Mrs. Carol Gibson on 942 9542 or Mrs. Eleanor Easton on 943 0368.



Brigade Blethers

The Company came to Church for our enrolment service on 6 November and the girls got quite excited when they saw that Mr Buchanan had brought along the big screen again. They were ready for an update on the adventures of the McMingin's when up came a slide of someone called Beckham. (Does he not have something to do with football?) In spite of their ignorance the girls enjoyed the service and we heard quite a bit about their hopes and dreams on the Thursday. We keep praying that more of them would come along every Sunday.

Sunday 13th was Remembrance Sunday and it was very moving to see so many young people out on parade to pay their respects.

Back on Company night the girls have been planning the decorations for our Christmas tree for the Tree festival. A member of the congregation kindly knitted 36 white squares and we are busy turning them into snowmen.

First, however, we have our Fundraising Quiz which this year is to help Canine Partners and the team entries are coming in fast and furious. Looks like it will be another good night.

Then, believe it or not, our Christmas party is on 15th December and I hope the weather behaves so that Santa can get here safely. That will be our last meeting of 2011 but we have already booked a visit to the pantomime in January and a Company weekend to Auchengillan in March so we have plenty to look forward to.

All of us here in Brigade thank everyone for their prayers and support and we hope you have a very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Anne Goodlet



Men's Association Visit to the Preshal Trust

On Tuesday 15th November several of the men from the Men's Association ventured across the water to Govan to visit the Preshal Trust and see at first hand how May Nicholson and her team work with the people of Govan, Linthouse and Drumoyne.

We arrived about 11.45 a.m. and were just in time to join with them for lunch. Suitably refreshed after minestrone soup, burger, potatoes and veg, followed by tea and biscuits we took the time to talk with those who were there. While talking it was obvious that everyone had a great respect for May, no matter what their circumstances, varying from recovering drug addicts to heavy drinkers who were delighted to tell us they hadn't touched a drop for many years. Snooker and dominoes figured prominently in their games with lots of friendly chat going on.

May showed us the artist's impression of their vision for the future in a new

building to be built on the existing site. Historically the building was a meeting place for disabled drivers and then the church of the Nazarene before that church moved to new premises. The new building is likely to cost about £800,000 and May and her team have already raised over £600,000 towards the target. As we left later, she asked for our prayers for the following Thursday when she was meeting with another business man with a view to securing further funding.

In all, for those of us who visited it was indeed a humbling experience to be accepted without question into their fellowship and be offered lunch with no expectation of payment, although all of us managed to make May accept our donations for the work of the Preshal Trust.

Chris Scott

Church Garden

It's that time of year when the helpers who do the church garden get a well earned rest. The weather this year was pretty awful but we still managed to keep the garden looking good. My sincere thanks to everyone who helped and hope that next year we will gain a few more volunteers. If you would like to help please get in touch.

In the meantime may I wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a blooming Good Year.

Sheila Dickson, Garden Convener



Coffee and Mince Pies

The annual Coffee and Mince Pies event will be held in the Large Hall after the morning service on **Sunday 18th December**. This year the proceeds will be donated to Alzheimer Scotland for the work they do in East Dunbartonshire. Do come and join us for festive fare and fellowship.

As usual, donations of mince pies and shortbread will be most welcome.

Alzheimer Scotland

It is estimated that there are around 2,000 people with dementia in East Dunbartonshire. Alzheimer Scotland aim to ensure that nobody should have to go through dementia on their own and they support people with dementia and their carers in a variety of ways. In East Dunbartonshire they have just opened a new dementia resource centre at Kessington which provides a comfortable environment where people can come to talk in confidence to a Dementia Advisor about their concerns. The Dementia Advisors can provide a wide range of practical advice and information which can help people to continue to live well with their illness for as long as possible. Alzheimer Scotland provide support staff who can work with people at home and in the community providing assistance with all aspects of daily living, enabling people to continue to pursue their interests and maintain a fulfilling lifestyle of their choice. They also run two small day services in Milngavie which provide stimulating activities and an opportunity to socialise with other people in a warm and supportive atmosphere while providing their carers with what can be much needed time to themselves.

Frances Ireland and Liz Traill

Christmas Tree Festival 1st—7th December



The Festival runs from December 1st - 7th so will be well underway, if not over, by the time you read this, but if you receive this in time and have not yet visited us, please do come! The Church is open each day from 10.00am till 4.00pm.

At the time of going to press the final preparations are being made. We expect to have 34 colourful and imaginatively decorated trees from many sections of the community, a well-staffed tearoom and many stewards from all the churches; there will also be wonderful entertainment from talented musicians. We hope to raise a good sum for each of our charities, St. Margaret's Hospice and Tearfund. In the January edition of 'Life' there will be a full account of the Festival.



C H U R C H R E G I S T E R

NEW MEMBERS

Joined by Certificate

Mrs Sheila Chalmers, 24 Homebrae House, 1 Strathblane Road 30a

DISJUNCTIONS

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Mr & Mrs A Robertson, 57 Drumlin Drive now 38

39 Craigend Circus Anniesland

Mrs Jean McCaughie, 39 Southgate 18

Now Almond View Nursing Home, 5 Drumchapel Place

Dr & Dr William Lee, 5 High Craigton, 64

Now 23 Braehead Ave., Milngavie 30a

DEATHS

Jesus said: 'I am the Resurrection and the Life'

3.11.11 Mrs Linda Angus, Whitefield Nursing Home

Please note copy date (the last date for submissions) for January Life is Christmas Eve (ie watchnight service) if using church pigeonhole and same if emailing. Email to rona.dawson@go.uk.com or ph 944 4198.

We anticipate the magazine will be ready for distribution on Sun 8th January but please keep an eye on the intimations for changes. Folding/collating team please also check for updates.

Date	Flower Deliveries	Crèche Rota	Traidcraft Rota	Vestibule Rota
11 Dec	M Thomson E Izatt	Berry Richell	R Raeburn H Reid	Team 6 Jim McQueen (EC)
18 Dec	A Gibson A MacLeod	Reid Lawrie	B Watson M Conway	Team 7 Marjory Kennedy
25 Dec	M Abbott R Douglas	No Creche		Team 8 Robert Rutherford
1 Jan	M MacLean R Cameron	No Creche		Team 9 Margaret Macpherson
8 Jan	J Ford C Tanner	Chapman McCreadie		Team 10 Irene Strang