

February 2025 Magazine



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Please do not contact the Rector in connection with hall bookings – the contact details for Celia, who deals with this, are above.

The cover picture: Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Luke 2:22-40) see p23

All Saints Scottish Episcopal Church

Drymen Road, Bearsden



February 2025

Dear All,

WHERE THERE IS NO VISION.....

*Where there is no vision, the people perish:
but those that keep the law, happy are they. (Proverbs 29.18)*

Here we are, already into the second month of the New Year - 2025. For many this is a time for new goals and resolutions, and at the time of writing our diocese is about to choose a new Bishop (we hope to know who this will be by the time you read this), so it's certainly a time of new hope and fresh vision.

It's an exciting time to be a part of the church, and my prayer is that we are a church where the people love one another, a church that has truly been blessed. But we remain a church where many people around us still need Christ. This is a time to look ahead with confidence. It is a time to have a vision for what God would have us do during this next year and beyond. It is a time to expect the very best that God has to offer. It is a time to build our church.

In order to build the kingdom, we need to have a vision. Where there is no vision, no preachers who preach, no teachers to teach the good news of the Lord, where there is no grace, there is no open vision. And in some of the most powerful words in the Bible we are reminded that where there is no vision the people perish.

It is time for the young to have visions and the old to dream dreams. To mature, to grow, to reach out, to encourage, to survive.... we need to have a vision for this charge. My vision is of a worshipping and faithful church, meeting the needs of the local community, unashamedly proclaiming the Good News.

Without a vision the people perish. We should pray for God to keep His vision of Kingdom building in front of us every day. So pray that the Lord will give you a vision for your life this year. Pray that God would send you to share your faith with someone. Pray for others as they go out into this world. Remember, there is no unemployment in Christian service: there is a place for everyone. Don't allow yourself to sit back and watch others work — look for ways to help with the harvest.

We have a small luxury this year in that there is space during February before we launch into Lent on March 5th. Sometimes we are dragged screaming into Ash Wednesday almost as soon as we've marked Candlemas but not this year. So let us use these weeks to recommit ourselves to the God who loves us and leads us into the future together, and to embrace the vision he grants us.

That verse - Proverbs 29:18 - is about God's Word and the truth he has revealed, and how without it people can't focus, reach their goals, or follow their dreams. Where there is no Word of God there is no message of life.

Having vision isn't about pie in the sky dreams but about God showing us possibilities and realities as we pray and study the Bible.

Someone once shared this with me at a conference about looking to the future as churches and congregations:

- Will people say, "They had a good vision statement" or "They had a Godly vision?"
- Will people say, "They had good Bible studies and services" or "They helped to transform lives?"
- Will people say, "They had nice buildings" or "They showed Jesus to the world?"

As we journey through this year (we hope, soon to have a new bishop in post to inspire us), let us understand that it's not enough to have a vision... we have to actually pursue it, or we might lose sight of it altogether.

Rev. David

NEW BISHOP ELECTED FOR GLASGOW AND GALLOWAY



The Reverend Canon Dr Nicholas John Bundock was elected yesterday, 18 January 2025, as the new Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway. He will be consecrated and take his new post later in the year. Nick becomes Bishop-elect, following the retirement of the Rt Rev Kevin Pearson who served the Diocese as Bishop for five years.

The Bishop-elect accepted the post following a vote of the Electoral Synod in Holy Trinity & St Barnabas, Paisley, where he received over half of the votes in each house, with clergy and lay representatives from congregations across the Diocese voting.

Nick is currently the Team Rector of St James and Emmanuel, Didsbury, in the Diocese of Manchester in the Church of England. During his time there, he has developed and led an inclusive ministry known as 'Church for Everyone,' which has been transformative in creating vibrant, welcoming, and growing communities for people of all backgrounds, including those who have often felt excluded from traditional church settings.

He studied Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the University of Sheffield and the University of North Texas, before training for ordination at the University of Cambridge and Ridley Hall Theological College. He was ordained deacon in 2002 and priest in 2003, serving his curacy at St Saviour's, High Green in the Diocese of Sheffield. In 2005, he became Team Vicar, then in 2010, Team Rector at St James and Emmanuel, Didsbury, in the Diocese of Manchester. In 2024, he was made an Honorary Canon of Manchester Cathedral.

Following the election, the Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Most Rev Mark Strange said:-

"I am delighted to welcome Nick as Bishop-elect into this new season of ministry in the Scottish Episcopal Church. I would also like to thank everyone who took part in the process—those who offered themselves and tested their discernment, as well as members of the Electoral Synod, Diocesan Council, Preparatory Committee, Diocesan staff and Bishop Andrew, Convener of the Electoral Process, for their prayerful work. Please keep Nick and Rachel in your prayers as we plan his consecration and new beginnings in Scotland."

The Bishop-elect said:-

"I am deeply humbled and honoured to have been called to serve as the Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway. This is a diocese with a rich history, vibrant communities, and a deep commitment to embodying the love of Christ in every corner of its life.

Throughout the discernment process, I have been moved by the openness, warmth, and faithfulness of the people I have encountered. It is with great joy that I look forward to walking alongside clergy, laity and their wider communities as we seek to nurture and grow God's Kingdom together.

As we face the challenges and opportunities of this time, I am inspired by the diocese's vision of inclusion, justice, and hope. I firmly believe that the Scottish Episcopal Church has a unique voice to share in today's world, and I am committed to supporting and encouraging all who contribute to its mission and ministry.

I ask for your prayers as I prepare to take on this role, and I offer mine in return for the flourishing of this diocese and its people. Together, may we step boldly into the future, confident in the transforming power of God's love to create a Church for Everyone."

In a message to our congregation sent to Revd David, the Bishop-elect said: *"Prayers are needed as I learn to relax into the new role and learn how to serve you all to the best of my ability. I look forward to our years of collaboration and mutual support, David, and please give my greetings and blessings to everyone at All Saints."*

WINTER WORDS FROM YOUR LAY REPRESENTATIVE

I have had a busy couple of weeks! I shall begin with some words about the recent Episcopal election. The preparatory committee certainly did a superb job by presenting us with a short list of three excellent candidates. At the first of the Electoral Synods, on Saturday 11th January at Holy Trinity and St. Barnabas, Paisley, these three candidates were presented. In the lead up to the Synod we had been given each candidate's answers to a questionnaire set by the preparatory committee and their CVs. At the Synod itself, each candidate gave a short presentation and was asked to answer questions in a sort-of interview with Bishop Andrew, who was in charge of proceedings. Synod members were organised in tables so that they could share their views of the candidates as the day went on. The presentations and interviews were recorded so that those unable to be present on the day could watch them through as well. We were asked to focus on "Calling, Competence and Chemistry" in our discernment process.

After a week of prayer, in the second Synod, on Saturday, 18th January, also in Paisley, we reassembled to vote. Proceedings were governed by the newly revised Canon IV of the Scottish Episcopal Church. The main change from the last time we did this is that the short-listed candidates' names and details are not made public, but there were also many other revisions to the voting process itself. Votes were separately collated from the two "houses" of clergy and laity and the process concluded with a favoured candidate, **The Reverend Canon Dr Nicholas John Bundock**. See the Rector's article for details.

I should note that the electoral experience was a much more pleasurable and rewarding one than the last time. The good humour and conscientiousness of Bishop Andrew were a major part of this, as was the impeccable organisation by the Diocesan team. We now await news and look forward to our new Bishop's consecration, hopefully in the next few months. I imagine that the Episcopal election will be the main topic of discussion at the upcoming AGM of the North-West Regional Council (NWRC) on Wednesday, 22nd January at St. Augustine's, Dumbarton.

Finally some personal updates:

1. On **Sunday, 8th December**, although Ed and I were due to take part in the Glasgow Santa Dash with local charity **The Sporting Aces**, both of us were unfortunately unwell and couldn't do it. We hope to do an independent walk ourselves in the near future and send you pictures, but if you did still want to donate, the JustGiving link is still open here: <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/the-aces-santa-dash-2024>

2. I'm sure many of you will remember our daughter, Ellen, from her time as a member of our congregation. Ellen is currently working for the company CatalogDNA (<https://catalogdna.com>) based in Boston, Massachusetts. Recently Ellen was part of a team that helped to produce a book written in DNA which was featured in a recent article in Wired magazine. You can read about it here: <https://www.wired.com/story/entire-book-written-in-dna-buy-it-60-dollars/>
3. On the evening of **Saturday, 29th March at St. Bride's Hyndland (exact time TBA)**, I shall be part of another concert given by the chamber choir **Cathures**. Music will include Fauré's *Requiem* with Organ accompaniment. Entrance is by donation at the door. The concert will last about an hour, with refreshments afterwards. Updates next month.

David Simmons

WEDNESDAY PRAYER GROUP

Our weekly Wednesday prayer group (currently at 10.30am, prior to our Said Communion at 11.00am) came about after several members of the congregation felt it was a natural follow-on to our prayer and giving day last May.

We have very mixed attendance – sometimes nobody but myself and sometimes six or seven. It can never be a bad thing to offer the opportunity to meet together in prayer for the church, community, individuals and world events and I am keen to keep it going. However, we have changed the way it happens: we now use the Scottish Episcopal Church short service of Morning Prayer as our springboard, thus giving a semi-formal framework based on existing liturgy and allowing a time of free or personal/quiet prayer/intercession within it.

As before anyone is welcome just to attend the prayer time or just the Communion but equally all are warmly welcome to come along to both.

The times will be reconsidered when the current Wednesday Lunch Group season comes to an end after Easter. Last year the 9.30am prayers followed by 10.00am Communion and 10.30am refreshments worked well.

Revd David

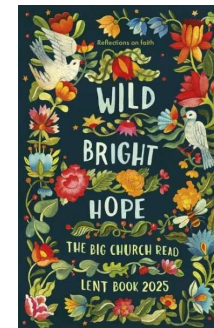
LENT

Lent begins this year on **Ash Wednesday, March 5th**, and once again we will be offering services and study for those wishing to make the best use of the season.

On **Ash Wednesday** itself we will hold our usual Morning Prayer/prayer group at 10.30am followed by Said Communion at 11.00am. Then at **7.30pm** there will be a Sung Communion. At both Communion services there will be an opportunity to receive the imposition of ashes.

On subsequent **Wednesday evenings at 7.00pm** (March 12th, 19th, 26th, April 2nd and 9th) we will be holding Night Prayer (Compline). This is an easier pattern to remember (with each Lent evening service being on a Wednesday) and takes us through to services during Holy Week.

On **Tuesday afternoons** (March 11th, 18th, 25th, April 1st, 8th and 15th) we will hold our Lent study course in the hall from 2-3.00pm. We will be using this year's SPCK Lent study book, **Wild Bright Hope**. It is a transformative Lent book, bringing together 12 dynamic voices, each contributing a unique chapter on the power of hope. Each chapter offers deep insight and creates an engaging experience – short linked videos can also be watched separately.



Themes include Seeds of Unity, Wild Paths of Peace, A Vision for Hope in Politics,

and Hope in Suffering. These chapters inspire readers to face challenges with fresh perspective and active faith. Through stories, reflections, and bold ideas, Wild Bright Hope not only encourages a hopeful outlook but also invites readers to play their part in bringing God's kingdom to life. The 12 chapters are intended to be read two at a time over the six weeks of Lent. For more details and to order the book visit

<https://thebigchurchread.co.uk/wild-bright-hope/>

In Holy Week itself we will repeat last year's pattern of services:

- Morning Prayer at 10.30am
- Said Communion at 11.00am on Wednesday, April 16th;
- Sung Communion with foot-washing and stripping of the altar on Maundy Thursday (April 17th) at 7.30pm;
- An Hour at the Cross service on Good Friday (April 18th) at 2.00pm with the church open for resourced private prayer and reflection from noon.

VESTRY NOTES 21 OCTOBER, 2024

(omitted from December magazine)

- John Brooker has taken the food items to Drumchapel and they have expressed their gratitude.
- The Vestry would like to thank everyone who helped with the garden work behind the halls.
- Work has begun on the stained glass window.
- It has been agreed that £5,000 will be allocated to Mission Support in the coming year.
- Date of the next meeting: Monday, 18 November

MISSION SUPPORT GROUP

We are most grateful to the Vestry for agreeing to allocate **£5000** to the Mission Support Group.

We met recently and after debate agreed the following distribution of the funds:

UK

Aberlour Children's Charity	£600
Christians Against Poverty	£300
Freedom from Torture	£600
Glasgow City Mission	£600
Maxie Richards Foundation	£300
Scottish Bible Society	£100

Overseas

David Gordon Memorial Hospital, Malawi	£500
St Francis Hospital , Zambia	£500
Vellore PTP , South India	£500
Wateraid	£1000

Self Help Africa - to be supported by a percentage from future fundraising events, the percentage yet to be decided.

We will ensure that a copy of any response from the organisations noted above will be added to future magazines.

With thanks again,
Celia, Janet, Philip, Susan and Louise

VESTRY NOTES NOVEMBER 2024

- The quote to resurface the car park has been accepted by the Vestry.
- It is hoped that the work on the bellcote will start in the summer.
- Stained Glass Window - the letter asking for donations has been prepared and will be sent out in late January or early February.
- The problems with the Church wifi connection are continuing and the Vestry is seeking further advice.
- The Quiz Night raised £270 and it was agreed that the proceeds would go to Tearfund.
- **Date of next meeting:** 20 January 2025

STAINED GLASS MEMORIAL WINDOW APPEAL

It will not have gone unnoticed that our Stained-Glass Memorial Window was removed and sent for repair in the autumn months of 2024. The work on this important part of the history of All Saints has been a great success and everyone agrees that the colours now look stunning, especially when the sun shines through the window.

The Vestry feel that the window is of such significance to our Church and the members, both past and present, that we are asking for your support in helping to meet the costs of this repair.

We suggest that this support be made as a dedication and lasting memorial and to this end we will be opening a new Memorial Book to contain the names of loved ones you may wish to be remembered.

A letter has been prepared and contains details about how you may wish to support this Appeal. This letter will be distributed in February 2025 to current and past members of our congregation.

Louise Benson

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CHURCH

24 November 2024

The Rector delivered his annual report as his sermon during the service before the meeting. This can be read on the church website:

<http://bearsden.church.scot> under Latest News.

THANKS FROM ABERLOUR

11 December 2024

Dear All Saints Bearsden,

On behalf of everyone at Aberlour Children's Charity, I want to extend our heartfelt thanks for your generous donation of money and gifts. Your kindness and compassion mean so much to us and, more importantly, to the families and young people we support.

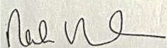
Your generosity will make a profound difference for families living in extreme poverty—families who might otherwise struggle to provide gifts for their children. Thanks to your support, many young people will experience the joy and magic of the festive season, creating memories that will last a lifetime.

Please know that your thoughtful contributions go beyond the gifts themselves; they bring hope, warmth, and a sense of community to families who need it most. This is truly priceless.

Thank you once again for your incredible support. We are deeply grateful for your partnership in helping us change lives for the better.

Wishing you and your congregation a joyful and blessed holiday season.

With warm regards,



Nadia Whitmore
Partnerships & Philanthropy Fundraiser

A massive thank you to each and everyone of you for your generous gifts donated to Aberlour. I am absolutely sure that each and every child will be ecstatic and delighted with their gifts.

Ellen

REFLECTIONS ON THE ADVENT CAROL SERVICE

When I was small, Christmas started around the time the last firework on bonfire night faded and it ended when I had finished ripping the paper off of the last present in my stocking. As you can probably imagine, this meant that for the last two months of the year, I became an unbearably excited and impatient child. I was not entirely to blame, the inevitable rush of nativity play rehearsals and Christmas concerts to ensure the Christmas period began well before the advent calendars were opened.

Christmas now starts much later for me, usually after exams are finished but this year, the absence of an exam diet allowed me to attend the advent service that we had near the start of December. The service was a lovely reminder about how during these darkest months we should be reflecting upon all that has happened to us during the year and quietly looking to the uncertain but hopeful light that the birth of Christ brings.

Attendance was plentiful and, as lovely as it was to see everyone, it served a perhaps even more welcome purpose by warming the church significantly. I was

wearing one of the choir gowns which turns out to be really quite thermal, so maybe that was it.

All the hymns were a mix of wintery songs that managed to be familiar but not too Christmassy, including my favourite carol 'It Came Upon the Midnight Clear', that I first heard on the radio one Christmas, during a dramatised production of Ballet Shoes by Noel Streatfield. The other hymns were similarly soothing in that they were bright but still brought to mind quiet rest and reflection rather than the more triumphant Christmas Day carols. As I was very late in joining the choir for this service, I hadn't been able to make it to any of the rehearsals and so I was slightly apprehensive that my attempts to sing the high notes in Jesus Christ the Apple Tree might damage the stained glass windows further. However, the other sopranos kept me right and I have to thank them, Esther and the rest of the choir for having me and making me feel welcome.

Many thanks to David and everyone else who organised this service, it was such a lovely way to ease into the Christmas season, whilst also keeping in mind the true purpose of advent that is so often forgotten in the rush to squeeze in preparations for celebrations around already busy lives. It reminds us to look back on our faith as we wait upon the returning of the light and the birth of Christ. For me, it has helped show that I indeed have grown; in my mind, Christmas now begins one month before the day rather than two.

Imogen Roach

WEDNESDAY LUNCH GROUP



A very jolly session to make table decorations was organised by Sheena

CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES AT THE WLG

On the 4th December, in addition to our delicious soup, sandwiches and cake, we were invited to make a Christmas table decoration. A huge selection of festive greenery, dried orange slices, wired pine cones and berries was available for us to choose from. A huge thank you to all those who prepared all this, and then encouraged us in our efforts to produce our own arrangement.

The following week was the Christmas party and it was wonderful to see both Brenda and Andrew back in charge and bring order to what seemed like a chaotic mix of sandwich and soup making, table decorating, costume fitting, and last minute rehearsals!!

The lunch was delicious, and the panto very entertaining: the Sleeping Beauty as we've never seen it before. Gíll was the 'off key' princess, Betty the bad fairy, Jane, Pauline and Mary the good fairies, Richard the king, David the handsome prince, and Sheena as narrator, joined it all together. Apologies if I've missed anyone.

Final thanks to John for leading the carol singing. A fitting end to a great party. Here's to continued success of this popular mid-week social activity, so get your name up on the list of helpers!

Kate Ross

The Christmas Party



About 60 people enjoyed a special Christmas lunch, a pantomime and carols on Wednesday 11 December. Many thanks to all helpers.



The two best dressed participants! Jean and Mabel win again.



The Sleeping Beauty

The Rector wrote a 10 minute rhyming version of the Sleeping Beauty. The performance even had a spinning wheel and all went well until the sleeping

beauty, having sung off key brilliantly as per script, turned over two pages of this script, so cutting out the handsome prince from his key lines. All was quickly restored to order and the happy ending resulted -to the relief of us all! You might recognise a few familiar faces in spite of glorious wigs!

An Appreciation

What a happy and convivial Christmas lunch we had, sharing fellowship, fun and delicious food.

Please give my thanks to all who worked so hard to make it all seem effortless; cooks, bakers, elves, assorted fairies ...the list goes on.

The music and carols were lovely too.

It was also good to hear about the support All Saints makes to the Glasgow Children's Holiday scheme which helps so many families in crisis. Well done all.

Christine Bishop

The lunch ended on a happy Christmas note with John Harrington leading carols. On 9 February, there will be a table top sale of pre-loved treasures. Contributions welcome. See Pauline Burns for details.

ASSOCIATION OF BEARSDEN CHURCHES (ABC)



The annual Association of Bearsden Churches carol singing took place in Asda on Saturday 14 December. All Saints joined members of Baljaffray, Bearsden Baptist and Bearsden Cross churches to sing for the first hour, the other Bearsden churches singing for the second. We **raised £445.34** which has been split equally between Drumchapel Foodbank and Women's Aid in Bearsden/Milngavie. There were fewer singers than in previous years but the foyer acoustics were good and

we received complements for our singing from some of the Asda customers. We were fortunate to have our own Gill Hamblen to lead the singing (Thank you for your expertise, Gill). Our thanks must also go to Asda for providing the venue, the many shoppers who donated and everyone who came to sing.

The next ABC event is the **Unity Lunch on Saturday 8th February** in Boclair Community Church Hall (previously known as Killermont Parish Church), Rannoch Drive. The speaker will be Robbie Morrison from Tearfund and catering will be provided by Café Crème. Tickets cost £10 and are available from Celia, and Penny. Everyone is welcome to come.

Celia and Penny

ADVENT STUDY

The Rector led a thought-provoking study on Tuesday afternoons In All Saints.

Jenny and Philip Thompson write:

The weekly group, which included some of our friends from St Andrews Milngavie, met on a Tuesday afternoon. The book used was the Archbishop of York's Advent Book 2024, "Do Not Be Afraid" by Rachel Mann. The main theme of which was the Joy of Waiting in a time of fear.

Rev David explained to us that Advent is a season of waiting for both the celebration of Jesus's birth at Christmas and the return of Christ at the Second Coming. The latter concept was perhaps a new notion for some of us.

One of the early chapters of Rachel's book describes a boat trip she experienced in Jamaica which went a little awry when the boat's engine failed and the owner of the boat had trouble repairing it. During this time the boat continued to drift slowly out into the dark Caribbean Sea. The story stuck with Rachel and she has never let it go. She was transfixed with fear whilst she was waiting for the repair to be completed on that very dark night. But what stayed in her mind most was the truly unforgettable view of the Milky Way in all its awesome intensity for the first time in her life.

Although we were only able to attend a couple of the meetings we found the book had some interesting ideas on different aspects of waiting and well worthy of reading.

Celia Fisher adds: Rachel Mann is a poet, priest and theologian and writes very engagingly, she included some of her beautiful poems too as prayers. The structure of the book was based on the four weeks of Advent with each week focused on an aspect of waiting: the joy of it, the discomfort of it, the use we can make of it and the final week looked at how Jesus is waiting for us to respond to him. There were two or three pages of text every day, often with a personal story

from Rachel included, and always a biblical story or text linked to that day's theme. Then there was a prayer and some questions to consider.

There was a lot to think about each day and the questions were very useful in making one really reflect on waiting -not just in Advent. At the meetings Rev David managed to weave the readings of each week together and we all shared some personal ideas and questions which often ranged beyond strictly Advent themes.

Personally, I found the book (and Rachel's thoughts on the writing of it which she recorded on YouTube) very thought provoking and though it is designed for Advent it could be useful at any time.

Christine Bishop adds: Tuesday's Advent group was good, rather quiet and reflective, touching on faith and hope and how to respond to others in pain.

Many thanks to the Rector for leading the group. The discussions provided much thought in preparation for the coming of Christ at Christmas.

COMPLINE

The origins of Compline are not clear, but seems to have been from Benedictine monasteries; a "fulfilling" of the day from the Latin *complens*. During Advent we had three short services on Monday nights, with spoken psalms and passages from Gordon Giles', *At Home in Advent* (Bible Reading Fellowship, 2020).

Those who attended, appreciated this intimate little service as a way of rounding off the day. It was good to be able to participate in the back and forth of the Psalms, enjoy the evening reflections from Giles' witty and thoughtful stories and to be able to tailor prayers to individual needs and concerns. While the liturgy repeatedly asks for God's protection against the dangers of the night, all of us went away feeling safe and blessed, and as the season wore on the mood lightened to reflect the anticipation of the joy of Christmas. Many thanks to David for organising these very special experiences.

Andrew Roach

ALL SAINTS CRIB SERVICE

4 pm Christmas Eve

This year Susan and I were delighted to have our daughter Nicola and children (13,10 and 6 years) with us from Greece to experience their first Scottish Christmas, so the family Crib service was an ideal opportunity to welcome them to All Saints; this was a learning experience for us all as Sue and I did not attend the Crib service last year.

Revd. David had asked us to come along suitably attired for Christmas or even as one of the characters of the nativity story, so I dug out my old walking stick, a bright jumper and warm hat to have some semblance of a rather odd looking shepherd. My dear granddaughter Susanna (13), was very accommodating when I gave her a smaller version of my walking stick.

Revd. David first set out the pattern of the service, explaining that he had written a version of the Nativity story but that he needed help along the way with congregational support! That support was "noises off" so to speak, every time he mentioned certain words. We were to say, sing or make appropriate noises! For instance, Mary, Joseph, Angels, Shepherds, Wise Men, Sheep, Cows and other animals, all had particular words or phrases to be shouted, said or sung whenever they were mentioned in the story. It was a wonderful idea, but it soon became clear that as the relevant words came thick and fast it was quite a test of our short term memories.



At the appropriate time those of us dressed representing different characters were asked to go to the front for that part of the story.



Anne and Graham Caie's granddaughter was a beautiful angel, and there were three impressive kings, as well as that rather odd shepherd and his lovely assistant who I was pleased came out with me to look after her old grandpa.

The whole service was peppered with suitable carols and was wonderfully joyful, but most important of all, it was instructive to those young ones still to learn all the truths of the birth of our dear Lord. John Harrington

Editor's comment: Many apologies but I was so involved in the action that I did not manage to take

photos. One king above is representative of the participants.

John Harrington

CHRISTMAS DAY



With a beautifully decorated church including the amazing display above that even had a miniature Rector Dr Who plus Tardis, the scene was set for a special Christmas Service. Thanks to Ann Caie and her team the church looked more beautiful than ever.

The service was a joyous occasion. The Rector based his sermon on Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol, with the three spirits of Christmas past, present and yet to come, illustrating the real meaning of Christmas.

But who can forget the rendering of the Twelve Days of Christmas with action especially the Rector's CanCan for Three French Hens. You can watch it still on Facebook.

Following are photos of a few of the glorious flowers, but the overall effect is hard to show.



E-GROUP

On Thursday 9th December, Mum and I hosted the wonderful E-Group ladies at our house for a little party. It was wonderful to see and chat with everyone and catch up. We were joined by our special guest, Susie (Margaret Dunn's Daughter). Always such a pleasure to meet with E-Group.



BEING TRIVIAL

A few weeks ago in a sermon I mentioned that I appeared as a question in the 1996 version of the board game Trivial Pursuit. It is one of those silly facts about me that I often share, but I am never quite sure if people believe me!

So I thought I would share the actual card as I retell the story for those who wanted to know more – and of course especially for the incredulous.

It was while holidaying on the Isle of Man that I first took driving lessons – though in those days you could learn earlier than you could in England, so I couldn't take a test when I returned to England and indeed in those days I couldn't even continue to take lessons. Over the years I took lessons but never really enjoyed driving and despaired at ever being able to master the gearstick and clutch.

Around the time of my ordination in 1992 I was told I really did need to drive as I couldn't rely on public transport when it came to visiting and getting around and I started taking lessons with a retired policeman in the congregation. He was encouraging but I noted he was often white after our lessons!

After I moved to Chester I realised I needed to persist and went to a driving school where I told them of my years of trying without success – and the person at the desk (who was Canadian) asked if I'd ever thought about learning in an automatic as she reckoned I would find it much easier. I was offered a free lesson with the promise that the instructor would honestly tell me what he thought of my driving at the time and if I would find it better to learn in a manual or automatic car. The moment I started driving in the automatic I loved it and the instructor said he would give me six lessons and put me in for a test which he was convinced I'd pass. And so it was!

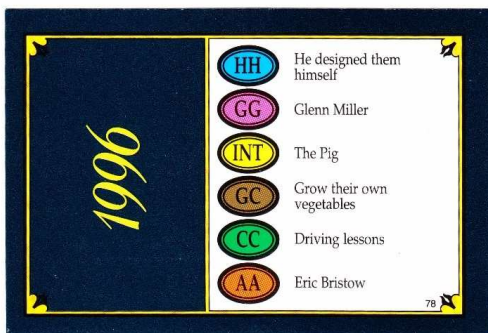
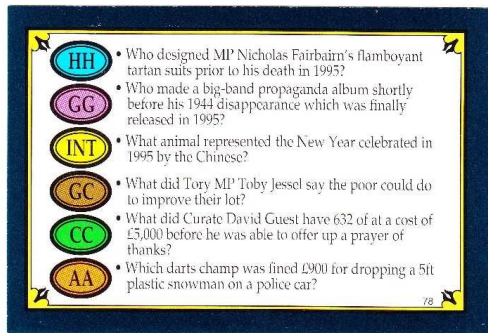
As I had developed a good relationship with the local paper I rang and asked if they'd be interested in doing a silly story about my passing my driving test after all those years and we headed off to a large car park where I dressed up in my robes and poured a bucket of water over my new car. The story appeared prominently in the next edition.

The following morning at 5.00am the phone rang and someone with an Australian accent said they'd seen the story and would I do a live radio interview with a station in Sydney in 30 seconds about it! Well, after that the phone rang off the hook and I found myself doing interviews for newspapers and radio all over the world. I was interviewed live on Breakfast TV by Eamonn Holmes, I appeared on page 3 of The Sun, I did live interviews for radio in Iceland, South Africa, Canada and beyond, and appeared on Sky News among many others. I was flown over to Cologne first class to take part in a live German TV chat show, appearing alongside a talking mynah bird, with an earpiece translating from German and someone translating my remarks into German (my hesitant failed O-level German not considered good enough). I received congratulations cards by the sackful from strangers as well as letters accusing me of being a menace to society and the spawn of Satan – whether for taking so long to learn to drive or for driving an automatic I was never sure.

I was interviewed for BBC Radio Merseyside's religious programme which led to me being invited to join the production team of the weekly Sunday show, which I loved. The team would meet on a Friday night and work through to the small hours to put the show together and edit all the recorded stuff (the good old days of reel to reel tape and razor blades!) then I was occasionally allowed by my Rector to go in and do the show live as I could get into Liverpool and back before the morning church service. I was offered the chance to do much more on television but there came a point where I thought enough was probably enough! The "15 minutes of fame" was over – or so I thought.

A few months later I received a phone call and a letter telling me I was to be a question in the 1996 edition of Trivial Pursuit and would I go and help launch it at the London Palladium. I featured in the “collected clippings” category and I joined many others – famous and not-so-famous – at the press launch. A national newspaper took a photo of me playing the game with Norman Wisdom and someone dressed as the Andrex puppy. Among others present who I met were a singing bus conductor, Rod Hull (with emu) and Rik Mayall. Great fun!

While the story has faded away now I occasionally see my name appear in sermons delivered in American churches (goodness only knows why!) as someone who was a good example of persistence. And I am still very happy driving an automatic car.



Revd David

Money from the Book Library in the Hall

Many thanks for your support of the Library. Through the year the books sold raised £100.00 which was given to the Glasgow Children’s Holiday Scheme. Please keep buying the books - there is plenty of choice. Jane Lewis

Thank you from BCRT

On behalf of everyone here at the Bone Cancer Research Trust and more importantly, the patients and families that will benefit from your stamp collecting efforts, thank you. Thank you from me too to everyone who has given me and are still giving me stamps to send to the above. Elaine Perrett

Missing Church Key

The Church Key, which is kept in church used mostly by the Brass Rota and the Flower Group, is missing.

If you have borrowed the key, would you check bags and jacket pockets please.

The Keyring has a picture and name of All Saints on it. Janet Shields

January

John Updike 1932 -2009

The days are short,
The sun a spark,
Hung thin between
The dark and dark.

Fat snowy footsteps
Track the floor.
Milk bottles burst
Outside the door.

The river is
A frozen place
Held still beneath
The trees of lace.

The sky is low.
The wind is gray.
The radiator
Purrs all day.

In this jaunty little poem Updike shows off his wonderful skill in evoking striking images well known to his readers. He was born in Reading, Pennsylvania which has some of the coldest winter weather in the USA, so he knew a lot about snow. His subject is January.

The four stanzas in rhyming couplets with unusually short lines in iambic dimeter allow the images to jump out at us and disappear just as quickly. In the first stanza we see a momentary flash of sunlight in the dark sky, and we move quickly to over large footprints in the snow. But then the images almost disappear to be replaced by ordinary bottles of milk delivered by the milkman with the frozen milk bursting out - if you’re over forty, you’ll remember that!

The third stanza is the loveliest of all with a glorious picture of a freezing river, silent and still, beneath a tree whose tiny frozen branches resemble delicate white lace.

Finally in the fourth stanza Updike again abandons the imagery for a farewell touch of his well-known cynical humour: OK, it’s dark and windy, so what really matters? - Keeping the radiator on all day!

Brenda

THE FRONT COVER PAINTING

The painting depicts The Presentation of Christ at the Temple, celebrated on February 2nd this year at All Saints. It is from a collection known as the **Menologion of Basil 11**.

This is a Greek illuminated manuscript designed as a church calendar or Eastern Orthodox Church service book that was compiled c. 1000 AD for the Byzantine Emperor Basil II (r. 976–1025). It contains a short collection of saints' lives, compiled at Constantinople for liturgical use and around 430 miniature paintings by eight different artists. It was unusual for a menologion from that era to be so richly painted. It currently resides in the Vatican Library. Basil 11 was a Byzantine Emperor (976-1025 AD) the longest serving Roman Emperor.

LOOKING AT LUKE

Sunday by Sunday in the church – day by day if you choose to use it in this way - the Lectionary allows us to explore Scripture, appointing passages to be read at public worship throughout the year.

The Revised Common Lectionary, published in 1992, is a three-year cycle of Sunday Eucharistic readings. This year is “Year C” when the Gospel passage is more often than not from Luke (unless a special theme or festival calls for an alternative – for example, we can only read from Matthew at Epiphany as that is the only gospel that tells the story of the visit of the Magi to the child Jesus).

The Gospel according to Luke is anonymous, yet the author explains in the opening verses that he was not an eyewitness of the events he describes. Christian writings from the latter half of the 2nd Century identify Luke, a companion of the Apostle Paul, as the Gospel’s author. As well as travelling with Paul on some of his missionary journeys he may well have offered medical help while he was in prison. In 2 Timothy 4:11 Paul writes, “Only Luke is with me.” Some think Paul quoted parts of Luke’s gospel in his writing.

Like the other Gospels, Luke was written some time after Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. It is largely thought to have been written after Mark and Matthew, probably between 80 and 90 AD. However, much material in Luke certainly comes from oral and written sources that had already been in circulation among Jesus’ followers for a while. Luke was obviously well-placed to hear stories and reports about Jesus as he travelled around parts of the early Church and tells us in chapter one that he is compiling a narrative based on things “handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses.”

Of what we call the synoptic gospels Luke contains much unique material. He uses only about half of Mark’s gospel, while Matthew uses much more. His references to historical figures (e.g., Caesar Augustus, Herod, and Pontius Pilate) anchor the narrative in real events.

Luke continually links the life and mission of Jesus to the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament but he also emphasises that Jesus is the Saviour not only of Israel but of all nations.

Notably, this is a gospel for the marginalised – Luke has been described as a vigorous champion of the outsider. Luke uniquely emphasises Jesus’ ministry to the poor, women, sinners, and outcasts: in the Magnificat (Luke 1:46–55) Mary praises God for exalting the humble and filling the hungry; Jesus frequently interacts with tax collectors, sinners, and the sick, bringing them grace and healing (e.g., Zacchaeus in 19:1–10); women play significant roles, from Mary’s faith to the women who support Jesus’ ministry (Luke 8:1–3). It is significant that the first visitors to the baby Jesus are the common shepherds and time and again you see Jesus welcoming those typically treated as outsiders.

Luke highlights the demands of discipleship: Jesus calls His followers to deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Him (Luke 9:23) while the parables of the Lost Sheep, Lost Coin, and Prodigal Son (Luke 15) emphasise God’s joy in seeking and saving the lost, inspiring His followers to adopt the same mission.

Luke’s Gospel contains many of Jesus’ most famous parables, including the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, and the Rich Man and Lazarus. These stories convey profound theological truths in simple, relatable terms, inviting reflection and response.

He wrote primarily for Gentiles (he is the only Gentile New Testament writer himself) and he leaves out things that might confuse a non-Jewish audience, also dropping passages about Jewish traditions and references to the Old Law – NB. Matthew’s Sermon on the Mount in Luke becomes the Sermon on the Level Place.

It would be fair to say that Luke manages in his writing to combine historical precision, theological depth, and narrative beauty. His Gospel presents Jesus as the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies, the Saviour of all people, and the compassionate Redeemer who seeks the lost.

Revd David

The Thursday House Group will be studying Luke’s Gospel during the next few weeks, starting on **30 January**. More details from Janet Stack. All very welcome.

Congratulations to Andrew and Brenda

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE WEDDING OF BRENDA AND ANDREW

As many of you already know, Brenda and I are getting married on **Saturday 22 March**. All of our friends in the congregation are warmly invited to the service in the Church at **2 pm** and afterwards to refreshments in the Drymen Hall. If you are able to come, please let us know (for the catering) by signing the sheet at the back of the Church. Please - no presents at all, but, if you wish, donations to two of our favourite charities, "Love Oliver" and the "Livingstonia Hospital Partnership" would be very welcome.



Andrew Long



The Rector visiting Abbotsford House during Advent

SERVICES IN FEBRUARY

Our 10.30am services will be held both in Church and on Facebook
It is also possible to watch services on our Facebook page afterwards

Date Sunday	2 February Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas) (White)	9 February Epiphany 5 4 th Before Lent (Green)	16 February Epiphany 6 3 rd Before Lent (Green)	23 February Epiphany 7 2 nd Before Lent (Green)
Celebrant	Rev David Guest	Rev Kevin Francis	Rev Kevin Francis	Rev Kevin Francis
9am Service	Said Eucharist (1970 Liturgy)		Said Eucharist (1970 Liturgy)	
10.30 Service	Sung Eucharist	Sung Eucharist	Sung Eucharist	Sung Eucharist
Stewards	Tracey	Celia	Kate	Pauline
Eucharistic Assistants	Louise	Celia	Graham	Jenny
Readings	Malachi 3:1-5; Hebrews 2:14- 18; Luke 2:22-40	Isaiah 6:1-13; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Luke 5:1-11	Jeremiah 17:5-10; 1 Corinthians 15:12- 20; Luke 6:17-26	Genesis 2:4b-9,15- 25; Revelation 4; Luke 8:22-25
Reader	Richard	Mary	Janet	David Simmons
Intercessor	Mary	Andrew	Celia	David Hamblen
After- service Coffee	Sheena Susan	Kate Moira	Mairi Elaine	Brenda Jane
Other events	A 9.00am Said Eucharist is held on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, using the 1970 liturgy. There is a 11.00am Said Eucharist on Wednesday mornings, preceded by a prayer group at 10.30am.			

The Editor for the March edition will be Janet Stack. Please send articles to janet.stack@btinternet.com by **Sunday, 16th February 2025**.

The Rector's usual days off each week are Thursdays and Fridays. One of these may occasionally change depending on other work demands