



St. Matthew's Church Perth

e- Newsletter No. 53

Thursday 16th Dec.

Friends,

Calum and I had the utter excitement of meeting a certain Mr Claus last weekend rather than waiting for Christmas Eve when we'll inevitably fall asleep and miss him. It made me reflect on my total lack of patience for Christmas to come this year. Here at Dun and Hillside Church, I have thrown out my usual plans for a slow and steady build up to Christmas during Advent and instead embraced a different style of Christmas service each Sunday. It's been brilliant because the past couple of years have been hard and we need the joy of Christmas more than ever.

Folks might only manage to come along one Sunday for any number of reasons, which may or may not be COVID-related, and I want them to go away having heard the Christmas story. It's not all about the 'happy, happy, joy, joy' but that message of hope that God is with us. Isn't this the message that we need every day of the year? In the midst of our joys and our struggles, God is with us.

This is the story of which we are all part, the Christmas story, the best story ever. God loves us and wants to be with us. So let's celebrate Christmas this year, according to the regulations and recommendations of course, and then let's keep celebrating the greatest story every day of our lives.

As a family, we are feeling both impatient and excited about coming to take our place in your church family. The plans are coming together and we can't wait to get to know you all in the New Year. Until then, please have a safe, peaceful and blessed Christmas.



With every blessing, your soon-to-be-new-Minister Fiona, Ian, Calum and Freya (the dog).

FORTHCOMING SERVICES

Friday 17th December PACT Service at 7pm in St Matthew's Church

This will be held tomorrow in St Matthew's Church at 7pm. There will be a limited number of seats so please book on Eventbrite if you can.

The service will also be live-streamed on YouTube, at this link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1IFdD_cKxS4

Christmas Eve Service on Friday 24th December at 7pm in St Matthew's Church

Christmas Day Service on Saturday 25th December at 10.30am in St Matthew's Church

Boxing Day service on Sunday 26th December at 11am in St Matthew's Church

SERVICE of INDUCTION of Rev Fiona Bullock will take place on **Wednesday 19th January 2022** at 7pm in St Matthew's Church

COVID omicron

The latest guidance from the **Church of Scotland** suggests that all the present precautions should be kept in place with the addition of recommending that those attending should take a **Lateral Flow Test**.

However, should you decide not to attend church please note that our **Zoom Services** have continued to be available. See ZOOM Diary.

ADVENT MEDITATIONS

This year's Advent Meditations will take place from **Monday 20th to Friday 24th December** in St Matthew's Church, starting at 9am and followed by breakfast.

Monday 20th will be led by **Jean Young** and **Thursday 23rd** by **Maureen Pearson** with **Rev Ewen Gilchrist** leading the remainder.

All are welcome- and it would be good to see some new faces this year!



DIARY

Sunday: Live streamed Worship from 10.45
ID 953 7532 1288 Pass code 058724

Wednesday Meditation at 9am (Restarting on 5th Jan.)
ID: 818 8897 1376 Passcode: 905980

The above can be accessed using the telephone by dialling : 0131 460 1196 And enter ID, and Pass Code where required, above when requested.
To Unmute yourself press *6

Quick link for Sunday Worship
<https://zoom.us/j/95375321288?pwd=Z0ZQckF2dEVpcmNUTWtPdmZxeUhgQT09>
Quick link for Meditations
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81888971376?pwd=UkYxcHo5SVV2Ky9JN0swc3JleitLZz09>



Congratulations to:

John Spence 70 years young on 16 December
Maureen Pearson 80 years young on 22 December
Frances Turnbull on 23 December
Tom Morrison 75 years young on 24 December

*We send get well wishes and prayers to **Myrna Little** who is self-isolating at present and to **Guy Willoughby** who has recently returned home from time in hospital.*

*We also send our greetings to **Christine Clark** and wish her well as she settles into her new home at North Inch House.*

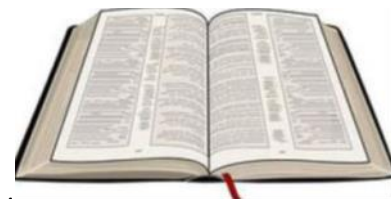
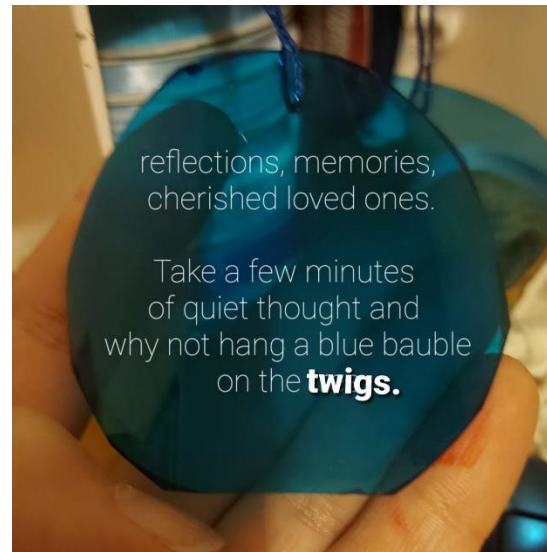
From our artist-not-in- residence, Viv McGregor:

For some of us at Christmas we can feel a little blue. So here at St.Matthews we have created a wee area for you.

A time for reflection of memories and cherished times with loved ones gone. Take a few moments of quiet to mark a moment close to you.

Either, place a bauble on the twigs in quiet thought or use the pens to make a mark then place on the twigs. The pens are there if you want to place a mark, a name, a drawing or initials on the bauble.

Take your time at the back of the church and place a blue bauble on the twigs on the left. Just take your time of reflection, you can do this throughout the season of Advent x



DEATH

It is with sadness that we noted the death of **Terry Wale** on 1 December. Terry contributed to various musical events we held in St Matthew's and we send our prayers and condolences to Lesley Mackie, Katy and Ollie and the rest of the family.



Our time capsule which was blessed at our recent Anniversary Service is due to be hidden in the church soon. We have lots of



paper documents from the uniformed organisations and pertaining to St Matthew's. However, we are short of items that might relate to life today. Can you think of any small items that might go in? It might be a popular toy or household gadget. If you have any ideas let Fiona Bruce know on FMBruce6@googlemail.com by 10th January 2022.

Guild News

It was a really difficult decision to make, but we had to cancel our Christmas lunch at the Salutation Hotel in view of the sudden and escalating rate of infection with the new variant of Covid. However, once we are meeting together again we can plan another date to have a lunch together in January or February, and with this in mind our treasurer is holding your money in our Guild bank account.



The Guild programme for January to Easter 2022 begins on Monday 10th January with David Sawyer, a member of our own congregation, giving us a talk entitled 3Ms.

This will be followed on Monday 24th with Michael Ellacott and Tom: "Scotland in music and pictures". On 7th February Maureen Shepherd will tell us her experiences of walking the Camino de Santiago in 2019.

On either 21st Feb or 7th March we hope to hear about another of the Guild projects, Starchild.

Then we have Gameeda Barnard a member of Perth Soroptomists talking to us about re-cycling.

The last meeting of the session will be the AGM on Monday 4th April.

The Guild is open to all, we have already gained 3 new members in the Autumn session. If you are interested please come along on a Monday afternoon, 2 pm in the Sanctuary.

Lorna Morrison Convener



Perth and Kinross Foodbank has designed a 'reverse Advent calendar', inviting supporters to donate an item a day from 1 – 24th December. (Collect them at home, and hand in to the church or Foodbank in January.) If you would like a copy, please e-mail Marjorie.clark@btinternet.com, or pick one up at church on Sunday.



Church Flowers

Dear members of St. Matthew's,

I have dates available in 2022 for anyone who would like to donate flowers for the Sunday Service. The flowers are sent to members of the church who have had a bereavement, are unwell and on some occasions as a thank you.

The flowers are very much appreciated by those who receive them, in knowing we at St. Matthew's are thinking of them.

Dates available:

23rd January 20th February 27th February

20th March 24th April 15th May

22nd May 29th May

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has donated towards the flowers and Christmas window decorations this year for their kindness and generosity

December 2021 Flower donors.

5th Eileen and Bill Montgomery

12th David Wright

19th Elaine Montgomery

25th Ina Soreide

You can contact me on 01738 635018 or you will see me in Church most Sundays. If you would like your flowers to go to any particular person, please speak to Marjorie Clark. with kind regards,
Norma Wright *Flower Convener*

EVENTS

ROCK CHOIR CONCERT

There were 2 Concerts on Saturday 4th December and, as usual, it was a lovely start for many to the Festive period. As well as all the fun the amazing sum of £2150 was raised for St Matthew's Church.

Thanks to the many volunteers who contributed to an enjoyable afternoon and evening and to Bev, Rachel and the Rock Choir for their energy and enthusiasm!

CHRISTMAS COFFEE MORNING

This was held on Saturday 11th December with stalls as well as coffees, teas and baking. It was a very busy morning with a lovely joyful atmosphere and it was lovely to welcome our new Minister and her family.

In addition to enjoying all the chat and company the incredible sum of £720 was raised for St Matthew's. Thanks to the many people who gave of their time and skills to make such an enjoyable morning.



Christmas Greetings

Ronnie & Ina Soreide would like to wish all members of St. Matthews a very Happy and peaceful Christmas. God Bless you all.

BOHEMIANS CONCERT - CRIMBOH

We were treated to a concert by The Bohemians Lyric Opera Company from Edinburgh on Sunday 12 December and I'm sure everyone present would agree what a Festive treat it was!

Their Musical Director was "our own" Finlay Turnbull and the mixture of songs and humorous poetry was delightful. Hopefully St Matthew's will be able to take a busload to their next production of "Shrek" in March 2022!

Again, as an addition to the fun, St Matthew's are donating £80 to the Foodbank from the concert proceeds.



On a personal note, I must say how much I enjoyed these 3 events held at St Matthew's over these 2 weekends. In this time of great uncertainty I think it is vitally important that we at St Matthew's provide a place particularly where those who may be socially isolated and lonely can find human warmth and Christian fellowship. Over the past 18 months there has been a great "culture of fear" built up so that many people are now fearful of stepping outside their own front door.

To me, these 3 events provided such an antidote to that culture and I was heartened by how many people, young and older, took advantage of the opportunity to "cast off fear" and apprehension. Obviously, we must be sensible and continue to wear our masks as required and take lateral flow tests where necessary and follow the "Track & Trace" guidelines but please do not let all these rules and regulations overwhelm our sense of wonder at Christmastime and our sense of the importance of Christian worship, hospitality and service in these times.

Fiona Bruce
Session Clerk

Wow! Those who were unable to join us on our inaugural walk on **Saturday 4th December** missed a walk which will live long in the memory- but perhaps not for the best of reasons!



11 of us set off in 4 cars from Broxden to make our way to the start of the walk at Culross in Fife This is a very picturesque village with lovely old 16th and 17th century houses lining cobbled streets which rise steeply from the shore. Having parked safely we set off up the hill to visit the 13th century Cistercian Abbey and our Session Clerk read out the "Pilgrim's Prayer".

Having stopped off for a coffee break we then started out along the route following the "Pilgrim's Way" signs. We followed these successfully until Torryburn where we took a wrong turn and ended up in Crombie, a short distance from our intended destination! As it was a linear walk we had intended to get the bus back to Culross so we waited half an hour in the



sleety rain for a bus. No buses arrived but a phone call to the local taxi firm to try to get the drivers back to Culross confirmed that most buses had been cancelled that day and, as a result, the taxis were too busy to pick us up!

We therefore decided to cut our losses and walk back to Culross which the sign post assured us was 5 miles.

Back at Torryburn we found a bus heading for Culross.

The group got on the bus only to discover that it was going nowhere as the road ahead was blocked so off we all got, back into the freezing rain! Another 2 miles saw us back to Culross and our cars, just as the sun was setting over the Firth of Forth.



THE NEXT WALK

The next walk will take place on **8th January 2022**. As there is a wedding taking place in Dunfermline Abbey in the afternoon, the plan is to visit the Abbey at the start of our walk at 10am and then walk back to Torryburn (about 6 miles in total).



All interested (and ready for the next adventure!) please meet at Broxden carpark (up near the electric chargers) at 9am.

Please let Jean Young know on jy2@btinternet.com if you intend to join us. All welcome!

QUEEN'S GARDEN CANOPY

Further to our article on our new tree "Prunus Snow Showers" which has been planted in the church garden, thanks to a couple of generous donations we have been able to purchase a commemorative plaque which is shown in the attached photo.

Fiona Bruce



Dear lord Jesus
I know at this time it's going
to be hard for everyone as
Christmas hangs alone
this year but please lord
to be support and encourage
others that need our help
and guidance
For Christmas and a new year
I hope and pray for those
who are struggling by
grief and need help
at the moment.
So lord I thank you.
Amen.

Andrew's Prayer

As this is the last Newsletter of the year may I on behalf of the Newsletter production team wish you all a Happy Christmas and a Safe & Healthy New Year.

Fiona and Tom



he next edition of the Newsletter, No. 54 will be on **Friday 7th January 2022** All contributions to FMBruce6@googlemail.com by Wednesday 5th January 2022