

Christmas



Tidings

December 2023

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Dear friends,

“Journeys”

During the October break, this year, we took a family holiday to Lake Garda in northern Italy. We got an incredibly good deal. So much so that, having never been before, we also hired a small car for the week. The plane was delayed only a few minutes and we were on our way.

The trip included all sorts of excitement. Our boys had never flown before, so that was a new experience. When we eventually found the shuttle to the car hire, we had the usual negotiation around local insurance. But, a rare treat, the size of car we had booked was unavailable. “Would it be okay if we gave you a bigger car?” Oh yes! “It’s automatic...” Great! I had recollections of the first time hiring a car abroad and constantly hitting my left hand on the door because of forgetting the steering wheel and gear stick were on the opposite side! The Italian driving was – interesting – but we arrived at the accommodation without incident. Yet, not without comment at the industrial scenery along virtually the entire length of the motorways.

During the course of the trip we circumnavigated the lake, taking in Limone Sul Garda and up into the hills to Trento. I was especially pleased to visit this town as it had been the site of the Counter-Reformation, where the Roman Catholic church finally made some of the changes that the great Reformers, such as Luther, Calvin, and Knox, had wanted. Having Majored on Church History in my university studies, it had been a long wait to visit.

We also visited Venice, another long wait since the days of seeing it in James Bond movies throughout my life. Boy, was it worth it, sailing up and down the Grand Canal on a river bus; visiting St. Mark’s Square, the Doges Palace; a couple of Cathedrals; and inevitably getting misdirected a few times in the narrow streets and bridges. A place I would love to revisit, which is high praise from someone with a long “bucket list” of places I’d like to visit.

The return home was similarly uneventful, with the flight delayed a couple of hours, but replete with memories of friendly people and wonderful food in every dish. However, I was left with wanting to share something of the experience.

Why am I doing so in the opening letter of our church magazine? Simply because it was a trip that contained so many metaphors for our journey of life and faith, interwoven through our days on earth. Highs, lows, detours, delays, company, fellowship, scenery, anticipation, appreciation, and hopefully a safe destination. We see some of this in the book of Acts, but we also see so many diverse examples in Hebrews 11. I wonder how many parallels of these events, in this article and in scripture, that you might discover in your own life journey?

Your Minister and friend,

Ross



Saffronhall Singers

Our new session started at the end of September and we began rehearsing immediately for a concert at Auchlochan on 23 October. Many thanks to all the members for their support.

Over the long summer break, we were deeply saddened by the loss of two of our former members, Armour Morrow and Margaret Gilbert, and also Iain Keir, one of our bass section. Iain was one of the star turns at our end of session dinner, a happy memory we will always be grateful for. They will be greatly missed.

We have two new members this session, Bina Thomas, one of our church family, has joined the sopranos and Jennifer Paterson, has joined the altos. Both are enjoying being part of our group. Sadly, we have had to say farewell to two of our sopranos, Margaret Ballantyne and Mae Waterson, who have both decided to resign due to ill health. We have sent them our best wishes.

Our thoughts turn to preparing for our annual Carols by Candlelight which will take place in the church on Friday 8 December at 7.30pm. Tickets cost £5 (children go free) and the proceeds of the evening will be donated to the church boiler fund. Audience participation in singing well-known carols, old and new, is very much encouraged and as usual, the Singers will perform some of their Christmas repertoire. All are welcome. Refreshments will be available in "The North" Hall afterwards. Tickets will be on sale from Sunday 19 November. We look forward to welcoming everyone to this happy night.



Campbell Barr

Monday Club

The club got off to a very good start with our own minister Ross, at our opening meeting. I asked Ross to bring along his fiddle and give us a few tunes which he did and he also brought his guitar and saxophone. We had a lovely musical afternoon with members joining in singing some of the newer hymns.

Chris Simpson from NHS Lanarkshire gave us very informative presentation on Mental Health and Wellbeing on Monday 23 October. Chris has left some leaflets on various topics of his presentation so that anyone in the Church looking for advice on this topic can get in touch.

- Monday 13 November we have Faye Armitage from Kilbryde hospice and members will have the chance to buy charity Christmas cards etc; to help this very worthwhile cause
- Monday 27 November is our Christmas Lunch with a 12.30pm for 1pm start.
- January 8 Karen Gillon will speak to us on Guilds Projects
- January 22 Moira Condie will speak to us on Burns and we will have our Financial AGM after her talk.
- February 12 Mystery Guest.
- February 26 Elaine Perry and Shelia Moore will do a presentation on Guide Dogs for the Blind.
- March 25 The Saffronhall Singers will entertain us.

We hope to finish our season with an outing and in order to get a grant from the council, we need to tell them where we are going to!! Any suggestions to myself, Nesella or Helen asap please.

Lastly on behalf of myself and the committee can I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and A Guid New Year.

Charlie Duguìd



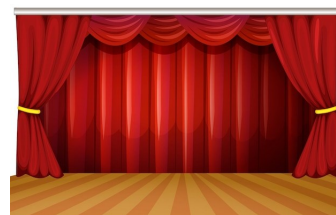


Christmas Goes Panto!

This year's Drama Kirk nativity will be "Christmas Goes Panto" by Michelle Fogg, a fun take on the nativity particularly suited to a young audience. We are delighted to have the opportunity to work with Woodside Primary once more as part of their Christmas celebrations. We will spend a day in school, performing for different groups of children and then taking the opportunity to involve them in telling the story. We are so grateful to those within the Drama Kirk team who give their time to this work and make this outreach possible. There are always wee jobs that need doing....from organising the props to helping get set up in school. If you can spare some time to help us with this please let us know. New volunteers are always very welcome.

We hope to be involved in the town centre celebrations, too. Currently, the plan is for Drama Kirk's performance to kick off the events planned on Saturday 2nd December. More info will follow via intimations but we do hope that every church member will use Drama Kirk's involvement in community events as an opportunity to share the true Christmas story.

And finally we look ahead to Holy Week 2024 when the Old Parish will host services. We will return to presenting a serialised Passion Play and would ask that everyone supports us as we try to create a memorable and poignant journey to the cross.



Finance and Gift Aid

Following the appeal for the heating project, the fund now stands at just over £16,000. Unfortunately, we have been unsuccessful in obtaining grants which are very difficult to get when we have substantial unrestricted funds available so your contributions are greatly appreciated.

Our claim for Gift Aid will be submitted at the end of the year so can you please let me know if you have moved house during the year, have stopped paying tax or any other change in circumstances which might affect the claim?

Can I once again thank each and every member of the congregation for your financial support and wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year.

Marilyn Henderson
Finance Convener



The Scottish Bible Society

United Bible Societies met in the Netherlands in October - the theme was 'God's Word: Reconciliation for the World'. Discussing how they can best help many countries and communities in turmoil. In some countries Christians are still being persecuted - Bible Society still have representatives supporting them in very difficult circumstances. Thousands of Bibles have been distributed across the World thanks to your ongoing support! Bibles for Bairns is going well in Scotland! Thank you!

Muriel Eadie



Boys' Brigade

On the 8 October 1883 in Glasgow William Smith started an organization which later became the Boys' Brigade.

By a quirk of fate on Wednesday, 8 October 2023 was the company night for our own BB company 1st Hamilton. So, our company night was exactly 140 years from the first ever BB meeting so by meeting on such a historic night we did the only thing possible. We had a Party with games, fizzy drinks and birthday cake and although I say it myself everyone had a great time.

I am not one to get nostalgic but being the captain on such a historic night made me think of all the people who came before me and kept the 1st Hamilton going.

Names like Gardner, Simpson and Buttery all came before me and part of their job was to make sure the company was in a fit state to be handed on and now it's my turn. Sometimes you have to put your own interests aside and do what's best for the organisation and realise it's now your job to make sure that even if you don't hand it on in a better condition than it was handed to you. You can at least make sure it's not so broken it can't be fixed and can carry on beyond your tenure.

I and many others love the BB and only want it to go from strength to strength and to be honest there are many challenges in its future. What we need now is people to put aside their interests and concentrate on what is best for the organisations and institutions we all love and can't imagine our life without it. I am optimistic, over the years I have met so many great people in the BB who have only the good of the BB at heart, and will move heaven and earth for the BB even if it's against their own personal interests.

So, to the future - what's in the programme between now and the New Year? Well it's quite quiet there is only Hallowe'en, Guy Fawkes Night, Remembrance, Christmas then its 2024 when we may return to normal. So, something to look forward to.

Graham Horne
Captain



Ye Olde Parish Beadle Haunt Escape Room

On Friday 3rd November, Hamilton Old Parish delivered a first for the town - an escape room. Escape Rooms present a series of clues and puzzles to be solved to allow teams to escape a room or building. This is currently a very popular way to spend an evening with friends and family, and we were unaware of one having been run previously in Hamilton. Never a church to shy away from new, innovative ways to engage our community, we



decided to give it a bash! A small team of volunteers created the scenarios and set up the puzzles for the participants on the night. Many of the church's beautiful features were used to good effect and the evening allowed us to share some of the history of our beautiful building.

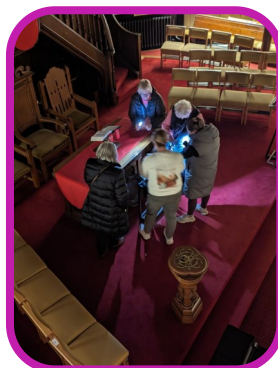
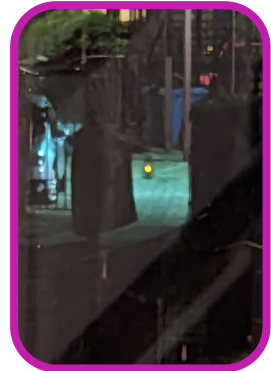
In total 8 teams faced and successfully completed the challenges, with varying degrees of help from our volunteers. It was lovely to see church members bring friends and family to the event and to see them all enjoying themselves within the Kirk. The evening was a great success and we plan to repeat the event in February. If you missed out on the fun, ask the office to add your name to the list. Whilst you are welcome to

bring a team, the office can also help you to form teams with others so please do join us for an evening of fun and laughter, exploring the nooks and crannies of our church.

Thanks to the team involved in putting this together, our willing contestants and those who helped out on the night. and to Jim Henderson who did a star turn as the Beadle despite being away on a cruise. Curious?

You'll have to join us in February to find out.

All proceeds will go to our church boiler fund.



Flower Rota

Date	Main	Rose Bowl	Delivery
19/11/23	Flower Fund		Miss M Richardson
26/11/23	Mrs H Simpson	Mrs H McGreevy	Mrs H Simpson
03/12/23	Mrs A Whitehill		Mrs A Gibson
10/12/23	Mrs M Henderson	Mrs N Barr	Mrs M Henderson
17/12/23	Mrs A Davidson		Mrs A Davidson
24/12/23	Mrs M MacLean		Mrs M MacLean
31/12/23	Mrs H Troop		Mrs H Troop
07/01/24	Mrs E Irvine	Mrs E Irvine	Mrs E Irvine
14/01/24	Mr A Blue	Mrs M Henderson	Mrs M Henderson
21/01/24	Mrs M Gilroy		Mr E Baird
28/01/24	Mrs A Hunter	Mr & Mrs D Young	Mrs A Henderson
04/02/24	Mrs L McIntosh		Mrs M Green
11/02/24	Mrs K Hunter	Jean Mathie	Mrs K Hunter
18/02/24	Flower Fund	Mrs M McCartney	Mrs S Craig
25/02/24	Mrs A Davidson	Miss G Davidson	Mrs A Davidson
03/03/24	Mrs M Eadie		Mrs M Eadie
10/03/24	Mrs S Nicholson	Mr & Mrs L Munn	Miss M Richardson

Thank you to everyone who gifts flowers, contributes to the flower fund and helps with delivery. This is very much appreciated. Dates throughout the year are still available and contributions to the flower fund always welcomed. If any dates are unsuitable and you are unable to organise a swap please contact Colin Davidson either via the office or on 07305 055924.

Andrea

Old Kirk Reflections

Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fat
Please put a penny in the old man's hat
If you haven't got a penny, a ha'penny will do
If you haven't got a ha'penny, then God bless you.



Christmas is indeed coming. Once more we enjoy the build up to the big day - buying and wrapping gifts, sending out Christmas cards to family and friends, ordering the turkey. There's much to be done. For some however, Christmas is a difficult time. With limited money, they struggle to prepare the Christmas they'd really like and are forced to enjoy a scaled back version, with perhaps few if any gifts. Over 2000 years ago, that first Christmas day was really scaled back. Mary & Joseph had been forced to sleep in a stable as there was no room at the inn. On that first Christmas morning however, they, and we, received the best gift of all - Jesus Christ! Jesus was born! He arrived from God, with His blessing to us. Let us all come close to God and enjoy His blessings this Christmas time.

Douglas



Entered into Eternal Life.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life"

*God of grace and peace, in your Son Jesus Christ
You have given us new birth into a living hope.
Strengthen us now to live in the power of the resurrection
and keep us united with our loved one
from whom in death we are not divided;
for you live and reign forever and ever. Amen*

*3 September 2023
Irene Adams*

*14 September 2023
Helen Baird*

*15 September 2023
Agnes (Una) Lang*



PRAYER

Heavenly Father,
direct our steps in the way we ought to go
all the years of our lives.
Help us to count our days
so that we might use them fruitfully for you.
Bring into our sphere
those with whom we might show something of Christ,
in word and deed,
that we might truly live for him;
and help us to enjoy the journey!
Amen.

*Wishing you a
Merry Christmas*



*and a
Happy New Year*