



St John's News

The Newsletter of St John's Church, Carluke

St John's Church of Scotland, Carluke, is a registered Scottish Charity, No SC004066



Winter 2015-16

Pastoral Letter

Dear members

CHRISTMAS REALITY

For most people Christmas heralds a time of celebration and fun, of presents and partying. In the Church we call it the Advent Season. Advent means “the Coming”. The amazing truth of Christmas is that 2000 years ago God came into our human affairs in a way no-one ever imagined: God’s coming was to be conceived and born as a human being. ‘The Word was made flesh’. The eternal God appeared among us in human form and he did this to put all wrong things right, and in doing so fulfilled the sacred writings.

CHRISTMAS POWER

The baby Jesus might appear weak, but God’s weakness is stronger than man’s mighty armies. In the character of the man Jesus all God’s purity and power were embodied, for in his Son God had come to seek and save those who were lost. God had come to pardon and renew those who were guilty sinners. God had come to adopt strangers and foreigners into his heavenly family.

The child of Christmas grew to be the man who would open the truth of God’s rule, who would die for the sins of the people, and who would deal evil a powerful body blow. Christmas led to Calvary and Easter – and it was all part of the package of the Advent of God into our world.

CHRISTMAS JOY

No wonder there was angelic singing when he came. No wonder believers have sung Carols and sacred songs ever since. Joy to the world: the LORD has come! Let us not be slow to join in the joyful singing this Christmas. Let us not lose sight of Christ among us this Christmas.

We need his presence all the more because of the dreadful darkness in our world – a darkness of violence and fear – a darkness of hate and misery.

Whatever your personal circumstances, remember Jesus came for us all to lift us up to high honour. The Joy he gives is real and permanent and the wonders of his love are to be experienced by us all this Advent time.

A Happy Christmas to you all !

Ian MacKenzie

(Interim moderator)

Worship Diary

Normal Sunday Services are held at 11:00 am. A short evening service, with prayers for healing, is normally held on the second Sunday of each month at 7:00 pm. A short, mid-week service is held on Thursdays at 10:30 am.

*Special events between now and the next issue of St John's News:
All events in St John's unless otherwise stated.*

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|-------------------|----------|--|
| Thu 10 Dec | 7.00 pm | Carol Service for Bereaved <i>at St Andrew's Church</i> |
| Sun 13 Dec | 7.30 pm | Christian Aid Festival of Christmas Praise <i>at Kirkton Church.</i> |
| Sun 20 Dec | 9.15 am | Christmas Breakfast |
| | 11.00 am | All-Age Christmas Service. |
| | 6.30 pm | Outdoor Carol Service and Nativity <i>at Kirkton Church</i> |
| Thu 24 Dec | 7.30 pm | Christmas Eve Carol Service <i>at St Andrew's Church</i> |
| | 11.15 pm | Watch Night Service. |
| Fri 25 Dec | 11.00 am | Christmas Day Family Service <i>at Kirkton Church.</i> |
| | 12.30 pm | Christmas Lunch |
| Sun 27 Dec | 11.00 am | Joint service with congregation of St Andrew's Church (in St John's) |
| Sun 3 Jan | 11.00 am | United Service, <i>at St Andrew's Church.</i> |
| Thu 11 Feb | 7.00 pm | Induction Service and Social for Rev Dr Elijah Obinna |
| Sun 14 Feb | 11.00 am | <i>Preaching In</i> of the new minister |
| Sun 6 Mar | 11.00 am | Celebration of Holy Communion |

Please watch Sunday bulletins, local press or visit the church website for late changes and additions as they become available.

Obituary

A Tribute to Helen Scott Wyper



Helen Wyper, one of our elders, passed away on 17 October, 2015, aged 74. She has left a huge hole in St John's church, in lots of ways, and will be greatly missed by us all.

Helen was always there working quietly in the background of most things that were going on: she was involved in the Boys' Brigade where she was captain for a number of years; she took over the Kettle's on when Liz Jackson stepped down and organized the smooth running of that; she was part of the Carluke Listeners. She worked in CHOICES every week; was a member of the management team with responsibility for housekeeping and also hall lets prior to the appointment of Donald Frame; she sat in on the Sunday School when needed; she worked in the Christian Aid Café. In fact ,Helen did everything asked of her except sing in the Big Kirk Choir, as the saying goes.

One of Helen's great loves was The Guild, serving for the last seven years as President, a position she held with her usual quiet skills, leading worship with dignity and from the heart and while in office she represented us in various Guild activities in other churches in our area.

Helen had a wee saying I will always remember. If you had a problem she would say “Leave it with me “ and when you did it was sorted out because Helen could do that.

Helen Wyper was a person with great personal faith and an outstanding servant of God in St John's and she will be remembered with great affection always. Her family will be struggling to come to terms with their grief, missing her guidance and leadership in their lives and we remember them, too, in our thoughts and prayers.

MS

In Brief

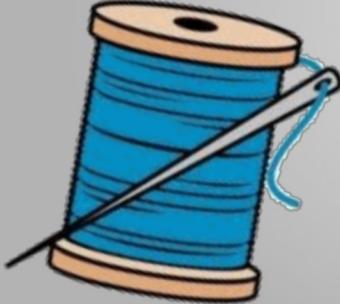
Bible Reading Notes

Janice Webster would like to thank all those members who have ordered Bible reading notes over the past year. As a result of your orders and donations the sum of £40 has been sent to the Clydesdale Food Bank.

Chief Scout Awards

Congratulations to **Lauren Gillan**, **Cameron Hoey**, **Sarah Leggate** and **Abigail Hardisty** who were presented with their **Chief Scout Awards** at a ceremony at the Glasgow Hilton Hotel on Sunday, 23 November.

LizBeeSewing



**Bridal
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Call Liz on 01555 771 896 or 07913 820 057

Material for the next edition of St John's News should be in the hands of the editor NO LATER THAN Sunday 21 February 2016.

Grace Notes

Grace Notes is our Youth Choir, formed and run by Janis McBride. There are nine members at the moment but it is hoped that these numbers will increase.

Grace Notes are very keen to perform and enjoy singing very much. They love being involved in the church services and have all asked if they could continue being part of Sunday worship in the future. I would like to encourage this in order to build up their confidence. Each of their performances to date has been very well-received. They enjoy practise sessions but performance provide focus and motivation and I would like to engage them more in the future.

Another way to do this might be by having them perform at some of the local care homes over the Christmas period. I would be delighted to hear of any care homes any of our church members have a connection with.

Grace Notes have also been 'booked' to take part in the Christmas Jingle on 7 December, and at the Christian Aid Praise Night on 13 December. Both of these events will be held in Kirkton Church. We have also been invited by the Care Club to perform at their Christmas Lunch on 14 December. The girls are very excited about this and we are now compiling a programme of Christmas songs and carols.

It is my intention to organise a group trip for Grace Notes to attend the 2016 Rocknations Youth Conference in Bradford. This event takes place over 3 days 4-6 August. It is a religious conference for young people with guest speakers and artists from many different Churches. It celebrates the Christian faith in a manner which is particularly relevant to their age group. It is a truly inspirational gathering for teenagers. It will be great fun and very exciting but focused on Christian worship.

The Grace Notes members have all already expressed their interest but I will obtain parental approval before any bookings are made. Jacqueline Hardisty and I will supervise the trip. I will be issuing letters to parents explaining the timing and content of the event along with the estimated cost of the trip. The choir members want to contribute to the costs of the trip to Rocknations themselves. They have suggested organising some fund-raising events over the next year that they would plan and execute.

JMcB

Vacancy Update

This will be the last report under this heading. By the time the next issue of St John's News is due, the Rev Dr Elijah Obinna will have been inducted as our new minister.

Elijah has preached in both St Andrew's and St John's as Sole Nominee on Sunday 20 September 2015. After each service, the congregation was balloted with 209 members from the two congregations combined voting FOR his election and 25 AGAINST.

Those who had remained after the services to hear the result were invited to sign the Call and over the next few weeks, Elders and others from each congregation went out to the members to collect further signatures. In total, 535 people from the two congregations had signed the call. This was a tremendous response, and the Vacancy Procedures Committee of the Presbytery of Lanark had no reservation in recommending that Presbytery sustain the Call, which was formally approved at the Presbytery meeting on 3 November 2015.

Since then, a lot of work has been going on in the background to ensure that all the paperwork and arrangements are in place for the Induction, which is set for Thursday 11 February 2016. Since Elijah comes from outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland, there are extra steps involving Immigration and NHS to be dealt with. Each of the six members of his family will require a visa and to make a payment towards health cover. These costs, together with moving expenses, will total many thousands of pounds.

In the meantime, plans are being made to ensure that the manse is adequately furnished and ready to receive our new minister and his family. Already, generous donations have been offered. At the time of writing this, arrangements were being made to hold a Gift Day on 5 December, to receive cash donations to help with the not inconsiderable costs to be met by the Obinnas in moving to Carluke.

GR

Manse Furnishing Appeal

Following on from the Gift Day, held on 5 December to help with the costs of bringing our new minister and his family to Carluke, attention has been given to making the manse a warm and welcoming family home. The Obinnas will be arriving without any furniture and so a list of items considered to be necessary to make our manse operational as a family home has been prepared.

King sized double bed	Tea set (6 places)	Draining rack
King sized duvets, sheets and pillowcases (x 2)	Mugs (x 6)	Milk jug
Single bed	Iron* .	Measuring jug
Cot bed	Toaster*	Mixing bowls
Dining table and chairs (to seat 6)	TV table	Chopping boards (preferably glass)
Place mats and/or table linen	Stair gates (x 2)	Airtight food storage containers
Dinner set and cutlery (6 place)	Kitchen utensils (including: wooden spoons, potato peeler, kitchen scissors, can opener)	Cooking pots (x 3).
Children's crockery and cutlery (x 2)	Kitchen /cook's knives	Milk pan
	Oven trays	Hob/oven to table casseroles

** These and any other electrical goods MUST be NEW and, preferably, boxed.*

Any offers of items from this list should be made to **John Stratton, Anne Reid** or **Ann Walker** (or use the website contact page with “Manse” in the subject).

We would ask you not purchase anything until you have discussed your offer with one of the above, to avoid unnecessary duplication and expense.

Please do not be offended if your generous offer is declined and you are asked to offer something else.

Thanks to those who have already donated for their generosity and to those who will respond in true St John's fashion to this appeal.

Undoubtedly, we have not thought of everything, so offers of any other items will also be gratefully received.

AW/AR

Christian Aid

One hundred years ago, Mary Slessor, a working class mill worker from Dundee, died aged 67. She had spent 38 years of her life working in Calabar in Nigeria, living with the tribes, learning their language, earning their respect and putting an end to the practice of the killing of twins, who at that time, were believed to be cursed. She rescued many Nigerian children, particularly twins who had been left to die, and worked tirelessly for women's education and human rights.

In Nigeria there are many reminders of Mary Slessor, including statues of her holding twins and streets and hospitals named after her. In our own country, streets are also named after her and there is an extensive memorial and exhibition in her home town of Dundee.

Mary suffered several bouts of malaria, and still today this disease is the number one health problem in that country. It can affect all ages but young children and pregnant women are especially vulnerable. Malaria kills 250,000 children in Nigeria every year and accounts for 11% of maternal deaths.

And so this year's Christmas appeal focuses on Christian Aid and its partners' work to combat malaria and improve maternal health in Nigeria. With your help, we can give families in these communities the tools to protect themselves from this preventable disease - mosquito nets, diagnostic kits and medicines to prevent and treat malaria.

What better way to remember Mary Slessor, a remarkable pioneering woman, her care for vulnerable children, her work to improve health and her commitment to the well being of women, than by supporting this year's Christian Aid Christmas Appeal.

You can do this by coming along to our Christian Aid Christmas praise night in Kirkton Church on Sunday 13 December at 7:00 pm to find out more, and help us deliver hope through an offering which will be taken at the service. Once again this year, the UK government will match every pound raised, meaning double the difference and double the number of nets.

IN

Personal Information

St John's, in line with every other church, holds personal data in the form of the church roll. We use this data to communicate with you and, as in the recent vote about whether or not to call the Rev Dr Obinna as minister to the deferred union with St Andrew's, to check your status as a member of (or adherent to) the congregation.

We are permitted, under the Data Protection Act, to hold such information and do our best to ensure that it is accurate and secure. The data we hold for every member and adherent are:

- Title (Mr, Mrs etc)
- Forename(s)
- Surname
- Full postal address, including postcode.
- Status (ie member or adherent)

In addition, for office bearers, we also hold

- Office held
- Phone number
- Email address, where available.

Associated church groups (eg BB, Guild) may also hold information about

- Diet
- Allergies and medication
- Emergency contacts

The Data Protection Act entitles you to check that the information we hold about you is correct and current. If you wish to see an extract from our records containing your personal information, please write to, or email, the secretary (details on inside back cover).



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