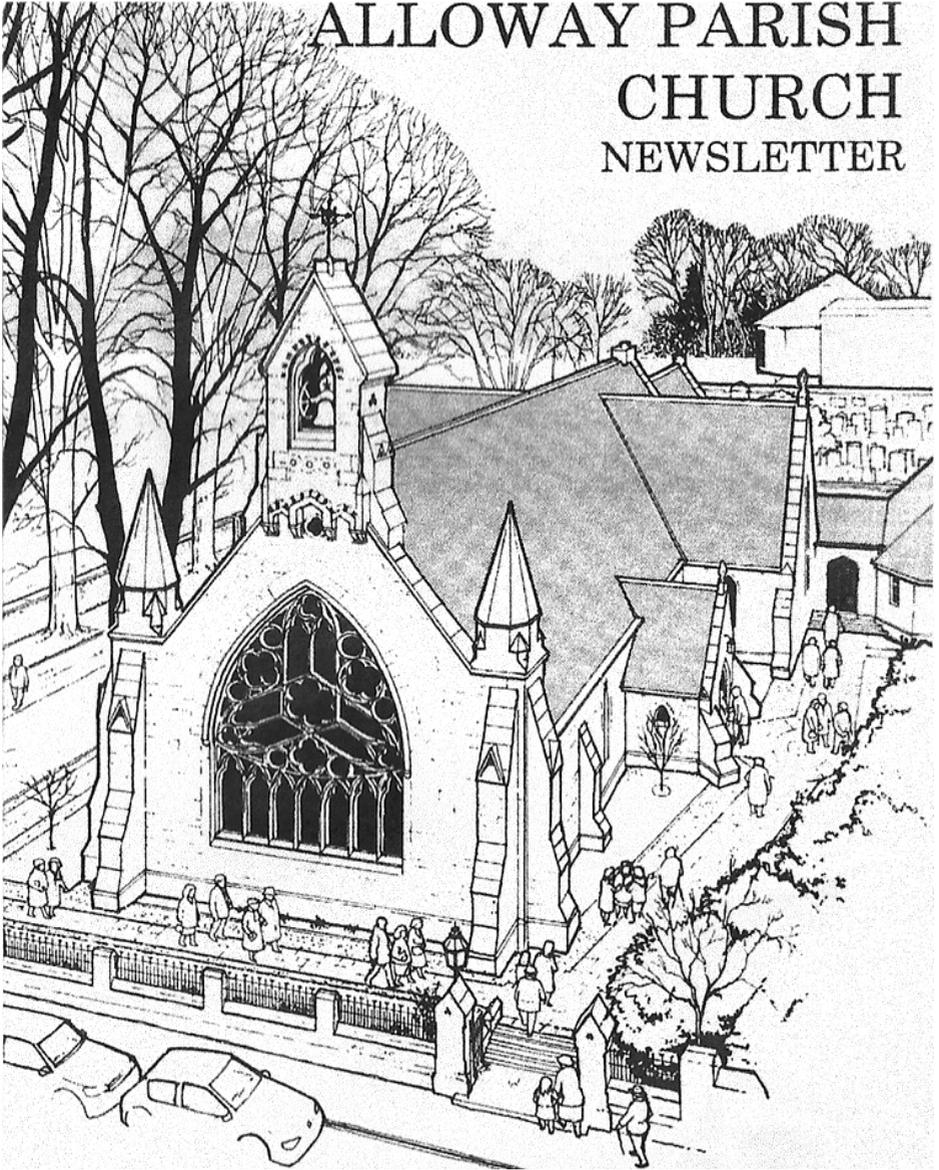


ALLOWAY PARISH CHURCH NEWSLETTER



February
2023



Dear Friends

I am sure days after Christmas in the shops you noticed the Easter eggs! Hot cross buns too are available anytime (in many delicious flavours!)

In February we begin our journey through Lent to Easter.

You will note this year we have a treat for all Les Mis lovers as we look at the spiritual dynamism of many of Victor Hugo's characters.

Lent is a time of course when we reflect too on the temptations of Jesus in the wilderness.

The first was simple. 'You're hungry. You can do miracles. Well, turn these stones at your feet into loaves of bread'. It sounds quite plausible, yet it's an invitation to put one's own needs first. Temptation rejected! "Man shall not live by bread alone".

'Throw yourself off a pinnacle of the Temple. You know that God will send His angels to catch you before you hit the ground'. Again, it's plausible yet this would be to substitute one spectacular publicity stunt for the hard slog of travel, preaching, healing and touching individual lives. Temptation rejected!

'Fall down and worship corrupt and evil power, and you will have infinite worldly power and successes. In other words, the Son of God should deny His Father and glean success without going to the Cross. Temptation rejected!

These temptations were tests of the Messiah yet we can all identify with them. For these temptations cross our mind day and daily.

Look after number one! Take the short cut to success and avoid all the hard slog! Compromise your integrity, in order to fulfil your ambitions! Or choose the hard way.

Walk the narrow path of honesty, commitment, and truth! The journey of Lent is our journey as we reflect and follow Jesus path through the wilderness. His walk can guide ours!

Someone once declared

"The kingdom of God ought to reshape our vision of what matters".

May our journey through Lent help us reevaluate and renew our priorities?

May our journey through Lent bring us closer to He who said

"I m the way the truth and the life".

Every blessing

Neil

Some notes from Rev. David...

With the assistance of Fiona Furey, it is great to visit Doonfoot Primary School each week for a session of Scripture Union. At the moment, we are exploring a number of characters from the Bible. I am currently exploring the possibility of restarting Scripture Union at Alloway Primary school - details to follow. On Friday 27th January, I had the privilege of being invited to the Alloway Primary School Burns Afternoon - what talented children at APS, and what a great tribute to Scotland's National Bard, Robert Burns.

SCHOOLS



We had another great turnout of children at our January Messy Church where we thought about 'Jesus Feeding the 5000'. I must express my huge thanks to all the helpers who make Messy Church possible - it is fantastic to see the large hall filled with children, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and friends! Our next Messy Church will be on Saturday 11th February 2023 when we will be focusing on the parable of the 'Prodigal Son'. All welcome!!

We are pleased to be running another programme of Stepping Stones commencing on Friday 3rd March 2023. This will be a 5-week programme and will run from 2.00-3.30pm each week in the Fellowship Lounge, concluding on 31st March.

**Stepping
Stones**

Stepping Stones is a bereavement support programme focusing on the journey of loss and allows people to meet with others who are dealing with common concerns and feelings. Stepping Stones is open to all who are living with loss and there will be an opportunity to discuss the bereavement journey; health issues; looking after yourself; and thinking ahead. You will be made most welcome! Contact me for more details.

As highlighted in last month's newsletter our Lenten Study will be on 'The Grace of Les Misérables'. Focusing on the book/movie/musical Les Misérables, this six-week study will explore six themes found in

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the story: grace, justice, poverty, revolution, love, and hope. The sessions will be held in the church halls on Wednesday evenings from 7.00-9.00pm and will commence on Wednesday 15th February 2023. In addition to the six sessions, there will be a 'movie night' on Wednesday 29th March to have a licenced viewing of the 2012 movie *Les Misérables* - popcorn and choc-ices available!!



Whilst notes will be given each week, some participants may also like a copy of the book that accompanies the study (priced £12.95). Please let me know ASAP if you would like a copy.

Shalom, David.

New-Year Concert

A thank you to everyone who contributed in any way to the success of our New-Year concert. It was a fun night enjoyed by our capacity audience.

We raised £1,223 for Crossreach who provide support and care for vulnerable people with differing needs throughout Scotland.

Mission Committee



A Week in the Life of a Student Minister



Hi friends!

As you know I am training to be a minister in the Church of Scotland. Lots of people have been asking me questions about the formation process after the service and I thought it might be worthwhile telling you a little bit about life as a final year ministry candidate. Training consists of three distinct elements: academic studies at the University of Glasgow; ministry formation and development provided by the training team at 121; and placements for on-the-job training. I also teach one day per week to help pay the bills!

Here is a rundown of last week to show you what a typical week in my life looks like:

Monday: in theory my day off, but I often use it to catch up on university reading and writing my dissertation. I usually treat myself to a lunch out with my pal Polly.

Tuesday: I head to Glasgow for Trinity College Worship. Trinity College is the Church of Scotland's College at the University of Glasgow. It serves the mission of the church through research and education, including the education and training of those preparing for ministry. Candidates are paired with a member of the teaching staff, or a guest lecturer, and we take turns at leading worship. This week we had a beautiful affirmation of baptism service led by Rev. Professor Charlotte Methuen, a priest in the Scottish Episcopal Church. After worship, we head to our common room in Wellington Church to have lunch together. Trinity worship is incredibly important for candidates as we are able to meet as a group and support one another.

After worship I went to my Theology through Creative Writing seminar. In the first half of the class, we discussed religious themes in detective novels. This was followed by a writing workshop on finding God in creation/nature. At the end of my seminar, I headed to the library to check out a couple of books for my Women in the Bible course before heading home.

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Wednesday: I spent the morning in Alloway for Wednesday Worship and a cuppa afterwards. Then Neil and I met for a quick planning meeting before I headed to Prestwick and Biggart Hospital. I spent time with members of the congregation who are ill in hospital before going on a care home visit.

Thursday: I teach in the primary department at Park School in Kilmarnock. My day was spent in the swimming pool with various classes teaching swimming and water confidence. It was fun... but very tiring.

Friday: In the morning I met with Rev. Linda Godfrey in the Howard Centre in Kilmarnock. Linda is my formation partner. She accompanies me throughout my 3 years of training as mentor and coach. Linda is a wonderful support to me.

Then it was back to Glasgow and university. This time it was my Women and the Bible seminar. We had some very interesting discussions on the theme of women and love in the Bible.

In the evening, at home, I searched for suitable images to accompany my sermon.

Saturday/Sunday: Saturday was for sermon writing and getting everything ready for Sunday morning. Sunday morning is naturally very busy! I gave the sermon and then had some lovely chats in the hall after the service. Finally, it was off to Cumnock for Sunday lunch at Mum and Dad's house.

I hope this provides a little insight into what life is like for student ministers.

Take care and God bless, David.





14th February St Valentine

There are two confusing things about this day of romance and anonymous love-cards strewn with lace, cupids and ribbon.

There seems to have been two different Valentines in the 4th century - one a priest martyred on the Flaminian Way, under the emperor Claudius, the other a bishop of Terni martyred at Rome. And neither seems to have had any clear connection with lovers or courting couples.

So why has Valentine become the patron saint of romantic love?

By Chaucer's time the link was assumed to be because on these saints' day -14th February - the birds are supposed to pair. Or perhaps the custom of seeking a partner on St Valentine's Day is a surviving scrap of the old Roman Lupercalia festival, which took place in the middle of February.

One of the Roman gods honoured during this Festival was Pan, the god of nature. Another was Juno, the goddess of women and marriage.

During the Lupercalia it was a popular custom for young men to draw the name of a young unmarried woman from a name-box.

The two would then be partners or 'sweethearts' during the time of the celebrations. Even modern Valentine decorations bear an ancient symbol of love - Roman cupids with their bows and love-arrows.

There are no churches in Scotland dedicated to Valentine, but since 1835 his relics have been claimed by the Carmelite church in Dublin.



Suggestion Box

A suggestion box will shortly be placed at the Foodbank Collection Point. If you have any suggestions, comments, questions you wish to ask the Session, please feel free to post them in the box (anonymous or otherwise) and they will be forwarded on to the Session Clerk.



February Lunch

Our next lunch will be held on Thursday 23rd February from 12.00noon until 1.30pm. The menu is shown on the newsletter poster. Please join us for the first time or as a regular to enjoy food and fellowship while supporting our work in Bandawe.



Halls Spring Clean

We plan to start a Spring Clean of the cupboards in the Halls shortly. Initial priority will be the cupboard outside the entrance to the Main Hall on the opposite side of the corridor from the kitchen.

If you are aware of anything in this cupboard which maybe hasn't been used for a while but you want retained please ensure it is marked clearly! Many thanks.

Donald Ross, Property Convener.



February Lunch



Alloway Church Hall

Thursday 23rd February 2023

12.00 noon until 1.30 pm

Leek and Potato Soup



Lemon Meringue Pie



or Carrot and Sweet potato soup



+
or

Chocolate Gateau



Cost £5.00 per person includes tea/coffee and biscuits.

All proceeds to Malawi.

FAIRTRADE – TRAIDCRAFT

We have heard news that Traidcraft, our supplier of fairly traded goods, has gone into administration and will be ceasing trading, after 40 years. They have been the leading suppliers for a very long time and this is a big blow to those concerned about supporting the poorest farmers and suppliers overseas. We have no more information at present but, for now, there will be no more Traidcraft orders. We hope to have more information later. In the meantime, please pray for the staff losing their jobs and the many hundreds of overseas farmers and suppliers, who will be hit hard by this news.

Please continue to buy products with the Fairtrade logo, available in many supermarkets, particularly during Fairtrade Fortnight which runs from 27th February to 12th March 2023



Olwen and Malcolm McNeil

Fairtrade is now big business worldwide, ensuring a fair deal and making certain that poor people overseas are not exploited.

We are celebrating Fairtrade Fortnight, which runs from Monday 26th February to Sunday 11th March 2018 and this year we'd like you to join us in supporting the farmers and workers who grow our food. With Fairtrade we have the power to change the world every day.

Did you know that there are an amazing 4,500 Fairtrade certified products available in the UK? Everything you can imagine from bananas, chocolate, beauty products, coffee, tea, cotton products, gold (and diamonds), flowers, sugar and loads more, even paper products like kitchen wipes and toilet rolls!

What can you do?

- Go to your supermarket and specifically choose to buy Fairtrade products, only those which show the logo above.
- Ask your supermarket to stock a better range of Fairtrade products.

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- Buy Fairtrade products from the stall at the church, about once a month in the Church Halls between the morning services.
- If you have any trouble finding and buying Fairtrade products, contact Malcolm and Olwen McNeil (01292 440423) or Email at olwenatayr@btinternet.com Catalogues are available and orders placed with us usually take about 7 days for delivery.
- Encourage the Ayr Fairtrade Partnership and others as they seek Fairtrade Zone status for South Ayrshire.
- Use your buying power to make a real and direct difference to the lives of thousands of the poorest people worldwide.



Litter Pick

There is planned Litter Pick scheduled for Sunday 26th February 2023, weather permitting, meeting at the Church Halls at 2.00pm, followed by tea/coffee at 3.00pm. Pickers and bags will be provided. For further information please contact Donald Kemp 01292 440700.



Boys' Brigade Staff

I noticed that in last months' newsletter, BB Captain Stewart Robertson acknowledged the service given by seven of his staff who had just retired or were about to retire, some after many years of service. Can I, on behalf of Neil and the Session, add our thanks to those who have given up time to carry out this very worthwhile work. Any service given is highly valued and working with our youth is particularly important and often challenging. We are grateful for your commitment and would like you to know it is very much appreciated. Thank you all.

Eric Ness, Session Clerk



TOY/GIFT DONATIONS

Thank you so much for the terrific response to our appeal for toys/ gifts for the Night Before Christmas Campaign.

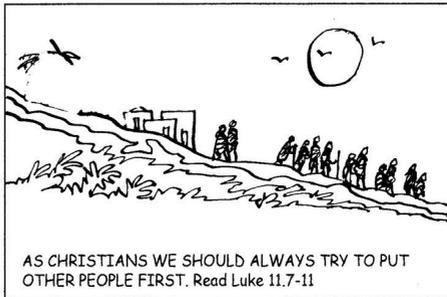
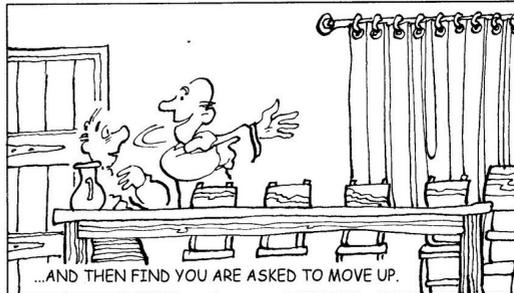
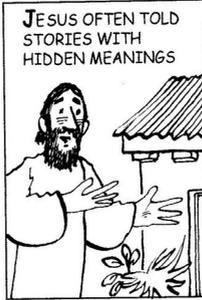
With your help almost 7000 red bags of joy were distributed across Ayrshire and beyond to families experiencing hardship.

The Night Before Christmas Campaign which is completely run by volunteers, operates all year round raising funds and dealing with referrals for any family or vulnerable young adult in need of help. As part of their fundraising they have a charity shop in Ayr called Baby to Teen which welcomes donations of any preloved baby or children's items including toys, prams and nursery equipment. They also welcome seasonal baby/children's clothing when space allows.

Please consider donating any of your preloved baby/children's items to this very worthwhile charity or pop along to the charity shop on Arthur Street in Ayr if you're looking for something for your children/grandchildren.

Baby to Teen have a Facebook page where you can message them or alternatively have a word with Lynda Mary in church or send her an email - lyndamary07@gmail.com if you would like more information or to arrange a collection of donations.

Thank you so much for your continued support.





thirdallowaybrownies@hotmail.com

by Brown Owl Lise Whittle

Happy New Year!

3rd Alloway Brownies have made a good start to the new year by welcoming two new Brownies into our Unit. We started off with a Welcome Night, singing our Brownie songs 'We're Brownie Guides, We're Brownie Guides' and 'Good Evening, Friend Brownie'. We talked about the Chinese New Year, and some of the girls already knew that this year it is the Year of the Rabbit. We found out that China uses two calendars - the Gregorian calendar (which is the one we use), and also a lunar calendar. The lunar calendar is worked out by the phases of the moon. So, each year, the Chinese New Year will fall on a different date in our calendar. The Chinese believe that each year is ruled by one of 12 animals, and that people have the characteristics of the animal that ruled the year they were born. We played a 'Bunny Hop' wave game which involved everyone jumping up and down like a bunny rabbit, and we had a Rabbit Quiz (see below) and found out some new facts about rabbits. Everyone took home a little chocolate rabbit and a Chinese fortune cookie.

We also celebrated Burns Night and worked out that Robert Burns is 264! We played a 'Chase The Haggis' relay game by flapping a paper haggis along the floor with a rolled up newspaper. Then we danced 'Brown Owl's Haggis Dance' which wore us all out! We sang Auld Lang Syne, and everyone received a Happy Burns Night card.

We have plenty to look forward to this term as we will be starting a new Theme Badge called Have Adventures which involves getting out and about to explore the outdoors and nature.

Have a go at our Year of the Rabbit Quiz on the next page - we hope you enjoy it.

Year of the Rabbit Quiz

What is a baby rabbit called?

Foal Kitten Puppy Cub

What do people believe rabbits symbolise?

Good luck Bad luck Good weather Bad weather

True or false: a hare and a rabbit are the same animal?

True False

What does a rabbit do when it 'popcorns'?

Make crunching noises Leap around happily Curl into a ball There's no such thing

Which of these is a true fact about a rabbit's teeth?

They break easily They are soft They never stop growing They have a special coating

Why are rabbit's eyes on the side of their head?

To help sight in bad weather Because their mouths are so wide To look for prey To look for predators

What is a male rabbit called?

Stag Buck Sow Stallion

What is a female rabbit called?

Roe Doe Fawn Chick

How many babies can rabbits have in a litter?

1 5 10 12

How far can a rabbit rotate its ears?

$\frac{1}{4}$ turn $\frac{1}{2}$ turn $\frac{3}{4}$ turn all the way round

Quiz Answers 1. Kitten 2. Good luck 3. False 4. Leap around happily 5. They never stop growing (so rabbits have to keep gnawing at food to keep them trim) 6. To look for predators 7. Buck 8. Doe 9. The average litter size is five, but they can have as few as one or as many as twelve, so all answers correct! 10. Each ear can turn $\frac{1}{2}$ way around, that way they can hear all the way around.

Parish Record



"Blessed are those who mourn they shall be comforted "

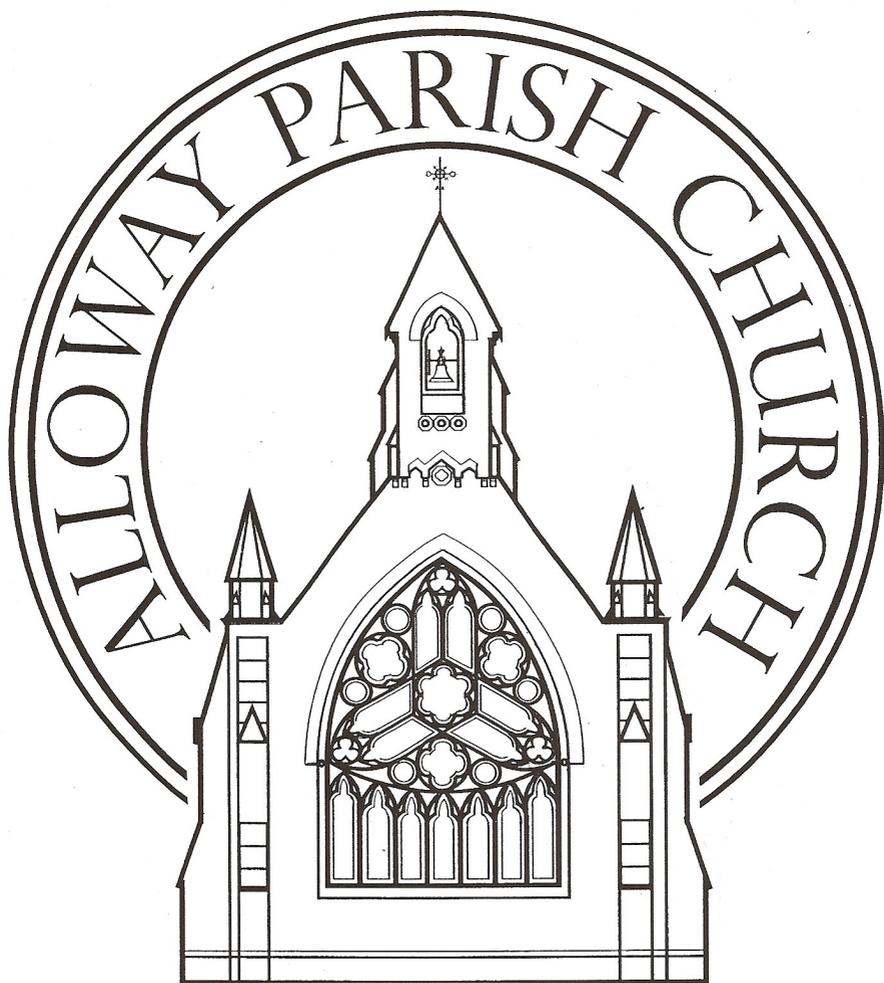
17.12.22	Mrs Aileen McAllister	Piper Hill
25.12.22	Mr Gavin Thomson	Shalloch Park
26.12.22	Mrs Joyce Martin	Upper Loaning
2.1.22	Mr Peter McQuiston	Monument Road
6.1.22	Mr Arthur Gilmour	Greenan Manor
8.1.22	Mrs Mary Taylor	Templeton House Ayr
14.1.22	Mr Sam Thomson	Drumellan Road
17.1.22	Mr William Taylor	Doonholm Road

Deadline for March Newsletter—Tuesday 21 February—12 noon

Contributions should be sent to:

Secretary.allowaypc@gmail.com

Please visit our website www.allowaychurch.org or our Facebook page



Alloway Parish Church of Scotland
No. 100538

Scottish Registered Charity
No. SC012456