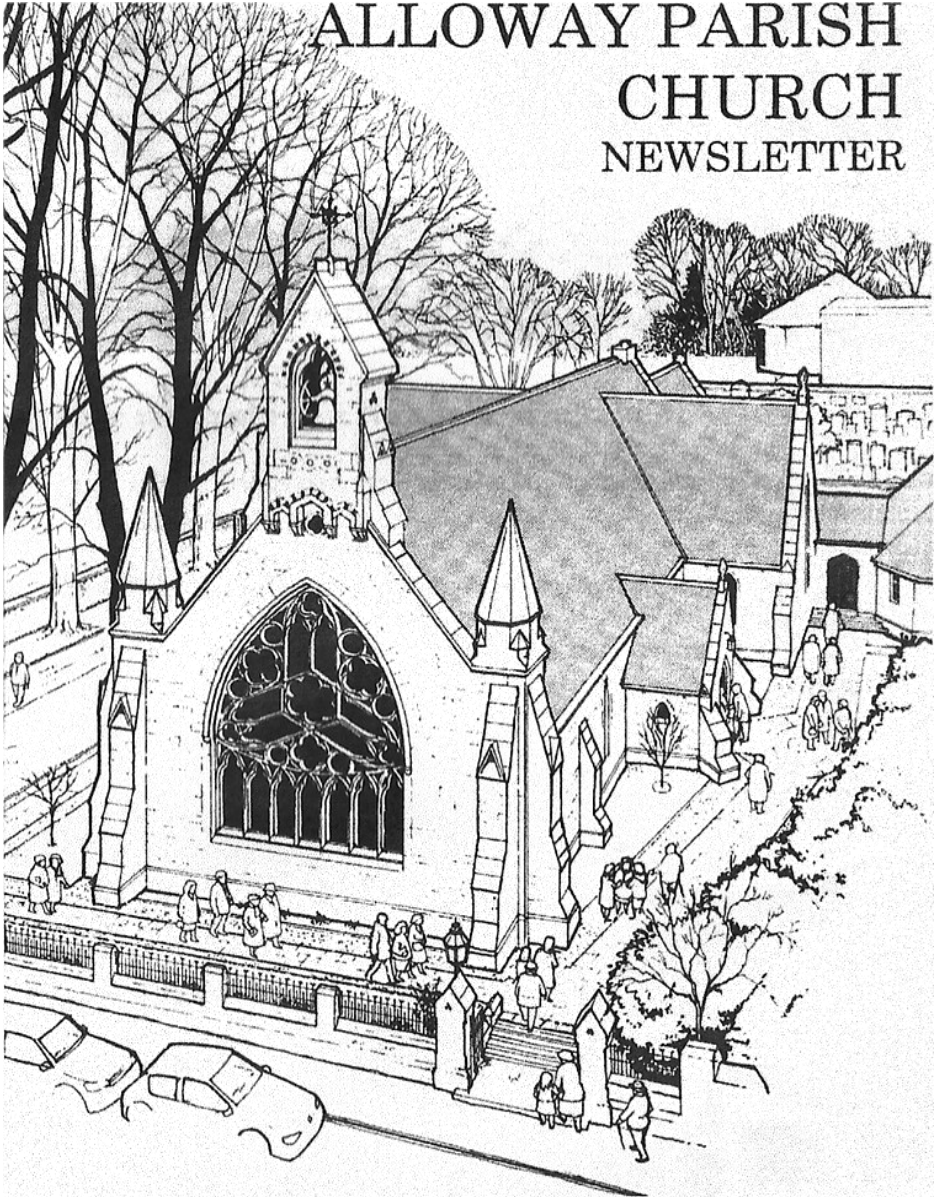


ALLOWAY PARISH CHURCH NEWSLETTER



February
2024



Dear Friends

In February 14th 2024 we have an unusual occurrence. Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day fall on the same day!

The two occasions illuminate the meaning of love. Lent, beginning on Ash Wednesday, focuses on learning to love God more, as we give his Kingdom space and priority in our lives.

We reflect on Jesus testing time in the wilderness. "Man shall not live by bread alone". Jesus had to endure testing times as we do. However he resisted to the last.

Lent reminds us, sometimes life can feel like a wilderness experience. Yet we are never left to negotiate it alone.

Hard choices still need to be made!

We see this also clearly demonstrated in the life and death of Saint Valentine.

Valentine was a Christian who demonstrated the importance of sharing God's love with others.

We know little about him, except that he was a priest who lived in the 3rd Century AD and that he was martyred on 14th February.

Emperor Claudius felt that soldiers in the Roman Army were distracted from their duty by their wives, and so had attempted to outlaw marriage. It is believed that Valentine married couples in secret, which is why today we celebrate our love for one another on his day.

However, with all this talk of love in February let us remind ourselves of Paul's wonderful definition of what love is.

While often quoted at weddings, the passage comes to us all married or single, as a timely reminder of the love we should aspire to:

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, and it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NIV

It is indeed this Christian quality of love which everyone needs more of!

The reward for practicing this love will be found both within and out of this world.

Happy Lent and Valentine's Day!

Neil McNaught



Some notes from Rev. David...



Well, what a start to 2024! At our January Messy Church we had 69 children and 54 adults attending - I think that is a record. We did need to undertake some logistical re-arrangement of activities, but everyone seemed to enjoy the session that focused on the story of Noah and the Ark. The various teams of volunteers worked extremely hard and I am so very grateful for their hard work and commitment. The next Messy Church is on Saturday 17th February 2024. This date has been chosen to avoid the school holiday weekend.

The January meeting of the Men's Breakfast took place on Saturday 27th January. Following some tea, coffee and delicious hot filled rolls, we heard from our guest speaker Linda Hopper.



Linda, who lives in Doonfoot, supports a charity in Uganda called 'Kitega Community'. The aim of the charity is to integrate those with physical and/or mental disabilities into the community, and society, and to offer vocational training, counselling, legal aid medical services and group activities. Linda's passion for the charity was evident and we were grateful to hear about Kitega Community, and about her involvement with the charity.



The first meeting of PULSE was on Sunday 28th of January. We were very excited given that we had 23 names registered. You can imagine our surprise/shock/panic/encouragement when 48 youngsters turned up. The evening started with games in the Octagonal Hall (pool, table tennis, air hockey, table football, corn-hole, darts, jenga, twister... and many more) and crafts in the Small Hall. We then moved to the Large Hall for an 'icebreaker' - but with 48 youngsters, this was 'challenging'. Time for tuck shop was next, and we finished the evening with some team games in the large hall. I am extremely grateful to the volunteers who helped out - I needed each and every one of them - and we were absolutely shattered at the end of the evening. One disappointing aspect was the behaviour of a small group of S1 boys - should this continue, their parents will be asked to come and collect

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them to take them home. The next meeting of PULSE is on Sunday 25th February - the leaders may have recovered by then!

The first session of our six-week Lenten Study will be on Wednesday 14th February 2024. The focus of the study will be the movie 'The Greatest Showman' and we will explore five themes portrayed in the story - A Million Dreams; Come Alive; Rewrite The Stars; Never Enough; and, The Greatest Show. On the first week of the study, we will have a 'Movie Night' when we will sit back and watch the full movie. As with previous events, popcorn and choc ices will be served! There is no charge for the study and there is no need to register. Each week we will meet from 7.00-8.45pm. A study booklet will be provided in Week 1. If you have any queries, please get in touch.



FAMILY CEILIDH As advertised previously, a Church Family Ceilidh will take place on Saturday 16th March, 7.00-10.00pm. Music (and dance instruction) will be provided by the amazing 'Jiggered Ceilidh Band'. Tickets are priced at £10 (adult) and £5 (children) and includes a light supper. Tickets are NOT restricted to church members. Those attending are encouraged to bring their own snacks and soft drinks. This is sure to be a great evening for all ages. The number of tickets is strictly limited - they are available from me on 07858 966367 or dhume@churchofscotland.org.uk.

Richest blessings, David.

Session Report

Our last two meetings of the year were held in October and November, the first in the Octagonal hall and the latter an on-line meeting. Most of the business was of a routine nature receiving reports from our hard working committees but we also had to record the result of the voting for our "Basis of Union". The vote was taken after the service on Sunday 15th October when 173 voted in favour of the union and 1 against and at Fisherton the vote was 20 in favour and 0 against.

Some of the matters brought forward by committees were:-

Finance

Everything in order with no unexpected expenses but it was noted that under our new contract for gas and electricity our bill would be doubling over the next year. It was also advised that we had received a Legacy of £15,766 from the estate of Miss Elma Stevenson.

Halls

We were pleased to hear from Jean that our halls are being very well used throughout the week.

Mission

Thanks were recorded to all those who helped with the Harvest Supper which raised £487 for the vine trust. All was in hand for the Christmas Fair and new-year concert.

Presbytery

We were advised that Rev Alison McBriar, had been appointed as the new Presbytery Moderator and that 5 new basis of unions had been approved. It was also confirmed that Alloway Church records had been attested and found in order.

Property

Routine work carried out on church, halls and gardens included replacement of light bulbs, boilers checked and septic tank emptied. After our recent fire audit the convenor contacted Edinburgh for guidance and they arranged for their fire and risk compliance manager to visit Alloway. His remarks were very positive and he gave a few suggestions for improvements which the committee was happy to introduce. This included installing inter-linked smoke detectors at the church buildings.

Roll Keeper

It was proposed and accepted that Jan Duncan would be appointed as our new roll keeper following the retirement of Mrs Maureen Leitch.

Safeguarding

We were advised that three applications had been accepted under the PVG scheme for some of the team, working at our AV corner - Tom Black, Hazel Hoyle and Andrew Jamieson.

Church Family and Schools Worker

David commented that there had been very good attendances at Messy Church and Toddlers and thanked all those who had helped at the Ladies' Retreat Day which had been a great success. He was looking forward to the next Men's Breakfast meeting and the start of "Pulse" at the beginning of next year.

Eric Ness

Session Clerk



Huge thanks to all who contributed to our Christmas Appeal for the Christian Aid Middle East Appeal £2000 was raised.

As a supporter of our work there, we want to update you on what our partners have been able to achieve, in the most unthinkable circumstances.

All our partner staff have been forcibly displaced from their homes and are living in either temporary shelters, or with host friends or family in cramped conditions and without adequate access to food, water, medicine, bedding.

Many have lost friends, family or colleagues and are dealing with unimaginable grief. There is huge need, as people have been left with nothing.

Daily bombardment is still incredibly intense and nowhere is safe. On top of this, all our partner's offices have either been partially or completely destroyed, reduced to rubble, or are surrounded by Israeli tanks, making them impossible to access.

In these unthinkable conditions, partners have implemented lifesaving work, setting up makeshift offices in shelters and continuing to be in contact through WhatsApp.

As part of the Middle East Crisis Appeal: Our health partner Palestinian Medical Relief Society (PMRS) have 30 teams on the ground operating in most areas of Gaza, including the north.

Their teams have reached at least 363,000 people. PMRS have run a mobile health clinic which provides people access to a doctor, nurse, social worker or physiotherapist.

Due to the lack of fuel in Gaza access is limited, however in an incredible demonstration of strength PMRS doctors have been reaching people by bicycle.

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The Women's Affairs Centre (WAC) have set up an office in a shelter in Rafah and their commitment to programme quality should be mentioned, as they have been able to send us detailed concept notes in these unthinkable circumstances.

Their response has included providing basic needs including mattresses and blankets to a shelter in Rafah. In the next few weeks they will begin a project supporting new mothers and their babies with basic needs like nappies

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) continues to systematically monitor, document and report human rights abuses and war crimes occurring in Gaza, the scale and severity of which are staggering.

This report is focused on Gaza, but it cannot be forgotten that in the West Bank and in Israel our partners continue to reach the most vulnerable, in a context which has been increasingly difficult for civil society organisations to operate. Thank you for your generous support of this work.

New Year Concert

The Mission Committee would like to thank everyone who supported our new-year concert on 19th January.

The final total raised after additional money from the tea/coffee on Sunday 20th was £1,356.

I am sure you will be pleased to know that this means that the South Ayrshire Foodbank and Crossreach will both receive £678.



Kiltwalk 2024

The Kiltwalk Glasgow 2024 is scheduled to take place on Sunday 28 April 2024 . The registration for the event is now open and you can sign up for the Glasgow Kiltwalk by visiting the official website

www.thekiltwalk.co.uk

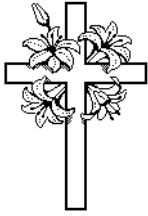
If you would like to join David and Neil for their 14 mile stroll to raise funds for Christian Aid please be in touch with the office by Feb 14th 2024.



Union Talks

Both Kirk Sessions of Alloway and Fisherton are now working towards union. It is hoped that the two congregations will be united in April 2024 to become Alloway and Fisherton Parish Church.





Rev Andrew McPhail

Members and friends turned out in good numbers at Rev Andrew McPhail's thanksgiving service in church in December 2023. "Mr McPhail" served as minister at Ayr Wallacetown for 34 years. On his retirement "Andrew" served for a further 10 years from 2002-12 as Parish Assistant in Alloway. With his good sense of humour and warm pastoral care for others he won many friends and admirers in the congregation and community. He will be greatly missed! To Gwen and Peter and family we extend our deepest condolences.

Pancake Day 13th Feb 2024

Pancake Day, also known as Shrove Tuesday, is a Christian holiday celebrated on the day before Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of Lent. Lent is a 40-day period of fasting and reflection leading up to Easter Sunday. The name "Shrove Tuesday" comes from the word "shrive," which means to confess one's sins and receive absolution from a priest. In the UK, Pancake Day is celebrated by making and eating pancakes, which is a way to use up rich ingredients such as eggs, milk, and sugar before the fasting period of Lent begins.



Night Before Christmas Campaign

A huge thank you to everyone who donated toys and gifts for the charity Night Before Christmas Campaign. We received hundreds of donations in the weeks leading up to Christmas which helped to fill some of the 7400 red bags of joy handed out to families across West Scotland experiencing hardship.



Leisurely Lunch

Our next Leisurely Lunch will take place on Thursday 29th February from 12.00noon until 1.30pm. It will have a (belated) St Valentine's theme and you can see the menu from the poster in this newsletter. Please come to join us - I'm sure you will have a "Lovely" time with good food and good company. The proceeds will be used for our work in Malawi.



st Valentine Lunch



Alloway Church Hall

Thursday 29th February 2024

12.00noon until 1.30pm

Lentil Soup



or

Carrot and Sweet Potato



To follow

Rhubarb Crumble



or

Red Fruit Gateaux



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

WEDNESDAY COFFEE & CHAT - SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP LOUNGE HOSPITALITY

During the year 2023 a total of £3093.23 has been raised from the Wednesday Coffee & Chat as well as the donations received at the Sunday Fellowship Lounge Hospitality. We will be donating £2147.69 to the Charity Trees for Life, for planting trees in Scotland. The other £945.54 goes to the Church to cover the cost of tea, coffee, sugar and drinks for children. The milk and food/biscuits is always donated by volunteers, so thank you to them.

In supporting this Environmental Charity, we continue to demonstrate our credentials as an Eco Church.

Thank You

Sheena Kemp



Litter Pick

There is planned Litter Pick scheduled for Sunday 25th February 2024, 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.





thirdallowaybrownies@hotmail.com

by Brown Owl Lise Whittle

Happy New Year! It's our 50th Anniversary year!

3rd Alloway Brownies are looking forward to celebrating a very special event in April this year when we will be 50 years old! We have managed to contact a few former leaders of the Unit, and if you (or anyone you know) was in 3rd Alloway Brownies or has photographs, memories, stories or any connections, please get in touch (email address above). We'd love to invite some of the former leaders - we're very pleased to have managed to contact former leaders Helen Duthie, Shelagh Johnston and Una, but we'd also love to contact Elizabeth Stevenson, Susan Searle, Catherine Nelson, Patricia Henderson, Annette Mitchell, Lena Lawrence(?), E. Bruce, Shirley Scott, and Joan Rome.



The Brownies started the New Year with a welcome back evening including a Happy New Year Mexican wave, and a pow-wow chat around the toadstool. We are starting a new theme badge called Skills For My Future - 'Look to the future, and build your skills to become independent and successful in life!' (taken from the Brownie Badge Book). We started off with a Skill Builder activity called 'Girls Can Do Anything' by looking at different objects and thinking about what different jobs you would be doing if you needed to use them - the objects included a toy tiger, spanner, camera, pot of paint, paper, a bucket, and a laptop. Then we chatted about what sort of things you would have to do if you had those jobs.

The Brownies also decorated Brownie boxes to take home to keep all their Brownie things safely inside.

The following week we continued with the theme badge activities and did two technology robot activities called 'Brownie Bots' and 'Beat The

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Bot'. The Brownies took turns to act as a robot, and the other Brownies had to imagine they were computer software engineers and write 'code' (which is step by step instructions to tell your technology what to do) in order to direct the Brownie robot around an obstacle course. If the Brownie robot didn't understand the instruction or they couldn't do it, they called out "Error!" and had to be reprogrammed with a new instruction! After that the Brownies had fun making their own robot out of recycled junk boxes and cartons.

We are also going to be starting another badge this year called the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Unesco Biosphere badge which has lots of activities aimed at finding out more about local heritage and our special local environment.

A huge thank you to all the volunteers who help at Girlguiding, and for the support from everyone at the Church. The District is in great need of more volunteer Leaders for Rainbows, Brownies and Guides. If you are interested in volunteering, PLEASE get in touch dcalloway@girlguidingayrshiresouth.org.uk





1st Alloway Company News

December is a quiet month for youth activities - understatement of the year.

Anchors Boys enrolled 6 new boys. They joined with the Junior Section for a Christmas Party involving games and food. The magician Fabulous Fraser popped in to entertain with magic and some cool ballon art. At the end Santa took an early opportunity to visit the Alloway boys.

The first boy, (although his name was in the Nice book) braved pulling the Big Man's beard. He then turned round, a face of wonder, a voice of awe "Its real, he's real" the hall went silent....

All Junior Section first half of session awards were issued.

Junior Section boys were also out assisting with the annual Santa's Sleigh Collection around the parish. Their enthusiasm, competitiveness was incredible to watch. Their discipline and behaviour was a credit to their parents.

Company Section Santa's Sleigh Report

Five Nights completed, including a couple of added areas.

Total Raised - £2,520

Autism Scotland - £500

Ayrshire Hospice - £500

Christian Aid - £500

Erskine Hospital - £500

St Johns Scotland - £500

CHSS - £50

All Company Section boys were treated to an evening at LA Bowl, Laser Quest games, burgers and ice-cream and juice - curtesy of a very appreciative parishioner.

Lesley Moore (Mrs)

OIC Junior Section

Youth, Christian Faith & Our Community

If you were lucky enough to attend the annual Remembrance Parade, you would have seen a young lad being presented with a SALTIRE AWARD for 500 HOURS VOLUNTEERING by the Rev Neil McNaught.

A BB Junior Officer, Queens badge, Duke of Edinburgh Award, Rugby player (Ayr RFC, West of Scotland and in the National squad) coaching and several other activities. He is just the fore runner. As part of the DoE work, Queens Badge and our Event Management Project the following have been Awarded:

500 Hours

Calum Bain
Ross Brown
Lewis Doak
Aidan Moore
Daniel Nicol

Upgraded to date:

100 Hours

Thomas McCall
Benjamin Thorne

Even two new members have completed enough hours to merit the second level, awarded in December.

Emma McCall, assisting at the Anchor Boys and Santa's Sleigh - 25 hours

Tyler Barclay, recent in the area, has been involved in all activities - 25 hours (5 nights of the Sleigh included.)

It is nice to end a year on a high. I am well aware that these youngsters do not volunteer, get involved, participate and assist for recognition. To be fair they don't know they have been identified, and their commitment recognised by the Scottish Government Saltire Award Scheme.

Stewart Robertson
Captain

1st Alloway Company, The Boys' Brigade



ENCOURAGEMENT CORNER

What's in a Name?

If you were born in the 30's you may well have been named after a relative. In the 60's you would probably have inherited a name that was trendy at that particular time. In the 70's you could have found yourself stuck with the name of your parent's favourite singer or actor.

God is known by many names in Scripture, most of them describing some facet of His nature or attributes. He is called our provider, our peace, our creator, our healer and our shepherd to name but a few.

The bible contains between 3000-5000 promises, of which I can assure you I have read often and stood on many of them in difficult times, but I have never counted them!

When someone makes us a promise what criteria do we use when judging its credibility?

Who made it? Are they trustworthy? Can I believe that they will follow through?

In Numbers 23:19 (one of my favourite scriptures) we are told, "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" A general rule of thumb when studying Scripture, is, if it's important you will find it repeated in other passages. Paul repeats this truth about God in Rms.3. Can I suggest that we can absolutely trust God to keep His promises.

Consider Abraham, God promised him a son and that He would make him a great nation. We can learn a lot from this man. Despite being a man of faith, he attempted to circumvent God's plan by attempting to do it in his own strength. A trap we all fall into at some point in our Christian lives. However, in Abraham's case God gave him the promised son. Fast forward to Gen.22 and God is asking him to sacrifice this precious son. We can only imagine what must have gone through his mind as he travelled toward the land of Moriah, Can I trust God? Will He keep His promise? How can I become a great nation and have descendants numbering the stars in the sky if I sacrifice my son? Will He raise him from the dead in order to keep His promise? Seeing Abraham's faith God responded by revealing Himself as Jehovah-

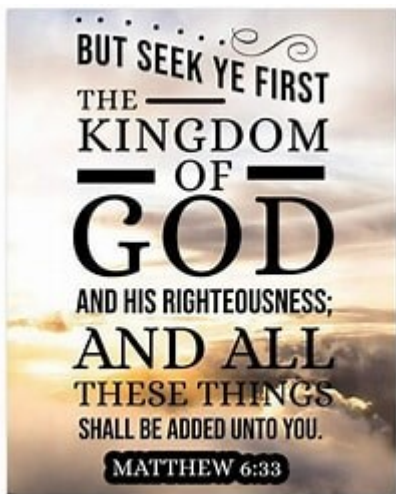
Jireh, God my provider. He provided a ram for the sacrifice.

Jehovah - Jireh = God my provider. However, the Hebrew translation of this name of God is Jehovah - I will see to it! What a God we serve. One who sees and knows our needs and promises to "see to it."

A story is told of a lady who had served Queen Victoria all her life as a maid. She was now due to retire with no home or money to support her in retirement. As she left the palace an official handed her a letter from the Queen. The letter outlined the provision of a cottage and a small pension to cover all her needs for the remainder of her life. Sadly, the lady never opened the letter and was oblivious of the fact that the Queen had made provision for her retirement. She reportedly framed it and hung it on the wall of the hovel she called home.

There is a message here for us. The bible is full of promises from God to supply our every need but if we don't trust Him, avail ourselves of them then consequently we will not live the life promised by God.

The Lord Jesus told us how to access the promises of God in Matt. 6:33 "**Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness ; and all these things shall be added unto you.**"





Parish Record

"Whom God has joined together"

20.1.24 Gordon Milligan and Jane Sykes

"Blessed are those who mourn"

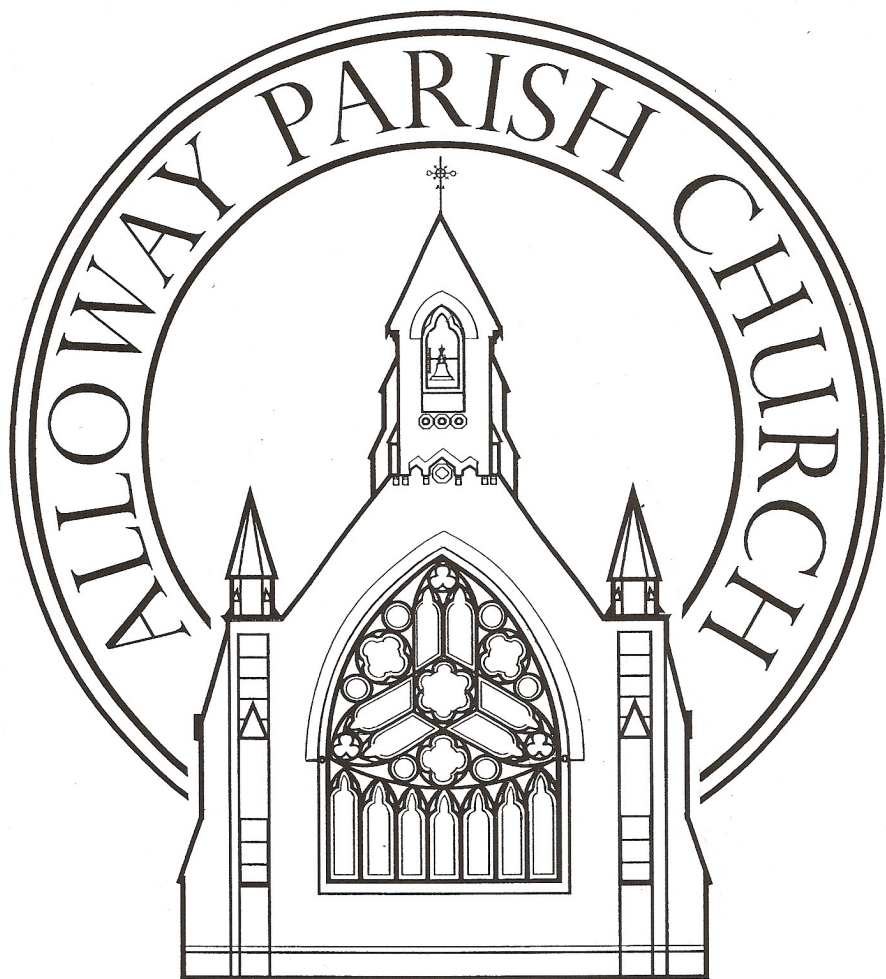
25.11.23	Rev Andrew McPhail	Maybole Road
1.12.23	Mr John Black	Burness Avenue
2.12.23	Mr Jim Fisher	Craig Drive
5.12.23	Mrs Mary Hutton	Portmark Avenue
7.12.23	Mr David Willet	Links Rd Prestwick
8.12.23	Mrs Lilian Jamieson	Templeton House Ayr
8.12.23	Mrs Gillean Richmond	Castle Square
10.12.23	Mrs Helen Rahiman	Minigaff Newton Stewart
19.12.23	Mrs Deborah Bryson	Cairn Crescent
25.12.23	Mrs Agnes Barclay	Cregganbahn Nursing home
27.12.23	Mrs Chris Shepherd	Cregganbahn Nursing home
28.12.23	Mr John Higgins	Windward Park

Deadline for March Newsletter—Tuesday 20 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

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