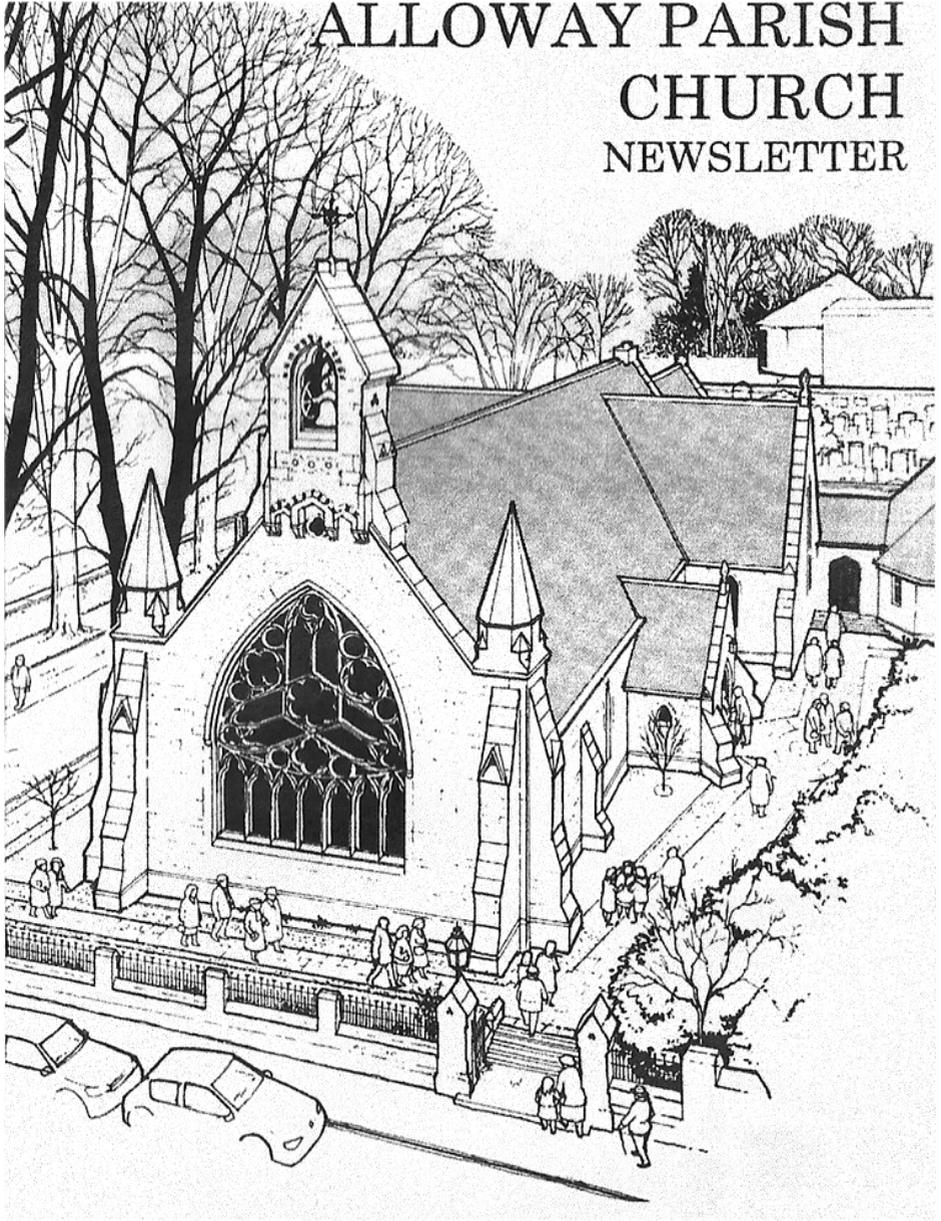


ALLOWAY PARISH CHURCH NEWSLETTER



January
2022



Dear Friends

My little granddaughter loves the night sky. While at times I hardly notice she loves to point out to me with great wonder the moon and the stars!

On 6th January we celebrate Epiphany - the visit of the Wise Men to the baby Jesus. They were guided of course by a star.

No one knows for sure who they were. Matthew calls them 'Magi', and that was the name of an ancient caste of a priestly kind from Persia. It wasn't until the third century that they were called kings - by a church father, Tertullian. Another church father, Origin, assumed there were three - to correspond with the gifts given. Since the 8th century, the Magi have had the names Balthazar, Caspar and Melchior.

What we do understand is that they followed a star which led them in time to Bethlehem.

Stars shine brightest when it is darkest.

As Christmas decorations are packed away, we must be careful not to pack away their message.

One of the loveliest titles given to Jesus in the book of Revelation is the "bright morning star".

Acknowledging other great teachers and luminaries of the world this title reminds us that Jesus is the forefront of splendour.

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It is the glory of the morning star to be the herald of the coming dawn.

January and February are difficult months. Months when our heads sometimes go down as we live through dark days.

Perhaps when this world seems at its darkest, it is time to look up. Even in the darkness there is inspiration to be found.

Not only physically are the nights getting shorter - spiritually we believe dark though it may seem - there will come a fullness of light which the Bright Morning Star heralds.

Every blessing in this New Year to you and yours.

Yours in Him

Rev Neil McNaught

(Thanks too for seasonal cards and kindnesses received at the manse.)

“Two men looked out from prison bars, one saw the mud, the other saw stars.”



A note from Rev. David...

As 'usual', the Advent Season was busy at Alloway Parish Church!

It was such a joy to have a lively Messy Church at the end of November where 22 children, together with their parents and grandparents, enjoyed activities focusing on the birth of Jesus - the atmosphere was just amazing. All of this would not have been possible without the help of Rosalie and her welcome team, Jenny with her wonderful crafts, and Tracy and her kitchen team - thank you all!



We were so excited to have an 'in person' Wednesday Break on the 1st of December and it was fantastic to see the Octagonal Hall busy - and to physically meet (socially distanced of course!) some people for the first time. It was a pity that one of our regulars at virtual Wednesday Break - Judy from Nova Scotia in Canada - was unable to join us!



The Advent Treasure Hunt around the grounds of Alloway Parish Church was also a success - and I hope everyone found the clues! The winners of the treasure hunt were Emily Roger and Katie Haddow from 2nd Alloway Brownies who both received a Christmas 'goody bag'. Well done girls!!

I also had the pleasure of welcoming the pupils and staff from Alloway Primary School to church during the month of December. As a result of the COVID restrictions, the pupils had to visit in their class groups - so we had 15 different groups coming to church for a time with me - they then headed over to the Fellowship Lounge for a snack (thanks to all the ladies who helped with this!). We had a ball in church - amazing singing (one Primary 4 class even 'signed' It Was On A Starry Night!!), presents with a hidden message, and a Christmas Movie Quiz. What a special time I had with the children!!

During the pandemic, Neil and I have been sending recorded

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messages to Alloway Primary and Doonfoot Primary - and we both enjoyed recording our Christmas Message where we thought about the 'reason for the season' and the JOY of Christmas.

Then of course we had our Christingle Service on the 19th of December. Despite the worries associated with COVID, we had a great turnout and it was a joyous time - full of fun and celebration remembering the birth of Jesus. The focus of the service of course was making our 'Christingles' and it was so special when the lights were dimmed and we could see the 'candles' of the Christingles as Abbie Hitchcock sang 'Hope of Heaven'.



Despite the restrictions associated with COVID, Advent 2021 was just great - I had better start planning for Advent 2022!





The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is traditionally observed from the 18th to 25th January. This year, the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity has been prepared by the churches of the Middle East. The Christians of the Middle East say that they offer these resources "conscious that the world shares many of the travails and much of the difficulties that it experiences", and that it also "yearns for a light to lead the way to the Saviour who is the light that overcomes darkness."

More at: <https://ctbi.org.uk/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2022/>

Watch out! Heat wave !

The Met Office is considering whether to begin naming heat waves, as they are becoming more dangerous. Naming them will make the public pay more attention to them, and take them more seriously.

The Met Office says that as the climate warms, so heat waves will become increasingly likely. Since 2015, storms have been named in alphabetical order between September and August of the next year, based on names submitted by the public.

The record high UK temperature is 38.7C, recorded in Cambridge in 2019. 2020 was a record year for heat-related deaths.

In future, 40C heat may become the norm. And the record-breaking 50C heatwaves seen in southern Europe in 2021 would have been 'almost impossible' to have happened without climate change caused by humans.





The New Year

If we put our hand in God's hand
As we enter this New Year
Not knowing what the future holds
But that our Friend is near

We shall not fear what lies ahead
If He is by our side,
Nor wander from the pathway
If He will be our guide.

The Sinless One from heaven came
To dwell with us on earth,
He sought and bought us with His blood
And offered us new birth.

Now as we travel through this year
He knows the things He's planned,
So let us trust and know just this -
Our times are in His hands.

By Megan Carter



Could God be calling you to train as a *Worship Leader* within Presbytery?

Presbytery seeks to enable people who are called, gifted, inspired and willing to serve as Worship Leaders.

Interested? - then discuss it with your Minister, get their nomination submitted as below by 17th January and we'll let you know when the new *Word and Worship Course* is due to commence.

Presbytery of Ayr Education Committee
Convener: Rev. Jeanette Whitecross,
phone 07803181150
email: jeanettewx@yahoo.com



The Wednesday Break

We fully understand it is difficult for many of us to meet at church Sunday by Sunday as we used to!

So why don't we meet each other online for coffee?

(It sounds like a phrase from an online dating agency - but it's not!)

The Wednesday Break continues weekly.

The Zoom meeting will last from 10.30am- 11.15am.

(If people have to leave early - they just press a button) Meetings take place weekly.

A very short act of worship will be followed by sharing digital tea/coffee and most importantly fellowship together.

Anyone interested should register for the Zoom codes by emailing Secretary.allowaypc@gmail.com before 6pm the day before .

Toy Bank Appeal

Thank you to all who dropped off toys and gifts at our Foodbank drop-off point for the South Ayrshire Christmas Toy Bank Appeal.

Over 200 gifts, books, toys etc were gratefully received and have been handed over to an extremely appreciative Toy Bank. A truly amazing response

Lynda Mary



Bandawe Update

Friends

Just before Christmas we jointly funded with Bandawe Girls Secondary School PTA the completion of a boundary wall for security for the girls living on site. The new toilet block sits close to a public path which the lake fishermen use and privacy and security for the girls is paramount.

David Hume has been liaising with Bandawe Primary school's new Head Teacher Mr Lungu and we are funding the creation of a chicken breeding project and the completion of pumping and electrics for an onsite water supply.

As we enter the New Year, I thought it would be of interest to outline an idea the Malawi Mission Committee has under consideration for 2022. Bandawe Primary School has over 1000 pupils and a new toilet block is much needed.

Our Primary schools have been asked to fundraise and together we would hope to jointly have enough to build the new toilet block. It is likely to cost over £12,000 and we look forward to your continuing support.

It is with great sadness we have heard the news of the untimely death of our friend and former headteacher at BAGSS Mr Ernest Chirwa. Ernest visited us in 2019 with his colleague from Bandawe Primary Francis Juma.

In 2020 he received promotion to be regional education manager, in charge of over 120 schools. It was during a school visit that he had a heart attack and sadly died before reaching hospital.

We will have fond memories of his time with us and pray for his family and that he rests in peace.

Murray Hutchison

Malawi Mission Convenor

Bandawe Girls School Toilet Block



Christmas Fair

A big thank you to everyone who contributed in any way to the success of the Christmas Fair on Saturday 4 December.

It was great to see so many people being able to enjoy time together at our tearoom and stalls, at a period when our Covid restrictions had been sufficiently eased.

With all your help £2,500 was raised, which will allow the surrounding area of the Bandawe Girls School and its new toilet block to be made safe for the pupils.

We hope in 2022 to be able to move on to further work in Bandawe.

Mission Committee

Leisurely Lunches

The Leisurely Lunch volunteers met together at the beginning of December to plan the reinstating of lunches in 2022.

You will now realise that these plans may have to be rethought but our hope is that by January 20 we may be able to have a Burns lunch from 12.00 noon until 1.30 pm in the large hall.

The cost remains at £5.00 each - proceeds to Bandawe.

We will keep you up to date via intimations in church and on the church website, but I do hope we will soon be able to enjoy the food and fellowship of our Leisurely Lunches in 2022.

Mission Committee



Traidcraft Stall in Church

Since the start of the first lockdown, we have not been able to have a Fairtrade Stall at our church services. In the background, things have still been running and we want to encourage you to continue to support fairly traded products.

Why is Fairtrade necessary? Fairtrade Standards help protect the natural environment through strict rules on pesticides, water conservation, soil erosion, *GMOs*, biodiversity, energy use and reducing carbon footprint. Fairtrade enables small-scale farmers and workers to receive a fair price for their products and prevents the exploitation that is only too common in the world today. This helps to drive forward a better future for all, particularly the poorest.

What can I do? Please consider making an order, large or small. The Fairtrade catalogue can be found at www.traidcraftshop.co.uk. There are hundreds of fairly traded products available, which are mostly not available in supermarkets. Check out the catalogue and write down the things you want to order. (If you struggle to get sight of a catalogue, please phone us and we will deliver to you a hard copy.) Email or phone your order to us. We will put it together with other orders, to have the benefit of free shipping. We will arrange with you to hand over your order on a Sunday, or deliver to your house. The next combined order is planned for mid-January. Thanks for your kind support of Fairtrade

Olwen and Malcolm McNeil
olwenatayr@btinternet.com
01292 440423





Wednesday Coffee & Chat

There is a plan to have a new opportunity for social gathering in the form of a Wednesday Coffee & Chat. This would take place on the first Wednesday of each month, within the Fellowship Lounge commencing Wednesday 2 February at 10.30am until 11.45am. This will be a very informal get together with tea/coffee and a wrapped biscuit. Monies collected would go towards tree planting in line with our Eco Church objectives. Other planned dates are Wednesday 2 March, 6 April and 4 May 2022.

We are looking for volunteers to help with this venture on a rota basis. If you would like to be involved, please contact Sheena Kemp on 440700. Not a lot of work involved as the tables & chairs are already set out.

All this, of course, is subject to the Covid Regulations appropriate on those dates, so please listen for announcements nearer the time.

Sheena Kemp

On behalf of Worship Education & Development

An Environmental Initiative

As an Eco Church, we need to be mindful of our local environment. To that end, it is planned to have, in the New Year, a series of litter picking events on selected Sunday afternoons. The idea is to litter pick in the Parish for an hour, then back to the Halls for a tea/coffee. Litter picking sticks and bags will be provided on the day. Look out for further announcements.

Events would be subject to Covid Regulations and of course the weather!!

Donald Kemp

On behalf of Worship Education & Development



Burns Lunch



Thursday 20th January 2022

12.00 noon until 1.30 pm

Alloway Church Hall

Menu to follow when lunch date confirmed.

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

Brownies

by 3rd Alloway Brownies Brown Owl Lise Whittle

In November the Brownies completed the last part of their 'Be Well' theme badge with an activity called 'Supergirl'. They made a little booklet about what confidence is and ways to develop their own confidence. To bind the book together, the Brownies learned to plait wool to make a strong braid - some girls found it easy as they had done plaiting before, and some girls found it tricky as it was new to them - but they felt more confident at the end.

For our last two meetings of term, we concentrated on CHRISTMAS! One week we had a Christmas Crafts night where the Brownies had a wooden elf decoration to decorate with felt tip pens. There was a cut-out space in the elf's face, and each Brownie had her photograph taken. They handed their decorations in at the end to be given back next week with their photograph taped in. After that each Brownie made a Christmas card for another Brownie so that everyone had one.

On the last meeting of term, we had our Christmas Party. We began with a chat about Christmas and singing the carol 'O Little Town of Bethlehem'. We then played 'Santa Says' which is similar to 'Simon Says', which got everyone warmed up! After that we played an adapted version of Christmas Corners; the Brownies had to stand up and act out on the spot either a Penguin, Reindeer, Santa or a Christmas tree. The parent helper turned away and called out one of the characters, and if any Brownie was acting out that character she had to sit back down until only one Brownie was left. The next game was 'Pass The Person' - an adapted non-passing version of 'Pass the Parcel'. The Brownies sat on their mats in the circle and were each given a wrapped-up present with their name on it. The Young Leaders walked around the outside of the circle, and when the music stopped whoever, the Young Leaders were standing behind could open one layer of paper from their present (with jokes on each layer!). Eventually (with some tactful moving by the Young Leaders!) everyone was down to their last layer, and opened up

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their present to reveal the elf decoration they made last week, with their own photograph in the space of the elf's face! The Brownies were delighted! Finally, we played 'Christmas Memory Game' which is similar to 'The Generation Game' - Little Owl Lara took Christmas themed items out of one bag and put them into another bag, and the Brownies had to remember as many of them as they could - I can tell you that the Brownies all have VERY good memories, far better than the Leaders! It was almost the end of our party - one of our Brownies is leaving and moving on to Guides so we sang 'We'll Meet Again' to her and gave her a goodie bag, leaving badge and certificate, and she said she'd let us know how she gets on at Guides. Everyone received their filled-in Brownie Badge Books and their 'Be Well' theme badges. Then instead of singing our usual 'Brownie Bells' we sang 'Jingle Bells', and everyone went home with a present, cracker, candy cane, a Christmas activity sheet, and Barn Owl Sonya's Christmas Quiz sheet.

We are looking forward to starting a new Theme Badge next term and welcoming some new Brownies to our Unit. We hope everyone had a happy Christmas, and we wish everyone a happy New Year.



GOD'S
WORD

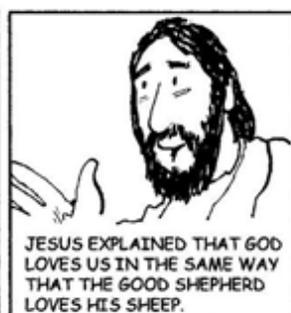
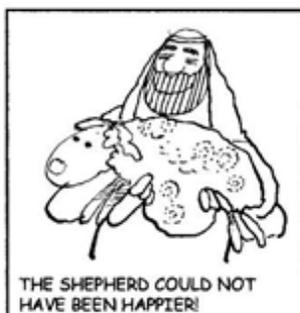
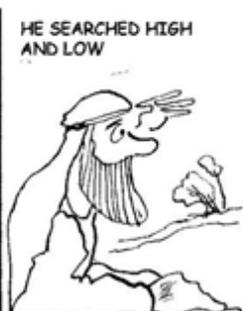
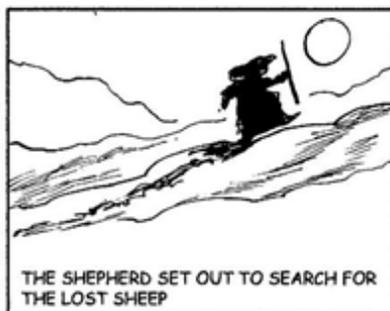
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LAMP

to guide my feet
and a

LIGHT
for my path

PSALM 119:105



Parish Record



“Blessed are those who mourn, they shall be comforted ”

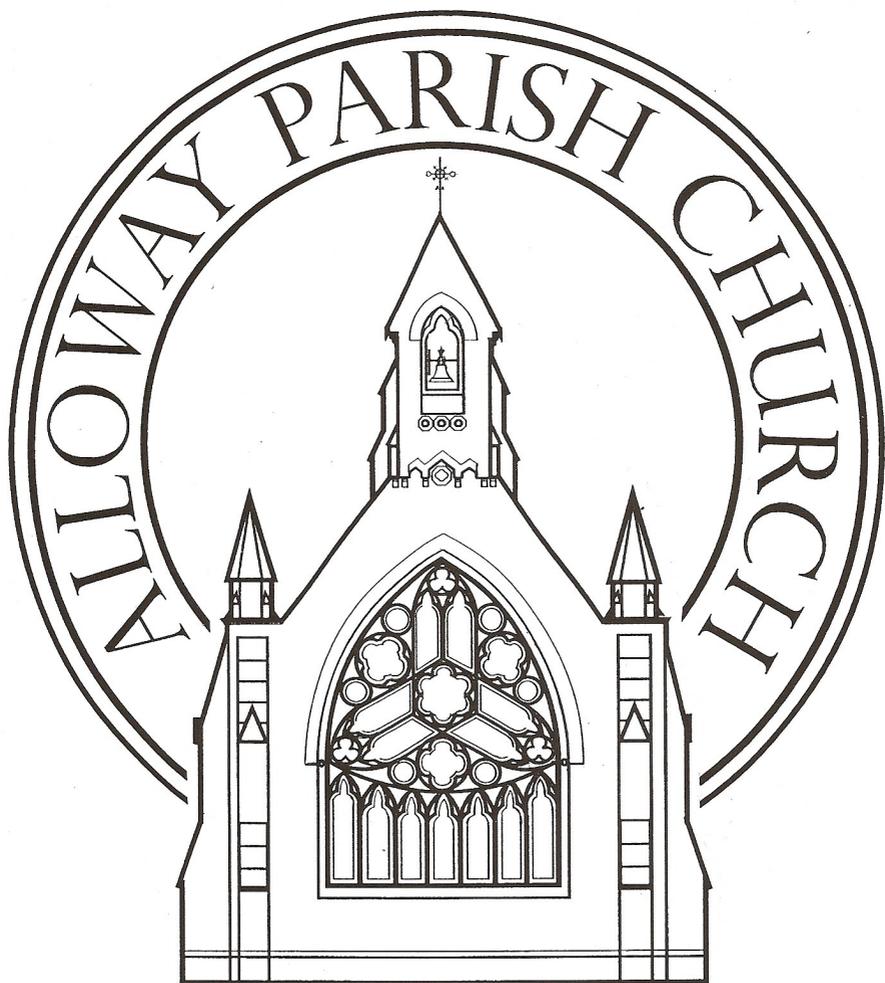
25.11.21	Mrs Shirley McGill	Mount Charles Crescent
25.11.21	Mr Duncan Hutchison	Corserine Road
14.12.21	Mr Thomas Smith	Bathurst Drive

Deadline for February Newsletter—Tuesday 25 January —12 noon

Contributions should be sent to:

allowaychurch.newsletter@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