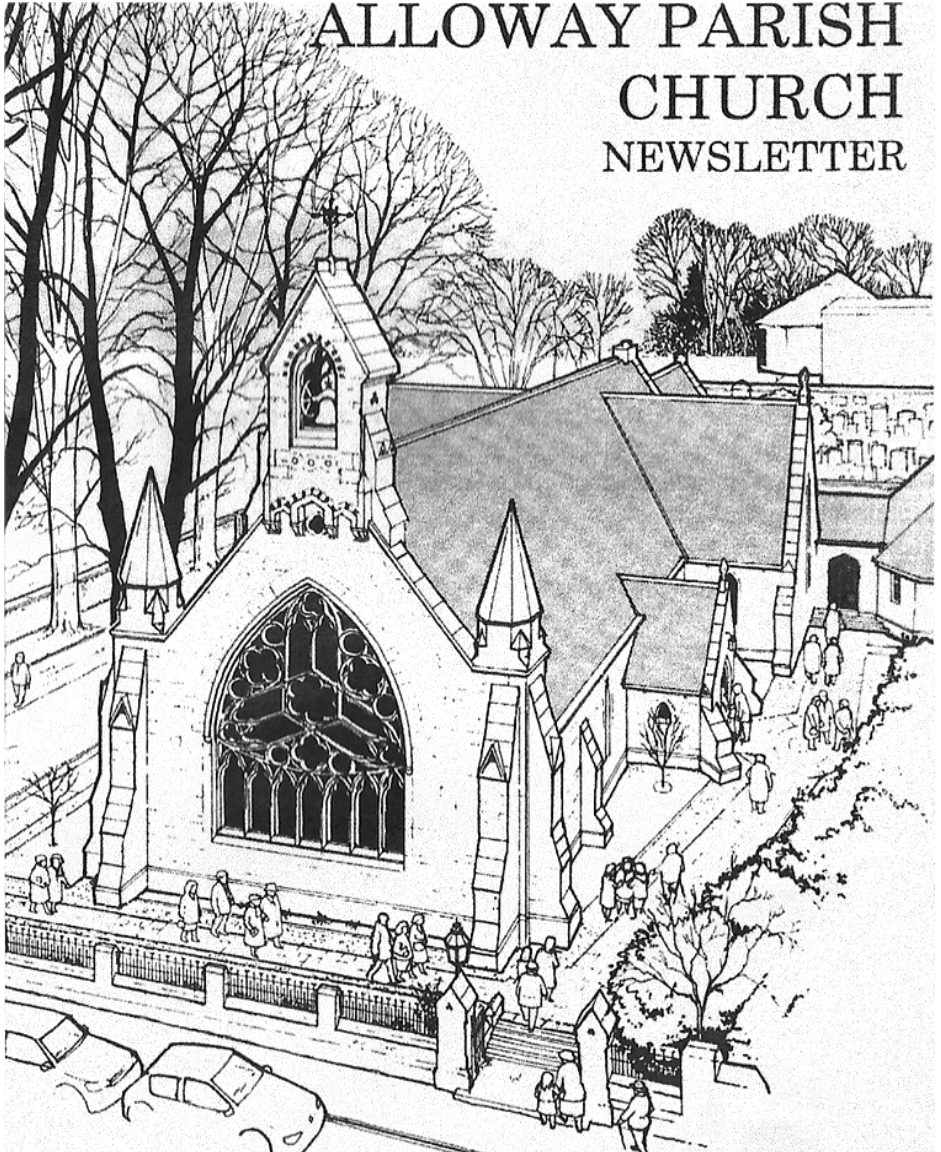


ALLOWAY PARISH CHURCH NEWSLETTER



January
2024

Dear Friends

Firstly, may I thank you for all the cards and kindnesses received at the manse over Christmas!

Welcome to our January 2024 edition of the Church Newsletter.

Doubtless you will be aware that January is named after the Roman god Janus.

Janus had two faces. One looked to the past the other looked to the future. He had two faces, so he could study the past and see into the future.

He was seen as the animistic spirit of doorways. Looking back yet looking forward!

At the start of the year we naturally all have a habit of getting rid of our old calendars and diaries. However, looking back is not always a bad thing.

Who would want to forget the special good and happy times we shared as a church or with our family and friends?

The Bible is filled with instances where individuals looked back as did the Jewish nation a whole.

Their feast days like Passover were celebrated to remind themselves that God had cared for them long ago.

So too our celebration of Communion reminds us of the depths of God's love in the past and is a foretaste of the Kingdom to come in the future.

I hope and pray that 2024 will be a year of blessing for you.

A wiser man than me declared

"Faith does not know what the future holds but who holds the future!"

The future is indeed an unknown country. At times future prospects may seem daunting.

However, we can draw comfort and strength from knowing that whatever befalls we will never face life's challenges alone.

"Yesterday is history - tomorrow is mystery.

Today is a gift - that's why they call it the present!"

A Happy and blessed New Year to you and yours!

Yours in Him

Neil McNaught



Some notes from Rev. David...

SCHOOLS

It was fantastic to see the church so busy on the 12th and 13th of December when the junior school of Alloway Primary school performed "I'm Gonna Shine" - a musical of the Nativity Story. The performance of the children on both evenings was amazing and they clearly enjoyed taking part. A retiring collection was taken on both evenings for the charity Children in Need. Rev. Neil, Fiona Furey and I enjoyed an excellent Christmas lunch at Alloway Primary on the 13th of December and what a joy it was to dine with the children, and to receive such a warm welcome. It was great to welcome the pupils and staff of Doonfoot Primary School and Alloway Primary School to church for their Christmas Services on 19th and 22nd December respectively. The church was full to capacity on both days, and it was wonderful to see the children so excited as they celebrated the joy of Christmas. Time for a little rest before the events of 2024!

This year, our Christingle Service took place on the afternoon Sunday 17th December. Around 50 children accompanied by parents, grandparents, aunties, uncles and friends enjoyed a lively and joyful service where we sang many of the favourite Christmas Carols



for children. We also decorated Christmas baubles and hung these on a Christmas tree kindly donated by one of our members. Before decorating the baubles, the children (and adults) inserted a message of something they were thankful for, or someone they were remembering at Christmas. And of course, we had great fun making 'Christingles' using an orange to represent the world, a red ribbon representing the blood of Christ, four cocktail sticks representing the four seasons, sweets representing our blessings from God, and a glow stick representing Jesus as Light of the World. We then enjoyed refreshments in the church halls.

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A little reminder that the next meeting of Messy Church is on Saturday 13th January when we will be thinking about the story of Noah. Other dates for the future are 17th February; 9th March; 11th May and 8th June 2024.

The excitement is growing as we approach the first meeting of "PULSE". As mentioned in the previous newsletters, "PULSE", is a new group for youngsters in P7-S4 and will commence on Sunday 28th January 2024, 7.00-8.30pm. We will meet on the last Sunday of each month for a range of activities including games (pool, table tennis, air hockey, table football, velcro darts, giant Connect 4, giant Jenga, numerous table games), crafts, bible focus, team games, quizzes and tuck shop. Please spread the word. Cost per evening is £1 - and INCLUDES tuck shop.



A further reminder of dates for your 2024 diary:



Lent Study - 'The Greatest Showman' - Wednesdays (7.00-8.45pm)
14th February - 20th March 2024.

'Family Ceilidh' - 7.00-10.00pm, Saturday 16th March 2024. Music will be provided by the fantastic 'Jiggered Ceilidh Band'. Tickets available mid-January!!

Richest blessings, David.



6th January Epiphany “The visit of the Wisemen”

The story of the coming of the Magi grew in the telling. By the 6th century they had acquired names: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar.

By medieval times they were considered to be kings. Whoever they were, we do know from Matthew that they brought three gifts to Jesus.

What about their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh? While we cannot know for sure what was in the minds of first century Magi, one Victorian scholar has offered a possible explanation as to the significance of their gifts. He was the Rev John Henry Hopkins, an American Episcopalian minister, who in 1857 wrote his much-loved Christmas carol, 'We Three Kings of Orient Are'.

Gold, said John Henry Hopkins, was a gift that would have been given to a king. Frankincense had traditionally been brought by priests as they worshipped God in the Temple. Myrrh was a spice that the ancients used in preparing bodies for burial.

If that is true, then you could say that the Wise Men, in choosing their gifts for this infant, honoured Jesus with gold because He was King of the Jews, with frankincense because He was to be worshipped as divine, and with myrrh, because He would also become a sacrifice and die for His people.

The Wise Men were the very first gentiles ever to worship Jesus. What faith they had!

They travelled for months over difficult terrain, they never saw any evidence of Jesus' kingship, His divinity or His sacrificial death. They worshipped Him through faith in God's promises about Him. Isaiah foresaw this response to Jesus:

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'Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.'

The Magi's eyes of faith saw clearly and far into the future.

Compare that with the High Priest and religious leaders whom the Wise Men saw in Jerusalem when they first arrived.

These head priests knew all about the prophecies of their own coming Messiah, but NOT ONE Jewish religious leader travelled to look for Him in Bethlehem. And it is only six miles down the road!





Care you can put your faith in

Spotlight on Crossreach

This month half the proceeds of our Folk Concert on Friday 19th January 2024 will go to Crossreach.

The organisation is sometime described as the Church's social care arm.

Here is a little of their story

"At CrossReach we offer loving care to people of all ages who are in need of a helping hand, supporting them to live life to the full whatever their circumstances.

We have been at the forefront of high quality social care for over 150 years. During that time we have worked hard to understand the needs of the people who turn to us for help and with them have been at the forefront of pioneering services which have literally changed thousands of lives for the better.

Today we are one of the largest care providers in Scotland, with experience across a broad range of services. We are still growing, learning and improving, thanks to the incredible people we have the privilege to support, and all those who support us."

Our Christian Ethos

"We aim to show the practical side of our Christian faith by reflecting Christian love to those we support, through our leadership, management and working relationships.

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We operate with over 70 services the areas covered include:

- Children and Families
- Counselling and Support
- Justice System
- Homelessness
- Learning Disabilities
- Mental Health
- Older People Services
- Substance use



**In God alone my soul quietly rests,
for my hope comes from Him. Ps 62:5**

Wednesday Worship

Why not join us at Wednesday Worship 10.30am - 11am in the Octagonal Hall this year?

(a short service followed by a long cup of tea!)

Dates for January

10th/17th/24th/31st



Well done!

A big thank you to the flower ladies and the social committee and volunteers for their hard work over the Christmas season. The decorated church was enjoyed by thousands over the festive period. So too, week after week we were well fed and watered.

We can report £305.20 was raised for Save the Children through our Christmas jumper Sunday including £83 from the coffee after church .



Inner Wheel Coffee Morning

The Inner Wheel Club of Ayr are holding a coffee morning on Saturday 10th February from 10 to 12 noon in the church halls, tickets £4. The charities we are supporting this year are The British Heart Foundation and The Night before Christmas.



Jolly Gardeners at the Christmas Fair

Dear friends

I was sorry to miss this year's fair, but leaving our plant stall in safe, secure hands I knew I had nothing to worry about! The 3 flowers (Lynn, Ailsa, Moira), working on the stall managed to raise £284. Great effort, well done and thank you to the girls.

I would like to take this opportunity to say (on everyone's behalf) a huge thank you to everyone who donated on the day and especially to Dobbies and B&Q for their seasonal plant donations (over £100 donated).

Finally, I hope you can visit the church front door some evening to witness the glowing Rowan tree which is an illuminating spectacle.

Wishing you all a very Happy New Year

The Gardeners Gaffer - (David)





Christmas Fair

A big thank you to everyone who contributed in any way to the success of the Church Christmas Fair on 9th December.

We managed to raise over £3,400 for our work in Malawi. This will help us to fund many much needed mattresses for the school children.

Further information will follow when purchases have been made.

Mission Committee

New Year Concert



Our annual new-year concert will be held on Friday 19th January 2024.

As last year, our performers will be the Dalrymple Ukulele Orchestra and The Last Resort. The cost remains at £7.50 per person and includes a sandwiches and home baking supper.

Tickets will be on sale from 17th December and the proceeds this year will be divided between the South Ayrshire Foodbank and The Church of Scotland's Crossreach.



Burns Lunch

Our first Leisurely Lunch of 2024 will take place on Thursday 25th January from 12.00noon until 1.30pm. As you have probably realised from the date, the menu will have a Scottish flavour. At £5.00 for soup, dessert and tea/coffee and shortbread, this must be the best value way of celebrating the Bard's birthday while also supporting our work in Malawi. See enclosed poster for menu details.

New Year Concert

Alloway Church Hall



Friday 19th January 2024
7.30pm

Music provided by

“Dalrymple Ukulele Orchestra” - and “The Last Resort”

Supper - sausage rolls, sandwiches and home baking
- included in Ticket price - £7.50

Proceeds to “The Ayrshire Food Bank” and
“Crossreach” – (Social care branch of the Church of Scotland)

Burns Lunch



Thursday 25th January 2024

12.00noon until 1.30pm

Alloway Church Hall

Scotch Broth

or

Cock-a-leekie Soup



Followed by

Cloutie Dumpling
with custard.

or

Cranachan



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

Encouragement Corner

Catch Me Daddy!

"The three children are standing on the stairs, their father is standing on the landing with his arms open wide, they shout excitedly "catch me daddy" and one by one they jump from the stairs into his open arms."

The late Rev David Pawson, minister, author and Bible teacher used this story of a game he played with his children to illustrate the topic of faith in God.

What is faith?

The writer of Hebrews says "Now faith is the substances of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." 11:1 AV

At the beginning of a new year there are things we hope for and changes we want to make in our lives. These are often translated into what is commonly known as New Year Resolutions. However, statistics show that in the UK only 27% of adults now make them and within two weeks they are no longer active. Leading us to ask what is missing? Who or what was the motivation behind them in the first place?

From a biblical point of view, faith is a gift from God which we all receive. God is no respecter of persons and Heb. 11:6 clearly states that, "Without faith it is impossible to please Him." Faith must have a focus. Ours as Christians is Jesus Christ.

The Bible is full of people who unreservedly put their faith and trust in God. Consider Moses who led his people out of the bondage of Egypt, David who slew a giant and became a great king and Gideon who with the 300 God-approved men beat the Midianites.

The outstanding example of a life of faith is Abraham. Called by God to leave his home, his country and his father's house and go to a land that God would show him. Gen.12:4 states "So Abram went."

Throughout history men and women of faith have demonstrated their love for and trust in God by their actions.

George Mueller (1805-1898) during his lifetime cared for 10,024 orphans providing them with food, a home, education and jobs when

they were old enough to leave the orphanage. All that he did was achieved by faith. "He never received government support and he never asked for money. This organisation received and disbursed £1,381,171 - £113 million in today's terms."

C.T. Studd (1860-1931) gained fame as a cricketer and as a Christian missionary in China, India and Africa. "He emphasised the life of faith, believing that God would provide for the Christian's needs." His father died while he was in China, and he gave away his inheritance of £29,000 - in today's terms approximately £7 million. Also well known for his poem "Only one life 'twill soon be past"

Only what's done for Christ will last.

The challenges facing us in the new year may not be as monumental as those facing Abraham, David, Gideon, George Mueller or C.T. Studd but in God's eyes just as important.

How do we face them? Like the Pawson children fearlessly, confidently and trusting completely in our Father.

Remember the words of Jesus to his disciples when faced with their inability to help an epileptic boy. It was "because of your little faith. For truly I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain 'move hence to yonder place' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you."

Use the gift of faith that you have and as you use it, it will grow.





thirdallowaybrownies@hotmail.com

by Brown Owl Lise Whittle

Two new Brownies joined us for Bump-Up games night, with the Brownies choosing to play Chairs where each Brownie sat on a chair in a circle. The Owls read out questions such as 'Do you have a brother?' - if the answer was 'Yes' the Brownies moved one seat left, if their answer was 'No' they moved one seat right. If there ended up more than one Brownie on a chair, they had to share the chair or sit on their laps - and sometimes there were four or five Brownies ending up on one chair! The next game chosen was Wink Detective where one Brownie left of the room and another girl was chosen as the 'winker or blinker' and had to wink at all the other girls without the first girl working out who it was. Both games were very popular. After that we got out the parachute - it is a genuine ex-Army parachute - and played games running under it, and trying to bounce balls on top off the opposite side.



One of our very kind-hearted Brownies made up little bags of reindeer food (oats) to scatter outside on Christmas Eve for Santa's reindeer. She sold these at Brownies in aid of the little girl we sponsor in Ethiopia through the charity PLAN. It was so popular, she took extra orders, and will let us know the total raised when she completes the orders.

Another Brownie took a tub of sweeties to the local Police Station on behalf of all the Brownies, to thank them for keeping us all safe all year.



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For Christmas Crafts night each Brownie had a beautiful silver star wreath to decorate with pictures they cut from old Christmas cards, stickers, beads, decorations and working mini fairy lights. They also made Christmas cards for Asda's Cards for the Community project to be given to people who will really appreciate receiving a card at Christmas.



Our last meeting of the year was Christmas Party night. The Owls decorated the hall, and the Brownies came along in their party clothes. We talked about why Christmas is celebrated, and sang 'O Little Town Of Bethlehem'. Then we played Musical Chairs with each girl choosing something from the prize table when they were out, then went next door to where the parent helpers had prepared a lovely tea of nibbles, biscuits, cakes and juice. After everyone had enjoyed their tea, they came back and sat in a circle and young leader Bex Owl read out a 'Left -and Right Story'. The Brownies had 3 Christmas teddies to keep passing around the circle, but every time Bex Owl said the words 'Left' or 'Right', the toys had to change direction! The winners were the girls holding the teddies when the story ended. After that it was time for the very popular newspaper Snowball Fight, with chocolate advent calendars for the winning team - and of course there just happened to be enough for the losing team too!



One of our Brownies is old enough to join Guides in January, and at the end of the party we gave her a little Brownies memory bag. Her parents and sister joined us and she was also presented with her special Brownie Gold Award badge for completing all six of the Theme badges, this is the highest award a Brownie can achieve, and not all Brownies manage to achieve it. We all sang 'We'll Meet Again'. The party ended with another song - 'Jingle Bells', and then everyone went home with a chocolate Santa, a present to put under the tree, and a carol sheet to sing along to on the way home!

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

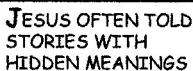
dcalloway@girlguidingayrshiresouth.org.uk

Scottish Gas Networks (SGN) Roadworks - Replacement of Gas Mains

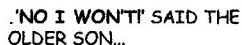
We have had notice from the SGN that they will be working on the main roads around the Church over the next 15 weeks. We will always have access to the Church, Auld Nicks's View and the car park. When specific dates have been advised we will include these in the Intimations.

Donald Ross—Property Convener





HE ONCE TOLD A STORY ABOUT A FATHER WHO HAD TWO SONS.



....BUT THEN HE CHANGED HIS
MIND AND WENT AND HELPED.



'OF COURSE I WILL!' SAID THE YOUNGER SON. BUT HE PROMPTLY FORGOT ALL ABOUT IT....

WHICH DO YOU THINK IT WAS?

'WHICH DO YOU THINK IT WAS?



Parish Record

"Of such is the kingdom of God"

26.11.23 Noah Michael William Connell son of Katie Johnstone
and Craig Connell, Bellvale Avenue

"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 Lillian Jamieson	Templeton House Ayr
8.12.23	Mrs Gillian Richmond	Castle Square

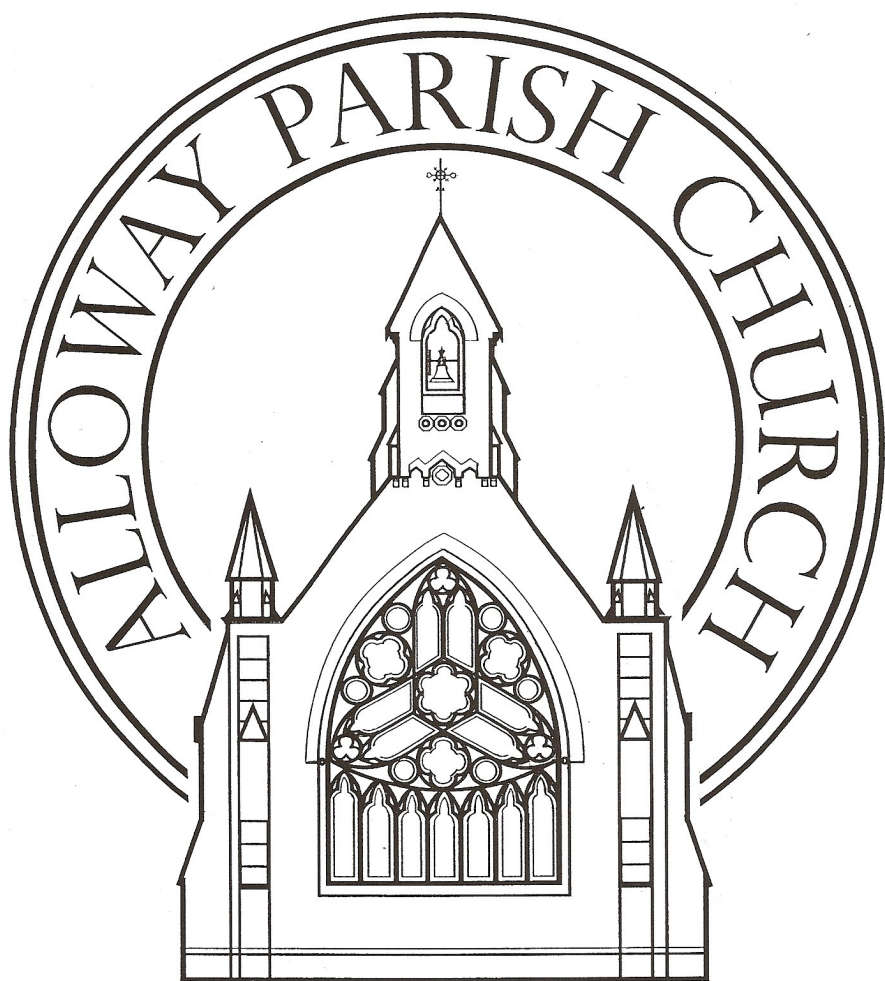


Deadline for February Newsletter—Tuesday 23 January—12 noon

Contributions should be sent to:

secretary.allowaypc@gmail.com

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



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