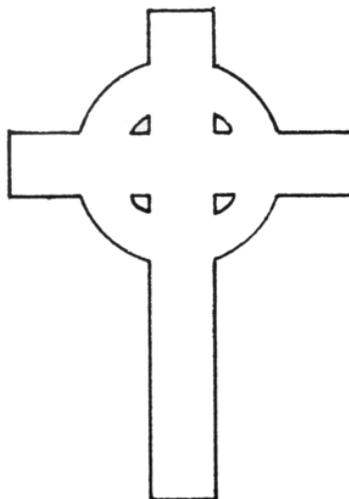


Meadowside St. Paul's

Church of Scotland



December, 2019

***MAGAZINE OF
CHURCH AFFAIRS***

INTERIM MODERATOR

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Registered Charity No: SC013162 Congregation No: 291769

CONGREGATIONAL CALENDAR

December	8	11.15 am	Tim Xenophontos-Hellen
	9	2.00 pm	Guild Christmas Party
	11	12 noon - 1.30 pm	Church open for prayer
	15	11.15 am	Rev Caroline Taylor (Sacrament of Holy Communion)
	18	12 noon - 1.30 pm	Church open for prayer
	22	11.15 am	Tim Xenophontos-Hellen
	24	6.30 pm	Christmas Eve Family Service (MSP)
		11.30 pm	Christmas Eve Watchnight Service (St Andrew's)
	27	12 noon - 1.30 pm	Church open for prayer
	29	** 11.00 am	United Service in MSP (with St Andrew's and Dundee Methodist Church)
January	5	10.00 am	Rev Caroline Taylor
	8	12 noon - 1.30 pm	Church open for prayer
	12	10.00 am	Tim Xenophontos-Hellen
	13	2.00 pm	Guild
	15	12 noon - 1.30 pm	Church open for prayer
	19	10.00 am	Tim Xenophontos-Hellen
	22	12 noon - 1.30 pm	Church open for prayer
	26	10.00 am	Rev Caroline Taylor (Sacrament of Holy Communion)
	27	2.00 pm	Guild
	29	12 noon - 1.30 pm	Church open for prayer

SYMPATHIES

We express our sympathies to [REDACTED] and her sister on the recent loss of their mother. The Meadowside St Paul's family sends their love and prayers to you both, and to the wider family.

GREETINGS AND NEWS FROM OUR INTERIM MODERATOR

While children look forward to Christmas with great excitement – as one of the younger girls rightly said at the Girls' Brigade (St Andrew's) yesterday evening (25th November), an Advent calendar helps us to “count down to Christmas” – older generations may be more inclined to look back to Christmases past.

When I visit families who have had a bereavement, for instance, it is not uncommon for their reminiscing to include mention of their Christmas traditions: everyone gathered together, favourite recipes, games played and so on. This can provide a welcome and needed respite from the sadness of their recent loss.

Christmas Day for the Holy Family would have been a much more ordinary day if they had not been required by the Emperor to make the long journey south from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Mary would have been surrounded by female relatives, to support and encourage her during the birth and tend to her needs and the infant's afterwards. Joseph likewise would have had family around him. Arguably the appearance of a perfect baby boy would have put a stop to any speculation as to why he had come along so early in the couple's relationship.

The Bethlehem birth of course fits with the Old Testament – once again, we look back. To the prophet Isaiah: “The royal line of David is like a tree that has been cut down; but just as new branches sprout from a stump, so a new king will arise from among David's descendants.” (11:1) To the prophet Micah: “The Lord says, ‘Bethlehem Ephrathah, you are one of the smallest towns in Judah, but out of you I will bring a ruler for Israel, whose family line goes back to ancient times.’” This verse is the response of the chief priests and teachers of the law to Herod's question, ‘Where will the Messiah be born?’

In our worship, through the words of scripture and hymns, we shall be reminded of these and other sayings surrounding Christ's birth, while our prayers will include the concerns of the present and future, for ourselves, our country and our world. And if we are moved to give, or give more, to the Foodbank, or to buy charity cards or Fairtrade gifts, or visit someone who would otherwise be alone and lonely, then we are bringing in a little of Christ's future Kingdom to our own time.

I am sure you can think of other ways in which to honour the Lord as we look forward to his Advent. And however you will be celebrating Christmas, may the peace of the Christ Child be within and around you. And may God bless you in your spiritual and commercial preparations to honour the coming of our Saviour.

Caroline

PS: I look forward to hearing what the Cubs have to say about Christmas on 28th November.

THE GUILD

I am writing this the day after enjoying another excellent Guild meeting, a Scots Afternoon where we were entertained by Fiddlin' Friends, a six-strong group of very talented musicians who performed a wonderful selection of foot-tapping, romantic, nostalgic and humorous music and poetry. This was followed by appropriate refreshments including delicious stovies ('seconds' were in much demand!) oatcakes and shortbread. Many thanks to all who helped with the catering and set-up (not to mention the clearing up afterwards), and especially to Janette Walker, who provided the stovies in such generous quantities. We were joined by members of the St Andrew's Guild, and are looking forward to a return visit to their Carol Service (led by Rev. Caroline Taylor) and Christmas Afternoon Tea on Tuesday, 3rd December.

Recent meetings have taken us to Iona, with Caroline Taylor's fascinating reminiscences of her visits there illustrated by beautiful photographs, and nearer to home, with interesting speakers from the Dundee Museum of Transport and the Verdant Works sharing some of the industrial heritage of our city. We are now gearing up for the Christmas Fayre with Guild members, as ever, fully involved in providing the refreshments and running stalls in support of the wider church effort. Our Christmas Party on Monday, 9th December, always an enjoyable occasion, will round off the first half of the session. Meetings resume in the New Year, with speakers and activities for the first few weeks as follows:

January 13th	Games Afternoon
January 27th	Lewis Rose
February 10th	Alison Bishop and Friends (Ex Dundee Operatic)
February 24th	Roddy Taylor on Faith in Young People - the BB (Guild Project)

In recent months we have been delighted to welcome two new members from outside the congregation and various guests from MSP who have come along to occasional meetings – we hope they will be tempted to make the Guild a regular part of their routine! One of our most faithful members, Cathy Robertson, has unfortunately been unable to attend so far this session because of an extended stay in hospital. She is home now, however, and looking forward to resuming her normal activities – we, in turn, will be very happy to see her among us again.

On the wider Guild front, a meeting organised by the national Guild Office discussed ways to continue co-operation between local Guilds following the suspension of formal Dundee Guilds Together activities. Among other positive outcomes, it was agreed that Guilds would take it in turns to organise a couple of ‘Dundee-wide’ meetings each year with a speaker or other activity. The first of these will take place in Dundee West Church on a weekend in March 2020, with Meadowside St Paul’s and St Andrew’s Guilds jointly organising an event in September – further details will follow in due course.

Information about local and national Guild activities and projects is displayed on the Guild noticeboard in the Main Hall – do take a look.



SUNDAY CLUB

We took part in the Big Brew event for Fairtrade, learning about farmers in Kenya, who are growing potatoes. We decorated potatoes in “Mr Potato-Head fashion (don’t worry about waste of food – a Church member took the potatoes away afterwards to make soup), and did sack races and potato and spoon races.

On Crossreach Sunday we looked through the Crossreach prayer diary to discover the different places where Crossreach works.

We have been reading the Bible, including comparing Psalm 23 as sung from the hymnbook and as written in the Good News Bible. This followed singing it in Church. At present we are preparing for the Christmas Fayre and for Advent and Christmas in Church.

FLOWERS IN CHURCH

We are indebted to the following for provision of flowers from November to January:

November 3 Flower Fund
10 Flowers: [REDACTED]
Wreath: [REDACTED]
17 [REDACTED]
24 Flower Fund

December 1 [REDACTED], in memory of [REDACTED]
8 [REDACTED]
15 Flower Fund
22 [REDACTED]
29 [REDACTED]

2020

January 5 [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED]
19 Flower Fund
26 [REDACTED]

Many thanks to all who have given so generously to the Flower Fund over the past year. If anyone who does not already donate to the Fund would like to do so, please contact [REDACTED] (tel. [REDACTED]) or speak to any member of the Flower Committee. The Committee are always grateful to hear suggestions of who might receive flowers after the service on a particular Sunday, or to have help with delivering these.

[REDACTED]

CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Parcels of groceries and bowls of bulbs for distribution to members of the Congregation and those associated with the Congregation who are in need, are being prepared. It is hoped to have these ready for Sunday 15 December. Volunteers who can assist with preparation and distribution will be greatly appreciated. Please contact [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] of the Caring Committee if you can help.

CAMELOT

Your magic fire sleeps
safe in Orion's arms
leaving ghosts recycling
those tingling tales

Show us King Arthur's
inner sanctum where
Guinevere shared
Excalibur dreams

Roundtable knights
clopping towards
Glastonbury bright
armour shimmering
through triangle trees

Can we meet tetchy
Merlin or at least
handle the wand that
set worlds ablaze

We would like to hear
A jester's cackling tones
Have our palms pressed
Over secret stones

Show us harvest moons
bobbing beyond the marsh
dribbling dragons shuffling
across hunchback hills
joust in red and gold
show us Camelot.



LINKAGE NEWS

United Service on 29th December

If you would like to do a reading in this service, please let me know by 22nd December at the latest. Also, I'd like to take a leaf out of Rev. Catherine Collins' book (Catherine is Moderator of Dundee Presbytery) by inviting readers to say a little about themselves, in this case just a sentence or two about how they spent Christmas, or what Christmas means to them. This helps us to get to know one another better.

City Centre Chaplaincy

Since the last magazine, both congregations have heard about the work of Geoff Findlay, City Centre Chaplain; this was on Sunday 20th October. On 12th November [REDACTED] and I went along to the Introduction Training Day which was held in the Boardroom of the Overgate (we were given a map so that we could find it!).

This proved to be a very interesting morning with a remarkably mixed group of Christians of different ages holding a variety of roles in the Church. We heard presentations from Geoff and also Paul Wilson, who is the Lead Chaplain to the Chaplains, besides participating in some small group work.

Ann and I are now in possession of certificates to prove our attendance, since this is the first step on the training ladder. In the new year we will receive information about the next steps, giving us time to decide whether or not to proceed. I think it would be fair to say we both came away feeling inclined to take things further in this valuable area of Christian outreach. These days, so many people just need a kind person to listen to them, and one of the compulsory training modules for voluntary chaplains is entitled "Active Listening".

We are the Church: second and third series

What particularly characterised the recent evenings on bible study and discipleship was people's willingness to be completely honest about their faith; I see this as a consequence of our getting to know one another better and that can only be a good thing. There was no need, as sometimes happens at such gatherings, to emphasise that what was said should not be repeated outside: I felt confident that no-one required this caveat.

Dr Kenneth Baxter gave us an excellent presentation on the Westminster Confession of Faith which included the historical background, thereby putting it into context. We concluded the second series with a discussion about Communion and a celebration of the Lord's Supper itself.

The focus of the services on 24th November was discipleship, taking a leaf out of the Moderator's book: his theme for his year in office is Jesus' words, "Follow me." The Remits of the General Assembly, under the Mission and Discipleship Council section, "instruct Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to engage with the characteristics of discipleship and explore how they are worked out in their own local context". The Council has produced a booklet entitled *Conversations in Discipleship: What if life in all its fullness was reflected in how we follow Jesus together?* It contains the following topics for conversation.

- Share a story about a time when your relationship with others shaped your journey of faith.
- Share a story about a time when you were taught or discovered something that changed the way you see God.
- Talk about something that Jesus said or did, which you find easy or natural to apply in your own life.
- Talk about something that Jesus said or did, which you find challenging to apply in your own life.
- How do you notice other people following Jesus in their everyday life?
- What have you found valuable from this time together that you will take with you in moving on from here?

Originally I had thought of beginning this at the end of November but, on further reflection, it seemed wise to leave such an important topic to the new year, when more than one session can be held – series 3 of "We are the Church". If you are interested in attending one or more, please let me know which days of the week are suitable for you and I will try and work out a programme.

Valentines Smiles

I have recently been in touch with Professor Peter Mossey and am pleased to report that he and his team of "Toothy Tigers" are keen to repeat this February's initiative: giving away toothbrushes and toothpaste to those who need them, with the Toothy Tigers on hand to give advice on oral health.

A planning meeting will be held early in the new year. Anne Barrowman has volunteered to attend from St Andrew's – it would be good to have someone from Meadowside St Paul's too, so let me know if you are interested.

Rev. Caroline Taylor

FINANCE

Dear Member

This note is to make you aware of the congregation's finances. Here are the details of the offerings to the end of October compared with last year:

	Jan - Oct 2019	Jan– Oct 2018
Ordinary Offerings	██████	██████
WFO - non Gift Aid	██████	██████
WFO – given under Gift Aid	██████	██████
Other Gift Aid Offerings	██████	██████
Other Donations	████	████
Total	██████	██████
Decrease	██████████	

The reduction is a matter for concern.

Leaving aside the extraordinary property expenditure which we have incurred so far this year (rewiring of the Lower Hall area and replacement of the Main Hall lights), you need to be aware that for the now day-to-day things needed to keep our congregation running expenditure is far exceeding income. This cannot continue and it is the reason the Congregational Board is making this appeal, aware of the generous responses of many of you in the past.

Have you reviewed your offerings and are you making the most of them through Gift Aid? All UK taxpayers can make their offerings through Gift Aid; this increases their value by 25% without any additional cost to the donor. Contact me if you need a Gift Aid declaration form. In case you are still unaware signing a Gift Aid declaration does not commit the tax-paying donor to meet any level of donation.

Members of the Weekly Freewill Offering Scheme are reminded of the words on the WFO Envelope: 'If you are unable to come, please remember the work of the church continues and needs your support. Please fill up the envelopes for Sunday(s) missed and give them with your next offering' (or you can put the total sum in a single envelope if that is more convenient for you). Envelopes may be given to your elder to pass on.

Please consider joining the Weekly Freewill Offering Scheme if you are not a member or, if you cannot come to church regularly, think about setting up a Standing Order through your bank. The congregation's bank details are as follows:

Bank sort code: 80-73-31

Account number: 00728234

Account name: Meadowside St Paul's Church

As the congregation does not have a treasurer at present, please let me know if you have set up a Standing Order to check that the payments are reaching the account safely.

The Congregational Board always welcomes proposals for fund-raising events. Get in touch if you have any ideas by speaking to your elder or any of the office-bearers, or dropping a note to the congregation's e-mail address: mspdundee@outlook.com.

Yours faithfully


Clerk to the Congregational Board

BIG BREW

The Big Brew Harvest event, featured in the October magazine, took place on 3rd November.

The good news is that, between donations and our monthly tea and coffee collections, £322 was raised. Together with a further £132 made on the Fairtrade Stall, the total was £454.

A Big Brew Thank You to all who supported the appeal.

SCOUT GROUP

If you were following the congregation's activities during the week 18 -24 November on the Church of Scotland's Twitter account, you will have seen the Scout Group at their visit to the Blackness Fire Station.

This is only one of the many mind-expanding activities that they have experienced this session. When the Magazine Editor visited on Thursday 28 November, the Cubs and Beavers were with the Minister, Caroline, and Group Leader, Fiona, in the Church learning about Advent for their "My Faith" badge. No sooner than they had returned to the hall, than visitors from the Guide Dogs for the Blind arrived to speak to the Scouts, as the Scouts are arranging a fund-raising event for them. Everyone had the opportunity to admire the beautiful well-behaved dog, along with her human companions.

If that isn't enough, there have been 2 camps at Douglaswood, and older Cubs are preparing for their transition to Scouts.

At the time of writing, they are to be helping at the Christmas Fayre and St Andrew's Day Event on Saturday 30 November, pitching a tent for storytelling, among other things.

On Thursday 5 December from 6:30pm -7:30pm, they will be holding a Coffee Evening in the Hall in aid of Guide Dogs for the Blind. All are invited to this event.

ADVENT BOOKSTALL

A bookstall with books, cards and gifts, supplied by CLC Bookshops will be available in the Hall after the Service during Advent. Please support this stall which will have items suitable for all ages.

LIFE AND WORK MAGAZINE

Please contact [REDACTED] if you would like to subscribe to the Monthly Magazine of the Church of Scotland.

DECEMBER EVENTS AT ST ANDREW'S

Saturday 14th - Messy Church, 11-1pm

Sunday 15th - Afternoon Tea & Fellowship Service, 2pm

Tuesday 17th - Café Church, 7.15pm.

DECEMBER EVENTS AT THE STEEPLE

Wednesday 18th - Lunchtime Carol Service, 12.30 – 1pm

Tuesday 24th - Carol Singing at Ninewells, 6.30pm

Wednesday 25th - Family Service, 10.30am

THE LINKAGE ON TWITTER

This month Meadowside St Paul's and St Andrew's have been taking part in Church of Scotland Voices on Twitter for a week. This was a great way of sharing the wide variety of activities we undertake between both churches. There wasn't a day when there weren't several interesting things to post about, and the reaction we got from other Twitter users was great. If you'd like to have a look at our week online, you can find it at <https://twitter.com/churchscovoices> (the posts date from 18 - 24 November).

Session Clerk:

Miss M Adamson

Tel. [REDACTED]

Congregational Board Clerk:

Dr J Burns

Tel. [REDACTED]

Beadle:

Mr B Millar

Tel. [REDACTED]

Hall Allocation Convener:

Miss I Birse

Tel. [REDACTED]

Editor of Congregational Magazine:

Miss MA Robertson

Tel. [REDACTED]

Fabric Convener:

Mr E Hughes

Tel. [REDACTED]

Safeguarding Co-ordinator:

Miss J Ireland

Tel. [REDACTED]

Christian Aid:

Dr F Smith

Tel. [REDACTED]

Cubs, Scouts & Beavers:

Dr F Smith

Tel. [REDACTED]

Guild:

Miss M Stalker

Tel. [REDACTED]

Life and Work:

Miss MA Robertson

Tel. [REDACTED]

Sunday Club (Trailblazers) & Crèche:

Miss MA Robertson

Tel. [REDACTED]

Organist:

Dr W Stevenson

Tel: [REDACTED]
