



*The  
Mustard  
Seed*

ADVENT 2021

# *Happiest places to live ..... "*

*Kirkcaldy* is in the Top Ten of a list of the Top Ten places to live in Scotland

Does that surprise you? After nearly three months of coming regularly to Kirkcaldy it does not surprise me.

People were asked to comment on qualities that make for happy places to live. A property and real estate company assessed their answers and produced the list.

Stirling, where we lived for six happy years, came out top; with Perth second. Dunfermline does not appear on the list: neither does St Andrews.

Of course it may be that the estate agents had their own motives for producing the list. People were asked about *friendliness and community spirit, whether people feel they can be themselves, nature and green spaces, opportunities locally to develop skills and amenities including schools, restaurants, shops and sports facilities.* Are these the things that make for happiness? What really matters in a place to live in? What would you say is the best thing about Kirkcaldy?

Some people might choose Bethlehem as the most frightening place in the world to live in. It is, after all, the place in the world which has, for its size, tear gas used most frequently. It is a place where killing and wounding and the widespread destruction of crops are daily affairs. It is nothing at all like the hymn suggests *O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie.* And yet some of my friends who live in Bethlehem are wonderful people: brave, funny, compassionate, and sometimes astonishingly happy.

When Jesus was born, Bethlehem wasn't much of a place. Neither the worst place in the world, nor the best. It had had its moments: famously it was the home town of the magnificent King David, which is why Bethlehem is so important for the Bible writers as the birthplace of Jesus. But it was very small - maybe only a few hundred people. The sort of place where nothing much happened. Which makes it exactly the right place for the love of God to come among us as a human being.

The ordinariness of Bethlehem is where God chooses to be born. That is why one of my favorite Christmas poems is :-

### ***BC : AD***

**This was the moment when  
Before turned into After,  
and the future's uninvented timekeepers  
presented arms.**

**This was the moment when Nothing happened.  
Only dull peace  
Sprawled boringly over the earth.**

**This was the moment when even energetic Romans  
could find Nothing better to do  
than counting heads in remote provinces.**

**And this was the moment  
When a few farm workers  
and three members of an obscure Persian sect  
Walked haphazard by starlight  
Straight into the Kingdom of Heaven.**

U. A. Fanthorpe

*Andrew McLellan*

## ***St Bryce Kirk Guild***

We have had a varied programme over the past 3 months including a speaker from our chosen charity BEAT, and we have raised £300.00 for it.



Iain Whyte the General Secretary for the Guild came along and gave us a very interesting talk on his 10 years as Secretary before his December retiral date.

We meet on Tuesday 7 December at 1.30 p.m. for our Finance Meeting and some Christmas Fun.

Toiletries and food items will also be welcome gifts for the Kirkcaldy Foodbank.

We look forward to our meeting on Tuesday 11 January when we hope to have a fun-filled afternoon playing ***baking bingo***.

Do come along and you will be made very welcome.

We wish you all a peaceful Christmas and a happy New Year.

*Helen Mitchell* Convener

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## **News from the Fellowship Team**

Towards the end of last year, we contributed some of our accumulated funds to be added to the congregation's collections for three charities. In November we added £64 to the Poppy Scotland Appeal, making it a total of £150; and at Christmas, we gave £200 to the Cottage Family Centre, and added £100 to the Kirkcaldy Foodbank donation in the congregation's name. In June of this year, we again added to the congregation's generous donations to make a gift of £225 to KART's Adventure Holiday Club.

As we became allowed to open for informal hospitality on a Sunday after services. we set up a Hospitality Team, involving volunteers previously not on the Fellowship Team. We are keen not to lose these lovely people!! In consultation with the Care Team Convener, it seems a good idea for them to manage their future events in such a way as to allow the Care Team to spend time "caring" for their guests rather than working in the kitchen. So - we now have a Hospitality Team, within the Fellowship Team, who will provide necessary hospitality services to any events which need them. I am pleased to say Catherine Millar has agreed to head up this sub-team.

We had hoped to have a soup lunch on 31 October, but that was delayed because C of S Safer Buildings Committee decided everyone cooking food at home for consumption in church must do a REHIS e-learning certificate in Food Hygiene. Several members of the team have now done that, so we were able to offer a Soup Lunch on 28 November. Numbers attending were small, but appreciative, and we managed to raise £155 to send to Poppy Scotland.

As far as other social events are concerned, like the Midweek Movie Club, and the Quiz Nights and so on, the feeling is that we go softly - Covid has not gone away! So perhaps we will have an occasional event to test the reaction of members to coming together in larger numbers and/or smaller spaces.

**Beryl Luke**  
Convener

WE  
BELONG  
TOGETHER

## St Bryce Kirk's "eco" Work

We have been hearing for several years about climate change and its impact across the world. We have seen upsetting scenes on the news of forest fires, flooding and the devastating impact that plastic pollution is having....., the list goes on. Given the COP 26 Summit was recently held in Glasgow and made headline news, this seemed an appropriate time to remind the congregation about the work that has been done here in St Bryce Kirk to help tackle Climate Change.

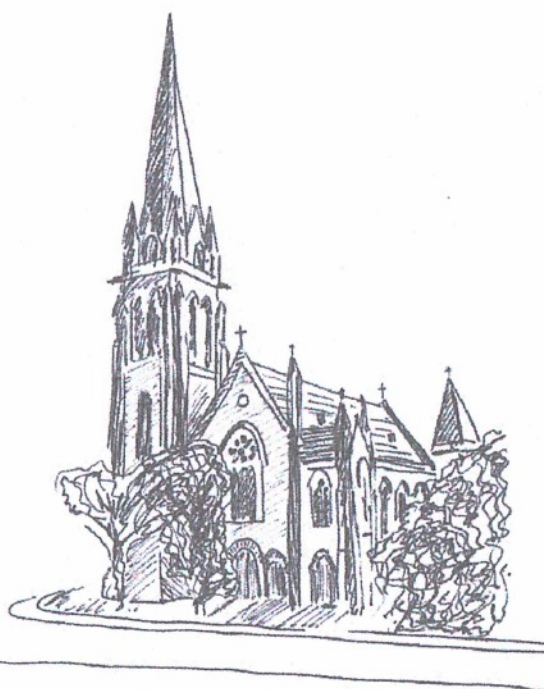
More than 6 years ago we decided we needed to do something about reducing our carbon footprint. With the support of several grants, we were able to upgrade our old, inefficient heating system, install low energy LED lighting, insulate the roof space, reduce draughts and heat loss with automatic electric doors and double glaze many of the windows. Not only did this reduce our carbon footprint, it also slashed our energy bills.

At the same time, we registered as an eco-congregation and engaged our congregation and user community in various environmental projects such as: home energy audits, fuel-efficient driver training, how to reduce food waste and food miles, closet clearance/recycling and lots more.

The final step in reducing our carbon footprint was the fitting of 40 solar panels on the roof of the large hall. There weren't any grants available to help with this so we decided to invest some of our own reserves and fund the cost ourselves. It was a sound decision both environmentally

and economically. So far, we have generated over 40,000 kWh of "green" electricity much of which has been used onsite, and this alone has saved more than 12 Tonnes of carbon emissions. What we can't use onsite, for example at times when the church and centre are closed, is fed into the electricity grid thus helping reduce the amount of energy generated from fossil fuels.

The eagle-eyed amongst you may have noticed a recent installation at the back of the large hall. This is a 10kWh battery which will store any excess energy generated from our solar panels at times when our electricity usage is low. This stored energy will then be available to use at other times, for example in the evenings when the centre is open but the sun isn't shining. It means we are now able to use 100% of the electricity generated on our roof which will help cut our electricity bill even further. The battery is an expensive item, which is why we didn't fit it at the same time as the solar panels. However, we were very fortunate to be given the battery free of charge for assisting in a year-long research project. The project that will gather data on the economics of installing solar PV on the roofs of public buildings. We are allowed to keep the battery once the year is up, and will also receive a generous donation of £500 to church funds just for participating. Definitely a Win-Win!



Gordon Reid & Rae Walker

Fabric Team

## Pastoral Care

*It's been another very strange year.*

It seems that everything is busier than it ever was with more traffic on the roads and crowds of frantic people in the shops as everyone tries to get things done "early" just in case the shelves are empty of essential items or there's another lockdown. Suddenly days are so short, and there's just not enough time.

Everything around seems to be in some sort of panic.....

Maybe time to take a step back and let ourselves be still.

Find a place of quietness and just be.

Take a deep breath and just let go -

another deep breath and

allow yourself the luxury of noticing how YOU feel.

It **IS** ok to just stop and take some time out to be quiet and experience peace and stillness.

### **Carol Tea**

We promised last year when we weren't able to have a Carol Tea that "next year it would be even better" and we hope that it will..... It will take place on 12/12/21 at 3pm. Our Christmas Worship in the Sanctuary will be led by the Very Rev Andrew McLellan.

This will be followed by Festive Food in the large hall.

We are looking forward eagerly to such a "normal" event.

Obviously we will be adhering strictly to COVID Guidelines and of course it will all only happen as long as further restrictions are not imposed.



## Contact Book

In order to improve communication in the Church we have made available a book where members/friends are able to note any events or news -happy or sad- which would be important to our Church Family. Members of the Care Team will have access to the book and if appropriate send a card, phone or make contact in some other way.

The Contact Book will be kept just outside the office.

Please DO make use of this book- no piece of news is too trivial to be passed on. We are a Church Family and so are concerned about what is happening for each and every member of our Family.

## Visiting

Visiting Church Members/Friends has obviously not been taking place now for some time. We are going to make this our priority in 2022. We are very aware that due to change of circumstances, for many people a visit is something that now would be important to them.

We will in the New Year be actively trying to find out who is in that position.

Meanwhile if you yourself or anyone else you know of is in this position please let us know.

Yet again it all depends on there being no further COVID restrictions.

For this or any other way in which we could be of help, please speak to a member of the Care Team or phone *Dorothy Murray* 01592 264456. (Convener)



***We wish you all a safe, joyous and peaceful Christmas***

# YOUNG CHURCH

**Remembrance Day** The Young church met upstairs then walked to the war memorial during Young Church time to look at the names and the wreaths then came back to Church for hot chocolate.

On the **28th of November** we made Christingles. Information and photos can be found opposite.

At the **Family Service** on 19th December the 4th Sunday in Advent, the Children will read the Nativity along with the PowerPoint of images drawn/coloured by the children. Because of ongoing Covid restrictions, we decided against a traditional Nativity to cut down on movement in the Sanctuary by the Young Church and the leaders. We invite members of the Congregation to come wearing your own costume or Christmas Jumper but we decided against using our church costumes to make it easier to be Covid safe.

Our **Family Picnic** will be in the Large Hall, 12.00 - 1.30 pm. bring your packed lunch. There will be Prize wheel set up in the foyer - older young church members to run, donations of tombola style prizes

We hope to invite Abbotshall, Bennochty and Linktown Young Churches to join us at our Pantomime (instead of party/gifts). Parents must stay with their child. The Panto -starting @ 1.30pm is free but Donations to Young Church funds are very welcome!!

## **Growing the Young Church**

Since restarting the Young Church has had smaller numbers than pre-Covid. To try and grow our numbers, we intend to get a bit about Young Church in the Fife Free Press and we have restarted using our **Facebook** page with photos of what we are doing and information about what will be happening at Young Church each week.

## **Fundraising**

With fewer children attending we plan in the New Year to do a coin collection (in tubes) with a display on the Noticeboard encouraging children to take part. Money raised from the stalls at the Panto will go towards supporting for our sponsored child

# Christingle - 'Christ's Light'

It is a symbol of the Christian faith. Lots of churches hold Christingle services around Christmas time. The custom of giving out lighted candles in these services began in Germany in 1747 but it wasn't introduced in England until 1968.

They are made up of 5 different parts

The **orange** represents the world.

The **candle** - *Jesus - The light of the world.*

(The foil is only there to catch waxy drips from the candle.)

The **red ribbon** goes all round the 'world' and being the colour of blood, reminds Christians that Jesus died.

The **four cocktail sticks** have either of two meanings; the four seasons *or* the four corners of the world.

The **sweets** (or sometimes dried fruit) remind Christians of God's gifts to the world including kindness and love.

## A Prayer when lighting your Christingle

Dear Jesus,

Thank you for coming to be the ***light of the world*** for everyone.

Please be with all who are lonely or sad or ill this Christmas and let them see your light.

Amen





# Christian Christmas Word Find



Jesus Is The Reason

D U S E D L O G A L M E S S I A H  
R M H B R L Y J C O R N F N O E L  
O Y E P E A C E O N E A R T H R E  
L R P H C O F S Y B J W C K I N G  
E R H E E T M U O A O D N W J G N  
H H E Y S L R S J P I H S R O W A  
T K R J A L H M T V C H R I S T S  
T N D L L I D T A P E M A Y E A A  
S A S K V W C D E L B A T S P R V  
I P O W E D F A R B J O S N H M I  
R R E B U O N F G O O D N E W S O  
H G I H N O D O G O T Y R O L G R  
C S F W A G Y P R O P H E C Y M E  
S C O Y M E L J K S A D T Y L R G  
I T W B M U A I N C E N S E R U N  
E L P O E P L L A R O F A Q A A A  
H N P A M R A E B Q D N E I G A M

Jesus  
Angel  
Rejoice  
Magi  
Messiah  
Stable

Manger  
Noel  
Joseph  
Savior  
Incense  
King

Gold  
Worship  
Myrrh  
Mary  
Emmanuel  
Christ

Prophecy  
Bethlehem  
Good News  
Shepherds  
Great Joy  
Eastern Star

He Is Christ The Lord  
Glory To God On High  
Town Of David  
Peace On Earth  
Good Will To All  
For All People

## HUGS –the Wonder Drug

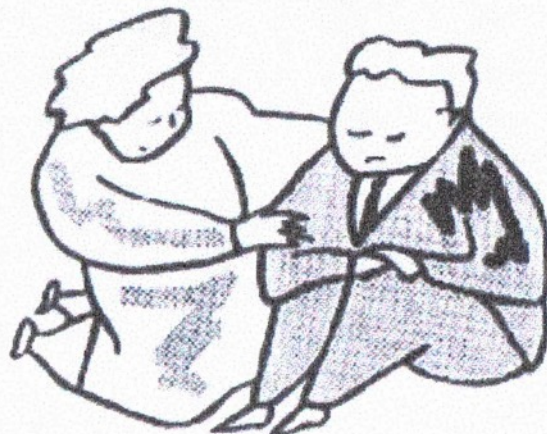
Have you ever wondered how effective hugs are? You rarely give a hug that is not appreciated, or receive one that does not make your day a little brighter. They are particularly effective in treating everyday problems like stress, worry, anger, frustration, sadness or sorrow – and even the occasional nightmare. They are available without a prescription. Can you think of any medication that has such pleasant side effects?

Hugs are good for you. They are non-fattening, they don't cause cancer, and they don't give you cavities. They are all natural, contain no preservatives, artificial sweeteners or other chemical additives. They are cholesterol free and contain one hundred percent of the recommended allowance of hope and kindness.

Hugs don't need batteries, tune-ups or x-rays.

- They are a completely renewable source of energy and are energy-efficient.
- They are non-taxable as well as fully returnable. They can safely be used in all kinds of weather – as a matter of fact they work especially well during cold and rainy days.
- The best thing about hugs is that you can use them without special training or prior experience.
- They don't require any instructions or a manual or tapes. But a word of caution for those of you trying it for the first time: you should never wait until tomorrow to hug someone who needs it today. Once you realise how good it feels, you'll want to do it all over again.

**Yes! Hugs are extremely addictive. Consider yourself hugged!**



(Author unknown)

## Finance Team Report

Offerings	2021		2020	
	Open	FWO	Open	FWO
July – Sept	£467.05	£2,369.20	£267.00	£2,180.00
October	£156.00	£1,187.00	£252.98	£1,190.50

### Standing Orders

July – Sept. 2021	£10,843.00	July - Sept. 2020	£12,136.10
Oct. 2021	£3,487.00	Oct. 2020	£3,638.00

**Gift Aid:** Tax reclaimed on Gift Aid contributions was: -

July - Sept. 2021	£3,354.81	July to Sept. 2020	£3,553.28
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**Dorothy Smith, Convener**

Our 'Clothes4Kids' base has now closed due to lack of footfall. Our stock of clothes which were gratefully received, has now been passed on, along with our equipment, to **Love Oliver**, another charity offering clothing to those who need it.

**Clothes 4 Kids**

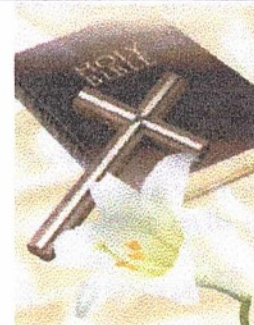


## **Church Register**

Deaths

"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish."

John 10: 28



*Graham Milne* - 17<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

# - Snippets

The Church Centre is open for groups to meet so please contact our Centre Manager on 640016 or [office@stbrycekirk.org](mailto:office@stbrycekirk.org) with any enquiries for room use.

Our Coffee Bar is open from 10 a.m. till 2 p.m. Monday to Thursday, offering not just tea/coffee and home baking, but also hot meals and filled rolls as well as home-made soup.

*The Centre will be closed from :-*

**23rd December till 10th January**

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Members of the congregation can phone or email any of the elders for information, advice or help, or just for a chat. For any financial questions, please phone 265808; for any pastoral concerns, phone 264456; and the Communication Team can be contacted on 566812. If you need to talk to a minister in person, however, you should contact Rev Robin McAlpine:-

 01592 643518 or [RMcalpine@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:RMcalpine@churchofscotland.org.uk)

*From the Editor :-*

In these difficult and uncertain times, may the Peace and Promise which come from the Saviour's birth be with you this Advent Season and throughout the year ahead

*George Luke* - [georgeluke.kdy@gmail.com](mailto:georgeluke.kdy@gmail.com)

*Isobel M Greenaway* (Convener - Communication Team) [isobelg300@gmail.com](mailto:isobelg300@gmail.com)



## Contact Information

St Bryce Kirk, St Brycedale Avenue, KIRKCALDY. KY1 1ET

St Bryce Kirk Centre & Church Office

E-mail :-office@stbrycekirk.org ~ Website : - www.stbrycekirk.org

'Phone :- 01592 640016

SC0 31064

## Christmas Services



### **Christmas Family Gift Service**

19 December 11.00 am

Offering in aid of **Kids Operating Room**

(envelopes available from 5 December)

### **Christmas Eve Service** in St Bryce Kirk

24 December 6.00 pm

Joint Service with Abbotshall Church

Offering in aid of Foodbank Kirkcaldy



### **Christmas Day Reflection** online

25 December

### **Joint Service** at Abbotshall Church

26 December 11.00 am

### **Joint Service** at Bennochty Church

2 January 2022 11.00 am