The Mustard Seed

Advent 2022

Advent

according to the

Andrews

Andrew 1.

Dear Friends,

In Pathhead Church's magazine, I noted the fact that the Season of Advent is like a journey to the Manger, providing an opportunity for spiritual reflection along the way. Like most long journeys there are ups and downs, as well as challenges and dangers along the way.

When we think of the journey the Holy Family had to take, we realise that it was filled with many logistical difficulties and was far from the idyllic scenes we see on our Christmas cards. I believe that Mary and Joseph were stretched to their limit just to reach Bethlehem in time for the census. They faced the added pressure of bringing a child

into the world when there was scarcely a room to be found. In one sense this can seem troubling and we may wish to ask why God didn't provide an easier entry into this world for His only Son. But in another sense, we might find it refreshing that God's preparations were grounded in the realities of life where conditions are rarely favourable. One thing is clear - Mary and Joseph had to trust their onward journey to God's safe hands.

I believe the same can be said for the journey faced by the members of St. Bryce Kirk as they contemplate a future which involves the town centre churches working together. For sure, there will be pain and setback, there will be challenges and disappointments - and there may be frustration that the journey to a ministry of growth is too slow and arduous. Some of these emotions are already being experienced and we know that the challenges we face are significant. Like Mary and Joseph on their arduous journey, blessing is to be found in trusting that God will guide us forward; and I wish to express my gratitude to the team at St. Bryce Kirk who are providing both vision and stability while the process of adjustment is taking place.

From Sunday services, to Kirk Sessions and Business Committee meetings, from café coffee-time to office-interactions, from pearls of wisdom from former General Assembly Moderators to the wise-head and steady pair of hands displayed by your Session Clerk, I have been greatly impressed by the commitment displayed by intelligent, creative, industrious and loving people.

Take heart, your Christian service is greatly valued and appreciated by your Interim Moderator and by all who pass through the doors of your Church on a Sunday morning and throughout the week.

May this season of Advent remind us that we are all on a spiritual journey and we rejoice in the support we receive along the way.

Andrew Donald, Your Interim Moderator

Andrew 2.

Where will be the worst place to be this Christmas?

In Bethlehem, where the loveliest carols are set?
Where the Wall may not let you out to go to church
and the Wall may not let your family in to visit you.

At home with heartbreak and loss and emptiness?

Inside the darkness of a depression
that never looks like ending?

In prison?

I've spent Christmas with people in all of these places.

What have I learned?

I have learned where God will be this Christmas.
This Christmas God will be in the worst places.
In Bethlehem.
In the emptiest of homes
In the saddest hearts
And in prison.

It is quite deliberate that the Bible begins the Christmas story at night. Do you remember? *there were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night.* It doesn't mean simply that light and love come into the world when most people are asleep. It means that

light and love come into the world where and when it is very dark, and where and when the light is needed most. The Bible does not say much about parties at Christmas. It says "The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has never been able to put it out".

Congregation after congregation in Scotland will be remembering people in the worst places this Christmas: praying for them, raising money for them, visiting them. Because at their best they know that is where God wants them to be: and because they know that is where God always is, and will be at Christmas.

I used to be in prison each Christmas Day. I used to sing – alongside some of the most lost people in the land –

All out of darkness we have light
Which made the angels sing this night

I believed it then and I believe it now.

Andrew McClellan.

The wise still seek Him.

Finance Report - December 2022

Sunday offerings are as follows:- July to Sept.

2022		2021	
Open	FWO	Open	FWO
£464.7	£1,391.60	£467.05	£2,369.20

Standing Orders

£10,552.00 £10,843.00

Tax reclaimed on Gift Aid

£2,964.59 * £3,354.81

* includes £247.69 Small Donations Scheme

Dorothy Smith, -Convener.

The Coffee Bar is becoming ever more popular and we are looking for more volunteers especially for afternoons.

Come and work alongside our fantastic "*baristas*"

For more information, contact the Office

Pastoral Care

The *Carol Tea* will take place at 3pm.
on Sunday 11th December.

The Very Rev Andrew McLelllan will lead our worship. An augmented choir will sing and our young musician, Connor, will play the harp.

The Hospitality Team will be responsible for the Festive Tea, providing warming soup, delicious Christmassy treats and mulled wine.

All members and friends are most welcome to attend the Carol Service. However, the Festive Tea will be by invitation only.

We would be delighted if members and friends from the other three Town Centre Churches would join with us for the Carol Service.

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Interested publicity or communication on:-
the website, **Facebook page**, ***Twitter***,
or the **Mustard Seed Magazine** ?

The Communication Team is keen to enlist more folk in the essential work of keeping the congregation informed of happenings in St Bryce Kirk.

Please speak to George Luke
(No **Age** or **experience** barriers!)

The Guild

Since our Autumn **Mustard Seed.** we have had a very happy afternoon with Rev.Andrew McLellan and his wife Irene, talking on his year as Moderator of Church of Scotland. It was a busy time for them both, but with lots of interesting stories, and we thank them for sharing their scrap book with us.

We then had a talk from Fay Smith who fascinated us with a display of birthday, Valentine and other cards dating as far back as the early 1940's. *Lots* of memories !

With Colin Johnson ,we visited the beginning of non-BBC radio stations - memories of **Radio Caroline** & similar.

Our Coffee Morning on the 19th November was a great success. **Thank you** to all who worked so hard to make it happen.

The amazing sum of **£1,209.00** was raised ! So thanks to all who supported us. The money raised will be divided between a few Charities and some will be used to buy new electrical equipment for the Church kitchen - more info in the next Mustard Seed.

The Hamper was valued at £118,89 and was won by Ainsley who is a regular Centre visitor on Thursdays. Her value was £119.50. A remarkable only 61 pence out!

And beautiful *"Faberge Eggs"* were the stars of our most recent talk by Deonald Wilson.

We have one more meeting on 6th Dec - our Finance Meeting, followed by Baking Bingo then some Christmas goodies.

We start back on Tuesday 10th January.

On behalf of the Guild, I wish everyone
a Very Happy Christmas, and best Wishes for 2023.

Jennifer Wilson.

"Whose we are and whom we serve."

CHURCH REGISTER

Deaths

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

John 10 : 28

30th September	Mandy Niven
17th November	Isobel M.Greenaway

Update on Town Centre Churches

Representatives of Presbytery and the Town Centre churches met on November 8th 2022.

Neil Campbell (Mission Director) updated the group and presented the process and timeline for applying for a Transition Ministry which was then discussed. Some frustration was expressed at the process and time it would take- a year at best. Would it be better to focus and progress plan and develop a Team Ministry?

Discussions then took place about what could be achieved if we focussed on progressing the plan. Various suggestions were made, including to consider local mission priorities, team ministry, shape of such a ministry team, and draft basis for union/team charge.

Each Kirk Session was asked to vote :- with the outline,

process and timeline for Transition Ministry now received, whether to:

a. Proceed with Transition Ministry option, or,

b. Proceed with the plan and develop team ministry.

St. Bryce Kirk Session voted unanimously to proceed with the plan and develop team ministry.

Guidance on how team ministry could work will be coming from Church of Scotland.

The group will meet again on December 12th 2022.

Anne Hunter Session Clerk

CHRISTMAS IS NOT THE ONLY TIME FOR GIVING

Over this past year, the congregation of St Bryce Kirk has been most generous in its financial gifts of support to charities:

£170 to the Church of Scotland HIV Aids Projects
£575 to the D.E.C's Appeal for Ukraine
£520 to Christian Aid Week
£265 to Kirkcaldy Foodbank + 14 Advent Calendars
£325 to Disaster Emergency Committee's Appeal for Pakistan
£305 to Poppy Scotland

The total is over £2000 - so thank you to everyone. Can we increase that total with our Christmas Gifts?
Because Christian Aid, as an organisation, has up to date information of what is needed, and where, to help those struggling with climate crisis, we will support their appeals this year. Please put your donation in one of the Christmas envelopes, and (if possible) please gift-aid it as well.

St Bryce Kirk

Contact Information

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

St Bryce Kirk Centre & Church Office

Rosalind Gould - Centre Manager
Kara Ewen - Office Manager
Corrie Carson - Catering Manager

E-mail :- office@stbrycekirk.org

Website : - www.stbrycekirk.org

'Phone :- 01592 640016

SCO 31064

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Seasonal Services

24th December

7.00 pm - Kirkcaldy Congregational Church & Bennochy Church

11.30 pm - Linktown Church

25th December

11.00 am - Bennochy & Linktown Churches

1st January

11.00 am - Abbotshall Church

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George Luke - Editor :- georgeluke.kdy@gmail.com

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