

NEW CONNECTIONS

The congregational Magazine of
Strathaven: Trinity Parish Church

Christmas 2023



Website: www.strathaventrinity.co.uk
Church office: strathaventrinity@gmail.com
Telephone: 01357 520019

*From the
Minister's
Desk*



'It's Christmas Time' is the beginning of a modern Christmas song and of course it is right. It is Christmas time! Yet, it is becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish this time of year from any other. Yes, I know there are Christmas trees, lights, decorations

and Christmas music all around, but these have been obvious since October. Not only that, television advertising has been geared to the festive season since the last of the summer holiday adverts in June. And talking about summer holidays, I have always found it strange (particularly in recent years) that there are Christmas shops selling trees, baubles, tinsel and all manner of santas and snowmen all year round. This is especially true in some southern states in America where nearly every shopping mall has a 'Christmas Store' and whose locals will not have seen snow unless on holiday somewhere else.

On a personal level, I don't like to see Christmas decorations being displayed too early. According to church liturgy, carols are supposed to be sung from the Watchnight/Christmas morning Service and for the next twelve days (until Epiphany). The Twelve Days of Christmas carol starts on the first day of Christmas ie Christmas Day and describes the festivities for the next twelve days. In reality, however, by Boxing Day many have had their fill of the piped music blaring out in shopping centres and have become fed up with the trees and tinsel decorating their homes.

Over the years the Church has adapted its focus from the days after the 25th of December to the time of Advent. Advent then has become more than just a time of preparation for the birth of Christ. It has become in a sense a time for celebration, which concludes with the finale of Christmas Day.

This isn't necessarily a negative thing because anything that helps society and the world at large to focus on Christ is good. Maybe the Christian Church needs to take a lesson from the realm of advertising. For various reasons, society is interested in Christmas and the advertisers focus their energies accordingly.

What we need to do is use this season as an opportunity to share the good news, not just of Jesus' birth but of his life, death and resurrection. Rather than being turned off by the consumer side of Christmas we should focus our energies into effective ways of advertising that Christ is at the heart of Christmas.

Since society is tuned into Christmas for months, maybe we should be setting our stall out by promoting Christmas all year round – that way we have the ideal opportunity to share the significance, meaning and Good News that the Messiah brought to the world, not just as a baby but as a crucified and risen Lord. That is what we try to do every Sunday but perhaps we need to be more effective at advertising it!

Wishing you and your family a wonderful Christmas and a super New Year as we share the Good News of Christ's birth.

Shaw

PREACHING ROTA

As always, the rota may need to be altered but at least it gives an indication of who's scheduled for where. A special thank you to Valerie, Robin and Norman for agreeing to take at least one service per month.

If anyone would like to assist by concluding a service (announcing offering, leading offering prayer and intimating closing hymn followed by blessing) or opening a service (this will be at Glassford and Strathaven involving up to and including children's address) then please volunteer to the minister who will provide appropriate resources.



3rd December	Shaw at Glassford and Strathaven; Norman at Chapelton
10th December	<i>Chapelton and Strathaven Communion.</i> Shaw at Chapelton and Strathaven; Robin at Glassford
17th December	Shaw at Glassford and Strathaven; Valerie at Chapelton
24th December	Shaw at Chapelton and Strathaven; Norman at Glassford
31st December	(joint service in Strathaven at 11.00am) Shaw

7th January	Shaw at Chapelton and Glassford; Norman at Strathaven
14th January	Shaw at Chapelton and Strathaven; Robin at Glassford
21st January	Shaw at Chapelton, Glassford and Strathaven
28th January	Shaw at Chapelton and Strathaven; Robin at Glassford

4th Feb	<i>COMMUNION AT GLASSFORD</i> - Shaw at Glassford and Strathaven; Norman at Chapelton
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MEMORY TREE

Throughout advent, a bare, scrawny tree will be placed in the church for people to put their memories (or wishes) on. By the time Christmas Day arrives, it is hoped that the tree will be decorated and transformed, with memories or wishes, in preparation for the birth of the Christ Child. Tags to hang on the tree are available, or you can bring your own (gift tags are ideal).



FUNERALS

11 th	November	The Very Rev Dr Hugh Wyllie
14 th	November	Ruby Crossan
19 th	November	Ian Jamieson
22 nd	November	Sheena Cunningham
23 rd	November	Jean Southern



Parish Christmas Cards

Would you be willing to help deliver a Christmas Card round the homes in our parish?

As we have done over the last few years we are planning on dropping a Christmas Card through the letterbox of every home in our parish. If you would be willing to help please let Ruth (our secretary) know. Once the cards are printed we will make arrangements to have them bundled into 'street' areas for folks to collect and deliver.



OFFERINGS

The Sunday offering (collection) is now being taken during the service in all three buildings.

We are conscious that many have switched to direct giving which has proved to be invaluable particularly over the last few years. Therefore, simply let the offering bag pass you by on a Sunday. Thank you to everyone for your continuing support.

Offering: In addition to bank transfer, electronic offerings can be made using the link <https://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/donate/?cong=171167> or via the QR code



LECTIONARY READINGS



December

3 Dec 2023 (1 st)	Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37
10 Dec 2023 (2 nd)	Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8
17 Dec 2023 (3 rd)	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126; Luke 1:46b-55; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28
24 Dec 2023 (4 th)	TBC
31 Dec 2023	Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40

January 2024

7 Jan 2024	Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11
14 Jan 2024	1 Samuel 3:1-10, (11-20); Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51
21 Jan 2024	Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20
28 Jan 2024	Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Psalm 111; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13; Mark 1:21-28

February 2024

4 Feb 2024	Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147:1-11, 20c; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39
11 Feb 2024	2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-6; 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9
18 Feb 2024	Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15
25 Feb 2024	Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Psalm 22:23-31; Romans 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38; Mark 9:2-9

STRATHAVEN FLOWER CALENDAR

DECEMBER

3rd	Mrs M McAuley
10th	Mrs C Jack & Mrs N Hinshalwood (<i>Communion</i>)
17th	Mrs K Field
24th	Mrs L Wilson
31st	The Forrest Family



January

7th	Mrs M Taylor
14th	Mrs J Graham & Mrs B Park
21th	Mrs L Fleming
28th	Mrs A Park

Anne Grady (tel. 523285) & Lilly McConnell (tel. 520989)

CHRISTMAS DAY AND SUNDAY 31ST DECEMBER

The Kirk Session has agreed to hold joint services on Christmas Day and Sunday between Christmas and New Year. Due to live-streaming, we will host these services in our Strathaven building at 11.00am. Anyone requiring transport from the villages into Strathaven (and home again) should contact local office-bearers or the church secretary tel. no 01357 529 316) as soon as possible.

GLASSFORD FLOWER CALENDAR

DECEMBER

3rd	Mrs L Jamieson
10th	Mrs S Herd
17th	Mrs R Andrew
24th	Mrs J Meikle
31st	Mrs S Struthers



JANUARY

7th	Mrs A Brisbane
14th	Mrs M Steel
21st	Mrs J Meikle
28th	Mrs E Moore

J Meikle (tel. 520941) & R Andrew (tel. 521662)

CHAPELTON FLOWER CALENDAR

DECEMBER

3rd Mrs Crawford
10th Mrs V McLean (*Communion*)
17th Mrs M McPherson
24th Mrs E Kennedy
31st Mrs P Riddell



JANUARY

7th Mrs J Callan c/o Ellen Callan
14th Mrs M Hamilton
21st Mrs J Young
28th Mrs M Gilmour

Mary Frew (tel. 300268) & Val Allen (075 785 06102)



PASTORAL CARE

The Pastoral Care Committee is updating the list of members who would value additional visits (to your own and those made by the Minister) or a pastoral care visitor from the church. If you know of anyone in your district, of whatever age, who would appreciate such a visit, please email the office at strathaventrinity@gmail.com and they will be put on the list.

COMMUNION—2024

Communion Sundays will fall on the customary Sundays for each location:

- **Chapelton & Strathaven** - Second Sundays in March, June, September and December
- **Glassford** - First Sundays in February, September and November, and second Sunday in May

It would be appreciated if you could use the hand gel which is available on entry to the church. If anyone is uncomfortable with receiving communion from the elders you may of course refrain or indeed bring your own.

All elders are asked to meet before the service.



MINISTER'S NOTES

Sunday 3rd December 1st Sunday in Advent
Sunday School Gift Service

Sunday 10th December 2nd Sunday in Advent
Holy Communion will be celebrated at 9.30am (Chapelton) and 11.00am (Strathaven)

Sunday 17th December 3rd Sunday in Advent
Family Nativity service in Glassford at 10am
Carol Service in Glassford at 6.30pm

Sunday 24th December
Chapelton - Family Service Nativity at 9.30am
Glassford Sunday Service at 10.00am
Strathaven - Family Service Nativity at 11.00am
Tea, coffee and mince pies served after the services).

Christmas Eve Watchnight Services at 11.30pm
There will be a Watchnight Service in both Chapelton and Strathaven again this year. Please come along to this special service as we meet in the darkness of the midnight hour to welcome Jesus — The Light of the World — into our lives.

Christmas Day Service at 11.00: Joint service in our Strathaven building.

Sunday 31st December: Joint service in our Strathaven building at 11:00am

Service of readings and carols at Strathaven

Christmas Day and Hogmanay services will be joint services at Strathaven. Anyone requiring transport to Strathaven on the 25th and 31st December should contact any office bearer.

1st Sunday in Advent Sunday School Gift Service

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**CAROL SERVICE IN
GLASSFORD on Sunday 17th**

Please join us for a Trinity and community Carol Service in Glassford Church on Sunday 17th at 6.30pm

**MEMORIAL SERVICE - Sunday
21st January 2024 at 7.00pm**

A service where we acknowledge with thanksgiving those we have known and loved and who are now in the fullness of God's presence, in heaven.

PRESBYTERY TRAINING FOR NEW LOCAL WORSHIP LEADERS

The course will consist of in-person learning across three Saturday mornings, and independent course work throughout the time of the course. Dates of the training are listed below.

Saturday 20th Jan 10am – 1pm; Saturday 24th Feb 10am – 1pm; Saturday 23rd March 10am – 1pm.

For further information, please speak to the minister.



Citizens Advice is a registered charity and most of our funding comes from the government. We offer free, independent, confidential and impartial advice and information to people on a wide range of issues including:

Benefits – benefit checks, help completing forms, etc.

Employment – workplace problems, including issues with redundancy, etc.

Debt – advice on managing your debt, managing your finances, etc.

Consumer issues – guidance on your rights with regard to faulty goods, complaints about service etc.

Housing – problems with tenants, landlords, issues with neighbours, etc.

Energy – understanding your utility bills, issues with suppliers, etc

Relationships – support with relationship breakdown, advice on a variety of family issues, etc.

Health – complaints about healthcare, understanding your patient rights, etc.

..... and many more.

We aim to provide research and explore the options and implications for our clients so that they themselves can make informed choices.

Our outreach service in Strathaven has been running for a year now and takes place in our church vestry on Tuesdays from 10am till 1pm. If you have something that is worrying you and you would like an appointment, please call 07592995152 and leave me a message.

Annabelle Meikle

CHILDREN, FAMILY AND YOUTH WORKER -
JULIE ROBERTSON

Well, the festivities are well under way as we prepare ourselves for the birth of Jesus. At Messy Church in November, we talked about how sometimes we can be so busy that it can be hard to enter into the mystery of Christmas. These coming weeks of advent do provide us with a time to stop and prepare but prepare for what? 'I know I tend to spend the Advent weeks planning turkey dinners, festive family outings and making sure I have visited all family. I feel the pressure of making special memories and it seems I can only muster energy for matching pyjamas and several last-minute dashes rounds the shops. In the words of our dear old grinch 'maybe Christmas means a little bit more'. In the hustle and bustle it can be easy to forget that lowly cattle shed, the hosts of angels singing and the arrival of the child who would change everything. Christmas can be a joyous time for many and a difficult time for some. Our Sunday School enjoyed a very powerful visit to Loaves and Fishes recently and it brought into stark focus how difficult this time of year can be to many. So, we remember them, and we remember all of you. May you have a peaceful and blessed Christmas and may the miracle and wonder of the birth of our Lord and Saviour be evident in all our celebrations. We have our nativities in Strathaven and Chapelton on the morning of Christmas Eve as well as an all age worship service in Lethame Road on 24th Dec at 6pm. I wish you all a very Merry Christmas.

Till next time – Blessings!

Julie

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Toddler groups will finish for the session week commencing 11th December and will re-commence from January 8th 2024.

Thursday After School: Thursday club will finish on Thursday 14th Dec and start back on Thursday 11th January 2024.

DECEMBER

9th December from 2pm till 6pm will be our family ceilidh! Tickets are £10 each for those 13 and over, 12 and under will require a ticket but are free. Tickets include a small fish/sausage supper at the break. All funds raised will be split between our festive donations to Save the Children and the Sick Kids hospital in Glasgow.

16th December from 11-1 will be Santa's helper Saturday – need to post your presents to the North Pole, clean the oven, wrap or shop or whatever you need a couple of hours to catch up on the week before Christmas? Drop the kids – or stay with them – for a morning of hot chocolate and Christmas Crafts.

24th December – Nativity will be held in Strathaven and Chapelton during Sunday worship but there will also be an all age Christmas Service in Strathaven at 6pm. Service will last around 30-40 minutes.

NEW CONNECTIONS FRONT COVER

All the young ones who attend Sunday School (in our three buildings) were asked to design the front cover of our magazine. We have so many fantastic designs, I'm sure you will agree! If any parent, family member or friend wishes a copy of a particular child's design, please contact the secretary.

* Thank you to everyone *
* who has donated flowers *
* over the past year and *
* also to the volunteers *
* who help arrange and *
* distribute the flowers *
* each week. *
* We wish you all a Merry *
* Christmas and a Happy *
* New Year. *

CHRISTMAS STAMPS

Each Christmas the Royal Mail issues religious stamps (in addition to Christmas stamps) but these are not offered routinely at Post Offices. They have to be requested! In order to keep the religious significance of Christmas at the fore front please ask for religious stamps.



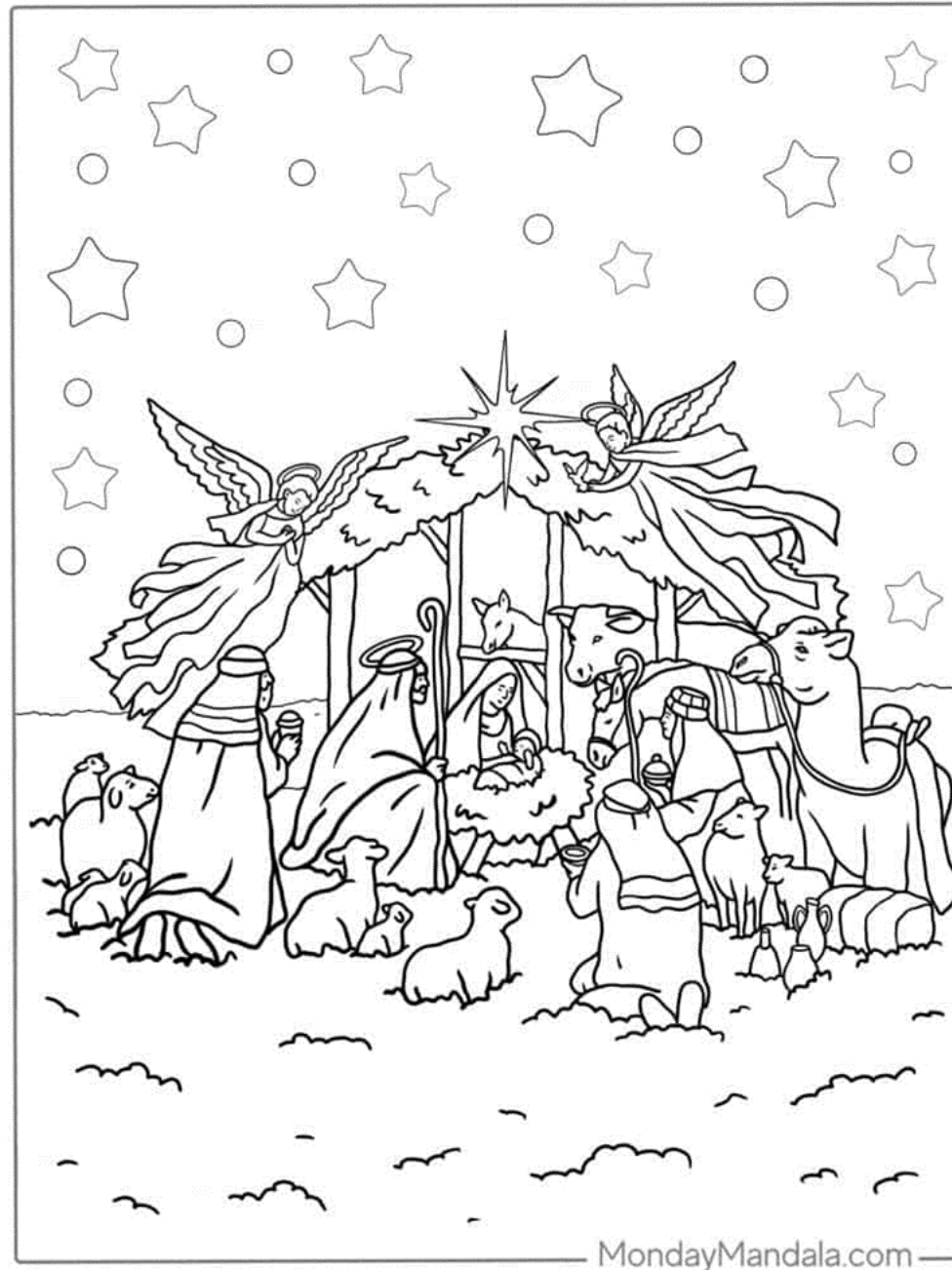
Thank you to everyone who came along and supported our Bubblegum & Fluff children's activity in the local primary schools. Your support was integral to having successful mornings where we could share the message of Christmas with Primary 6 pupils.

STAMPS FOR WORLD MISSION

Please remember to save your Christmas stamps for this very worthwhile cause. If possible, leave a good border around the stamp so that it does not get damaged. Thanks to everyone who has supported this ongoing appeal. Several boxes have already been sent on to the main collector. There is a collection box at the door of the Strathaven building; stamps can also be handed in to the office.

Maureen Geraghty

Two Nativity scenes for you t



to colour in - relax and enjoy!





On 19th November children from all three Sunday Schools enjoyed a trip to Loaves and Fishes. What an amazing and insightful experience it was for all the children.... and adults. The children were involved in helping out with various jobs in the warehouse and got a real idea of the amazing work being done.

We are now well underway in our planning for all things Christmas!! Our nativity will be on Sunday 24th December. This will be such a lovely day for the boys and girls to share the Christmas story - we hope to have a big turn out. We are also looking forward to enjoying a Christmas party for all three churches. Please look out for an email within the next few weeks with confirmed information.

The Sunday School wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year - enjoy every bit of this special celebration,

*Much love,
The Sunday School
Team*



STRATHAVEN TRINITY GUILD

Our next meeting is our annual Christmas lunch which this year is being held on Tuesday 12 December. Country Bake (Janet Foster) is providing the meal being held in Strathaven Bowling Club.

On Tuesday 9 January at 2.00 pm we look forward to hearing from Liz Allan who will speak on 'Isobel Hutchison, Female Explorer'.

Our second January meeting is on the 23rd at 7.30 pm in Strathaven when we look forward to welcoming 2 groups of young people. One is from The Morag Fraser School of Dance which is a highland dancing school for girls and boys age 3+. The other is Strathaven Gym Club which is for young gymnasts. We look forward to what will be an energetic session!

On 13 February at 2.00 pm in Strathaven we hold our joint meeting when we invite guilds/groups from other local churches to join us for the afternoon. This year the guest speaker is Deedee Cuddihy, journalist and author.

The Avondale Community Bus is available to transport anyone who requires it – Marjorie Lamb organises this and you can call her on 07872 050305 to book a seat.

GUILD CONCERT BY STUDIO 32

On Tuesday 27 February at 7.00 pm we look forward to a musical evening provided by Studio 32 Theatre Company – with our own choir leader, Iain Sinclair, and others. Studio 32 was established in 1985 and today has over 100 members. They are equally at home staging challenging, provoking drama or cheesy musical entertainment.

In November they performed in Strathaven Town Mill Theatre – Strictly Musicals - which was a very entertaining evening. In September they performed 'Sunshine on Leith' in East Kilbride Village Theatre and in November/December they are performing 'Aladdin: Family Pantomime' in East Kilbride Arts Centre (most shows sold out!)

We are really looking forward to hearing them on 27 February and hope as many people as possible come to hear them. The concert is being held in the church and tea/coffee/home baking will be served in the large hall following the performance. All of this and it will only cost you £10 per ticket – a real bargain I am sure you will agree. Tickets will be on sale from early January and will be available from committee members but will also be available from Craig's Newsagents in the Common Green. Proceeds from the sale of tickets will be donated to charities which includes The Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice which Studio 32 support.

Ishbel Anderson

STRATHAVEN FRIENDS OF HEALTH HELP INTERNATIONAL

The Christmas leaf cards will be on sale in all of the church halls over the next few weeks after the service. As usual they are also available to order, on line at sfhhi.org.uk or directly from Kath at 521059.

The artists in India who provide for their families with these leaf paintings benefit directly from the sale of the cards and greatly appreciate your support.

Thanks, Kath



PROBATIONER MINISTER

It was intimated a few months ago that the minister was to supervise a full time probationer from January 2024. Eleanor Hamilton is due to finish her academic study by Christmas and had been placed with Shaw for the final part of her training.

However with Shaw being appointed as the next Moderator of the General Assembly he will not be able to supervise Eleanor, and as a consequence her placement is being moved to Douglas.

We wish Eleanor well as she enters this final stage of her training for the full time minister of word and sacrament.





CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

Just a reminder that
Annabel from Citizens Advice Bureau is in the
vestry every Tuesday from 10:00am – 1:00pm.
This is a first come-first served basis so make sure
that you are here nice and early.

Stories from our parishioners:

'What have been your most memorable experiences of singing in worship?'

I always love singing/hearing singing in Church and I think we're so lucky to have a choir BUT the best time I remember is when the congregation could sing after covid.
I sit at front of Church and the volume was amazing after having no singing for such a long time.

Cillia

SNOW CLEARERS

Winter is coming and with it the possibility of snow. That means we need to ensure the paths around the church are cleared of snow before the Sunday service.

We are looking for additional volunteers to be ready, in the event of a snow fall, to come down to the Lethame Road building at 9.00am and help make the approaches to church safer. Over the last few years we have not had many Sundays when the snow needed to be cleared, so it is not an overly onerous commitment.

If you would be prepared to help out, please let Douglas Campbell know (tel. 520191).

Faith makes all
things possible,
Hope makes all
things work, Love
makes all things
beautiful, May you
have all the three
for this Christmas.
Merry Christmas!

Homemade
GIFTS MADE EASY



CAP DEBT HELP

If you are feeling weighed down by debt, then CAP, Christians Against Poverty, can help. You may think your situation is impossible, but there is hope. Our friendly team will give you a listening ear in the privacy of your own home and provide a practical solution to your debts.

Since we started helping people out of debt in 1996, we've helped thousands in situations like yours through our professional service offered by over 300 CAP Debt Centres. Why not ring us today to begin your journey to becoming debt free?

Does it cost anything? No. Our service is completely free. We are able to provide a totally free service because CAP is a charity and receives donations from churches and individuals who want to help people.

Will my creditors cooperate with you? Yes. We have worked with over 1,000 companies within the finance industry and we are well respected. This means that councils, utilities and mortgage companies work with us because they have seen the results of our involvement. They know we offer fair repayments based on what you can afford.

To access CAP Debt Help call 0800 328 0006

Fiona Lamont

Christians Against Poverty, East Kilbride Debt Centre
Working hours: Wednesday & Thursday 09:00 - 17:00

**LETTER FROM THE HOLY LAND: REVD MURIEL PEARSON IN
DECEMBER'S LIFE AND WORK**

'Christmas is cancelled in Bethlehem'. The headline from The Herald newspaper in December 2000 awakened my determination that when we celebrated Advent and Christmas in my parish in Scotland it should not be divorced from life in current-day Bethlehem. Writing now, with no way of knowing how this war ends or where it might lead, I wonder what that means?

Luke's account of the birth of Jesus begins with the political context. Augustus was Caesar and Quirinius was governor of Syria, territory which includes today's Israel and Palestine. Then as now, ordinary people found their lives disrupted and worse. A heavily pregnant Mary was forced to make the journey with Joseph her husband to Bethlehem, David's town. We think of images from around the world of weary women and frightened children and sad and humiliated men all on the move because of geo-political forces outwith their control. Into this world Jesus was born.

Bethlehem was overcrowded when Mary and Joseph got there, and unlike our classical manger scenes, I don't think they would have been alone with the ox and ass. During the current war, strangers (both Palestinian and Israeli) have opened their homes to shelter families. In Gaza, 30 or 40 crowded in to one house is not unusual. Mary would have given birth with perhaps a sheet for privacy but the midwives would have been there for her, as medical personnel in Gaza have given their all with little equipment to give what comfort they can. When her son was born, Mary swaddled him and laid him in the hay. You use what you have in a crisis.

'Don't be afraid! I am here with good news for you, which will bring great joy to all the people'. Luke 2:10

The shepherds' fear was overwhelming, yet they had enough faith that when the angels had left, they went down into Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph and the baby, just as the angel had said.

In times of polarisation and brutality and ecological and humanitarian disaster, when it seems humanity itself is under threat; superficial tinsel covered 'good news' does not ring true.

Childbirth is hard: painful, sweaty, dangerous without medical resources. Blood, sweat and tears birthed the Prince of Peace. Peace in our time, God's dream, will be equally painful. It involves justice for all, recognition for all, a place for all. Just as it took imagination to see in the tiny newborn wrapped in cloths and lying in the hay a Saviour, so we need all our imagination to welcome the One named Jesus – Yeshua- Deliverer, Rescuer, in our lives and in our world now.

Come, Prince of Peace
God-with-us, Emmanuel
Into the mess and misery
Into the war and worry
Into the fear and forsakenness
Come, be born again today.
Amen

Strathaven Fairtrade

The Fairtrade stall will be available after the service on the first Sunday of every month. We hope to offer a limited range of your favourite fairtrade sweets and groceries and thank you all once again for your support for the poorest and most vulnerable producers throughout the world.

Maureen and Nancy

REMINDER! New Connections has now gone digital!

If you would like to receive the magazine via email rather than hard copy, please would you pop a message to Ruth at the office on **strathaventrinity@gmail.com** with your name, who your elder is and your preferred email address.

LIVE STREAMING

Our Strathaven services are live-streamed (and available as a recording later). It is only the chancel area and first two pews that are in sight of the camera. Parents, in particular, should be aware that if they do not wish their child to be visible 'on-line' then they should ensure that they sit a couple of pews from the front.

We are now well established with live-streaming services from the Strathaven building on Sundays and for funerals and weddings (when requested). However, we would value some additional volunteers to assist and then a rota can be established. You do not need to understand how live-streaming works. It's straightforward if you are used to working a computer. Please get in touch if you wish any further information about what is involved or speak to one of the 'team' on a Sunday.

LOAVES AND FISHES

As you know we have been supporting Loaves and Fishes Foodbank for some time now and they are extremely thankful for all that they receive from us. When I take the food to them I am extremely humbled by what they are achieving. As times are getting harder for many people Loaves and Fishes are facing a crisis with not enough food to support the needs of many.

If you can, please bring an item of food to church on a Sunday morning or drop off at office when it is open.

Any dried or tinned foods and toiletries would be suitable and would make a huge difference to the work of the charity.

Together we
can make a
difference!

Ruby
Davidson



Memory Club

Please note there is only one meeting of the club in December. It is on Wed 13th Dec 1.30 till 3.15. We shall have a Christmas theme and hope to welcome some of the pupils from Kirklandpark Primary to entertain us.

As usual new members are welcome. The meetings are in the large hall of Trinity Church, Lethame Road.

If you or a loved one is suffering from memory loss and would like to meet others in the same situation why not think of joining us for some social interaction and tea, coffee and cake!

For more information please contact Lynda Horn on 07778579504



Jesus Is the Reason for the Season *By Kelly Roper*

Jesus is the reason for the season,
So think of him in all that you do.
The good you do others this season,
Should be carried out all year too.

TRINITY MEN'S COFFEE GROUP

There is a men's group that meets in the Rankin Room (upstairs in the hall) on Wednesday mornings between 10.30 am until 12 noon for coffee/tea, biscuits and a chat. Come and go for part or all of the time, as suits you.

LADIES KEEP FIT

Trinity's Keep Fit class meets on Mondays in the small (East) hall of our Strathaven buildings, from 7-8pm. Exercises are designed to maintain fitness, so not dynamic. We do a lot of laughing so the hour goes quickly. Oh, and the exercise is usually to 60's music!

Cillia McLeary

WHEELIE BINS

We have been advised that the bin lorries will no longer empty our wheelie bins unless the lid is able to close.

In Strathaven - the church wheelie bin is the black bin located in the manse garden. This bin is of sufficient size for normal activities. However, if you are having a function/party/event that generates more rubbish than usual please arrange to take it to the amenity site for disposal. Please do not stack the bin with the lid open or leave on the ground adjacent as birds and foxes make quite a mess.

CAR PARKING

Please be considerate of our neighbours when parking for church events! Please ensure you park responsibly and be careful not to block anyone's access.

This applies for Sunday services, funerals, weddings and weekday activities in the halls.

At busy times parking is a premium and so please only use the car park off Crawford Street when attending the church or halls - there have been several instances lately when the car park has been full prior to anyone arriving for a church/hall event! Therefore, do not be afraid to ask if others who are parking in the car park are attending something in our premises and, if not, encourage them to park elsewhere.

KIDS KLUB

Kids Klub meets on those Sundays when the Sunday School is "on holiday". Children wishing to participate should go into Church as normal for the children's address then make their way to the large hall where there will be board games for them to enjoy during the remainder of the service.

It would be great if we could have a few more helpers (we need two per session) – the role is supervisory and there is no requirement to plan activities. Now is a good time to contact me so that PVG forms can be completed. There is no regular commitment for Kids Klub – just operating on a "now and again" basis. I will put together a rota, depending on who is available.

Claire Campbell (01357 520191)

BIGGER PICTURE ...Mondays at Lunch Time

Academy pupils are welcome to come along to the large hall for a hot chocolate and biscuits (and a Toastie, if they wish) while eating their lunch, or watching cartoons on the big screen. Please let as many as possible know about the hall being open – it's a dry and warm place to have lunch.

BIGGER PICTURE +1... Fridays at Lunch Time

The Friday version of Bigger Picture is up and running although volunteers are still needed to make toasties and/or hot chocolate and simply 'be there'. For more information please speak to Cillia Mcleary.

WHO?

Minister:	Rev Dr Shaw Paterson	spaterson@churchofscotland.org.uk 01357 520019
Pastoral Assistant	Rev Norman McKee	normanmckee946@btinternet.com 01698 827358
Session Clerk:	Ruby Davidson	rubydavidson96@yahoo.com 07809 128038
Church Secretary:	Ruth Ward-Cox Mon-Thurs 9:15-11:45	strathaventrinity@gmail.com 01357 529316
Sunday School:	Pamela Walker	TSundaySchool@outlook.com
Youth Worker:	Julie Robertson	jrobertson@churchofscotland.org.uk 07544 249324
Treasurer:	David Lipowski	david.lipowski@gmail.com
Ass. Treasurer:	Sheila Dodds	sheiladodds24@gmail.com
Presbytery Elder:	Scott Bennie	01357 521 661

CHURCH OFFICE

The church office hours are term time Monday to Thursday 09:15—11:45.

The email address is strathaventrinity@gmail.com



Lifts to Church
If anyone requires a lift to Church, please contact
Kath Russell
07916 171830

NEW CONNECTIONS

EDITORIAL

It's Advent again. My favourite time of the year! I even make Ed watch at least some of the mushiest Christmas films. However, there's no doubt that for me the joy of anticipating and celebrating Christ's arrival on earth will be tinged with a lot of sadness over the state of his world – the warring nations, the climate crisis, the natural disasters so quickly forgotten.

We recently sang 'I have a dream', a man once said,
where all is perfect peace;
where men and women, black and white,
stand hand in hand and all unite
in freedom and in love.'

But in this world of bitter strife
the dream can often fade;
reality seems dark as night
we catch but glimpses of the light
Christ sheds on humankind

So this advent as we light the weekly advent candles of hope, faith, joy, peace and purity I will be praying very hard that the light of Christ really can be seen in some of the darkest places in this world of His!

Meanwhile I will hold very tightly to the dream
Lord, give us vision, make us strong,
help us to do your will;
don't let us rest until we see
your love throughout humanity
uniting us in peace.

Wishing you all peace, joy and happiness this Christmas.

*Take care
Maureen*

PS: After I wrote this article I found an article in my December Life and Work entitled 'Letter from the Holy Land'. It resonated so strongly with me that I have copied it and it can be found inside. It was written by the Rev Muriel Pearson, who, *'along with her colleague the Rev Dr Stewart Gillan, came back to Scotland from Israel-Palestine a week after October 7 2023. This article was written before the outcomes of the war in Gaza unfolded, and in awareness of the fears on all sides of escalation, and in the yearning for an end to Occupation and a hopeful future for all between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea'.*

**Final date for inclusion in our
February edition of New Connections is :-
Monday 22nd January 2024**