

ABBOTSHALL PARISH CHURCH

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

ALL ARE WELCOME

1 DEC 11:00 SUNDAY SERVICE
8 DEC 11:00 SUNDAY SERVICE
8 DEC 14:30 BLUE CHRISTMAS
15 DEC 11:00 CHORAL & GIFT SERVICE
21 DEC 17:00 CHRISTINGLE SERVICE
22 DEC 11:00 CHILDREN'S NATIVITY
24 DEC 18:00 WATCH NIGHT SERVICE
29 DEC 11:00 JOINT SERVICE AT
BENNOCHY PARISH

ABBOTSHALL RD, KIRKCALDY, KY2 5PH



Please note that the Watch Night Service this year is earlier in the evening at 6 o'clock on Christmas Eve and there will be no Christmas Morning Service at Abbotshall Church but there is a service at Linktown Church.

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

Christmas Time, Mistletoe and Wine...

Anyone who knows me well know I love Christmas. I love the carols, the mince pies, the trees etc. In fact, I love Christmas so much I have been known to wear my special Christmas socks twelve months of the year. So, as we come to December, I get exceptionally excited.

What upsets me though at Christmas is some of the Christians that celebrate it. For a long time now, they have been the joy vacuums in their attempt to police Christmas. Slogans like “put the Christ back in Christmas”, the “it’s too commercial”, and “remember the reason for the season”. What they fail to realise is that Christ is already in Christmas, you can’t take him out. When families are reconciled, when children enjoy the wonder of Christmas day, when people take time out of their lives to think about someone else, Christ is there. Christmas is magical because it’s Christ’s invitation to joy.

This Christmas was to be a very special one for our family as my Mum was going to come and share in the festivities. It was always her dream to experience a “White Christmas”, because she had only experienced a summer Christmas living in South Africa. She was going to enjoy seeing Francis’ first Christmas and the joy of attending church services led by her son. We had spoken at length about the holiday and her excitement of coming. But unfortunately, she died in October.

As I think about Christmas my heart sinks in the memories that I will not share with my Mum. My enthusiasm seems somewhat tapered by the thought of my first Christmas without her Christmas cheer ringing through the day. Christmas will be emotionally hard.

Christmas will for some of us not seem like a time to experience joy. In fact, Christmas will be gut-wrenching as we see the empty seat at the dinner table, or we think of a loved one who is not around, or the present we won’t have to buy. As we walk around the town we will see people gathering, children giggling, and hear stories of loved ones reconciled, and our own emotion will be juxtaposed with what is happening around us.

Friends, **THIS IS TOTALLY NORMAL.**

When Christianity met with the Celts, Christmas became an important festival with 25th December being central to their celebration. This is the first day (after the winter solstice) when the light started to creep back lost ground that the darkness had taken away. Christmas was not just a celebration; it was the idea that in the midst of our darkest night, when our world is crumbling down, and the pain is too hard to bear, light comes... The birth of Jesus, for the Celtic Christians, was not just a historical event but rather a daily lived reality. That the Christ was/is born in the places we think cannot bring forth life.

Christmas was a story of joy in the midst of the barren. It was/is a powerful image about what God is doing when we feel like we are in our darkest night of the soul.

So, wherever you find yourself on the emotional Richter scale this year, I pray Christmas would be a time of joy. That whether you hold your love ones close or you remember them with fondness, you would find Jesus’ presence there. That as you are reminded of Jesus’ birth, so too may he be birthed in you.

Yours In Christ

Justin



Christmas Wreaths and Trees

To help with our fund raising Abbotshall has been offered exclusive offers from The Kilted Christmas Tree Company.

Christmas Door Wreaths

We will have these 10inch Door Wreaths available for sale for £ 20.00 at our Christmas Fayre. (Last year our church wreaths lasted beyond the Christmas season)

Christmas Trees

Abbotshall members are offered Norman Fir Trees, renowned for their minimal needle drop. The price will include delivery, collection and disposal. Sizes are from 4ft to 10ft.

For more details on the trees and costs please contact Bruce or Jennifer Farrell who will be selling the Wreaths at the Fayre or contact them by phone – 266003 or e-mail brucefarrell@blueyonder.co.uk.

The Kilted Christmas Tree Company Limited
Tillyochie Farm, Balado, Kinross, Scotland KY13 0NL
www.kiltedchristmastree.co.uk

WALKING GROUP

In September and October the Holy Strollers continued their journey along the Fife Pilgrim Way. Starting from Kelty on 21st September we quickly reached the Lochore Meadows Country Park. The route took us around the north shore of the loch to the Willie Clarke Visitor Centre where we stopped for a coffee break. We left the “Meedies” at the remains of Lochore Castle, one of Fife’s former strongholds, and walked through part of Crosshill before striking off on the Benarty Heritage Trail. We made a short detour to Harelaw Cairn where we stopped for our picnic lunch and to admire the views. The next stage took us across rough farm tracks and through woodland emerging at the Woodend area of Cardenden. The final section was on the pavement alongside the main road into Kinglassie.

On 19th October we picked up the trail where we had left off in Kinglassie the previous month. We had a brief stop for coffee in the Ness Café before the serious business of walking got under way. The route left Kinglassie by a steep uphill grassy path. We made a detour to the recently restored Finglassin’s Well which is reputed to have healing powers. Returning to the path we continued upwards and ahead of us we could see Blythe’s Tower, an old lookout post, and then on to the farm track road at Finmont Farm. The route into Leslie was through shelter belt trees and follows the Den Burn and then the River Leven. After recent heavy rainfalls the path was exceptionally muddy and required careful navigation. We went through some residential streets in Leslie and then crossed over the Leslie Viaduct and into Glenrothes. We now went along a very pleasant woodland walk, part of which is known as the Bat Walk, alongside the River Leven and into Riverside Park. An interesting feature here is the Labyrinth which is a replica of the Labyrinth at

Chartres Cathedral in France. As a result of some of the footpaths having been so very muddy making walking hard work we were ready to stop here for our picnic lunch. Suitably refreshed we continued through residential streets to Gilvenbank Sports Ground and Park. A road walk through some houses took us close to the site of the Balfarg Henge. It was now necessary to cross the busy A92 road to enter Balbirnie Park at the North Lodge.

We stopped to look at the relocated stones from the Balfarg Henge and then went by a very pleasant woodland walk as far as the golf club house. The route then followed the Balbirnie Burn before emerging out of the park onto Stobcross Road and after passing the Stob Cross we reached St Drostan's Church. We received a very warm welcome from Rev Douglas Galbraith who gave us a conducted tour of the church yard and the interior of the church after which he treated us to a very welcome cup of tea in the Session Room. There has been a place of worship on the site of the church for over a thousand years. The tower that we see today was built by the MacDuff Earls of Fife, probably in the 12th century. Many masons and other craftsmen worked on the project and over a hundred masons' marks have recently been recorded along with traces of the big wheel winch which carried the stone blocks up the tower. It is a fine example of Romanesque architecture.

Next year we plan to continue our pilgrimage via Kennoway and Ceres to St Andrews.

Jenny McLeod

MONEY MATTERS?? (or does it??)

How much do you know about the church's finances? Maybe – not too much!! Here is a simple explanation of the facts behind the figures.

Firstly, let's look at what we spend our money on: -

1. What does our Minister cost per month? –	Salary + NI	£3985
	Expenses	£ 190
	Pulpit Supply	<u>£ 85</u>
	(per month)	£4260
2. What does the Manse cost per month? -	Insurance	£ 40
	Council Tax	£ 260
	Garden M'tnce	£ 90
	Property M'tnce <u>£ 100</u>	
	(per month)	£ 490
3. What does our Music cost per month? -	Organist	£ 315
	Relief Organist	£ 15
	Organ M'tnce	<u>£ 55</u>
	(per month)	£ 385
4. What do we have to pay to Kirkcaldy Presbytery per month? -	(per month)	<u>£135</u>

5. What do our Church and Halls cost per month -	Insurance	£ 385
	Hall Keeper	£ 240
	Cleaner	£ 350
	Gas and Elect.	£ 520
	Maintenance	<u>£ 320</u>
	(per month)	£1815
6. What are our Office Expenses per month?	(per month)	£ 155
7. There are other Sundry Costs per month	(per month)	£ 60

So, the total of all these costs is £7300 per month

Now we need to look at how we can raise this amount per month!!

1. How much do we as a congregation give?		
- Free Will Offering		£3060
- Open Plate		£ 250
- Standing Orders		£ 600
- Gift Aid Reclaim		£ 845
- Donations		£ 355
- Funeral Donations		<u>£ 75</u>
	(per month)	£5185
2. How much interest do our reserves make?		
	(per month)	£ 140
3. How much do we make from renting out our Halls		
	(per month)	£ 925
4. How much do or Church Organisations give?		
- Scouts and Cubs		£115
- Country Dance		£ 50
- Craft Group		£ 60
- Guides		£ 40
- Brownies		£ 30
- Rainbows		<u>£ 30</u>
	(per month)	£ 325
5. How much do or Fundraising events raise?		
- Coffee Mornings		£ 290
- Coffee after church		£ 90
- Internet fundraising		£ 10
- Church Visit		<u>£ 10</u>
	(per month)	£ 400

So, the total of all our money raising is £6975 per month

PROBLEM !!! - WE SPEND MORE THAN WE RAISE – by £325/ month = £3900/ year

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So – What Can We Do About That !!! Well, We Can :-

- 1. If you give to the church by using the weekly Free Will Offering envelopes, then please ensure that your weekly contribution is given for 52 weeks. If we all did this, we would have NO deficit!**
- 2 When did you last look at how much you give to the church? Unfortunately, costs keep going up – could your giving go up !!**
- 3 Are you a tax payer – if so, we can claim back 25% Gift Aid on your giving. At present we can claim Gift Aid refund on roughly $\frac{3}{4}$ of all the FWO giving.**
- 4 If you aren't a tax payer, but maybe your partner is – if you change your giving to under their name, we can make the 25% claim.**
- 5 Consider changing your giving to “by Standing Order”. While this doesn't mean the church gets more, but the contributions then are regular and guaranteed.**
- 6 Support our own Fundraising – Coffee mornings and Christmas Fair. As well as helping the coffers, it is a great time and place to meet up with Kirk members.**
- 7 Traditionally we have made a general appeal at Christmas time to all the congregation for an extra donation. We will do this again this year and your donation envelope is enclosed in this newsletter. Although, if everyone acts on the Points 1 to 6 above, we should meet the shortfall.**

**I HOPE THIS HAS GIVEN YOU FOOD FOR THOUGHT
– EUAN FRASER – TREASURER**

GOOD GIVING

“Our finance team aims to secure the future of the Abbotshall through sound financial management in tandem with using any potential surplus to enable us to better serve our community. We have many ideas on potential projects that we would love to see flourish but are in need of continuous financial support.

It is therefore paramount that any giving that goes beyond our day-to-day running costs develops these aims”

GARDEN APPEAL

Dear Friends

Although we are surrounded by land at the Kirk, there is actually very little physical space that we have control over. As I have walked around the church, I have noticed two areas that I was wondering if we could develop.



The first is outside the halls (shown by one of the two arrows). This would become the Andrew Duncan memorial garden. Our hope is to plant a couple of plants that would make our halls look more inviting.

The second is just outside the crypt (shown by the other arrow) which has been called in the past the Eddie Speed garden. We currently do not have any rights to our graveyard and who can be buried in it. I have noticed in the past that many people would love to have a plaque or be interned in the garden however have been denied by Fife Council. It was with this in mind that we want to develop a memorial garden in this area, where people would be able to purchase a plaque as an act of remembrance.

The reason I write this is an appeal for help in two forms. First financial, we estimate that both Gardens will come to around £400-600 to develop. Second, with planting and developing the garden. If you wish to donate, please let us know.

Kind Regards Justin Taylor



The date this year is **Saturday 7th December.**

All the usual stalls, home baking, jams, confectionery, tombola, craft, greeting cards, cosmetics, bric a brac and raffles, all will be there. **WE HOPE YOU WILL BE TOO.**

All donations and enquires please to Bill Page on 262009.

Tickets on sale at **£3.**

Please note that the hall will be open on Friday 6th December between 2pm to 7pm to receive donations for the stalls.

Please note the next coffee morning will be on **Saturday 11th January 2020.**

Tickets on sale at **£3.**

Thank You Bill Page

YOUNG CHURCH CHRISTMAS DISCO

As in previous years our Young Church are holding their popular Christmas Disco on Saturday 21st of December from 3pm to 5pm.

Children and grandchildren of members are welcome. Please inform any of the young church staff Suzanne, Diane or myself or uplift a leaflet from the vestibule in the church. This is so we are able to cater for the buffet. There is no charge for this function. We then proceed to the church for the Christingle service.

Bill Page

Young Church Snowman Drive

The Snowman Drive takes place on Wednesday 11th December at

6.30 pm. Tickets are priced at £2 for adults and £1 for children. The cost includes refreshments after the drive. Tickets will be on sale soon. See you there.

The Young church

The collection for the Food bank and Blythswood boxes were again a successful effort by the congregation. Thank You.

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BEREAVEMENT

We were saddened at the passing of Raymond Duncan in October

THANK YOU

I would like to thank members for their cards, kind thoughts and concern during my recent ill-health, also the flowers which were much appreciated. Tom Scott

PRAYER GROUP

We meet in the Vestry usually on the second and last Sunday in the month for about 15 minutes at 10 am. A warm welcome is extended to anyone who would like to join us on any of the dates below:-

10th November (meet at 9.45), 24th November, 8th December, 15th December.

12th January 2020, 26th January, 9th February, 23rd February, 8th March, 29th March, 12th April, 26th April.

If there is someone or something you would like the Prayer Group to pray for, please put a note in the prayer boxes in the Church Vestibule or the Church Hall.

Anne Gardner Prayer Promoter Phone: 01592 265876

Craft Group

The craft group thanks the congregation who knitted poppies for the display at the armistice service.

Your contribution was appreciated.

The group had two more successful open mornings this year.

The craft group resumes on Wednesday 15th January 2020 at 10 am in the Kennedy Hall. We would still like to see more people attend both male and female. If you have a craft hobby or a project you are working on (e.g. modelling, art, sewing, knitting etc.) please bring it along and enjoy fellowship and refreshments.

For further information contact Bett Duncan.

Pastoral Care - Tear off slip

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I would like a member of Pastoral Care to contact me on the number detailed below.

Name

Contact telephone number

Date:

Please place this form in the box in the Church vestibule, or email to the minister jtaylor@churchofscotland.org.uk or by post to Justin at the Manse, 83 Milton Road, Kirkcaldy KY1 1TP

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28 NIV

In accordance with GDPR guidelines, this form will be destroyed when we have dealt with the query.

Next Newsletter – Lent and Easter Edition 2020

Thanks to all contributors who sent in material for this present issue. It is much appreciated.

Please continue to think about something of interest for inclusion in the next issue in February.

Closedown will be **Sunday 25th January 2020.**

Please send your contributions to Diane Murray on e/mail at dianemurray953@btinternet.com or by post to 97 Mellerstain Road, Kirkcaldy KY2 6UD or leave in our basket in the church vestibule.