

St Ninian's Church

www.corstorphinstninians.org.uk

In the heart of Corstorphine



Quarterly Magazine
Spring 2025



Dear Friends

Dear Friends,

'... A great gale arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But Jesus was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and the disciples woke him up and said to him, 'Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?' He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Peace! Be still!' Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, 'Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?'

(Mark 4: 35 – 40)

Elsewhere in this edition of the Quarterly there are dramatic photographs of storm damage in Corstorphine caused by ferocious Éowyn, which hit the UK and Ireland on the 24th of January. Storms are no fun; I hope you came through that one unscathed, not everyone did. Natural disasters of all kinds can be very serious. The manse family own a property in the Borders. During the November cold snap, a pipe burst, and the cottage was flooded. Even this harmless 'disaster' has been disruptive, intrusive, and upsetting for us. For others, storms and floods can be much more serious, people fear for their lives.

Storms aren't only real, they are also metaphorical. All sorts of storms buffet and sometimes wreck our lives. Ill-health, a lost job, a broken relationship, a bereavement, or any number of physical and emotional tragedies make us wonder whether the misfortunes we suffer are a feature of our lives or a bug. Are they a part of creation, or a part of creation gone wrong?

If they are a bug – something intrusive that can be pulled out – then we might think that we should be able to pray that God will make the storms of life go away. After all, why would God not come to our rescue? On the other hand, if they are an intrinsic part of our fallen world and our fallen lives, prayer may not be as useful.

Jesus encountered misfortune, tragedy, and disaster. From a boat on the sea of Galilee to a garden before his arrest, storms both real and metaphorical often crashed around him. Both in the boat and in the garden, Jesus discovered that the storms he encountered had to be faced rather than wished away out of fear, '...and going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want."' (Matthew 26:39)

Jesus taught this lesson to his disciples; faith is praying for the strength to courageously live in this fallen world confronting the storms of suffering, sadness and misfortune that blow through our lives. Cowering in a boat hoping that God will make it all go away is wishful thinking. Praying for faith to face our fears brings us strength from God, which we didn't believe it was possible for us to have. That strength can be accompanied by an unexpected stillness and peace.

Whatever storms you must face this year, I pray that through your faith in God, by the power of Christ's love for you, and with the help of the spirit of holiness found in the love that we in the Christian community have for each other, you will discover the strength and courage that you need to endure, and that you will experience some measure of peace and stillness despite it all.

Best wishes,

James



SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE EVENING

4th March 2025
from 7:00pm



To mark the start of the Season of Lent
come and enjoy
food, fellowship, and fun
for all ages.

ST. NINIAN'S PARISH CHURCH



Easter Sunday

20th April

Corstorphine Hill, 8:00am

(meet at 7:50 at the top of Cairnmuir Road
or 7:30 in St. Ninian's car park)

(followed by egg rolling and bacon rolls)

St. Ninian's, 10:30am

(followed by a separate short act of communion)

During the 10:30am service children of all ages are welcome. There will be a children's address and individual drawing and paper-activities to keep the children engaged. There will be an Easter Egg Hunt after the Service

St. Ninian's Parish Church

144 St. John's Road

SCO 016557



Dates for the Diary



The Kirk Session will meet in the Burn's Hall at 19.30 on the following dates:

- ◆ 19th February
- ◆ 28th May
- ◆ 17th September
- ◆ 19th November

Communion Services will be held at **10.30**
(Refreshments after each service) and
at **15:00** (Refreshments after each afternoon service, with
an afternoon tea in June) on the following dates:

- ◆ 2nd March
- ◆ 1st June
- ◆ 7th September
- ◆ 7th December



rock trust

ENDING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

THANK YOU SO MUCH!

St Ninian's supplied 1,531 items of food and toiletries to Rock Trust over the course of 2024. The generosity of your ongoing support is greatly appreciated by all concerned.

Rock Trust gratefully relies upon our regular monthly delivery of 100 plus items to replenish its stocks. All kinds of tinned and other non-perishable food items are welcome including products which can be reconstituted with water, e.g. packets of soup and noodle and pasta pots such as Mug-shots which are invaluable to young folk who may have access to no more than a kettle. Toiletries and other little luxuries are also appreciated. All items can be left in the dedicated cupboard at the front door of the church before the service on Sundays. Please help yourself to the supply of carrier bags you will find there as well. If you would like to help but are unable to bring items to church, please get in touch with me.

More detailed information on all aspects of the work of the Rock Trust may be found by visiting www.rocktrust.org.

Susanne Hope (334 2489)



Our Guild @ St Ninian's

Our programme continues with an interesting selection of talks and presentations. Of course the highlight must be on Tuesday 18th February when "Congratulations and Celebrations" do just that! Our Guild has come a long way since it was started in 1940 and now we celebrate 85 years; years in which our members have served the Guild through action, faith and prayer.

The numbers may have dwindled since the 1940s when approximately 150 ladies attended an afternoon meeting or an evening one here in St Ninian's; I wonder how the tea convener coped with that! Throughout Edinburgh there were over 120 Guilds. As the years go by Guild numbers have diminished until in Edinburgh there remain only nineteen Guilds. With our 42 faithful and enthusiastic members we shall continue to share faith, fellowship, friendship and fun at our weekly gatherings and you who have missed out on so many of them are welcome to dip in to the rest of our programme until April. You might be inspired to come again to our next session starting in October! You would be very welcome.

Congratulations; yes, this is another reason for celebration as we now recognise the service given to Our Guild. Everyone's service is contributed weekly as we meet and it is greatly appreciated. The Guild acknowledges this service but only after 25 years and so the time has come when the following members will be congratulated and presented with a certificate. Many of them have served our Guild in various roles including president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, roll keeper, project partner, tea convener; they used to have a label, have I missed one? Some have served on local committees and national ones as well.

Congratulations to

Diana Fairgrieve - 25,

Maureen Paton - 25,

Valerie Thomson - 30,

Morag McLarty - 33,

Katherine Broom - 35,

Audrey Winton - 35,

Brenda Anderson - 45,

Norma Gilmore - 45,

Yvonne Wallace - 50.



Valerie Thomson

Guild contact





Christian Aid

We at Corstorphine St Ninian's Church, continue to fundraise for Christian Aid enabling them to assist communities in the developing world and disasters wherever they occur.

Christian Aid Fundraising 2024

We fundraised for Christian Aid for a variety of their appeals including for the DEC Middle East Humanitarian Appeal, Christian Aid Week, KiltWalk2024 and the Christmas Eve Appeal as follows:

Middle East Humanitarian Appeal	£538.00
Christian Aid Week 2024	£3,073.02
KiltWalk2024	£1,448.00
Christmas Eve Appeal 2024	£1,211.55
Total raised in 2024 was	£6,270.57

Events within Christian Aid Week were the Soup & Sweet Lunch, 70 Lap Challenge and delicious Biscuits baked and sold by the Sunday School, the Christian Aid Quiz, and Retiring Collection.

2025 Fundraising Events will include:

Christian Aid Week	11- 17 May
Soup and Sweet Lunch	11 May
Congregational Walk/ Bridge Crossing	To be arranged
Christmas Eve Retiring Collection	24 December
Supporting Emergency Appeals	As they arise

Thank you to everyone who fundraised, helped, and contributed to the amount raised and for your continuing support.

Alec Millar Christian Aid Coordinator

Tel 0773 800 7302 alec.w.millar@blueyonder.co.uk





Some of you may know that I've been missing from church over the past 18 months. During this time, I have been travelling with the non-profit organisation called 'Heart Global'. Heart Global runs workshops in schools and community groups all over the world working with children and adults to teach singing and dancing with the overall aim of boosting self-esteem and improving confidence. Our cast members come from all over the world, giving me the opportunity to make friends and work with people from 14 different countries. I have completed 3 tours, 2 in Japan and 1 travelling Europe and am about to embark on my 4th tour, bringing the cast to the UK and Ireland. At the end of our 3 day workshops the participants and the cast come together to put on a show for family and friends in which they show everything they have learned and even perform solos. It's so amazing to see even the shyest children stand up and sing a song (often in a foreign language to them) or perform a dance for the audience. The philosophy at Heart Global is 'YES AND...' meaning, just go for it and try something new. We are encouraged in our workshops to say yes to trying new things, even if it is something way outside our comfort zone, and we encourage the participants to do the same.



While travelling we also get the opportunity to stay with Host Families who give us accommodation and look after us. The host families often take us on days out around the area and show us what their life is like. This has given me the chance to try so many new things like cycling football, wearing traditional Japanese dress and making real Italian pasta. This is such an amazing way to immerse yourself in the culture and I have made many friends, and learnt so much.

Heart Global was founded in 2020, right before the world went into lockdown, by Bill Brawley and Robyn Brawley. Bill has been working for over 40 years in the industry as an artistic director, and has performed alongside the likes of Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire and worked with Diana Ross and Whitney Houston while directing the Superbowl Halftime Show and FIFA World Cup Closing Ceremonies. Robyn Brawley began her career at the Australian Ballet Company and the Royal Swedish Ballet and has performed with many great classical ballet dancers, and has directed Broadway Concerts with Tony award winning artists. Together they have gathered special guest directors who direct the cast on our tours and change every 2 - 3 weeks. These guest directors also fly in from all over the world and range from Broadway performers to Ballroom dancers, each one there to teach us something new about performing and teaching.

I'm so grateful to everyone I've met and worked alongside while doing this and I can't wait to have the new cast over in Scotland in March!

Hannah Waugh

St Columba's Hospice Coffee Morning

St Ninian's Church,
8th March 2025
10am – noon

Coffees & Teas, Books, Flowers, Hampers, Home Baking, Tombola,
Knitted Goods & Hospice Stall
£3 Adult & £1 child

St Columba's
Hospice Care





Mission Committee

Our March collection for Fresh Start will be on Communion Sunday 2nd March when we will be looking for Pots, Pans and Kitchen Equipment, or anything else you would be happy to use yourself. Buckets will be at the doors of the Church.

A big thank you to everyone who helped deliver the Congregational Christmas Cards. Over 2,000 cards were delivered to homes within the Parish and members living outwith. Congratulations again to Nathan and Piper who designed last years cards.

Once again forty Bags of Hope were delivered to members who are no longer able to attend services. These bags have been well received, and it is important that we do not forget our members and continue to remember them in our thoughts. Thanks all who helped to deliver these bags.

On Sunday 10th November after our Remembrance Service we held a retiring offering to raise funds for

the New Scots Christmas Appeal. The sum of £600 was raised to help buy hampers for refugees living in Edinburgh. Thank you to those who helped to deliver the hampers.

To start the New Year we held our Annual Congregational Lunch on Sunday 19th January. The amazing sum of £600 was raised, a cheque has been delivered to the Maggie Centre. Thank you to all who gave so generously and to Georgie and the Hospitality Team for another successful event. The Mission Committee hope to hold a summer lunch, watch out for more news on this nearer the time.

Once again we would like to thank the Minister, Kirk Session and Congregation for all their help and encouragement.

Margaret Hunter





Fire Evacuation Information

The Fire Warden Team leads: Marion Campbell, Fiona Coutts and Lesley Gulland have updated the Fire Evacuation information for the church. The Church of Scotland ask us to ensure that the congregation is made aware of the fire evacuation plan for the church. Please find this information below

At the sound of the Fire alarm, the Beadle or Fire Team lead will identify where the Fire is and remain at the front of the Sanctuary to manage the evacuation,

When the alarm rings, the Fire wardens in the church will proceed to the Sanctuary Fire exits at the east, west & front doors. The Fire lead and wardens will be wearing **yellow 'hi vis jackets'**,

Fire wardens will direct you to the appropriate exits, depending on the site of the Fire. The safe exit may not be the nearest exit to your seat. **Please listen/watch the Fire lead and wardens.**

The **primary exit routes** from the Sanctuary in the event of fire are as follows:

seated in the centre aisle, leave by the **front doors** to the FRONT meeting point,

seated in the choir, the east transept or Beith hall, leave by **east front door** to the FRONT meeting point,

seated in the west transept, leave via **west corridor front door** to the FRONT meeting point or **those with mobility issues** via **room 4** to the REAR meeting point,

from room 6, leave via **west corridor front door** to the FRONT meeting point,

from the Martin Shields Hall, creche or lounge leave via the **Crush Hall** or **North corridor door** to REAR meeting point,

from Burns Hall leave via the **emergency exit door** in the hall, or the **Crush Hall** to REAR meeting point.

The Fire safety meeting points for the church are:

FRONT – on the pavement on St John's Road to the west of the front entrance to the church. Please keep the church entrance free for the Fire Service to gain access,

REAR – on the pavement outside St John's church on St Ninian's Road. Please keep the rear church entrance free for the Fire Service to gain access,

The congregation are asked to leave the Sanctuary as quickly and as calmly as possible, to gather at the front and rear Fire safety meeting points.

If you need additional support, please gather in the west transept wheelchair space, if practical, and await assistance, or speak with a Fire warden. The wardens will help or encourage others to assist if necessary.

Primary children attending Sunday School will exit with their teachers, via the **Crush Hall, or the Burns Hall emergency exit**. Parents leaving from the front of the church should meet their children at the REAR meeting point, via St Ninians Drive and along St Ninians Road.

The Fire warden at the front door of the church, and the Fire warden in the car park will encourage you to move towards the front and rear meeting points respectively.

Please leave the church quickly and calmly, do not return to the church until the Fire wardens instruct you to do so.



The Big Freeze of 1955 (and the Storm of 2025)



Seventy years ago, from early February 1955 and well into March, a Big Freeze took place in Britain. Deep snow and freezing temperatures caused havoc, with many places cut off. The RAF dropped food and medical supplies to affected areas, while thousands of sheep died from exposure.

Although the winters of 1947 and 1963 have attracted more publicity, 1955 saw severe weather in most parts of Britain, as well as in other parts of Europe and North America.

Snow fell in many areas of the UK from 11th February onwards, with night frosts gradually worsening and blizzards developing over the north of Scotland, where the RAF scrambled to do several rescues: in Caithness the response by emergency services was known as Operation Snowdrop. An exhausting search for a postman from Thurso, who went missing in the deep snow, eventually led to his being found at a remote farm where he had sought refuge.

More than 70 roads in Britain were blocked by snow, according to the Automobile Association, and hundreds of vehicles were abandoned in snowdrifts. Many parts of the country were cut off from essential supplies, and rail travel was disrupted. Church attendance was also hit, of course.

This year in Corstorphine we have had our fair share of Winter Weather including a very cold snap at the beginning of January. Then with Storm Eowyn a red weather warning brought the City and activities to a halt just like lockdown. There was even a gridlocked carpark in Tesco the evening before as people prepared for a day inside.





Storm Eowyn in Corstorphine



Fences, Fences everywhere



The Old Manse Garden and the New Manse Garden



Before and After

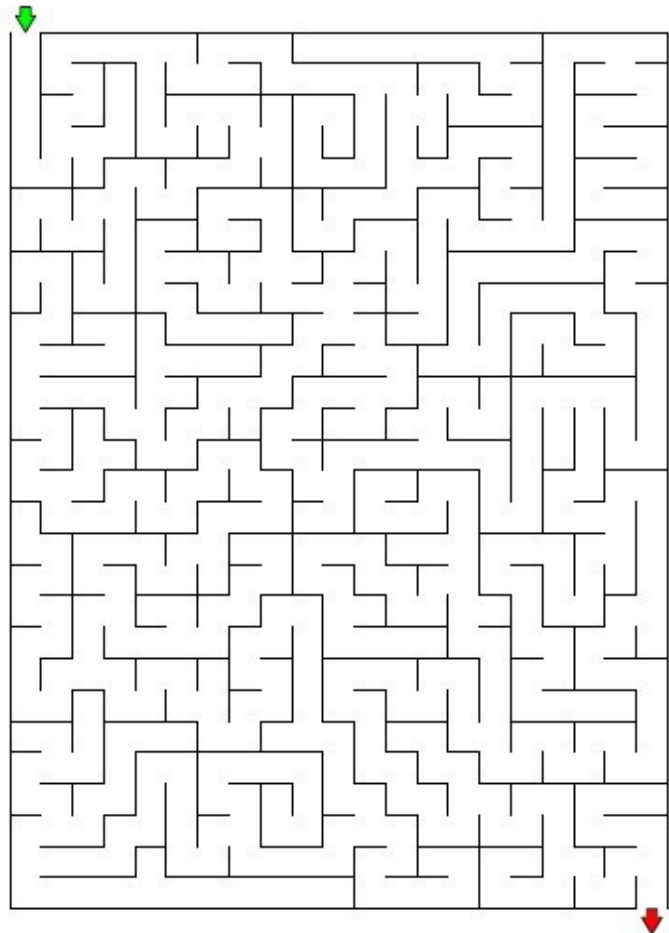


Sudoku

		1		6			8	
8			5				7	2
		9	2	4		3		
	5							
		3	7	1	5	2		
							5	
		8		7	9	5		
2	9				6			8
	3			2		7		

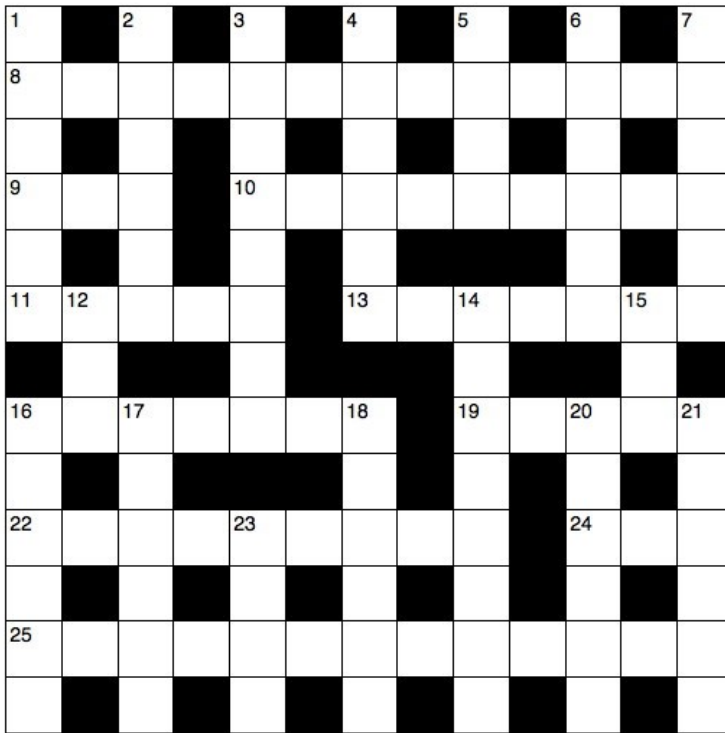
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Maze





Crossword Time



Across

- 8 Interrogated (Acts 12:19) (5-8)
- 9 'Burn it in a wood fire on the — heap' (Leviticus 4:12) (3)
- 10 Tobit, Judith, Baruch and the books of Esdras and the Maccabees are part of it (9)
- 11 Science fiction (abbrev.) (3-2)
- 13 Clay pit (anag.) (7)
- 16 Went to (John 4:46) (7)
- 19 'Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to — your bodies as living sacrifices' (Romans 12:1) (5)
- 22 David's plea to God concerning those referred to in 14
Down: 'On — — let them escape' (Psalm 56:7) (2,7)
- 24 Royal Automobile Club (1,1,1) 25 How the book of Ezekiel refers to God more than 200 times (Ezekiel 2:4) (9,4)

Down

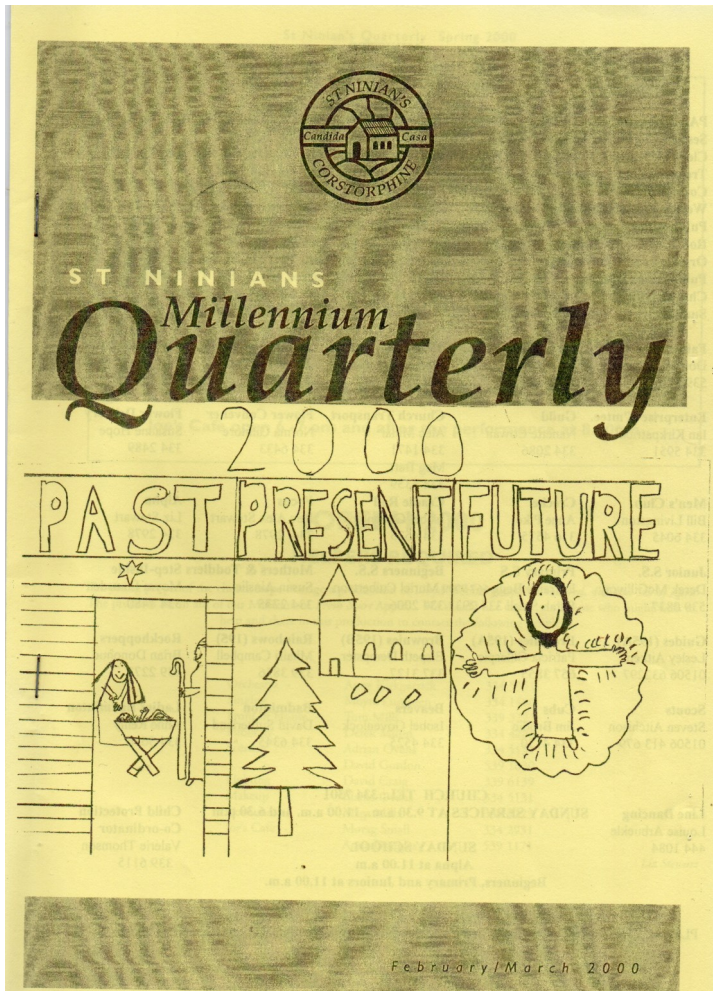
- 1 Seas (Proverbs 8:24) (6)
- 2 One of the sons of Eli the priest, killed in battle by the Philistines (1 Samuel 4:11) (6)
- 3 Specialist in the study of the Muslim religion (8)
- 4 'Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but — him as if he were your father' (1 Timothy 5:1) (6)
- 5 One of Esau's grandsons (Genesis 36:11) (4)
- 6 Taking a chance (colloq.) (2,4)
- 7 God's instructions to the Israelites concerning grain offerings: ' — salt to — your offerings' (Leviticus 2:13) (3,3)
- 12 Confederation of British Industry (1,1,1)
- 14 'All day long they twist my words; they are always — to harm me' (Psalm 56:5) (8)
- 15 The crowd's reaction to Jesus bringing back to life a widow's son in Nain (Luke 7:16) (3)
- 16 Disappear (Psalm 104:35) (6)
- 17 How Jeremiah was likely to die if he wasn't rescued from the cistern where he was imprisoned (Jeremiah 38:9) (6)
- 18 What the prophets do to a wall, with whitewash (Ezekiel 13:10, RSV) (4,2)
- 20 Made by a plough (Job 39:10) (6)
- 21 Noah was relieved when the flood waters continued to — (Genesis 8:5) (6)
- 23 Jesus gave the Twelve the power and authority to do this to diseases (Luke 9:1) (4)



Past Times in St Ninian's

The first edition of the Quarterly in the new Millennium (though some asserted that the new Millennium didn't start until 2001!) contained a wide variety of articles reflecting the work that went on in St Ninian's at that time. A few extracts include a copy of the distinctive cover designed by an un-named child in the Sunday School, referring to The Past (Birth of Christ), The Present (Church and Christmas Tree) and The Future (the Second Coming).

Andrew Broom



"Minister's Honour"

"It is good to be reminded from time to time that ministers have interests outside of the Church which help them to relax in their leisure hours. Our own minister, Mr Stewart [Rev Alex T Stewart] is no exception and has had a life-long fascination with Archaeology and Antiquities, especially in relation to Scotland's many standing stones and stone circles.

" It was appropriate, therefore, that in November last, Mr Stewart was elected a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, a singular honour indeed. The Society was founded in 1780 and incorporated by Royal Charter three years later, being the second-oldest such Society in Britain and has as its main purpose the study of the antiquities and history of Scotland. I am sure that the whole congregation will join in congratulating Mr Stewart, FSA Scot, at this time. DTR" [Douglas T Ramsay]



"Evening Services"

"The Kirk Session have agreed to give a new look to our Evening Services this year. Once a month we shall have a Songs of Praise type of Service. On the other Sunday evenings in the month, in addition to the Ministry Team, a number of Elders have offered to lead our worship. These will be informal Services with a difference. Elders will speak about their own faith and experience. Please encourage our Elders and support these Services."

"Sunday Morning Coffee"

"Approximately 19,000 cups of tea and coffee have been poured between the Services on Sunday mornings, since the project began. 'That's a fair amount of washing up' I hear you say! The eight teams of ladies and short list of reserves deserve a big thank you for turning up regularly to organise things. A goodly number of these have been involved since November 1981. Well done, ladies! From proceeds this year we have bought 4 oven trays, 6 serving trays and gave a donation to St Ninian's Millennium Project, *Fresh Start*. Thank you all again for your support. IN" [Inez Nisbet]

"Church Flowers"

"Harvest and Christmas have long since passed, but we can still have thoughts of the happy times, especially with the people you care about. If at any time you would like flowers in Church for a special occasion, or in fact would like to 'do' the flowers please phone me and something could be arranged. I have a willing little band of helpers whom I can call on at Harvest and Christmas when we enjoy laughter and lunch and fellowship. Someone gave me this verse which I share with you. Norma Gilmore"

"Among the unsung heroines who grace this world of ours

Are those who give and who arrange

Their Church's lovely flowers.

I wonder if they realise the pleasure that they bring

To people who will gather there to worship and to sing,

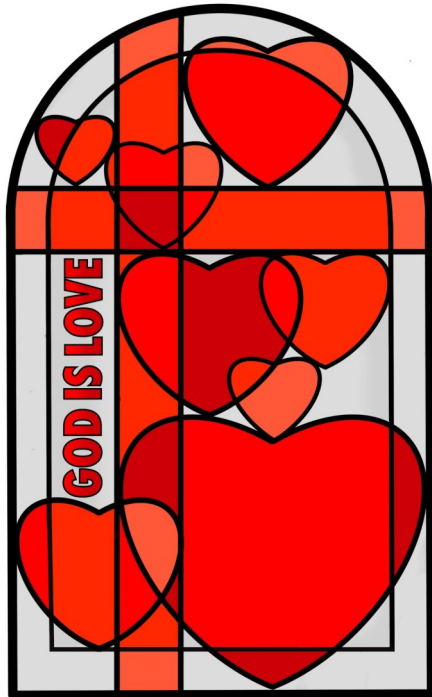
Or the warm friendship that they send

When given to those who can't attend?"





Valentine's Day Observations on Love...



Marriage is more than finding the right person; it is being the right person. – *Anon*

'One plus one equals one' may not be an accurate mathematical concept, but it is an accurate description of God's intention for the marriage relationship. – *Wayne Mack*

Marriage is the ultimate invitation to growth in unselfishness. Living with another imperfect person pushes us to mature, mellow and master the art of relationship-enhancing self-denial. – *UCB Word for Today*

Even if it's a little, do something for which there is no pay, but the privilege of doing it. – *Albert Schweitzer*

When you routinely build little kindnesses into your marriage, they build the bond of trust and love between you. And your marriage partner is not a mind reader! So, whenever you think something nice about them, tell them. – *Anon*

The purpose of this world is not to have and to hold, but to forgive and to serve. – *Wilfred Grenfell*

Salt is like love; it can heal, purify preserve and enrich, but it's useless if it's not sprinkled around. The truth is that all of life is tasteless without love. – *UCB Word for Today*

Love is practical, or it is not love at all. – *P W Heward*

Love seeks one thing only: the good of the one loved. It leaves all the other secondary effects to take care of themselves. – *Thomas Merton*



Congregation Register

New Members by Transference Certificate:

Mrs Angela Grossart Craigmount Brae

New Member by Resolution of Kirk Session:

Mr Philip Tang Pearce Avenue
Mrs Wendy Tang Pearce Avenue

Funerals:

24th November 2024* Mr Charles (Charlie) Jackson, St John's Road

* Denotes member

Puzzle Answers

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

9	6	7	4	2	8	5	3	1
8	4	1	6	5	3	7	9	2
3	2	5	9	7	1	8	6	4
7	5	6	3	8	4	2	1	9
4	9	2	5	1	7	3	8	6
1	3	8	2	9	6	4	5	7
4	9	2	5	1	7	3	8	6
1	3	8	2	9	6	4	5	7
6	1	3	8	2	9	6	4	5
2	7	9	1	3	5	6	4	8
5	8	4	7	6	9	1	2	3



Parish People : Phil Wheeler

How long have you been involved in St Ninian's and in what ways?

Our daughter was born shortly after Maggie and I moved to Clerwood in 1974, so we asked the parish minister (Revd Colin Martin) to christen her. We have attended fairly regularly since then.

In 1984 I became a deacon – another banker must have been needed to count the collection! – and I soon joined the Finance Committee. I became an elder in 1994.

A few years later, I convened the Praise & Worship Committee, which recommended combining the two morning services into the current one at 10.30; this change reflected the shrinking congregation. Subsequently, evening services were abandoned, after a few "Songs of Praise" style events.

As a member of the (short-lived) Social Committee, I invited Jimmie MacGregor to speak about a couple of his treks.

Any special memories of the Church?

The baptisms of both our children, becoming a Deacon and then an Elder and the absolute high spot for a father: our daughter's wedding.

Do you have a favourite Hymn?

"Lift up your hearts" (CH4 – 518). Its tune, "Woodlands", is named after a boarding house at my old school (Gresham's School, Holt, in Norfolk), and was composed by Walter Greatorex. It was reported that he and his pupil Benjamin Britten did not agree about music.

What is the best piece of advice you've received?

When I retired, a senior elder advised me not to take on any commitments for six months.

Something people don't know about me:

I had an opportunity to visit the top of the Forth Road Bridge's North Tower (500 feet above the water), despite my fear of heights – see photo!





Primary Sunday School



We enjoyed a very busy last quarter with an extra Sunday because of the when Christmas fell.

It was our Christmas Party on the 7th of December when we had fun with party games, food and of course a visit from Santa. The children brought friends with them, and we had 14 children, so it was a good number, and fun was had by all. Mark came along and supported us with an extra pair of hands which was much appreciated.

In one of our sessions pre-Christmas we learnt about and made Christingles, I am not sure how many "fruits" survived before the oranges made it home.

For the family service, with help from Aidan and Mary Brotherton, we staged "The Newsflash Nativity". The children all did really well with their lines and were hope-fully clear enough for the congregation to hear. I also hope that it wasn't too noticeable that Tyler had to double up as a King and Joseph.

We continue to follow the Roots syllabus and so far, the children have made Origami Boats to represent "Crossing in Faith", Pinata Cakes to help us think about the abundance of God, and the surprise at the wedding in Cana when Jesus performed his first miracle. We look forward to seeing what else is planned in the coming months.

Barbara Mackie





Paul Art

As part of my Divinity degree, I recently began a course called 'Paul and His Letters'. For this course I need to make a presentation, to my tutorial group, on an artwork related in some way to the Apostle Paul, his writings, and/or significant themes in his writings. Despite my previous undergraduate degree being in History of Art, I was keen to find something modern for this task, and something with obvious contemporary relevance.

The only written description of Paul is found within a second-century apocryphal text, called "The Acts of Paul and Thecla", here Paul is described as:

"a man small of stature, with a bald head and crooked legs, in a good state of body, with eyebrows meeting and nose somewhat crooked, full of friendliness; for now he appeared like a man, and now he had the face of an angel."

I was reluctant to select from the array of ancient portraits to be found, likely based on this description, and shy too of choosing a well-known classical historical scene, such as one of Raphael's cartoons, in which Paul is featured. Therefore, I was delighted when I discovered this recently commissioned work by Bettina Furnée entitled "I am more like this".



"I am more like this" was created for an exhibition, in May 2023, called Reimagining Paul, seeking to help viewers visualise Paul in new ways, connecting to contemporary themes of identity and asking how we might interpret Paul and his letters today. This lilac and yellow lit neon work displays alternating flashing text over two lines: "like this" and "I am more". The words are an extract from the New International Version translation of 2 Corinthians 11:23, which in its entirety reads:

"Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again".

In this verse and the wider passage, Paul boasts of various hardships he has suffered in the course of his ministry. By isolating words from 11:23, and presenting them in flashing neon format, the words can be read as an ambiguous identity statement prompting two questions: 'like what?' and 'more what?'.



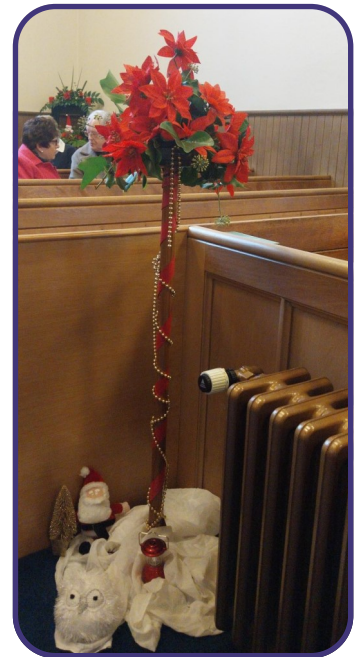
The textual nature of this work appealed to me because Paul's legacy is written. I was also struck by the artist's explanation that she was invited to respond to selected passages of Paul's letters that resist ancient and modern expectations regarding masculinity and gender, with Paul alluding to his body as being marked, disabled, enslaved and maternal. As I reflected on this suggestion, and the words included in the artwork, I thought about how limited our understanding of others can be, and how we readily view difference negatively. Yet, "like this I am more" / "I am more like this" reminds us that whatever "this" difference is, it can indeed be something positive, resulting in us being "more", and possibly not something that is measured by orthodox means of success or wealth. I wonder what the words make you think of?

Emma McMillian





Christmas at St Ninian's



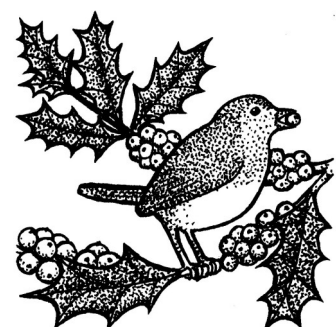
Whilst Christmas is now just a memory, I just wanted once again to thank everyone for the response to our Salvation Army Gift Appeal. We were pleased to be able to give Barbara Wells the sum of £810 together with an exceptional number of gifts as seen in the photographs. We are very fortunate here at St Ninians to have the support of the Congregation and Sunday School together with a generous donation from out with the Congregation.

On checking back, I see that this was the same amount as we donated in 2022, so despite the present economic climate and so many calls on our funds for various charities at this time of year this really was a magnificent effort.

Diana Fairgrieve



Gift Service





Nativity



Christmas Party





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