

CASTLE HILL
Parish Church
Winter



The Herald



winter
2023

Editorial

The front cover for this edition of The Herald has come courtesy of a competition we ran for pupils at Kincaidston Primary School. We had submissions from both P3 and P5 with the winning entry coming from Finlay Peach, P5. Congratulations and thank you to Kincaidston for providing all the entries, it wasn't an easy decision to make.

There are many interesting articles in the magazine from learning about the work of the street pastors to an update from Christopher Watt, as well as updates from all the usual contributors. Thank you to all who have contributed articles to this magazine.

I would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year on behalf of the Publicity Committee.

Rachel Queen, Editor

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Have your say

If you have any comments to make on the Magazine, please feel free to do so by letter or email to herald@castlehillchurch.org. We are always pleased to consider any articles for the magazine from members of the congregation. These can also be sent to the same email address.

From The Manse



Dear Friends

How does Christmas feel for you in advance this year? It will, I fear, be a season of many differing moods for different people for various reasons. Most of these reasons will, however, be external causes for complaint – something that is not happening or has happened and is not seen as having a place in Christmas celebrations. The feelings may well be valid as much as they are real but as we look into Advent in preparation for Christmas, perhaps we could start in no better place than the meaning attributed to the candles we shall light throughout December:

HOPE PEACE JOY LOVE JESUS

These speak first of feelings which are distinctly worthwhile for our world always, and then we have the source of these feelings in the last, the white candle: Jesus. Surely, Hope, Peace, Joy and Love should be our focus through the Church year that begins in Advent, not just as we mark the birth of Jesus at Christmas. Peace was the message of the angels in Advent: Peace should be a prominent message this Advent whether it is echoed elsewhere or not. If it is, we can look forward with hope. If love has a place in our homes and hearts this year, then no matter whatever things do not feature for us or for others, there will be a joy that goes deeper than any pervading despair. And we can be sure of that because Jesus does not only finish 2023 with us but is our constant companion in 2024 and every succeeding year.

Let's make a place for worship throughout Advent, to Christmas and beyond in all our lives this year: whether in person or online. Let us make our welcome to others more emphatic this Christmas whether it is people returning for the season or our community calling. We believe that under God we have a future here: let's demonstrate that by our everyday actions all the time and show people in our communities that we care for the continued presence of the Church here. Francis of Assisi spoke of and prayed for peace but he is also accredited with the instruction to "Preach the Gospel always, and sometimes use words." [And in that I am writing to myself as well!!].

Take care of yourselves through Advent and may you and yours know the blessings of Christmas wherever you celebrate it.

God bless you all at this time.

Paul

ADVENT LEADS TO CHRISTMAS

Our worship in December will naturally focus on Advent and Christmas. The following is our timetable of services:

DECEMBER 2ND PROSPECT CAROL SERVICE FOR ALL **2 PM** IN CHURCH.
COME ALONG ON SATURDAY AFTERNOON AND WELCOME
OUR GUESTS WHO WILL LEAD THE SERVICE. TEA/
COFFEE AFTERWARDS.

DECEMBER 3RD **11 AM** ADVENT ONE
ADMISSION OF NEW MEMBERS AND COMMUNION
SOUP LUNCH + TEA/COFFEE AFTERWARDS
WORLD AIDS SUNDAY
6 PM ADVENT REFLECTION
BRIEF REFLECTION LASTING 30 MINUTES

DECEMBER 10TH **11 AM** ADVENT TWO
TEA AND COFFEE AFTERWARDS
BAPTISM CELEBRATED
6 PM ADVENT REFLECTION 30MINS

DECEMBER 17TH **11 AM** ADVENT THREE
TEA AND COFFEE AFTERWARDS
6 PM QUIET SERVICE TO REMEMBER THOSE WHO WILL
NOT CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH US. TEA/COFFEE
AFTER

DECEMBER 24TH **11 AM** NATIVITY: YOUNG CHURCH
ADVENT FOUR REFLECTION
TEA/COFFEE AFTERWARDS
7 PM ALL AGE CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

DECEMBER 25TH **10.30 AM** BRIEF CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE WITH
COMMUNION

DECEMBER 31ST **11 AM** SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

JANUARY 7TH **11 AM** FIRST SUNDAY OF NEW YEAR
SOUP LUNCH TEA/COFFEE SHORTBREAD

ALL ARE WELCOME AT ALL OUR SERVICES!

BELMONT ACADEMY CHRISTMAS CONCERT **11TH DECEMBER** at **7 PM** IN
CHURCH. ALL WELCOME: PAY AT DOOR.

“Update from an Old Friend”

Hello folks and greetings from Dumfries! I can't believe how quickly time has passed, it seems like only yesterday that I was taking choir practices on a Friday and worshipping with you all on a Sunday morning! As many of you know over the past three years I have been studying for my divinity degree along with undertaking the initial stages of training with the Church of Scotland to become a Minister of Word and Sacrament. I am delighted to tell you that I have passed my degree and my first three placements and am now officially a Bachelor of Theology. What it means in practice is that I am now able to move to the final stage of my ministry training and I become a probationary candidate.

A Probationary candidate is a wee bit like a probationary teacher. I am going to be placed in the Parish of Thornhill, Durisdeer and Penpont for the next 15 months where I will in effect be an assistant minister. Currently this parish has no minister so I will be left to my own devices whilst being supervised by an experienced minister in Dumfries.

Having found it quite a struggle over the past few years to become a student again and get back into the academic life I am excited to move on to this more practical stage in my training. Going into a parish where there has been no minister for a few years means that there is huge scope for me to try things out and really try and develop what kind of minister I will be going forward. On the flip side though I am somewhat anxious about it, not wanting to make any mistakes or let anyone down.

One of the best parts about training for Ministry is knowing that you are doing what God wants you to do and so I take great comfort when things are getting tricky that if God has got me thus far then he will mould me into the minister that he would want me to be going forward and won't let me fail. That having been said I would value your prayers for both me and the congregations that we will get on well together and the 15 months will be a positive time for us all.

I am entering the ministry at a time where the church is going through huge amounts of change with many churches closing, linking or going into union owing to declining congregations and not enough ministers to go round. A number of people have asked me is it really a good idea to enter the Church of Scotland at the moment with everything up in the air however, I trust just as God has called me to the ministry that God will not let his church die and that instead everyone needs to roll up their sleeves and get on out there, showing people that the church, rather than a dying institution, is a place where anyone can come for love, support, encouragement, comfort and most importantly of all, to develop a relationship with the living God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Take care everyone and I hope that God willing, some of you may be able to join me in my ordination if I successfully complete my probationary period.

With my very best wishes

Christopher Watt

Attention Photographers

We are looking to update the banner photograph on the Church website, if you have a photograph which can be used for this purpose please send it to Margaret Graham, maggie641.mg@gmail.com, for consideration.

All units again have had a busy time.

17th C (Tuesday night) have been working on their badge work with a number of girls starting to work on Gold awards with presentations for other badge work in December. Brownies and Guides had a visit to the fire station where the girls got onto the Engines, used the hoses and the Firemen were so good. They went to Morrisons in Ayr to shop for the foodbank where they got lots of food and it was handed into the Church, they also had a Halloween party, made poppy pictures, rubbish collecting around the Church and up the woods and a weekend at Nether Auchendrane, which was a great success. The girls are looking forward to their Christmas outing to Bounce Station and a parents night on 13th December where the girls are singing Christmas songs for the parents. The girls are looking forward to the next session in order to complete their badges. A huge thank you to everyone who has helped make this a successful and enjoyable year.



17th E (Monday Night)

Since September, this unit has been working on the Dumfries & Galloway Biosphere badge and also the Scottish Forest Badge. This has included measuring the size of trees in the woods, looking at their carbon footprint, creating a safe environment and they had to discuss with someone in the community about their concerns and they had a visit from Councillor Cullen. They brought up with him their concerns about how the playpark had been taken away at the top of the woods and gave him loads of ideas about how this could be replaced. Councillor Cullen suggested that they write to him with their ideas and thoughts and we are in the process of doing this. The Senior Section from the Guides organised the Halloween Party as part of their Gold Award. The girls from Monday night are also looking forward to their Christmas activities. They are having a joint party with the Guides and are having an inflatable disco. They will be decorating the Christmas tree in the fellowship area on 4th December.



All units attended the Remembrance Service at the Church and the younger children stayed for part of the service and then went into the hall to do craft work.



Prime Cuts Butcher

Unit 2
49 Maybole Road
Ayr
KA7 4SF
01292 443445

RAINBOWS

In September, we welcomed more Rainbows into our 17th A and 17th E Rainbow units. Had a day out at Nether Auchendrane filled with crafts, games, and exploring the campsite. In October, both units had fun celebrating Halloween, dressing up, and participating in games and activities. We have been busy in November learning about remembrance day and attending the remembrance church service, as well as Guy Fawkes activities. In December, we are having a fun night out with a local brownie unit to the indoor inflatable bounce station. As well as a cozy night in and watching Christmas movies, with festive treats and crafts, as well as celebrating girls making their Rainbows Promise.



The work of Christian Aid continues around the world. As a consequence of the flooding in Libya, CA put out an appeal for donations to help with the devastation. Our congregation answered the call and a sum of just under £500 was despatched to CA. Once again, the generosity of our

members is both surprising and humbling.

CA is there on the ground as the conflict in Gaza and Israel continues. CA helps those of all faiths and of no faith.

As we approach Christmas, CA will be Carol Singing at Morrison's on Monday, 18th December between 2pm and 4pm. All are welcome to join. Note the details on the poster in the vestibule.

Allan Jack

Remembrance Service

Wreaths were laid by representatives from Castlehill Church, Castlehill Guild, Boys Brigade, Girl Guides, Forehill Primary, Kincaidston Primary, Belmont Academy, Kyle Academy.

Our younger members of Boys Brigade and Girl Guides joined our Youth church members to create craft work during the morning. Funky bracelet with the colours of remembrance and collage of hands poppy.

We had a message sent to Church Facebook from Lindsay Roxburgh Orr after the service:-

Just a little message to say thank you for having me play the Last Post at your lovely service this morning. Apologies for having to dash, we had a band service straight afterwards! Myself and the Dalmellington Band are happy to play any time. Thanks again Lindsay



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Each year time seems to pass quicker than the last. We're nearly stopping for the Christmas break and it seems we have barely got this session started. Having said that we have had a busy four months and achieved a lot.



This year the Boys' Brigade have been celebrating their 140th anniversary. It's a great achievement for the world's oldest and most respected Christian uniformed organisation for boys. At Castlehill we have been part of the BB story for 64 years.

Each section was encouraged to participate in the celebrations. The anchor boys embraced their challenge by marking the event by coming up with their novel 140 logo made from toilet roll cores donated by the congregation. They each in turn were presented with a 140th anniversary badge. The Junior Section contributed by forming the number 140 using themselves on the Main Hall floor.



The company Sections contribution was at the Ayr Battalion 140th Anniversary thanksgiving service in the Auld Kirk on Sunday 8th October. The 17th Ayr were honoured to be invited to provide two boys to parade the Battalion colours into church, Callum Smith and Matthew Doolan did the 17th Ayr proud on the day.

Our own dedication service continued the theme of celebration. We presented a friends Badge to Rachel Queen for her achievement in raising money for our Romania fund by running the London Marathon, we were delighted to present promotion certificates to the Anchor Boys who moved up to the Junior Section, Lukas O'Hanlon, James Hanton and Jacob Wilson, also to the boys who moved from the Junior Section to the Company Section, Rex Brown and Cameron Wallace. I was honoured to also present certificates to our two newest officer, Sharon Reid and Manne Watt. We had the pleasure of presenting seven president's badges and to top it off, Ryan McGeachin was presented with our top honour, his Queen's Badge. It is with great pleasure we have now welcomed Ryan on to our staff, he is training to become an officer.



Following the dedication service we had our annual Soup and Sweet lunch which was, as always, very well attended. We enjoyed the company of several former members and their families. Rev Paul Russell and I cut the celebration cake which had been specially baked for our event.



Two weeks after the dedication service we were back in church for the remembrance service where Callum Duff from the Anchor Boys represented the 17th Ayr by laying our wreath at the altar.

The Junior Section enjoyed a visit to the Fire Station on a Friday night in October. They were well looked after during their visit. They got to see, the now redundant, firemen's pole, they held a hose while it was in full flow. They also sat in a fire engine with the lights flashing and the siren sounding. In addition to this they were also given very good fire safety advice from the fire fighters.

In September Sharon Reid contacted her union Unite NHS Ayrshire and Arran. They have a committee who distribute funds to deserving charities. Sharon made a case for the 17th Ayr's trip to Romania. Their committee wasn't meeting for another couple of months but they gave us a very generous donation of £150 with the suggestion, once the committee had met, there might be further funds available. We are very grateful to the Unite union for their donation to our funds and thank Sharon for the foresight to apply.



Our weekend "camp" was to the outdoor activity centre at Dumfries House on the weekend of 24th to 26th November. It is our favourite venue. We get catered for by the chef from the "big house". The officers feel like it's a weekend break! We spent the whole weekend in the environs of the centre taking part in some excellent activities led by the outdoor staff. The boys participated in archery, an indoor climbing wall and, the highlight of the weekend, Geocaching. Never heard of it? Neither had I. It is a treasure hunt which is conducted using handheld GPS trackers, the boys loved it. We also enjoyed a football tournament, bingo and quizzing. It was a great weekend. Everyone returned suitably exhausted.

We now look forward to our festive activities, and a welcome break.

From all the staff and boys of the 17th Ayr we wish you all a very Merry Christmas.

Ian Queen

History and Origin of some Favourite Carols

Everybody enjoys singing Christmas Carols, even those folk who would never sing any other religious hymns. But where do these songs come from? There are some based on Bible stories, but others seem to have no such connection. I will try to explain some of the histories below.

SILENT NIGHT

The romantic version of its origin is that, on Christmas Eve in 1818 in a small town in Austria, the priest, Joseph Mohr, found that the bellows of the church organ had been chewed through by mice rendering it unusable. He sat down and wrote the words so that the congregation would have something to sing at Midnight Mass. The tune, so I'm told, is a simple one for guitar. The less romantic version leaves out the chewed bellows and has Mohr inspired by fresh snowfall after the end of the Napoleonic Wars (1816) with the tune being composed later by Franz Gruber with the first performance in 1818.

O, COME ALL YOU FAITHFUL (ADESTE FIDELES)

A perennial favourite at Christmas but recent research has uncovered a hidden code within it. It is suggested that the Latin lyrics contain puns such as 'Fideles' meaning 'Faithful Catholic Jacobites', 'Bethlehem' was a common Jacobite cipher for England and 'Regum Angelorum' being a pun on Angelorum (angels) and Anglorum (English).

Hence 'Come and Behold Him, Born the King of Angels' really means 'Come and Behold Him, Born the King of the English' – Bonnie Prince Charlie!

However, the Jacobite meaning of the carol has abated as the Jacobite cause has faded and now most folk will be celebrating the birth of someone completely different at Christmas!

LITTLE DRUMMER BOY

Not one of Liz Kelly's favourites but is heard every Christmas. Not as old as some, it was composed by Katherine K. Davis in 1941 based on an old Czech carol. Its original title was 'Carol of the Drums'. Modern recordings have boosted its popularity.

O, HOLY NIGHT

Frenchman Adolphe Adam wrote 'O, Holy Night' in 1847, initially setting the music to a French poem called 'Midnight, Christians'. In 1855, John Sullivan Dwight translated the carol from French to English.

JOY TO THE WORLD

It may surprise some that this wasn't written as a Christmas carol. Issac Watts (that well-known hymn writer) based a poem on Psalm 98 which was then revised by George Handel, the German composer. Lowell Mason (from Boston) gets credit for popularising the carol in the USA. Though not intended for Christmas, it is the most-published carol in North America.

AWAY IN A MANGER

No-one knows for sure who composed this children's carol (it wasn't Martin Luther!) but it seems to have come out of the German Lutheran community in Pennsylvania round about 1885. W. Kirkpatrick and James R. Murray are credited with coming up with the arrangement we know today.

THE FIRST NOEL

This carol dates to the 13th/14th century and came out of the 'Miracle Plays' of the times. These were dramatisations of favourite Bible stories for illiterate folk. During the plays, people made up poems that they could sing. 'Noel', of course, is the French for Christmas.

In 1823, there was some concern that Christmas carols were dying out which led one Davies Gilbert to collect some songs in 'Some Ancient Christmas Carols' including a version of 'The First Noel'. In 1833, William Sands included a version, from which today's version(s) are based, in his collection 'Christmas Carols, Ancient and Modern'.

MARY, DID YOU KNOW

A very modern carol. Lowry and Green wrote this carol in 1991, Green writing the tune in just 30 minutes!

JINGLE BELLS

This wasn't written for Christmas at all, but for American Thanksgiving. The lyrics fit the Thanksgiving holiday much better. However, there is no doubt that 99% of folk, when they're singing it, have Christmas in mind.

Allan Jack

Happy Birthday

Kids you are invited to a special birthday celebration
on Sunday 24th December at 11a.m.

Contact Margaret Graham to find out how you
can be involved in this special birthday party.

Bowling Club



Attendances at the Club been around twenty each week, with some new members coming along, which is encouraging. Competitions have started for the new session.

The prize winners from the 2019/2020 season, which was not completed, will receive their Trophies at the Christmas Party on 11th December 2023. They were as follows:

Champion of Champions: Rita Macey-Lilley

Gent's Singles: George Neill Ladies Singles: Rita Macey-Lilley

Gent's Pairs: Alex Smith and Wellwood Grierson

Ladies Pairs: Margaret Gerrard and Ann Park

The other Trophies were not completed.

Our winter session will finish on 11th December and recommence on 8th January 2024 finishing with the AGM on 18th March 2024.

Wellwood Grierson

Winter Activities Afternoons

Our Warm Spaces afternoon has now resumed and we have an average of 30 people attending every Thursday afternoon. We have welcomed new people over recent weeks, who are enjoying meeting new people while being involved in the activities.



Our aim is to provide an environment where all are made welcome and enjoy the chat.

Over the recent weeks we have welcomed Forehill Nursery pupils as part of intergenerational work and these visits will continue into next year. We have enjoyed the pupils telling us what they know about autumn.

If you need some company, and are able to come along on a Thursday afternoon you will be made welcome and perhaps you might learn a new crafting skill, as well as making new friends.

Liz Hardie, Lead

Fabric Report

The small toilet/kitchen area has been painted and new carpet laid. Thanks to Jim McClurkin who painted and Brian who laid the carpet. We will be putting up the Christmas tree on the 30th November so I hope you all enjoy seeing it. The main hall floor is still not repaired as we are struggling to find the correct wood for the job but hopefully it won't be too long. The North Hall has an issue with damp in the old Alan Bailey room but we are getting this resolved as soon as possible. We now have two new fire bells in place so you can hear these everywhere when in the building for your safety. We have put a bike rack in place at the office door, you will need your own security locks to keep bikes safe and leave your bike at your own risk.

The Fabric Team

Social Report

We hope you enjoyed the Christmas quiz and Christmas fayre. We will be having a lucky numbers Christmas food hamper in December for you all to take part in. Thank you for all your support and a Merry Christmas from the Social Team.

The Social Team

Wee Kirks

Our total for the collections this year is £1926.90 This is a marvellous total considering that many folks do not have a lot of change around nowadays due to so many card transactions. In addition, we will be able to claim around £200 from Gift Aid. We cannot thank you all enough for your generous donations through the "Wee kirk" scheme.



I have decided to give up organising this effort, following 20 years of doing that. Though I have to say that some of your collectors are into 30 years visiting your homes. My sincere thanks to all the collectors through the years who have helped me in this project, they have been brilliant and dedicated, making my job so easy. The total we have collected over that period is in excess of £40,000.

I am pleased to say that Linda and Jim McClurkin have agreed carry this on from March next year and I am sure they will do an excellent job and that they will have your support.

It has been a pleasure meeting many of you and I have thoroughly enjoyed every minute.

Wellwood Grierson

The new session of the Guild has had a good start, with us tapping our feet and singing along with the group "Just Three Guys". We managed to have some exercise with Chair Yoga, listened to an interesting talk from Paul (our Minister) on the theme of the Guild (New Wine, New Wine Skins) and heard about the Commonwealth War Graves Commission from a local Ayrshire historian, Ken Nairn. We also heard about the history and folk of St Kilda.



As Christmas approaches, we have arranged an evening to the Gaiety for the pantomime plus an evening at a local restaurant. We try and support local enterprises whenever possible.

Good news is that our membership has increased but we always have room for more.

We restart in the New Year on 10th January with many more interesting and exciting evenings. If you want to know more, please come along to our meetings starting at 7.30pm on Wednesday evenings in the North Hall.

On behalf of the Committee, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Dorothy Jack, Secretary

Ayr & Prestwick Street Pastors – Eight Years On

In December 2015 Ayr and Prestwick Street Pastors started operating and continued to put out Patrols every Saturday night from 10pm till 3am until COVID struck until 7th March 2020 and for just over a year nothing happened. We continued to remain in contact through Zoom. Then in July 2021 as things began to open, we started patrolling again. It also meant we had to refresh our First Aid Certificates and other courses. One of them is in the use of Naloxone which we now carry, and which reverses an opioid overdose via a nasal spray. To begin with everyone was apprehensive but pleased to be out and about again. It helped that we patrol outside and were supplied with Street Pastor face masks. Although we had to keep a safe distance it did not prevent us having some really good conversations with those out and about.



What is carried with us

We are all part of a community. If you live in Ayr you are part of the Community of Ayr. You are part of a sub-community- for example; senior citizen; young mother or young person. These communities are recognised and given suitable support. There is also the sub community of 18-35yr olds. Many people cross the road if they see a group of young adult males. However Street Pastors when out engage and interact with these people. When we go out these people really appreciate our presence, they come across the road to thank us for coming out and being available if they have a problem. Many thank us for having helped them out months or years ago. How many overtly Christian organisations get such a response and all we have done is chat to them, given them flip flops, water or assistance in getting home. We only share our Christian faith if they start the conversation.

Since COVID there has definitely been a change in the dynamics in Ayr and Prestwick. Ayr is generally quieter. However Prestwick is much busier. People are coming there from all over Ayrshire particularly Kilmarnock, Irvine and Kilwinning to have a good night out. It is interesting why people are coming out, last week we met a hen party out celebrating along with a group of ladies celebrating one having just got divorced. We have assisted a number of ladies who having had a good night had been “befriended” by a man. We thank the man then ensure the lady gets home safely and not taken advantage of.



Street Pastors at Prestwick Promfest

This year we welcomed three new Street Pastors with at least one other due to start training shortly. South Ayrshire Council have been very supportive giving us money for uniforms and First Aid Training. We are members of a Joint Action Group comprising of the Council, Police, Fire, St Andrews and other agencies involved in the night time economy. Everyone has been very supportive of our work. We particularly value the prayerful and other support from the local Christian community. A report every week is published on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/ayrandprestwickstreetpastors/>

We welcome people joining us as Observers to see what actually happens. If you want any further information please contact me at chair.ayrandprestwick@streetpastors.org.uk

Richard Wiggins



Looking back to old magazines we found so much to remember and think about. How it was put together [it was stapled and put together in the office] and the changes in presentation through the years. No photographs or Facebook entries in those days. From the Autumn edition of 2005 we found lots of interest.

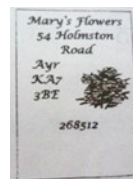
Does anyone remember the "Tape Ministry". Here we had a request for volunteers to deliver tapes for anybody interested in having recordings of the Services.

Then a few pages on the Stewardship campaign held at the end of 2005. So many involved in so many things. 60 of our members visited every member in the Parish. Peter Park's message was that "they are not coming to your home to discuss giving, but to invite you to come to meetings in the Church where you will receive a warm welcome."

Adverts were few but two stand out.

Mary's Flowers still advertising, how about that for loyalty and Jim only stopped when he retired last year.

Who remembers the Bowling outing to Girvan, the winning rink was Margaret Hodge, Margaret Grierson and David Kerr and the first "toucher" came from Bill Rae.



There was a thought-provoking article which is, I think, worth repeating. Times have hardly changed. We are not sure of the contributor, perhaps someone knows.

"Isn't it funny how we question the Bible, but believe everything we read in the newspaper...."

Obituary of Common Sense

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend by the name of Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as knowing when to come in out of the rain, why the early bird gets the worm, and that life is not always fair.

Common Sense lived by simple sound financial rules [don't spend more than you earn] and reliable parental strategies [adults not kids are in charge]. His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the Ten Commandments became contraband; Churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims. Common Sense finally gave up the ghost after a woman failed to realise that a steaming cup of coffee was hot, she spilled it in her lap and was awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth, and Trust, by his wife, Discretion, his daughter, Responsibility and his son Reason. He is survived by two relatives that they no longer speak to, My Rights, and Ima Whiner.

If you still know him pass this on and if not join the majority and do nothing.

To enable us to replace items in our main kitchen we will be holding a donation fund raising soup lunch on the 1st Sunday of each month (September to March). Tea/coffee will be available as usual.



On 30th October South Ayrshire Foodbank treated its volunteers and trustees to a lunch in the New Life Church, Prestwick. Seven of our volunteers and Paul (who is a trustee) were able to attend. We were served soup and then helped ourselves to a delicious buffet, which was very much appreciated by all.

At Castlehill Foodbank we have busy days and quieter ones - we might have ten booked in and five turn up and then visa versa the next week.

Our clients are given a box which contains enough food for three days and they can also choose to fill a bag from the extras. We also have an information table with leaflets ranging from recipients to where you can get help with debt etc.



We would like to thank everyone for their continued support be it goods, money or giving their time, all is very much appreciated.



A very big thank you to the Castlehill Brownies for donating food to the value of £100 and going shopping for the goods themselves, well done girls. Also giving up your trips to enable you to donate the money to us just shows great selflessness

and generosity. Also a big thank you to the BB Junior section for their kind donation of food to our Castlehill Foodbank, well done boys.

We would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Margaret Gerrard and Andrew Graham

Finance

Our financial year runs from 1 January to 31 December.

The Ministry & Mission payment to the Church of Scotland was renamed Giving to Grow and was £50,512 to be paid over 12 months. It was agreed we could reduce this to £2000 each month and we have paid the shortfall every 3 months and will have paid the full amount by the end of December. The Presbytery of the South West dues were £1,289. We continue to get income from outside groups which use the halls and this is a welcome addition to our finances.

To the end of October income from FWO envelope was £5,803, Standing Order income was £37,088 and Open Plate income was £5,379. During this period gas & electricity costs for the church and halls came to £5,823. Insurance costs were £2,028 and cleaning the church and halls cost £6,457.

We claim Gift Aid each month and to the end of October we received £11,883 of refunded tax. Under the Listed places of Worship Scheme we claimed a refund of £859 on VAT for eligible work done on the church and halls.

There have not been any major repairs or maintenance to the church, halls or manse this year. A water leak was discovered in a pipe under the office window and this was repaired at a cost of £2,265. We installed two further speakers in the church at a cost of £4,182 which have improved the quality of sound during services.

Margaret Devlin

Funerals

September

Jenny Murray

Templeton House, Ayr



Our thanks goes to the following people for donating flowers to the church between September and December:

Sheena Gray, Marion Rae, May Harris, Stella Nixon, Janette McFarlane, Nettie Bell, Wilma Thomson, Mary Cain, Pat Colquhoun, Elizabeth Graham, Margaret Grierson, Brian & Jackie Christie, Janice Blair, Linda Telfer, Rita & Ann Walker and Marion Reid.

Thanks also to the flower arranging team and delivery team:

Margaret Gerrard, Lyn McDermott, May Harris, Margaret Grierson, Margaret Devlin, Liz Hunter, Moira Alexander and Elizabeth Reid.

There are still a few spaces available for anyone looking to donate flowers, please contact Stella Nixon for further information.

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