

# Columba News

December  
2022  
No. 249





*Time  
for joy*

The Columba News  
editor wishes all  
the readers a  
Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New  
Year

## Waiting to welcome you

Sundays	Team	Leader
December 4	Team 6	Mr J. Hunter
December 11	Team 7	Mrs N. Mortimer
December 18	Team 8	Mr P. MacDonald
December 25	Christmas Day	
January 1	Team 9	
January 8	Team 10	Mrs A. Swan
January 15	Team 11	Mr A. Muirhead
January 22	Team 12	Mr W. Muir
January 29	Team 1	Mr R. White

Evening Services:  
January 29: Team 1



# From the manse

December 2022

*Dear Friends,*

On Sunday, November 13 at 10.45am, St Columba marked Remembrance Sunday. It was great to have so many people in the church for the service, including representatives of the uniformed organisations and the Sunday School. As part of their own preparations to mark Remembrance, the Cubs had carefully and artistically painted stones, each one with a beautiful and unique poppy. The stones were laid in the garden at the church during the service.



At the end of the calendar year, it is always worth looking back over the past twelve months. Thankfully, the COVID restrictions have substantially gone and, albeit slowly, life is beginning to return to normal. COVID is still with us but, with the aid of vaccinations, we are beginning to live with it and move on.



The church has invested in a greatly enhanced PA system for the sanctuary. On the first Sunday it was used, the difference was considerable and very much appreciated. So, thank you to Alistair Swan and John Stewart for doing all the hard work! May I also take this opportunity to thank Irene and Margaret in the office, Matthew for his dazzling talents at the organ, the ubiquitous Session Clerk, Bob, and the large number of volunteers whose work makes a real and meaningful difference to St Columba and the ministry it offers collectively week by week.

Be assured of my thoughts, prayers, and good wishes at this sacred and holy time of the year. In our recent discussion group at St Columba, we read a book by John Philip Newell. A former warden of Iona Abbey, Newell has written many books, meditations, and prayers. Here is 'The Blessings of Jesus':

Blessed are those who know their need  
for theirs is the grace of heaven.

Blessed are those who weep  
for their tears will be wiped away.

Blessed are the humble  
for they are close to the sacred earth.

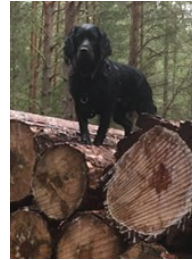
Blessed are those who hunger for earth's oneness  
for they will be satisfied.

Blessed are the forgiving  
for they are free.

Blessed are the clear in heart  
for they see the Living Presence.

Blessed are the peacemakers  
for they are born of God.

Finally, many people regularly ask kindly after Rosie. Here she is – thoroughly soaked and standing atop a pile of logs in the depths of Culbin Forest, Moray. Her adventures never end! Recently while walking across Seafield Golf Course, Rosie picked up a flagpole which a groundsman had laid flat on the green. Without a second thought, Rosie grabbed the pole and ran off down the fairway and through the rough! With as much dignity as I could muster, I chased after her until finally – exhausted – I managed to catch her. I hope the groundsman didn't see me!!



Every blessing,  
Blessings and peace to you.

**Scott**

Revd Dr Scott S McKenna



## **Ayr St. Columba**

### **Christmas 2022 and New Year 2023**

#### **SUNDAY 27 NOVEMBER**

10.00am All-Age Worship  
11.15am Morning Worship  
6.30pm Service of Remembering

#### **WEDNESDAY 30 NOVEMBER**

2.00pm Afternoon Communion

#### **SUNDAY 4 DECEMBER**

10.00am All-Age Worship  
11.15am Morning Worship  
1.00pm Congregational Lunch

#### **SATURDAY 10 DECEMBER**

2.30pm Seniors' Christmas Party

#### **SUNDAY 11 DECEMBER**

10.00am Nativity Play  
11.15am Morning Worship

#### **SUNDAY 18 DECEMBER**

10.45am Morning Worship & Sacrament of Baptism  
(one service only)  
4.30pm Lessons and Carols in St Columba

#### **SATURDAY 24 DECEMBER**

7.00pm Christmas Eve Service in the Auld Kirk  
11.30pm Watchnight Service in St Columba

#### **SUNDAY 25 DECEMBER**

10.30am Christmas Day Service in St Andrew's Church

#### **WEDNESDAY 28 DECEMBER**

No Service of Afternoon Communion

#### **SUNDAY 1 JANUARY 2023**

No Early Service  
10.45am Morning Worship



## Christmas Charity Collection

You may recall that we were not able to arrange the normal collection for charities at the Christmas services last year as these services were cancelled due to Covid. Consequently, no money was passed on to charities a year ago.

The Kirk Session has agreed that those donations which were sent in will be added to this year's donations and be passed on to the charities which were identified by the Kirk Session last year. These are **Ayrshire Cancer Support** and **Crossroads (South Ayrshire)**.

You may be aware of the outstanding work these charities are doing to support local people and of their need for continuing support. Please use the envelope which came with this magazine if you wish to donate to these causes. Place the amount you wish to give into the envelope and hand it in to the Church Office or place it in the Collection Plate at the door of the church.

As has been our practice in the past, the collections at the Christmas services in Ayr St Columba will also be in aid of these charities.

We do realise that not everyone will be in a position to help this year due to the extraordinary financial situation the country is in, however members of Ayr St Columba have a strong tradition of generosity at Christmas time and we sincerely thank everyone who is able to contribute to these good causes.

**Bob Bartholomew**

## On the up at Monday Fellowship

Our first three meetings of this session have been very well received with great talks and plenty of Q & A's afterwards!

Membership has slightly increased and it is very heartening to have so many ladies join us - which also makes the singing somewhat more musical!

We were invited to join the Guild at a Musical Afternoon in the Church on November 14 *see the Guild Report*.

On November 21 there is a change in the advertised speaker - Bob McMillan will now give us an insight as to the History of the Panama Canal. Bob was scheduled to talk on December 19, so the speaker that night



will be Jane Dare on her trip to Antarctica. The speaker for the middle Monday, 5th December, will be Tony Morrell talking about the Turnberry Airstrips.

All our meetings are open to anyone and held in the Midton Hall at 7.30pm.

In January and February next year our meetings will be at 2pm in the Midton Hall.

**John Ferguson**  
**Secretary**

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## Ministry of Flowers

As we approach the end of the year, I would like to thank everyone who has donated to the flower fund. The benefits are twofold - we are able to display flowers in the chancel and decorate the church on special occasions but, perhaps more importantly, we are able to present little bouquets each week to members of our church family.

We know from the many letters of thanks that they are so much appreciated - but we also know that some people will be missed, simply because we don't know about them!

*So if you know someone who has perhaps been unwell, or suffered a loss or who just needs cheering up please contact Scott, David, the church office or your elder and we will make sure that they receive some flowers.*



The calendar for 2023 will be up in the Carrick Park vestibule by mid - December and anyone wishing to donate to the flower fund is most welcome to add their name on any date they prefer. Donations (either cash or cheque made out to St Columba Flower Fund) can be handed in to the church office - please put it in an envelope with your name.

Finally, my sincere thanks to all the ladies in the flower team and to everyone who delivers the flowers each week. Their time and talents are very much appreciated and it gives us much pleasure to know that the flowers are so well received.

**Anne Drennan**  
**Flower Convenor**

*Scott's sermon preached for All Saints' Day on  
Sunday, November 6, 2022*

All Saints' Day is November 1. Each year the Church celebrates the place and importance of the saints. Ordinary and extraordinary; social activists and mystics; old and young; female and male; Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran, Coptic, Anglican, Baptist, and others; we call to mind the hosts of heaven and earth. All Saints' is an opportunity to explicitly celebrate the witness of the Church of every generation from every culture and continent, from the days of Jesus to the present time. What is a saint for you?

Over the course of my ministry, I have met many 'ordinary' Christians who have faithfully followed Jesus in their lives: through private prayer, attendance at public worship, or direct social action at home and abroad. It is easy, perhaps, to focus on the giants of the faith, those well-known in history, and therefore overlook the saints around us.

This morning I want to share thoughts on four saints or, at least, people who in some way inspire me. At the end of October, you may have read about Maurice Hastings, a California man who was wrongfully convicted of rape and murder. In 1983, Roberta Wydermyer was found dead in the boot of her car; she had been shot. Maurice Hastings was convicted and sentenced to life in state prison without the possibility of parole. For the past thirty-eight years, he has been in prison. Based on new DNA testing, Hastings was able to demonstrate what he had maintained from the beginning: that he was innocent. When his conviction was set aside, Hastings said, 'I prayed for many years that this day would come to pass....And I just give glory to God for that. I am not pointing fingers; I am not standing up here as a bitter man.' After thirty-eight years of wrongful imprisonment, Hastings spoke of prayer and giving glory to God.



In not dissimilar manner, the South African leader Nelson Mandela transcended conflict and eloquently spoke of and lived out forgiveness. Desmond Tutu described Mandela as 'noble'.

On Robben Island in a small cell, Mandela had slept on a thin mat on the cold floor for eighteen years. He could have become an enraged avenger

but Mandela embodied forgiveness; one writer called Mandela's forgiveness 'the insanity of grace'. Hastings and Mandela are two saints. Through their lived experience, they reflected the beauty and tenderness of God.

Saints may also be people who have struggled against church authorities. On 27 May, 1831, a young minister of the Church of Scotland, Alexander John Scott, was tried by the General Assembly of the Kirk accused of heresy. Scott refused to sign the Westminster Confession of Faith, a subordinate standard of the Church which is still in force today. The Confession states that we – all of us – are born wholly defiled and wholly inclined to evil. It further states that Christ died only for the elect; only for those whom God has pre-ordained will be saved to life after death.



By contrast, Scott said that the Divine lives in all of us. For Scott, the Divine is a golden thread that runs through the whole of creation and is present in every human being; those in the church and those beyond the church. The Kirk's theology has been built on the doctrine of original sin; in other words, by virtue of our birth we are sinful creatures and prone to sinful conduct. At his trial in the General Assembly, Scott was accused of insulting the dignity of the court. Speaker after speaker condemned him



for affirming the goodness of creation and God's Presence in creation.

Unanimously, the Assembly found him guilty of heresy. Everyone voted against him, including his father who was also a minister. Scott was deposed from his charge and banned from every pulpit in the land. Although having just lost his living, as Scott walked home that night, he felt relieved, a true sense of release. Moving to London, he was able to write, preach, and teach, but this time

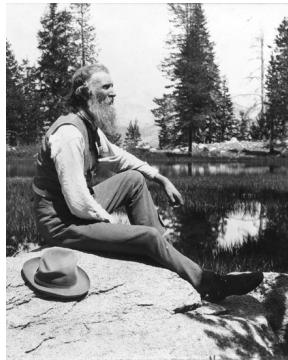
drawing on the inspiration and insights of other world faiths alongside that of Christianity. A friend of Thomas Carlyle, Charles Darwin, John Ruskin, and other public intellectuals, Scott drew upon the most revered Hindu text, Bhagavad Gita, as well as Islam's holy book, the Qur'an. Later in the nineteenth century, ministers such as George Matheson welcomed the insights of other world faiths but, as the twentieth century progressed, we lost that spiritual generosity and humility.

Writing of the sacredness of the earth, Scott said:

*Who can gaze upon the moon beams stealing through the boughs of the dark forest trees – or the fir trees glowing in relief against the clear amber sky, or the mountain scenery which seems to partake more of the sky above it than of the soft verdure that reposes at its feet – without feeling that they all speak of this world transformed and glorified, and of the world above made ours.*

Scott said that creation, every living thing, was a manifestation of God, a showing of the divine. This ‘saintly’ theology is a far cry from the defilement of the Westminster Confession.

Hastings, Mandela, and Scott are all saints of Jesus. My final inspiration today comes from the Scot, John Muir. Born in Dunbar on the east coast of Scotland, Muir saw every living form, every rock formation as ‘throbbing’ and ‘pulsing’ with the Divine. Even the stars, he said, are pulsed onward by ‘the heart of God’. Muir’s father has been described as an angry Calvinist: Daniel Muir taught his young son that we – all of us – are ‘poor worms of the dust, conceived in sin’. John Muir, known as John of the Mountains and Father of the National Parks, was a naturalist, botanist,



and philosopher. He came to see the universe as a sacred text: the winds, the waters, the springs are all ‘words of God’. For Muir, the sacred text of the universe is a living unfolding text and God is still writing passages for us to learn from. Entering Yosemite Valley, Muir said he was ‘born again’.

He said, ‘Never shall I forget my baptism in this font.’ Walking barefoot, Muir said, he touched the ‘naked God’. As Moses before the burning bush, Muir would remove his ‘sandals’ for the earth on which we walk is holy ground. All ground is holy. Every moment is sacred. Muir

has much to teach us about our care for the planet and life on the planet. Like others, Muir’s sense of God, of the sacred, stretched far beyond the doctrines of Christianity and the confessions of any single denomination.

Hastings, Mandela, Scott, and Muir are all saints; they are saints as far as I am concerned. They possess or are possessed of a spirituality, a generosity, an openness, that is life enhancing.

These are the stories of faith and faithful living that we need to tell ourselves again and again.

**Revd Scott McKenna**



## THURSDAY AFTERNOON GAMES

It is with deep regret that it has been decided to bring the Thursday Afternoon Games to an end.

The games afternoon has been going for over forty years and many games of carpet bowls and snooker have been enjoyed by members. The world has also been put to rights on several occasions over the years along with the obligatory coffee, tea and biscuits and many friendships have been made that have lasted the test of time.

The passage of time has taken its toll on the membership and the Pandemic has also been a significant factor. Despite an article in a previous issue of Columba News and several reminders included in the pew leaflet there has been no uptake of new members. So sadly I feel that I have to call it a day.

*Alan Hawthorn*  
*Games Convener*

### Enjoy Warm Space with a cuppa and a chat

Our Warm Space proposal is not just a place to come in from the cold – we hope you will drop in if you feel like a chat, or a cuppa or you want a quiet place to sit for a couple of hours (or even half an hour!!).

The initiative is underway with a good number of willing volunteers to welcome all into the Church.

We can offer a quiet space for reflection, or a lively place to chat, there are magazines, games and lots of other possibilities.

There is also, tea and coffee and chocolate biscuits! We can arrange help with understanding your fuel bills too. Please come, if you have skills to share, are on your own, or just love to blether – anyone can come, all are welcome.

Opening times are: 9.30am – 12.30pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday .

## All the Kirk Session news

*A meeting of the Kirk Session, chaired by the Moderator, The Revd Dr Scott McKenna, was held on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2022. A summary of issues discussed at this meeting is given below:*

- The Moderator reported that the Presbytery of Ayr had approved the Mission Plan which included the eventual union of Ayr St Columba with St Andrews and the Auld Kirk. The buildings of Ayr St Columba and the Auld Kirk were to be retained, with those of St Andrews marked for disposal by 2027. However, this plan had not been approved by the Presbytery Mission Plan Implementation Group (PMPiG) as too few buildings had been marked for disposal.
- The Moderator said that lockdown had affected the work of the various church committees and that this was a good time to look at our committee structure and remits. He and the Session Clerk would set up an ad hoc Committee to review the function and practice of all church committees.
- The Presbytery Elder, Mr George Park, reported on the First Meeting of the Presbytery of the South West. On a wet, dreich morning the first meeting of the Presbytery of the South West was held on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022 within St Marnock's Parish Church, Kilmarnock. The morning session focused on the formal installation of the Moderator - Rev Brian Hendrie, Minister, St Leonard's Church and the Presbytery Clerk - Mrs Christine Murray. In addition, a short delivery was given on the journey undertaken to arrive at the new Presbytery amalgamation as well as some early business was conducted.
- The Moderator spoke of the outstanding service our Presbytery Elder, Mr George Park, had given for many years to the Church and to the Presbytery of Ayr. He was delighted to intimate that Mr Park would stay on in the role with the Presbytery of the South West. He was hugely grateful to him and offered him his sincere appreciation. This was warmly endorsed by members of Session.
- Mr Andrew Muirhead referred to an energy report on the Manse which had been carried out by Andrew MacOwan Associates in September 2021. A number of issues had been identified and these were referred to the Fabric Committee to progress.
- The Clerk reported that Miss Muriel Wilson had agreed to become Convenor of the Worship Mission and Outreach Committee and this ap-



pointment was warmly approved by members of Session.

- The WMO Committee felt that their name was not particularly appropriate for the work they are involved in. It was decided that the name should be changed to the Faith Nurture Committee, which reflected current thinking in the wider Church of Scotland.
  - The Treasurer presented a Finance Report to Session for the 9-month period to 30th September 2022. Alongside the vast majority in the investment community, Ayr St Columba had taken a very significant hit to the current overall value of our Investor Trust investments. It was hoped that a recovery in values will take place in the not-too-distant future. In terms of the General Fund performance, some categories of income and expenditure were greater than budget, but some were less. Overall, the end result was very much as expected for the 9-month period to 30<sup>th</sup> September.
  - Mrs Irene Bartholomew said that the Central Committee were seeking Session's approval for the initiative known as "Warm Space". This initiative would allow members of the church and members of the public to come into church during the winter months for some warmth, tea, coffee and companionship. Members of Session gave their approval for the initiative.
  - Mr K Fullerton reported that the Education Committee had not met since September 2021, when Stuart McKinlay announced he was stepping down from his role as Sunday School leader. Since then, Mr Fullerton had been leading St Columba Kids.
  - Heartstart Training had been arranged for Tuesday 22nd November.
  - Miss Muriel Wilson reported that links between Lochside and Newton Wallacetown Church were being promoted in the expectation of the churches joining together in the coming months. Revd McNidder had invited members of Newton Wallacetown to visit for a cup of tea and fellowship.
  - The Foodbank continued to operate within Lochside Church on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- Miss Wilson reported that Andrew Muirhead had led a discussion on energy saving at Table Talk. The visit to the Synagogue had gone well and it was intended to arrange more trips in the future. The Walking Group continued in fine style and a six-week programme of Table Talk events had been organised. The Lego Club, Parents and Toddlers and Messy Church (in liaison with St Andrews) were going well.

***R A Bartholomew Session Clerk***

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## Fireside Puzzles for Christmas

*Here are a few exercises for the brain as you relax over the Christmas season.*

*Solutions can be found on page 23.*

1. Mr. Red, Mr. Blue, and Mr. White meet for lunch at a restaurant. Under their coats they are wearing either a red, blue, or white shirt.

Mr. Blue says, "Hey, did you notice we are all wearing different coloured shirts from our names?"

The man wearing the white shirt says, "Yes, Mr. Blue, that's right!"

Can you tell who is wearing what colour shirt?

2



If you have a 7-minute hourglass and an 11-minute hourglass, how can you time exactly 15 minutes?

3. What is the next letter in this sequence ?

W I T N L I T \_

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Copy deadline for the January issue will be

**Sunday, January 1**

Copy should be emailed to [editor.columbanews@gmail.com](mailto:editor.columbanews@gmail.com)

New advertisers should also send their copy to the editor Norman Reid



## Concert time for The Guild 🎵



Since our winter programme commenced on October 3, the change of time to the afternoon has been very successful with a good attendance at all meetings when we have all enjoyed fellowship and friendship - and a cup of tea at the end of the afternoon.

We were sorry to lose Janette Otterson, Nan Mackie and Pamela Naylor from the Committee but all gave sterling service over the last few years and we thank them for all they did for the Guild. I am delighted to report that the Committee has welcomed Elizabeth Cameron and Caroline Cochran into their midst. Already they are showing their eagerness to work as a team.

We were delighted to join with the Monday Fellowship for an afternoon of entertainment by Ayr Community Gospel Choir on November 14. Because of numbers and the relatively large choir this was held in the Church and opened to members of the Congregation.

Our final meeting of 2022 is on **Monday, December 12** with a Christmas Afternoon Tea and entertainment from True Colours.

The first meeting of 2023 will be on **January 9** when we will learn about the progress of Whiteleys Retreat from Sarah Johnstone, Community Awareness Manager.

The Guild here at St Columba is affiliated to the Church of Scotland Guild with head office at 121 George Street, Edinburgh and we follow their guidelines as to theme, programme content and Guild Projects on a three-year strategy. Having said that, our meetings are open to anyone interested in what is happening at a particular meeting. **All are welcome at St Columba's Guild.**

Meantime, on behalf of all my hard-working committee, whom I sincerely thank, I wish you all a very Happy Christmas time and Good Health in 2023.

**Dorothy Bone, Convenor**

## LIFE AND WORK MAGAZINE

The editorially independent magazine of the Church of Scotland is packed every month with features, news and opinions on Christian life within Scotland and further afield.



One of the magazine's most important features is reader feedback- the letters pages are lively and very revealing about general attitudes within and beyond the Church.

As the Church pays annually for the magazines, it receives a discount, so we are able to offer an annual subscription rate of £42, to anyone paying before the end of December 2022.

Cheques should be made payable to St Columba Church.

Home delivery can be arranged for elderly or housebound members.

**Hazel Steele (tel 07704711672 )**

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### LIFE AND WORK MAGAZINE

Annual subscription for 2023 = £42 payable before December 2022

☐ I enclose my subscription for 2023.

Cheques made payable to **Ayr St Columba Church**

☐ Home Delivery required?

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

Please return to me **as soon as possible**, either to my pigeon hole, 57, in the Carrick Park corridor or to my home address.

57 Auchendoon Crescent, Ayr KA7 4AT



## Tribute to Netta Espie elder at Ayr St Columba

Janet Danskin (or Netta as she was known to her family) was born in the family home at 1 Watson Place, Blantyre on 28th June 1927. She was the eldest child of John and Jean Danskin.

She had a happy upbringing as part of a large extended family. She had 16 Aunts and Uncles and dozens of cousins in the Blantyre area.

Her younger brother John was born a few years later.

Her father worked in Blantyre Pit as an underground shot firer, studied in the evenings, undertook mining exams and eventually rose to the level of Colliery Manager.

As his career developed the family moved around Scotland. From Blantyre they moved to Blairhall in Fife and then to Prestwick, Annbank and Cumnock. Netta completed her primary education at Glenburn Primary School in Prestwick and then moved on to Ayr Academy. She proved to have a good head on her shoulders.

The family relocated to Cumnock but unfortunately she contracted Pleurisy and spent six months in hospital at Glenafton Sanatorium.

This meant she was unable to continue her education at University or College. In 1945, once clear of illness she trained as a shorthand typist and worked as an administrator for the Police. I am sure she would have been very good at her job and very conscientious, and of course well liked and respected by everyone.

She inherited a love of music from her father who was an accomplished pianist and organist. She learned to play the piano and was also a very good singer and attended Crichton West Church in Cumnock, singing in the choir as well as helping in the Sunday School.

While living in Cumnock she met Ean Espie. They fell in love, became engaged and were married in November 1955 at Crichton West Church. I think it would be true to say that they were utterly devoted to one another.

The set up home in Bellsbank, Dalmellington. Ean became the Sub-Postmaster there and was greatly assisted by Netta. They became members of the local church, Kirk O' the Covenant. Netta's faith was always strong. She became an elder and was a member of the Women's Guild.

In 1966 Douglas arrived on the scene and Netta was a truly loving and devoted mother to him. When Douglas married Gillian, they produced her two grandchildren Megan and Lauren. She was over the moon. She was a

super gran to them - helping with homework after school, teaching them her cooking and baking skills which were considerable. She was very proud of their achievements and was at her happiest when the family were around. She truly loved them all.

In December 1967, they moved to Doonfoot. At this time Netta joined Sandgate Church and served as an elder, a choir member and joined the Women's Guild.

In 1981 when the congregations of Sandgate, Cathcart and Trinity Churches united to become Ayr St Columba, Netta became involved in the new congregation in many different ways - again as an elder, the guild, and a member of the Church Fellowship Committee. She worked with her friends at all sorts of church activities - Burns Suppers, Christmas Parties, and other social events. She really was a committed Christian and played her full part in the life of the church.

In 1992, Netta and Ean retired from the Post Office which gave them more time in their garden, helping at the church and enjoying holidays, both in the UK and further afield. One of Netta's favourite holiday destinations was Keswick in the Lake District and for many years Netta and Ean would holiday there taking part in the annual Keswick Convention, sharing her faith with many friends.

She also enjoyed when Douglas, Gillian, Megan, and Lauren joined them on their many trips to Keswick.

Netta loved family history and had extensively researched her family tree back to the 1600's - she was able to help Megan and Lauren with their family history school projects.

Netta's health began to deteriorate in 2011 and she was cared for initially by Ean, but sadly Ean passed away suddenly in March 2014 - after 58 years of happy marriage. That was a devastating blow to her but she was determined to remain in her home as long as possible and was supported for many years with daily visits from community carers as well as the family. I used to enjoy visiting her and was always assured of a warm welcome.

In 2017 Netta's service to the Church was honoured when she was presented with a Long Service Certificate recognising more than 60 years of service to the Church. Netta was humbled yet delighted to be presented with her award by the Moderator of the Church of Scotland at a service in the Church. By March 2020 right at the start of the Covid pandemic, her health worsened and she became a resident in Redford Nursing Home in Doonfoot. She settled in very quickly to life there and enjoyed participat-

ing in daily activities, interacting with the large group of residents and care staff. Covid resulted in tight restrictions on visiting and for many months she could only see the family via window visits - that was hard for them all. Gradually, the restrictions were relaxed, in person visits were allowed, and she enjoyed regular trips in her wheelchair with the family to either the seafront or to Belleisle Park.

Netta was a truly remarkable lady in so many ways. She had a warm engaging personality - a good sense of humour - a good organiser.

She spoke her mind, but always in a gentle way. I think that at home, she was the boss. She loved to do things for others and was greatly loved, especially by all her family. She had a long and happy life and has left us with so many good memories. We will never forget her. Surely the words of Jesus apply to her,

*“Well done good, and faithful servant”*

**Revd David Ness**

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**TAKING AN ECO LOOK by Andrew Muirhead**

## Is the cost of living crisis all bad?

After the second world war, Japan was a defeated country and much of it was in ruins. Winter in parts of Japan can be cold and there was very little money or capacity for home heating.

According to a BBC book based on a documentary series, many families in cities adopted a simple economic solution. Homes were poorly insulated and so, in the evenings families would gather in a living room. It was the custom to sit on the floor, often with a large table close to family members. They put a cloth or blanket over the table that reached the floor all round. Family members sat with their legs and waists under the table and blanket. A small electric fan heater, under the table, was then turned on for periods of the evening. Children could do their homework and adults could relax in comfort and read, chat and eat food. The solution was to heat part of a room.

Modern Britain is very different from Japan in 1945-46. Solutions that worked for a different culture in a different time are likely to be resisted here and now. Nevertheless, the cost of fossil fuel has risen and the availability of some foodstuffs has diminished due to war and climate change. It is interesting to see how the cost of most things has gone up as a result.

According to the FT cost of living calculator, you will be insulated from many price rises if you live in a household with one or two members; are of pensionable age, own your home; have no commuting costs and have ample spare time to shop around. Even so, you will be aware of price rises.

Let us now consider this issue from another perspective. For some time there has been pressure to introduce a “carbon tax”. Mark Carney, a previous Bank of England Governor, has promoted this idea as a means of combating climate change. Over the last year, war has imposed a huge carbon tax. The cost of fossil fuel has risen and has caused a rise in the cost of most manufactured goods, food, transport and home energy. These are the same things that define our personal carbon footprint. If we wish to put a brake on climate change, it is up to Government to decarbonise our economy but also up to us to reduce our carbon footprint. It seems that our Government has struggled too much recently and so it is now up to us!

It is frequently said that we need to insulate our homes better. We need solar panels, electric cars and all manner of new equipment and then, we will be able to reduce our carbon footprint. Very little is said about our habits and customs. If you live in a small, modern, well insulated flat, then government advice is to turn down the thermostat by one degree which will save 10% in the already low heating bills. This is true but not always helpful to the many who live in old, larger and poorly insulated buildings who have long since abandoned a 19 degree standard for heating.

What is your indoor winter dress code? Clothing makes a big difference to comfort.

Back-ground home heating is more about damp and its prevention than maintaining a tropical



temperature in older homes. What about drying laundry in winter? I weighed a load of towels after washing them and spinning them. I weighed them again after drying them. The difference was 1.5 kg. In order to convert 1.5 kg of water (1.5 litres) into vapour at the same temperature, it takes close to 1 Kw hour of energy or one unit of electricity, assuming perfect efficiency.

We will need ventilation to expel water vapour. If we dry laundry in-

doors in winter, the house will be colder and damper. Small amounts of laundry can be dried indoors in winter but a tumble dryer is not a waste of energy. If you have a large family and a lot of washing, get an expensive heat pump tumble dryer if you can afford it. It will be good value. Drying laundry outside is the gold standard when feasible.

If you keep your bedrooms cool, then you will find it difficult to go to sleep in a cold bed. You will need at least a hot water bottle or electric blanket. An alternative is to have a hot bath.

Hang on a moment... Showers are more economic aren't they? A shower in a cold bathroom will not warm you up enough at bedtime. If a bath is an alternative to home heating, then maybe it is reasonable value. If you do prefer to shower then consider wiping it down with a window cleaning blade when finished. The water goes down the drain and is not left to evaporate.



Your towel rail and fan will not need to be on for so long and your bathroom will not collect mould as fast.

How about diet? Animals are not 100% efficient at converting their feed into meat or milk. As a result meat has a greater carbon footprint than vegetables in general. A vegetarian diet is often cheaper than a meaty one. Can you reduce your meat consumption? The odds are that this will improve your health as well as your carbon footprint and finances. Ideally we should eat better quality locally produced meat and veg. This will cut down on transport emissions and support our farmers and food security.

During a time of strikes, people will use their cars more to travel. There are still things we can do. Travelling on big roads at the speed of most lorries, 60 mph, is not dangerous, takes little extra time and uses less fuel. We can join up journeys too. Go to the shops and perhaps refuel and visit someone in the same trip.

In conclusion, our expectations and customs may be as important as our equipment and external factors in defining our carbon footprints. Many of the cost of living increases are really a carbon tax paid to unfriendly nations.

***Andrew Muirhead***

Please contact me if you would like to promote ecological matters in Ayr St Columba. Any contribution of any type will be appreciated. It need not be a big commitment.

Email [a.g.muirhead@gmail.com](mailto:a.g.muirhead@gmail.com) Mobile 07526662044

## Discussion time at Table Talk

Our talk group met for a second 6-week session from the October 11 until the November 15.

We had some really interesting discussions. We talked about humanity's relative youth in terms of the history of the world, and how we are still maturing as a species; about the importance of communication; about the path from traditional to progressive Christianity; about mental health and murder; about Scott's book; and about eco matters.

This is a group that has really developed as we have got to know each other better and we hope to run again in the New Year.

*Helen Greig*

## Weather didn't deter the walkers



An amber weather warning scuppered our plans for our September walk at Boswell's coach house, so we have parked that for another time.

High winds at the end of October threatened to derail our walk at Fullerton woods but a few of us decided to brave the weather, and as you will see from the pictures it turned into a lovely morning and we were glad that we made the effort.

On the November 25 our walk will be at Eglinton Park - as usual, leaving promptly at 10am from Halfords.

There will be no walk at the end of December but on the January 27 we will walk at Auchincruive. Meet at St Quivox church (Auchincruive) at 10.00. Bring money and we will have coffee at the cafe in the walled garden. We will return to Helen's for a bowl of soup as a late Christmas lunch.



## Solutions to Fireside Puzzles

1. The man wearing the white shirt is speaking to Mr Blue and therefore he is not Mr Blue himself. Neither is he Mr White because no one has the same shirt colour as their name. Therefore, he is Mr Red.  
Mr Blue is not wearing the white shirt and he cannot be wearing the blue shirt. Therefore, he is wearing the red shirt.  
Mr White is the only one left and he must be wearing the blue shirt.  
Summary: Mr Red – white shirt; Mr Blue – red shirt; Mr White – blue shirt

2. To time exactly 15 minutes, follow these four steps.  
Start both hourglasses together.  
After the 7-minute hourglass runs out, turn it over to start it again.  
Four minutes later, when the 11-minute hourglass runs out, turn the 7-minute hourglass again.  
Wait for the 7-minute hourglass to run out, which will take another four minutes and get you to exactly 15 minutes.

3 - S: The complete sequence is the first letter of every word in the sentence.

---

## Congregation and Parish Register



### DEATHS

*"I am with you always to the end of the age"* Matthew 28:20

Elizabeth Tucker  
Margaret McKissock  
Rena Smith  
Molly McLeish

Creggan Bahn  
Maybole  
Templeton House  
Newton Park Court

## Who to contact

### **Minister:**

Revd. Dr. SCOTT S. McKENNA.  
scottsmckenna@aol.com  
Tel:- 01292 226075

### **Associate Minister:**

Revd. DAVID T. NESS, LTH,  
17 Winston Avenue, Prestwick.  
Tel:- 471625

### **Session Clerk:**

ROBERT A. BARTHOLOMEW,  
30 St Leonard's Road, Ayr. Tel:- 265794

### **Depute Session Clerk:**

WALTER MUIR, 1 Corsehill Place, Ayr  
Tel:- 282931

### **Treasurer:** TOM CAIRNS,

15 Longhill Avenue, Ayr KA7 4DY  
Tel:- 443271

### **Director of Music:**

MATTHEW HYNES,  
20A Academy Street, Ayr KA7 1HS  
Tel:- 870449

### **Gift Aid Convener:**

PETER G. MACDONALD,  
23 Dongola Road, Ayr. Tel:- 264059

### **Free Will Offering Convener:**

GRAEME SAVAGE,  
27 Newark Crescent, Ayr. Tel:- 445347

### **Roll Keeper:**

MARGARET DONCASTER  
20 St Cuthbert's Road  
Prestwick KA9 2EB  
Tel:-477381

### **'Columba News' Editor:**

NORMAN REID,  
4 Hawthorn Drive, Ayr. Tel:-262144  
[editor.columbanews@gmail.com](mailto:editor.columbanews@gmail.com)

### **Church Secretary:**

IRENE E. BARTHOLOMEW,  
30 St Leonard's Road, Ayr  
Office 269524  
[irene@ayrstcolumba.co.uk](mailto:irene@ayrstcolumba.co.uk)

### **Beadle and Church Officer:**

JOHN STEWART,  
6A Ronaldshaw Park, Ayr.  
Tel:- 07847639528

### **Church Office:** Carrick Park, Ayr.

Tel:- 269524 Office hours: 9am-noon, Mon,  
Tues, Thurs and Fri

**Church Charity Number:** SC014338

### **Church Services (Midton Road):**

10am - Family Service;  
10am Sunday School,  
11.15 - Morning Worship;  
6.30pm - Evening Services  
(Last Sunday of the month)  
2pm: HOLY COMMUNION  
(Last Wednesday of Month)

### **Church Services (Lochside):**

10am Morning Worship

### **Webmaster:** Iain Bartholomew,

email: [website@ayrstcolumba.co.uk](mailto:website@ayrstcolumba.co.uk).  
[www.ayrstcolumba.co.uk](http://www.ayrstcolumba.co.uk)

## What's on in the halls

### **MONDAY**

5.30pm **RAINBOW BROWNIES**

Aynsley Bell, 07914 842118

2pm: **THE GUILD** (fortnightly):

Mrs D. Bone, 441651

7.30pm: **MONDAY FELLOWSHIP**

(fortnightly):

Mr T. R. Swinn, 441896

### **WEDNESDAY**

2pm: **HOLY COMMUNION** (4<sup>th</sup> Wed):

Church Office, 269524

2pm: **FITNESS with FRIENDS:**

Mrs Margaret Doncaster, 477381

6.15: **9<sup>th</sup> AYR BROWNIES,**

Sally Bentham 07817169436

### **THURSDAY**

10am-noon: **OASIS CAFE**

Mrs M. Doncaster 477381 Mrs P. Naylor  
570020

6.30pm: **CUB SCOUTS:**

Mr Jereon Bolte 07511489755

7.30pm: **SENIOR CHOIR:**

Church Office 269524

### **FRIDAY**

6pm: **BEAVER SCOUTS:**

Fiona Wilson, 290414

7.30pm: **SCOUTS:**

Jereon Bolte, 07511489755

### **SATURDAY**

**MESSY CHURCH**

in St Andrew's Church


(First Saturday of the month):

Irene Bartholomew, 269524



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 just simply enjoy singing. We will sing old familiar songs of  
 fellowship and learn some newer ones along the way.

We hope you will come along and bring a friend  
 to share in Faith and fellowship.

There will be a break for tea and coffee.

If you have any further questions  
 contact Jillian Powell - 07773 883 489



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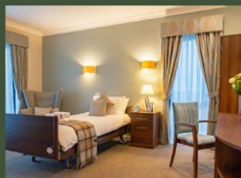
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