columba News



Christmas



2019

CHURCH PERSONNEL

"COLUMBA NEWS" - DECEMBER 2019 - Issue No. 231

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Church Office

Carrick Park, Ayr. Tel:- 269524 Office Hours: 9.00am - 12.00 noon Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday

Church Charity Number: SC014338

Church Services (Midton Road):

9.30am - Family Service; 10.00am - Sunday School and Bible Class 11.15am - Morning Worship; 6.30pm - Evening Services (Last Sunday of the Month)

Church Services (Lochside)

10.00am Morning Worship

Webmaster:

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A Sense of Call

It is a supreme privilege to be called to the charge and congregation of Ayr: St Columba. From the very outset, I felt a strong, warm and natural connection with members of the Nominating Committee. I was thrilled to be asked to be Sole Nominee and 'relieved' and delighted to be elected as your Minister. Thank you. I look forward to a good, long and creative ministry working among this very vibrant, caring and talented community.

The Service of Induction, Welcome Social and banquet in the hall afterwards were excellent and truly memorable. The evening could not have been better: I want to thank everyone who in any way helped to make the evening such a magnificent success. Members of my former congregation, Mayfield Salisbury, said that they were made to feel very welcome, which was particularly appreciated after nearly three hours on the bus! During the Welcome Social, I thanked the Interim Moderator, the Very Revd Dr David Lacy, for his clear, sure and utterly dependable advice; again, I place my appreciation on record.

My wife, Shelagh Laird, and our son, Murdo, were enthusiastically welcomed by so many people. Murdo will continue to live in Edinburgh and, once Shelagh has secured a teaching post in Ayrshire, she will move to the manse.

Ayr: St Columba is one of the largest congregations in the Church of Scotland. I want to pay tribute to my predecessor, Fraser Aitken, who had a long, joyful and successful ministry here; it is my intention to build on that honourable and distinguished legacy. I look forward to working with our Associate Minister, the Revd David Ness. It was an honour to be preached in to my charge by the Revd Dr George Whyte, Principal Clerk to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and Chaplain-in-Ordinary to the Queen in Scotland.

A saint of the Celtic Church, Columba taught the importance of pilgrimage. Pilgrimage in this sense does not necessarily involve physical journey to a sacred site but an inner journey; a spiritual exploration of the Eternal in the soul. Recently, together with my friend Hassan Rabbani (imam and Muslim Chaplain at Heriot-Watt University), we shared our different insights into God with a group of students at Edinburgh University: we reflected on the feminine in God within the traditions of Islam and Christianity. While there are many significant doctrinal differences between us, there are strong parallels on the inner or spiritual journey. In both faith traditions, there is an unquenchable desire for every closer and deeper union with God. On our pilgrimage at St Columba, I look forward to exploring our Christian faith in relation to other faiths, science, personal spirituality and a more mystical interpretation of our Scriptures. It is with openness and excitement that I look forward to shaping the future of St Columba in full partnership with office-bearers and members!

Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish you a blessed and peaceful Christmas, and a joyous new year. Be assured of my good wishes and prayers for our community, not least those for whom Christmas is a painful or lonely time. I pray that all of us are able to draw strength from our faith: Christ is born and Christ is born in us.

Every blessing,

Scott

Revd Dr Scott S McKenna

SUNDAY DOOR DUTY

MORNING SERVICES (9.30am and 11.15am)		EVENING SERVICES (6.30pm)
DECEM	BER	
1st	Team 8	
8th		
15th	Team 10 Team 11	
22nd	Team 11	
29th	Team 12	
JANUAI	RY	
5th		
12th		
19th	Team 3	
26th	9.30am Team 4	
	11.15am Team 5	6.30pm Team 6
FEBRU A	ARY	
2nd		
9th		
16th		
23rd	Team 10	6.30pm Evening Service
	xcept June, July, August, Decemb	held at 2pm on the fourth Wednesday of each er), the forthcoming occasions being January 22
		YING BRIDGE? If the congregation to hold Bridge events at Ayr St

A proposal has been made by a member of the congregation to hold Bridge events at Ayr St Columba on a number of occasions throughout the year.

Before the Kirk Session decides whether or not to give the green light to a possible 'Bridge Club', they would like to gauge the interest from the congregation to join the 'club'. This is before they commit cash to purchase tables. This cash would be repaid from the 'club' back to the church funds over the opening months.

Please fill in the coupon below and pop it in to Norman Reid's mail box in the Carrick Park entrance or email your interest to editor.columbanews@gmail.com by Sunday January 12, 2020.

2020.	
PS: The editor is in no way connected with this proposal. Playing Snap with playing cards is hard enough for	r me!
I would be interested in joining a Bridge Club at Ayr St Columba	
Name	
Contact number	
page four	

A Great Welcome

Everyone who attended the Induction Service for Revd Dr Scott McKenna on 24th October will remember it fondly for a long time to come. The Service itself was very moving, the Social was highly entertaining and the hospitality was quite superb.

The small army of members who contributed to the event in some way, be it large or small, are very much deserving of our gratitude. We are especially grateful to Kerrie Lee, who thanked everyone in fine style on the evening, except, of course, herself. I know that everyone was delighted to see Kerrie doing this so well. It is very fitting that it was she who offered our very first vote of thanks to Scott in his time here with us.

Kerrie took the opportunity to thank the people in the congregation and it is a pleasure to endorse her comments here. We gladly acknowledge the part played by everyone who turned up to support Scott and to support the Church. The positive response given to speakers and performers was very much appreciated and their part in creating such a warm and pleasant atmosphere was indispensable.

Many people have emailed, written or spoken to say how much they enjoyed the evening and those who received presentations have been quick to express their delight and their appreciation. We have also received a very gracious letter from Mr Charles Garland, Session Clerk at Mayfield Salisbury, Scott's former Church. In it he has expressed the deep gratitude of members of his congregation for the warm welcome they received at Ayr St Columba. He emphasises how much it means to the folk at Mayfield Salisbury to have been able to witness the beginning of a new phase in Scott's ministry and to be reassured that this will be happy, fulfilling and fruitful. What a testament this is to the relationship that Scott has built with the members there and what a testament it is to those who welcomed visitors and provided hospitality on that memorable evening.

We are very grateful to Revd Mandy Ralph for conducting the Service in a manner which allowed important messages to be conveyed in an amiable and accessible fashion and we also thank the Revds Brian Hendrie and Alastair Symington for conducting the Induction ceremony itself in such a meaningful and inclusive way.

Thursday, 24th October 2019 was the day that Scott McKenna became our Minister. We are delighted that he has joined us and we look to the future with great optimism. Ahead of that journey, it is right to record our sincere gratitude to everyone who contributed so much to ensure that this momentous occasion in the life of our Church has been celebrated in a distinguished, joyful and memorable way.

R A Bartholomew Session Clerk

COLUMBA NEWS COPY DEADLINE

Please note the deadline for the January edition will be WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18th

Norman Reid, Editor

Fun at the Light Party

On Tuesday, October 29 the halls at the church were transformed into a haven of light in the midst of the dark October night.

The Light Party ran successfully again welcoming over 30 children in to the church with their families for a night of fun, games, competitions, crafts, pumpkin carving, a light disco, challenges and hot chocolate.

Everyone had a wonderful time and half way through the night we paused for a God Slot from Irene where we explored the promise of hope and light in the darkness of the world and life. We met some of our regulars, some folk that come to the light party each year, some from holiday club, some from Messy Church, as well as some new faces.

Everyone on their way out received an invitation to the All-Age Service the following week and leaflets with information about Messy Church and St Columba's Kids.

So many people put in so much effort into making the night a success, including all those who helped decorate the halls in the very short timeframe available - special thanks to George Pilley, Irene Bartholomew, Margaret Doncaster and Terry Swinn for all that they did in advance to ensure that the party was a success and to those outwith the church who gave us a loan of their lighting equipment to help transform the halls.











A Big Thank You

Jane and the hospitality team would like to express their appreciation and thanks to all who helped at our minister Scott's Induction on Thursday, October 24.

A special mention must go to the Ladies of the Guild for supplying the delicious home baking, organising and serving tea/coffee.

The leftovers from the feast of St Columba were enjoyed by the staff of Belmont Academy, Holmston Primary School ,various work places, goody bags to the congregation and across the country to students in Edinburgh.

Our Beadle John and Elizabeth Ann for their help in the kitchen afterwards.

Finally the Wednesday Team who organised tables, chairs and cable extensions etc. Thank you everyone. A great team effort and certainly "A Night to Remember" .=

FREE WILL OFFERINGS

We are coming to the end of another year and new Free Will Offering envelopes for 2020 will be delivered along with this issue of Columba News to those members of the Congregation who have elected to use them. Due to rationalisation of the system there has been a change to some envelope numbers, however, this will not have an effect on the record of givings.

The start of a new year will soon be upon us, and exciting times lie ahead with a new Minister, The Revd. Dr.Scott S. McKenna, at the helm. His Induction Service, on 24th October, was a great success enjoyed by a large turnout of the Congregation along with many representatives from his previous charge in Edinburgh.

As the work of our Church continues not just locally but also in the wider context of National and International help and assistance we must accept our responsibilities in doing what we can to support these good works.

To this end the start of a new year would seem to be an appropriate time to reconsider the level of contributions we make to ensure that adequate funding is available to continue these services. So please give serious thought to your level of givings for the coming year.

If you do not contribute via Gift Aid, and are a tax payer, why not complete a Gift Aid form, this will increase your offering to the Church by 25% - forms are available in the Carrick Park Vestibule. You could also complete a Standing Order, a process which helps the Church to budget ahead and it also removes the need to remember returning envelopes each week.

I thank you in anticipation of a positive response and take this opportunity to wish everyone a Very Happy and Peaceful Christmas and a Fulfilling and Rewarding New Year.

Alan Hawthorn

Free Will Offering Convener

Notes from Session ...

A meeting of the Kirk Session, chaired by the Moderator, The Revd John Matthews, was held on 10th September 2019. A summary of issues discussed at this meeting is given below:

- Presbytery had noted the Safeguarding Committee report to the General Assembly 2019
 included the deliverance to instruct Kirk Sessions to conduct Basic Disclosure checks on
 all individuals in their congregations in leadership roles and positions of trust, including
 but not limited to organists, church officers, caretakers and cafe workers, where their
 duties may involve contact with vulnerable groups as referred to in the Protection of
 Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007.
- Presbytery had noted the recent inspections of the manses of Ayr: St Columba Parish Church and Ayr: Newton Wallacetown Parish Church. Both manses are fit for habitation but further inspections will be carried out on completion of the defects identified in the inspection reports.
- Ayr St Columba Ministries and Mission Contributions for 2019 are £158,927 and are proposed to be increased to £159,826 for 2020.
- The Church of Scotland had announced the appointment of Mr Dave Kendall BSc, FRSC, an elder at West Kirk East Kilbride, as their first Chief Officer. He will have overall executive responsibility for the Trustees' employees and budgets, and will take forward the organisational implementation of the vision and strategy of the General Assembly for a leaner and fitter Church.
- The Clerk was very pleased to inform members of the Kirk Session that the Nominating Committee had chosen a Sole Nominee for the position of Minister at Ayr St Columba Church. The Sole Nominee was the Revd Dr Scott McKenna, currently Minister at Mayfield Salisbury Parish Church in Edinburgh. Appropriate Edicts had been read out and Dr McKenna would preach for the charge on Sunday, 15th September, at 10.30am.
- The Clerk expressed his thanks to the Interim Moderator Dr Lacy, to the Committee Clerk, Irene, and to the members of the Nominating Committee for all their hard work. He said that it was a real privilege to witness the positive commitment of everyone involved and also the determination to find the right person to take the Church forward. Whether agreeing or disagreeing there had been a true sense of purpose throughout the seven months and the harmonious nature of the meetings had allowed everyone to contribute and to give their opinion without any sense of trepidation. The Committee had been truly representative of our Congregation and the decision taken had been unanimous.
- During the Vacancy, a neighbour of the Manse had taken the opportunity to unlawfully cut sections off some trees in the Manse garden. A lawyer's letter had been sent to them indicating our displeasure and making it clear that this must not happen again. The Clerk thanked Graeme McKinstry and his Company for dealing with this matter on behalf of the Church. No legal fees had been charged and the Clerk was extremely grateful for Graeme's advice, generosity and support.

- It was agreed that the monies collected in the Harvest Offerings this year would be split equally between the Foodbank in Ayr and Mary's Meals.
- Mrs Bartholomew said that many Duty Teams were working without a full complement
 and this problem was exacerbated when members did not attend and did not organise
 cover or swaps. She said that it was unfair to expect teams to function without all
 possible members on duty.
- The Treasurer reported on financial matters for the eight-month period to the end of August. He expressed his thanks to Margaret Doncaster and Tony Greig for providing their analyses promptly.

Summary of Overall Financial Position of the General Fund as at 31st August 2019:

- Investment portfolio value was up over the 8-month period by £38,000, having fully recouped the significant unrealised loss sustained in 2018.
- Total cash balances within the main Church bank accounts and the Church of Scotland Deposit Account were up by just under £17,000 against the actual figures at 31st December 2018.
- The profit statement of the General Fund showed that the Church was largely operating within the Budget set by Session in March.
- The only area of financial concern at the moment was the fall in the level of congregational offerings against the similar period last year. Session had budgeted for a fall of 3% against last year, but offerings were currently running at 7.2% lower than last year over the eight-month period.

An extraordinary meeting of the Kirk Session, chaired by the Interim Moderator, The Very Revd Dr David Lacy, was held on 15th September 2019. A summary of issue discussed at this meeting is given below:

Election of Minister

After the Revd Dr Scott McKenna had preached for the charge and the subsequent voting procedure had taken place, the Kirk Session met in the Church Sanctuary. Ballot boxes containing the voting papers used in the election were opened. The votes were counted in the presence of the Kirk Session.

The Moderator declared the results of the voting for the election and appointment of a minister to the

vacant charge of Ayr St Columba Church to be as follows. For electing Revd Dr Scott McKenna: 333; Against electing Revd Dr Scott McKenna: 9

Therefore, Revd Dr Scott McKenna had accordingly been elected and appointed as the new minister subject to the approval of Presbytery.

The Moderator thanked Mrs Irene Bartholomew for her work in organising the voting procedure and all those who had helped on the day.

R A Bartholomew

Session Clerk

Ministry of Flowers



Each week our church is beautifully adorned with flowers very generously donated by members of our congregation — often in memory of loved ones or to celebrate a special occasion. After the service, the arrangements are made into bouquets and, judging by the many thank-you cards we receive, are very much appreciated by those members of our St Columba family who receive them.

We would like to thank everyone who makes this possible – from the people whose generosity buys the flowers, the ladies who arrange them and those who make the bouquets and deliver them.

A new calendar for 2020 will shortly be put up in the Carrick Park vestibule and if you would like to contribute to the flower fund, please feel free to add your name on your chosen date. Your contribution can be left in an envelope with your name and date at the church office at any time. (Can we please ask that any cheques be made out to St Columba Church Flower Fund) You are, of course, very welcome to purchase flowers and / or arrange them yourself – just write that next to your name on the calendar.

Finally, we would like to say a huge "thank-you" to the ladies in the flower team for giving so freely of their time and talents. We are a cheery group who enjoy a chat and a cuppa every Saturday morning as we work. If you would like to join us, please get in touch via Irene in the church office.

Anne Drennan and Corrie Lawrence

THE GUILD

"Whose we are and Whom we serve"

When you receive your Christmas Columba News, we will be looking forward to all the celebrations within our own Church and with family and friends which comes with this most special time in our Church calendar.

Our opening meeting was on Monday, September 30, when we were delighted that the Revd Ian Paterson agreed to come along and dedicated The Guild for the coming session – and what a wonderful evening we had. His talk was so interesting and certainly gave us plenty to think about as we hope to continue the good work which The Guild does both locally, nationally and internationally. Thank you again Revd Ian for doing that it was so much appreciated by all the members. We had a large attendance at our opening meeting and were delighted to welcome some new members and we hope they will enjoy being with us.

In October, we had excellent speakers. Ian Thomson who gave us a most interesting insight into his work as VIP and Royal Security; what an amazing life he had and what stories to tell. Barbara Graham also gave us an interesting talk on the life and work of Gladys Aylward. We are so grateful to our speakers who give up their time to come along to our Guild.

Our first meeting in the New Year is Monday, 6 January 2020 at 7.30 p.m. in the Midton Road Hall and we can look forward to having Mr Bob Johnstone from RNLI Troon Lifeboat.

This is followed on Monday, 20 January 2020 at 7.30 p.m. our Burns' Evening, when we are pleased to have Mr Ronnie Breingan who will talk about Robert Burns and Money, followed by a light supper.

We hope to have our usual good attendance at these meetings and anyone who would like to come along and join us will be assured of a warm welcome.

May I, on behalf of Dorothy and the Committee, thank you once again for all your support and wish you a Happy Christmas and we look forward to seeing everyone again in the New Year – **Monday, January 6, 2020 at 7.30 p.m.**

Maureen Fullerton

Secretary

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Norman Reid, Editor

St Columba's Kids

At St Columba's Kids we continue to meet every Sunday after the first service between 10-11am for a morning of Songs, games, stories, crafts, challenges, snack, and prayer.

Since the last edition of the Columba News we have explored the Trinity and explored the work of the Scottish Bible Society, our charity of the year.

Each week our Junior leaders are brilliant at leading the worship songs and organising games - we are blessed to have such enthusiastic and able young leaders in our midst - please pray for them and the work that they do as they continue their school careers.

We are fast approaching Christmas time and we are looking forward to a Nativity with a difference as well as our outing at the end of the session.

If you know any children who would like to come along and join us we are always delighted to welcome new faces at any time in the year!





▼ SENIOR CHRISTMAS PARTY

BOOKING FORM

PLEASE RESERVE.....

a place at the Seniors' Christmas Party on Saturday, December 14



Not so many young people in October – perhaps everyone was preparing for the Light Party! Jennifer and Kerrie led the opening welcome and prayers; Stuart kept us all on our toes with great songs; and Lois had the crafts all in balance!!!

We continued our theme of "Great Escapes" — with the story of Joseph — escaping a horrid death down the well when his brothers sold him to a passing caravan and again after a very unfair stay in prison — when Joseph, with God's help interpreted Pharaoh's strange dreams. Irene left the story on a cliff-hanger — for another day!

Our next meeting will be 30th November same time. Same place – when we will be celebrating ADVENT.





Ayr: St Columba Christmas 2019 and New Year 2020

SUNDAY 1ST DECEMBER

at Ayr St Columba Lochside 4.00pm – Christingle Service

SUNDAY 8th DECEMBER

Morning Worship at 9.30am and 11.15am Congregational Christmas Lunch

Kylestrome Hotel - 1.00pm for 1.30pm

SATURDAY 14th DECEMBER

Seniors' Afternoon Tea

2.30pm – 5.00pm SUNDAY 15th DECEMBER 9.30am St. Columba Kids Nativity St. Columba Kids Christmas Party Time 11.15am Morning Worship

TUESDAY and FRIDAY 17th and 20th DECEMBER Advent Music for Meditation - 10.00am – 12.00 noon

WEDNESDAY 18th DECEMBER

2.00pm Wellington School Junior Service THURSDAY 19th DECEMBER

10.30am Wellington School Senior Service

followed by mulled wine & mince pies in the Midton Road Hall 4.30pm - Service of Readings and Carols by Candlelight 7.00pm Family Carol Service by Lantern and Candlelight Children are asked to bring a toy that Santa has left **CHRISTMAS DAY - WEDNESDAY 25th DECEMBER CHRISTMAS EVE - TUESDAY 24th DECEMBER** 11.30pm "Midnight at the Manger" 10.45pm Church doors open 11.15am - Morning Worship 10.30am Morning Worship **SUNDAY 22nd DECEMBER** 9.30am - Family Worship

No Early Service
10.30am Morning Worship
11.30am Holy Communion
"At the Close of the Year"
SUNDAY 5th JANUARY 2020

SUNDAY 29th DECEMBER

No Early Service

10.30am Morning WorshipSacrament of Baptism"At the Gate of the Year"

"O COME, LET US ADORE HIM, CHRIST THE LORD!"

Ayr Presbytery Meeting

held on 22 October 2019 within Ayr: Castlehill Parish Church

Ayr: St Columba: Presbytery noted that the Rev Dr Scott McKenna preached as Nominee at Ayr: St Columba on Sunday 15 September 2019. For 333, Against 9. Presbytery noted that the Call to the Rev Dr Scott McKenna has been sustained.

Ayr: St Quivox: Presbytery noted that the Rev John Mc Cutcheon preached as Nominee at Ayr: St Quivox (Dalmilling) on Sunday 6 October 2019. For 44, Against 1. Presbytery noted that the Call to the Rev John McCutcheon has been sustained.

Mauchline and Sorn Parish Churches: Presbytery granted Mauchline linked to Sorn permission to Call, subject to the concurrence of the Presbytery Planning Task Group.

Extension of Leave to Call: Presbytery granted an extension of Leave to Call to Old Cumnock: Trinity linked with Muirkirk for a further period of one year.

Letter of Demission: Presbytery noted that the Rev Helen Cuthbert, on grounds of retirement, will demit her Charge of New Cumnock Parish Church on 19 April, 2020.

Presbytery Plan for East Area: At the General Assembly, Presbyteries were asked to accept a reduction to their allocation of ministries based on information given to the 2018 General Assembly that showed a projected reduction in available parish ministers from 742 in 2018 down to 611 in 2023.

Presbyteries were further instructed to challenge themselves in their Presbytery Plans to be robust, imaginative and courageous in reducing the number of charges, creating ministry hubs and enabling new pioneer and new church planting opportunities, supported by a Ministries Council that enables new reformed pathways to ministry.

Ayr Presbytery previously agreed to reduce the number of charges from 32 to 26 with 5 full time equivalent Ministries Development Staff who will aid mission by the formation of more cooperative and flexible ministry teams operating in a "hub" style units.

Presbytery approved the plan as it relates to the East Area of the Presbytery which is moving from resource centre planning towards mission centred planning.

For information, Ayr St Columba is now in the Central Mission Focus Group which will be reducing the number of ministers in this area from 8 to 6 in accordance with the updated Presbytery Plan.

Troon Churches: The Troon Churches will be reducing from 3 to 2 full time stipendiary ministers, 1 OLM/Auxiliary minister, an attached Reader, Youth Worker and if available, other forms of local ministry.

Presbytery had commissioned a Committee to bring forward recommendations on the way forward. Unfortunately, they could not agree on recommendations and therefore Presbytery agreed that the 3 Kirk Session together with the North Area Focus Groups and Troon Dundonald Parish Groupings should work together based on a clean sheet of paper and bring forward relevant proposals considering various options e.g. having two worship centres, one in Troon town centre and one in North Troon, formation of two churches/congregations with one Kirk Session etc.

Church Repairs and Alterations: Presbytery agreed to the applications to carry out repairs and alterations projects to the following churches:

Drongan, The Schaw Kirk - £15,600 to replace Windows

Coylton Parich Church - £6,500 to install new Audio visual system and remove one pew Ayr, the Auld Kirk - £99,800 to replace hall roof

Conducting Worship: Presbytery agreed to allow successful participants of worship training, in teams of two, to conduct worship outwith their parish bounds, if they so wish, subject to the permission of their Parish Minister or Interim Moderator.

Barony Campus: Presbytery agreed in principle to explore the possibility of a project (school chaplaincy) to assist the new Barony Campus (amalgamation of Cumnock and Auchinleck Academies plus primaries) with possible funding from the Growth Fund and possible other sources.

Christian Communities: Presbytery encourage congregations to actively support the Olive Grove Chapel project at Tent of Nations , Bethlehem and become familiar with the Church of Scotland report "If One Suffers". This is to encourage congregations to express solidarity with partner churches where the Christian community comes under severe pressure because of its minority status.

Malawi - Alternative Xmas Gift Scheme: In the past, money has been raised every two years through the Alternative Xmas Gift Scheme to assist congregations in Malawi with mosquito nets, solar lamps, seeds and fertiliser.

This year the Gift Scheme will be purchasing seed, fertiliser and solar lamps. Further details and Gift cards are available from our Church Office.

Ayr Presbytery Annual Conference: The Presbytery annual conference will be held on Saturday 11 January 2020 in Alloway Parish Church. The Rev Prof David Ferguson will be speaking on Change and the future of the Church. Anyone coming for breakfast (9am - 9.45 am) should advise the secretary Ayr@churchofscotland.org.uk by 30 December 2019.

George Park, Presbytery Elder

BOOK GROUP

The book group continues to meet every six weeks or so in each other's homes.

This year we have read more non fiction than in previous years including Michelle Obama's autobiography and The Cut Out Girl by Bart Van Es, the story of a Dutch family who took a young Jewish girl into their home during the Second World War to hide her from the German occupiers.

Our last book of this year is also non fiction - Travels with a Stick by Richard Frazer, a Church of Scotland minister who went on pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela.

Anyone interested in joining us or in setting up a group of their own (perhaps in an evening) please contact Helen Greig on 07533 981670 or hcgreig@icloud.com

A WONDERFUL VACANCY

No Church welcomes a Vacancy. It is a time of uncertainty, a time of change and it is a time of peril for much of that which we hold dear. If it comes at the end of a joyful and devoted ministry, the emotions which are laid bare only add to the feelings of concern.

It is quite remarkable, therefore, that members of Ayr St Columba Church, having said goodbye to a much loved and highly valued Minister and having welcomed a warm and gifted new Minister who has already earned their admiration, have expressed genuine feelings of regret that our Vacancy has come to an end.

We have had a wonderful Vacancy. It has been a period when good people in our Church have stepped up, not just to hold us steady, but to take us forward and it has been a time when we have gratefully accepted the support of friends to lead us in the right direction. Friends such as David Lacy and Eddie Simpson, who were browbeaten into our service by Fraser Aitken – a great parting gift!

David has led our Kirk Session and our Nominating Committee with a sure and experienced hand. His outgoing personality, his friendliness and his willingness to go the extra mile for us have been tremendously important and his advice, guidance and reassurance have kept our hopes bright and our confidence high.

Eddie's contribution has been simply marvellous. He has been heard and admired Sunday by Sunday. His unique style, his openness, his stories and his humour have earned him a place in all our hearts and, if they could, many of our members would set aside his years and give him a permanent home in our pulpit.

We have been greatly served by our own group of retired Ministers and Preachers. The variety and the quality of our Family Services have been excellent. David Ness, John Matthews, Roddy McNidder, Ian Paterson, Lawrie Lennox, Muriel Wilson and David Wallace all volunteered to lead worship at the 9.30am Services as soon as the need became apparent. They have ensured that the service to our members has remained unbroken and that the standard has remained high. It is truly heartening to know that such good people are willing to help us so much.

Our members have continued to support activities in a spirited manner. Helen Greig and Keith Fullerton have taken on convenorship roles in Church Committees to ensure that all areas are covered and that the vital day to day work of the Church goes ahead unabated. Members have volunteered in many different ways to support the Church and this has been particularly evident in the preparations for the Induction Service and at the welcoming social where we enjoyed some truly special moments provided by talented people who are in our midst. The worship at Lochside has continued in the safe and committed hands of Roddy McNidder and the outreach work there goes on and is being nurtured by first class people.

Critically, our Office has functioned as normal throughout the Vacancy. Irene Bartholomew's input has been quite extensive and extremely valuable. Despite a considerable increase in workload, she stepped right up to the mark and dealt with it all in her distinctive, yet accomplished manner. John Stewart worked hard to organise the updating of the Manse, along with many other matters. He also found time to help out in the Office and Margaret Doncaster has spent hours supporting Irene and dealing with day to day financial matters. Our Church affairs have been in very safe hands.

As we look forward to a new ministry and a new era and as we commit ourselves to the exciting future of our Church, let us take time to reflect with satisfaction upon our Vacancy. It is a testament to the nature of all who make up our Church community that members and friends stood tall when they were needed and that all thoughts of a protracted and traumatic Vacancy were swept aside. Very few churches will have similar experiences to this. A wonderful Vacancy indeed.

R A Bartholomew, Session Clerk

Ayr St Columba Burns Supper

7th FEBRUARY 2020, 6.30 for 7pm - £20.00

MENU

Haggis, Neeps & Tatties
Steak Pie & Seasonal Vegetables
Clootie Dumpling & Custard
Tea/Coffee Tablet
Cheese Board/Oat Cakes

Caterer: Sugar Cube Drinks BYO

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CELEBRATE BURNS NIGHT IN THE MIDTON HALL PLEASE ADD YOUR NAME TO LIST IN CARRICK PARK VESTIBULE FROM 5th JANUARY 2020

The Hospitality Committee would like to wish everyone a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year

Fireside Puzzles for Christmas

BEWARE OF THE ELF

One day, whilst out standing in his field, McTavish suddenly noticed an elf standing next to him.

"I have a proposition for you McTavish" said the elf, "and how can you possibly lose!"

"I have two £50 notes, and I am going to give both of them to you," continued the elf with a cunning smile. "Then I am going to make a statement. If the statement is false, then you give me back just one of the £50 notes. If the statement is true, then you keep them both. Do we have a deal?"

Seeing nothing but profit in the proposal, McTavish agreed and shook hands with the elf to seal the deal - to which he was now inescapably bound. The elf handed him two crisp £50 notes and made his statement.

To his horror, McTavish suddenly realised that he now had to give the elf £1,000!!!

What was it that the elf said?

McTAVISH'S SISTER

McTavish was contemplating how old he was compared to his sister.

He said to her, "I am four times as old as you were when I was the same age as you are now".

McTavish is 40 years old. How old is his sister?

Solutions to these Fireside Puzzles can be found on page 26.

LOVE ACTUALLY

Every Boxing Day people across the land resolve that next Christmas will be different. In January, when the bills arrive, they promise that next Christmas will be simpler, less indulgent and cheaper. According to Money Supermarket, almost 10% of people will still be paying for Christmas well into next year. Perhaps next year, by refusing to conform to every tradition and everyone's expectations, we will recapture the wonder, the magic and the awe of Christmas and 'remember what it's all about'.

November magazines include articles on how to approach Christmas – 'Twenty Six Ways to Simplify Christmas'; or 'Five Reasons Why I'm Not Simplifying Christmas'. There are some radical work-saving, stress-busting, money-saving strategies out there. One woman recommends leaving the Christmas tree fully decorated all year. Hers has been in the corner of the sitting room, festooned in tinsel, baubles, lights and all, for *sixteen* years. It's true. For most of the year it is wrapped in sheets with the reminder, 'Do not open until December'.

Perhaps, after all, even on Christmas Day, reflecting on how simple or how lavish it has been is to miss the point. Maybe, as we approach Christmas, we do not need a to-do-list and a credit card so much as a Grinch-like revelation:

'Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before! What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store? What if Christmas ... perhaps ... means a little bit more!'

(Dr Seuss, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*)

A German proverb goes: 'The main thing is that the main thing remains the main thing'. That seems a pretty good definition of simplicity to me: recognising the extraneous and superfluous for what it is and focusing on 'the main thing'. Authentic simplicity has to be an inward reality before it bears the fruit of an outward lifestyle. Attempts to create the outer beauty without the inner actuality are doomed to legalism and frustration.

'The main thing' is to recognise the significance of that first Christmas, the Nativity. The birth of Jesus Christ was marked by astonishing simplicity. The highpoint of history, the climax of eternity, was not marked with grandeur, pomp and pageant. Rather, a pregnant teenager had no option but to deliver her child in the stark and smelly surroundings of a stable, the only warmth provided by the body heat of sheltering animals. The first visitors were shepherds, who were considered the lowest of the low. Jesus, the Bible tells us, did not come with majesty and opulence, but 'full of grace and truth', to reveal God – a God who is love – and to bridge the gap between us and that lavishly loving God.

Christmas is ultimately about love ... actually. As Christina Rossetti's carol puts it, 'Love came down at Christmas, Love all lovely, Love divine; Love was born at Christmas.' Perhaps, as we make our plans, we should be less concerned with how simple or extravagant our Christmas will be. Perhaps the touchstone of all that we do should be love: and how we respond to the extravagant love of God and how we love those around us.

Mission & Discipleship Church Without Walls Team

LIFE AND WORK

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 £30.60, to anyone paying before the end of January 2020.

Cheques should be made payable to St Columba Church.

Home delivery can be arranged for elderly or housebound members. Each month copies are available at both doors, priced £2. 80.

Anyone wishing to take out an annual subscription for the first time, please contact me, either through the Church office or at my home address.

Hazel Steele (tel 861631)

LIFE AND WORK MAGAZINE

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Hazel Steele, 10 Holmston Rd, Ayr KA7 3BB. Tel: 01292 861631

Men's Association

We have had an excellent start to this session with first class speakers on a wide variety of topics. We continue with an interesting programme as follows,

DECEMBER 2nd "A wee dram" - History - John Rattenbury DECEMBER 16th "My working background" - Harry Peters

JANUARY 13th Bagpipes - Kenny McLean (Guests of the Ladies Fellowship)
JANUARY 27th McCallum Highland Wear - (Aftenoon visit to Kilmarnock)

Our Meetings have been well attended and we always welcome new visitors and members. So please come along and enjoy an evening of fellowship and interesting talks,

George Rae, Secretary

TRIBUTE TO MR JIM RICHARDSON

ORDAINED ELDER DIED 13TH SEPTEMBER, 2019

Jim could be described as a wee man with a big heart. He was a native of Maryhill and had one sister, Maureen who sadly passed away last year. He was always close to her and her family. At an early age, his family moved to Troon and that is where most of his education took place.

He proved to have a good head on his shoulders especially when it came to Maths. He left school and entered the family business, which was a Newsagent, and Tobacconist situated in Kilbirnie.

After a short time, National Service beckoned and he served with the RAF Regiment, and was based in Devon. He hated the initial square bashing and taking orders, but because he was able to drive, was transferred to the Transport Dept which meant him driving all over the country – that was something he enjoyed. Upon Demob, he came back to the family business which he loved. I think he loved it so much because he was his own boss, and, of course, he loved people and enjoyed all the interaction with them.

Life, however was not particularly easy. His average day began at 5 a.m. and did not finish until 6 p.m. On a Saturday he did not finish work until 7 p.m. He took hardly any time off. When the family were young, he bought a caravan which on a Friday night, he took to Craigie Caravan Park, went back himself to the shop on Saturday morning and then on a Sunday evening brought the caravan back to Kilbirnie. In terms of holidays he was lucky to get a few days in the summer. Arran was one of his favourites, but only for three or four days at a time. He loved his work, being self-employed and especially meeting people. He retired in August 1997 when he was 62 and moved to Overmills Rd in Ayr.

In his retirement, he missed people and worked in a Car Wash a few days a week and latterly was engaged doing Taxi runs to the Airport. Jim was a hard worker all his days and was loved by everyone.

He met Ann at the Moorings in Largs. He dated her for a while but on one Saturday night he was late in picking her up — probably due to a late delivery of papers at the shop. Her response was epic "I don't know where you think I am going at this time of night. My make-up is fousty". Poor Jim was sent packing, but not for long. Love blossomed and they were married on 26th September 1962 in Kilbarchan. It would be true to say that they were utterly devoted to one another. I witnessed that on many an occasion. They lived for one another and in the fullness of time Tom, Caroline and Robin arrived on the scene. When they married Susan, Bill and Jeanette respectively they gave him his five grandchildren — Robert, Ewan. Wallace, Rory and Kaitlin. He loved them all to the uttermost and was very proud of them and their achievements.

Jim was undoubtedly a great husband, father and grandfather who always put the family first and himself last. Just recently Robert was married to Alex. The family also helped him in the business.

Jim, enjoyed sport when time allowed. A keen golfer, he was Captain of Kilbirnie Golf Club and was involved in its development. He was an enthusiastic curler and played for about 30 years, first of all in the Magnum and then in Ayr. He loved the outdoors and was a great walker. Both he and Ann were animal lovers having about eleven dogs and two cats during their married life. When I used to visit them not only did they have two televisions

in the one room, in order that Jim could watch his sport and Ann something else, Jim was the one with the headphones on, but they both had numerous books on the go all at the one time. Jim would have about five books on the go all at once. He believed in Scottish Independence and was always up to date with current affairs; of course in his work he had instant access to all the headlines. He also had an extensive knowledge of Classical Music, which was always playing in the shop. He also loved his cars and driving.

Jim loved his church and his Lord. When younger he would go on a Sunday evening to the Tron Church in Glasgow to hear Rev Tom Allan. He particularly loved this church and, of course, Fraser. Although not an elder here, he was ordained in Kilwinning. He would do anything for the church and was always willing to help. No doubt we can recall him standing there with his shock of white hair and broad grin, welcoming everyone to worship.

When we think of Jim, we think of someone who was a great character and personality, generous and someone with a great sense of humour, who loved to wind up Irene in the Office. He enjoyed a good debate – people putting forward their views and why they held them. He had a keen enquiring mind, but most of all he was a people person who would do anything to help. He most certainly enriched the lives of all who came into contact with him.

Surely the words of Jesus apply to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant"

Revd David Ness

WORSHIP, MISSION AND OUTREACH

At 9.30 on the November 3 we held our first All Age Worship Service. We were delighted with the numbers who attended, including 16 children and their families. Rev Dr Scott McKenna led the service; and the story of David and Goliath was told by Stuart McKinlay with the help of 4 children who played the part of the characters in the story.

Members of the congregation joined in 2 action songs and learned a new hymn; they were also invited to contribute prayers for the prayer tree. The final prayer included the prayers submitted by St Columba Kids and Messy Church. The service was followed by breakfast in the hall - a very sociable occasion. A huge thanks to Nan, Isobel and Jo who cooked for around 50 guests.

Our next All Age service will be the Nativity at 9.30 on the 15th December.

Before that, we are holding a Christingle Service at Lochside church at 4pm on the December 1 when we hope that members from both Lochside and St Columba will join to celebrate the start of the Christmas season.

Our outreach to the less fortunate this year is in the form of support for a local charity called The Night Before Christmas. This involves filling shoe boxes which the charity distributes to those living in poverty and the homeless. The boxes are provided along with a list of suggested contents (but you can fill your own box). They will be available every Sunday until the beginning of December when they will be collected by the charity and distributed throughout Ayrshire.

For more information contact Helen Greig on hcgreig@icloud.com or 07533 981670.

Helen Greig, WMO convenor

St Columba Church Library

Thanks to purchases and donations, the Library now has well over 200 books and DVDs - something to interest everyone.

Perhaps you haven't used the Library yet? You may simply be browsing or searching for a book on a specific topic. If so, there are six colour-coded sections to help you find your way around:

Children's books
Biographies
Fiction
Worship and Spirituality
Theology
The Christian Life

red
yellow
white
blue
orange
green

If there's a particular book you'd like to read and it's not on the shelf, let us know and we'll see what we can do!

The Library trolley is located outside the Struthers Room. Once you've found something that interests you, complete your entry in the Borrowing Book attached to the trolley. Borrowings are for up to one month. When you've finished the book, just return it to its colour-coded section on the trolley and note the date against your entry in the Borrowing Book. Nothing could be simpler!!

St. Columba is depicted in our stained glass window holding a book, so our library would definitely meet with his approval.

The following is a short list of books from the shelves, recommended by Rev. Eddie Simpson.

The purpose driven life – what on earth am I here for? by Rick Warren
Waiting for the last bus by Richard Holloway
Mole under the fence by Ron Ferguson
All in the end is harvest edited by Agnes Whitaker
An Altar in the world by Barbara Brown Taylor.

We have ordered the last two books on the list.

The Library is open for business!

Muriel Wilson, Bryce Hartshorn

SOLUTION TO FIRESIDE PUZZLES

BEWARE OF THE ELF

The elf said, "You will either give me one of those £50 notes or you will give me £1,000."

McTavish is trapped by logic. He cannot give both notes to the elf because this would make the elf's statement false and therefore violate the inescapable condition of the agreement that he should only return one note in that situation.

If he gave the elf just one of the £50 notes, this would make the statement true, but it would violate the inescapable conditions of the agreement since the elf had said, "If the statement is true, then you keep them both."

He must therefore keep both notes and ensure that the statement is true. Thus his only option is to give the elf £1,000.

MCTAVISH'S SISTER

Suppose McTavish's sister is aged X now. Then 40 - X years ago, McTavish was X years old and his sister was X - (40 - X) years old = 2X - 40

McTavish, at age 40, is now 4 times as old as this, so 2X - 40 = 10. Which means that X = 25. So McTavish's sister is aged 25 now.

Christmas Lunch

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Sunday, 8th December Time: 1pm for .1.30

Cost £22.00 (PAY ON THE DAY)



The Christmas Lunch is now fully subscribed but a reserve list has been placed in the Carrick Park corridor table

LIFE AND WORK

DECEMBER 2019

Christmas in the Holy Land

Church ministers offer contrasting pictures of Christmas in Tiberias and Bethlehem



Perspectives on following Jesus from Christians from Nigeria, Uruguay and the Czech Republic

'A Real Honour and Privilege'

Interview with the newly elected President of the Diaconate Council, Mark Evans DCS

'My Story is Also My Work'

The background to a new series of portraits of refugees, painted by church artist Iain Campbell and on display at the Royal Society of Edinburgh

Transforming Lives in Christ's Name

Viv Dickenson reflects on a year of social care celebration for CrossReach and the Church of Scotland

'Our Church is Awesome!'

Two young Fife sisters describe their experience as part of the Church family

Speaking and Acting

The Rev Dr Martin Fair continues his study of 1 Thessalonians

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CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

DECEMBER 2019

DEATHS

31st July 2019	Mrs. Jean Reid, 39 Walker Road, Ayr
11th September 2019	Mrs. Isobel Smellie, Genoch Farm, by Ayr
13th September 2019	Mr. Jim Richardson, 28 Overmills Road, Ayr
26th September 2019	Mrs. Isobel Bicket, 3G South Lodge Court, Ayr
5th October 2019	Mrs. Veronica Ritchie, 10 Ewenfield Park, Ayr
6th October 2019	Mrs. Chresta Clerk, Biggart Hospital, Prestwick

NEW MEMBERS

Dr. John Rogerson 91 Fairfield Park, Avr. KA7 2AII

by certificate	Di. John Rogerson 71 Turricia Turk, Tyr. R717 2710
by Certificate	Mrs. Karen Rogerson 91 Fairfield Park, Ayr. KA7 2AU
by Resolution	Dr Charles Aryiku 17 Bellevue Road, Ayr. KA7 2SA
by Resolution	Mrs. Cynthia Aryiku 17 Bellevue Road, Ayr. KA7 2SA
by Certificate	Revd Dr Scott S. McKenna, The Manse, 3 Upper Crofts, Ayr. KA7 4QX
by Certificate	Ms. Shelagh Laird, The Manse, 3 Upper Crofts, Ayr. KA7 4QX

CLOSING THOUGHT

IT'S OK TO BE UPSET

IT'S NEVER OK TO BE CRUEL

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REGULAR ACTIVITIES MIDTON ROAD HALL

MONDAY			
5.30 pm	Rainbow Brownies	Aynsley Bell	07914 842 118
7.30 pm	The Guild (fortnightly)	Mrs. D. Bone	441651
7.30 pm	Men's Association (fortnightly)	Mr. T. R. Swinn	441896
7.30 pm	Ladies Fellowship (fortnightly)	Linda Sharp	286951
, ie o piii	Zuares i ene nomp (rorunging)	Ziiidu Siidip	200,01
WEDNES	DAY		
2.00 pm	Holy Communion (4th Wed)	Church Office	269524
2.00 pm	Fitness with Friends	Mrs. Margaret Doncaster	477381
5.45 pm	9th Ayr Brownies	Mrs. E. MacDonald	445529
7.30 pm	Girl Guides	Susan Christie	442374
	9th Ayr Ranger Guides (every second Wednesday)	Susan Christie	442374
THURSDA	AY		
10.30 am	Oasis Café	Mrs. Rene Kidd	
10.20 am	Ladies' Badminton	Mrs. Elizabeth MacDona	ld 445529
2.00 pm	Men's Association Games	Mr. R. Park	268788
6.30 pm	Cub Scouts	Mr. D. Hope	263376
7.30 pm	Senior Choir	Church Office	269524
FRIDAY			
10.00 am	Parent & Toddlers	Church Office	269524
6.00 pm	Beaver Scouts	Fiona Wilson	290414
7.30 pm	Scouts	Jereon Bolte	07511 489 755
SATURDA			
4.00 pm	Messy Church (last Saturday of the month)	Irene Bartholomew	269524