

Newsletter of Dalgety Parish Church

December 2022

Minister's Musings

Elsewhere in this publication you will read about our 'Advent Library': a place where you will find things to be borrowed, or indeed taken; a place where things you have found useful in advent, or for Christmas can be left for others to borrow, or take; or maybe where you can leave your suggestions as to how to make Advent and Christmas calm, more fun, less stressful so we can all experience the miracle that IS Christmas.

A sharing of ideas and 'things'.

Strange to think that God came to our world to do just that too! To help us experience the miracle of life.

Bringing the clues, the experiences, the actual things we need to see and know the fullness of life, with a growing awareness of God that fills our hearts and souls.

And just as a dog is not just for Christmas neither is the need for us to share with others the comfort, and hope we get (I hope) from our faith. We are to help others see and feel for themselves the assurance that can lift us.

And no matter our faith, or the length of our faith journey thus far, we all need that lift because this world is a tough place to be. For some it is tough just occasionally, for others it is tough way too often.

So as we travel to and beyond Christmas what can we do to lift someone else?

To help them glimpse hope in the darkness?

To 'get' what it is we have found?

Christmas is that moment in time when God breaks through to be with us. It is the awesome wonder that the God of all creation sees each one and wants to gather every one into the depths of love.

Over my life, at different times, I have treated Christmas as a present-fest, I have dismissed it as commercialism gone mad, but over the years I have discovered in it - no matter the madness of the word around me - a truth that remains. That truth is that God loves me and this creation so much that the decision to come and be here, to assure and encourage, was made and was fulfilled in Jesus.

I also look back and see that from celebrating Christmas as a party season I discovered the wonderful account of Jesus being born, then moving to that realisation that this child is God incarnate. I then of course rediscovered Easter and moved to consider Easter as the major festival, more important than Christmas Then I worked out that without this birth, without Christmas, there could be no Easter. And now? NOW I hold Christmas as dear and precious as Easter.

For 'Christmas' was and is God coming to be with me. God giving up the glory and safety of heaven; laying down all godly power to be seen in human flesh. And so do not underestimate Christmas. Do not simply leave it for the children. Pick it up, hold it firmly yet gently - as you would a babe in your arms - and delight, wonder, and celebrate that the God of All came in such a way that we can hold God which allows God to hold us. That first grip might simply be a tiny hand wrapped round our pinkie or thumb - but that tiny hold leads us to know the promises, the love, the presence of Immanuel God is with us.

I know we thrill to see children excited at Christmas. Yet this season, this miracle is not only for them! It is for all of us no matter our age or stage!

The depth of meaning of this birth cannot be fathomed. And the gift of God's love is for all God's children- of every age, every generation, every nation - and every part of creation. To bring peace through love, to bring joy through hope - to bring light and lightness into lives

Have a wonderful Christmas.

Christ, God incarnate, was and is born into this world for you.

Christine

Storytelling

We have recently launched a Story telling session for 0-5-year-olds, a warm and safe place to enjoy a story and a song or two. We meet from 10.30 am till 11.00 am with an option of tea or coffee afterwards too. All are very welcome.



Storytelling and Art Project Update

Thank you so much for all your contributions to the "Behind your mask" Project. The stories are being collated into a photobook and the masks (with the thanks to the very clever and talented banner team) are being made into a banner. We hope to have this completed soon – watch this space.



On behalf of Dalgety Parish Church, and May Freeman a Huge THANK YOU to all who have donated to the church flower fund.

Not only have the flowers been appreciated on Sundays, but made into posies and taken out to people in the community, they have brought comfort and great pleasure. Seen as a continuing of our care and concern for the sick, lonely or sad but also as a welcome to new faces.

Next year's calendar list is now available so if you have a significant date you would like to mark or just like to see flowers in church and support the flower ministry, please contact me.

Sylvia Fradley Tel. 07771747610

PS Thank you to Sylvia who has taken on the arranging and delivering of our church flowers, and to Isabel who so willingly steps in to help when needed. May is not so well at the moment, has had a few spells in hospital, and I know that we all hold her in our love and prayers. Her amazing memory, depth of compassion and care, and of course creativity with the floral arrangements has been such a source of joy and support to SO many.

May, you are a star. Thank you.

Henderson House

It is wonderful to be back in Henderson House to offer a wee service twice a month. If you would like to come along, help with the singing, and chat with the residents just let Christine know. Tuesday afternoons 2.30 pm; 2nd and 4th Tuesday each month.

Enjoy

On 9th December from 10.30 am we will be enjoying ENJOY Christmas with a special 'Escape Room' experience around the nativity account. Simply put there will be a few challenges and quizzes as we try to Escape To Christmas! With a lot of chat around the Christmas Story and refreshment of course. Open to all.

Advent coming soon

A time for tradition, for family, a time of expectation and preparation, the most wonderful time of the year. How would we feel if our traditions were lost to us, that bauble that always reminds us of days past, the festive foods we share with people we love, the sending of cards and giving of gifts? What would it be like if we were, like Mary and Joseph, refugees travelling into the unknown? Expectation now apprehension and unable to prepare? I imagine it would be a time of stress and great concern of fear and the yearning of normality. This year we have a 'Little Advent Library' at DPC and we are asking you to share your traditions and borrow others! From books to baubles, jigsaws to jumpers! Please join in and leave something, borrow something, spend some of advent thinking about our local refugees and what you might do for them as well as those we will all be thinking of, the awkward to buy for especially! The office will happily look after anything you want to share and there will be a table and information in the hall of fellowship where our library will be situated as and when you feel you would like to leave or borrow. There is no-one to ask or leave things with. This is your library and you can use it as you like so take, leave and have a lovely time of advent.

Kari Watson

Tablet for Junior Church

We have launched over the last few months a different approach to our Junior Church. Each week our Junior Church watch and listen to a pre-recorded story, song and activity on a tablet during the service. These stories are also available on our website, if you would



like the password or a weekly email, please contact Christine or Andrea.

Youth Nights

A youth group for all teens (S1 and above) meet on Friday nights at 6.30 till 8.00 pm. A safe space to chat, catch up with friends, play table tennis or badminton, board games, crafts. It is a place and space for all teens, and all are welcome. For further information contact Christine or Andrea.

Teens and Twenties

We are a small group, that meet once or twice a month over lunch to share questions and thoughts about life and faith. If this is something you think you might like to know more about, please get in touch, with Christine or Andrea. All are very welcome.

Evil, What is it?......Where is it?.....

Evil is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as "profoundly immoral and wicked", yet when a person or action is called evil, it does not explain to us either the person or the act. We can all agree that torture is evil and that goes for genocide as well, but what the conception of evil really is, can be subjective.

Tamarlane, the Mongol ruler of Samarkand, conquered Baghdad in 1401 and had 90 000 of the inhabitants beheaded. He went on to build 120 mountains of skulls, which made a chronicler write, "He left no eye open to weep for the dead". The Mongols certainly did not think he was evil, then or now. He is a national hero and there is an equestrian monument to him in Tashkent, so those who say they know evil, when they see it, may not be right, because we are straying into moral relativism. It makes what is evil depend on who witnesses it.

Atheists reason that if God is all knowing and powerful and good, why does He not prevent the horrors that take place in the world. This, they say, proves that there is no God. Of course the obvious answer to that is free will, as Augustine puts it in his Confessions, God is "not culpable for the presence of evil, for the will is the source of evil" and he adds reassuringly, "God gave the will for the use of good". In other words evil and good are the by-products of free will, because if God prevented us from doing evil or good, we would not have free will.

This is logical, but evil in a religious context, can be confusing. I am sure we all consider nuclear warfare evil, yet at the end of world war two, the US Air Force chaplain, father George Zabalka, blessed both the Hiroshima and Nagasaki missions. In our own time, the head of the church in Russia, Patriarch Kirill, has blessed Putin and his war in Ukraine.

To understand the concept of evil, we could seek a neurological explanation, in fact there are neuroscientists, who are searching for Syndrome E, where E stands for evil. That means evil may be rooted in mental illness and that a normal mentally fit person, would not commit evil acts. We have to question this premise. Adolf Eichmann was the main organiser of the Holocaust and Martha Gellhorn, American reporter, who covered the trial of Eichmann in 1961, wrote "We fear him, because he is sane".

The idea of evil is firmly established in all religions, we think of Satan or if you prefer, the Devil. These characters are known for tempting humans into sin, but this is a distraction, which leaves us with only one conclusion. It is humans, who create hell on earth and that is much more frightening than either the Devil or Satan.

Ref. Philosophy Now, 2022 issue 148 Ref. The Spectator Feb.8 2020 edition Some of our Guild members enjoyed a memorable visit to Rosslyn Chapel and a meal out on one of those lovely sunny days we enjoyed this summer. We were treated to a short, but fascinating talk about the history of Rosslyn and then took time to wander around, absorbing the wonderful carvings and their symbolism.



We meet on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7.30 pm in the church. Our meetings started in September and we are enjoying being back together and welcoming new members.

Our fundraising quiz on 2nd November raised £333, thanks to the teams who turned up to take part. There were groans, sighs and laughs when the answers were given to questions and we all enjoyed the fellowship.

At the time of writing we are looking forward to hearing from local resident and author, Eric Simpson, about the latest book he has written.

We will have our Christmas meeting on 7th December and hopefully a fun night at the panto in the Dunfermline Alhambra. If you are interested in sampling a Guild meeting, pop along on 4th January 2023 for our first meeting which is a games night followed by a Burn's night on 18th January. You will be very welcome. You can pick up a syllabus from the church weekday mornings.

Elma Doig

Christian Aid has been raising funds and supporting people in need for many years. Initially it was started in 1947 to help refugees and destitute people who were suffering the after effects of WW2 in Europe, but now concentrates its mission on the developing nations. St Fillan's Church has been



holding a Coffee Morning for over 30 years in support of CA. With the demise of the pandemic this year everyone was enthusiastic to attend events in person. The Coffee Morning in late May was very well attended raising a brilliant total of £1605. The Plant stall outside was particularly popular.

A massive thank you goes to the ladies who organised the sponsored golf competition against Dalgety Bay this year. Dalgety Bay won and a total of £735 raised by the event.

This year the cluster group of Forth Churches - Aberdour St Fillan's, Dalgety Bay, Inverkeithing, North Queensferry and Rosyth Parish Churches formed a enthusiastic committee from the participating churches for the promotion of Christian Aid. We held our first joint venture on October 22nd - a concert in Dalgety Bay Parish Church. The acts included the Fife Ukulele Orchestra, Sing it Ladies Choir and St Fillan's Handbell Ringers. Over 200 people attended the concert raising a fantastic £1605.25. Watch out for our future joint venture in 2023.

"Christmas is coming – but Advent is here", perhaps that should be the new catchphrase or "It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas – but enjoy the mystery of advent" – The second one perhaps isn't so good, but I am sure you get the gist.

Advent is a time for waiting and discovering, a time for preparing and noticing, a time for counting down and reconnecting, whether that is in the writing or receiving of Christmas cards for people who you only hear from once a year. Perhaps it is in the enjoyment of stirring up Christmas cake and waiting to bake it, the buying of gifts and wrapping it, or simply the watching of a Christmas film with a cosy drink and something sweet.

Advent often passes in a blur and perhaps we, (including myself), have had years when we have rushed through only with eyes on Christmas Day and have missed the mystery of preparing and waiting. There is so much mystery and wonder in our faith, and it is in the mystery, that God draws us closer, it is in deep moment in which we simply can't explain, words are inadequate and yet for some reason we might see a moment in God.

As you journey towards Christmas this year, as we prepare to welcome and celebrate the birth of a child born into poverty, with none of the comforts of home, to make his birth or the early days of parenting easier – may we find time to be thankful for all we have, to not rush around this year caught up in the stress of perfection. Jesus didn't arrive into a perfect world or even had a perfect birth (whatever that might be), Jesus arrived into the messiness and into the chaos of life and despite the Christmas card scenes, I doubt very much that there was stillness and quietness in a very busy and overcrowded Bethlehem. But I do think there would have been nuggets of peace that Mary and Joseph found, and all who visited them, from Shepherds and Wisemen to unknown visitors that would have supported this new family. My prayer for you this Advent and Christmas is that you find moments of stillness, moments of calm that point towards God, where you can enjoy the preparations, for the celebrations will come.

Enjoy all that Advent and Christmas have to offer.

Andrea

Advent Studies

Advent Studies will be on Thursday evenings this year, the 4 Thursdays of December at 7.30 pm in Room 3. All very welcome.



Engcongolweni

Our Twinning with Engcongolweni CCAP (Church of Central Africa Presbyterian) in northern Malawi is now well into its 15th year. During that time visits have been made and friendships established, projects undertaken and vital help provided to an impoverished community. The Covid pandemic, unfortunately, disturbed the twinning link with activity reduced to practically zero. Covid was much worse in the UK than in northern Malawi and Engcongolweni escaped relatively unscathed.

A new opportunity for re-establishing our links has now arisen, as a change of minister is on the horizon. Rev Alan Mwale has been in post for the past four years but following a meeting of the CCAP Synod of Livingstonia in early October, he is due to move to Kaviwale parish in Mzuzu. Taking his place will be the Rev Brown Mwafulirwa, who comes from the Karonga district, an area close to Lake Malawi and the border with Tanzania.



After leaving school, Rev Brown, 45, became a primary school teacher. In 2002, he received a call to enter the ministry and he undertook his studies, under the auspices of the Synod of Livingstonia, at Zomba Theological College, graduating with a Licentiate in Theology. He subsequently completed a Diploma in Theology at the University of Malawi and in 2010 embarked on a Bachelor of Arts (Theology and Religious Studies) degree with Mzuzu University. He has a desire to continue his studies and complete his master's degree.

Rev Brown has been married to his wife, Victoria, since November 2001 and they have three children Junior, Uchizi, who is in Form 2 at Elangeni Secondary School, and Gertrude who is still at primary school.

Malawi, like other places, is recovering from the effects of Covid but is continuing to have to contend with other life-threatening diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis and the continuing effect of HIV/AIDS. With climate change, rains do not have the same reliability and there is a fear that insufficient rain will lead to a poor harvest and subsequent hunger. Malawi offers opportunity for prayer – on a wide range of fronts. Pray for political stability, opportunities for education, solutions to endemic diseases; and pray for Rev Brown and his family as they settle into their new home and for the community of Engcongolweni as it struggles with all that life has to throw at it.

Robin Arnott

Fairtrade - can you, will you help?

More than ten years ago, the Fairtrade group in Dalgety Parish Church had a dream to make Dalgety Bay a Fairtrade Town. Following a public meeting, and with support from the Church and the Community Council, the Dalgety Bay Fairtrade Group was formed.



To prove it met the criteria established by the Fairtrade Foundation, the Group had to ensure that Fife Council had appropriate Fairtrade policies in place, local supermarkets and retailers were stocking and selling Fairtrade products and encourage businesses on the industrial estates to use Fairtrade products in their staff canteens. Engaging with both primary schools and keeping the community informed about Fairtrade issues were also key in the steps to becoming a Fairtrade Town.

Achieving Fairtrade Town status was the impetus, during Fairtrade Fortnight, to hold annual assemblies and competitions with the primary schools, coffee mornings with the Church, monthly articles in 'The Diary' and the occasional outings with Bananaman offering free bananas at the railway station.

Sadly, the team organising the Fairtrade activities has not only reduced in numbers but time is catching up with its committee. We are now actively seeking new members to take the Fairtrade Group to the next stage of its life. If we cannot recruit people, the strong likelihood is that the Fairtrade Town Group will fold and the Fairtrade influence on the town will be lost. If you feel you can help, please speak to, or email, Winnie Wood, Chair, (tel: 01383 822516; win.wood2@btinternet.com) or Robin Arnott, Secretary, (tel: 01383 822293; robin.arnott@nibor.org.uk)

Probationer News

Andrea has been with us since September 2021, and has her final review in December. This means that from January Andrea will be free to start looking for her next post. As you may be aware there are not so many openings as yet - not until Presbytery Plans are settled and get going. Please continue to pray for Andrea as she seeks her next steps in ministry.

Six Little Stories with Lots of Meaning

- Once all villagers decided to pray for rain. On the day of prayer, all the people gathered, but only one boy came with an umbrella. That is faith.
- When you throw babies in the air, they laugh because they know you will catch them. That is trust.
- 3. Every night we go to bed without any assurance of being alive the next morning, but still we set the alarms to wake up. That is hope.
- We plan big things for tomorrow in spite of zero knowledge of the future.
 That is confidence.
- 5. We see the world suffering, but still, we get married and have children. That is love.
- On an old man's shirt was a written sentence "I am not 80 years old; I am sweet 16 with 64 years of experience".
 That is attitude.

Have a happy day and live your life like these six stories.

Remember - Good friends are the rare jewels of life, difficult to find and impossible to replace!

Finances

Not surprisingly with all that has happened these past few years, our income is not keeping pace with our expenditure. We have a fair gap this year - so far in the region of £12k.

We have a cushion, we are paying our bills, and will be able to for some time. We also know times

are tough for everyone and that is not going to improve anytime soon. This is not a plea for money. This is simply to let you know the reality of our situation. We are solvent, we are simply not paying our way year by year, which is something we will need to address next year!

Presbytery Plans

On 19th November at our Presbytery meeting we heard that the proposed Presbytery Plan had been agreed, in the main, by the National Planning Group. There is a period of 14 days for any appeals as regards process to be made. Thereafter the plans can start to be put into action



Our own area plan remains as has been suggested for some time now: a cluster group from Rosyth, through North Queensferry, Inverkeithing, Dalgety Bay to Aberdour with 3 fulltime ministerial posts.

Put simply this will mean 3 ministers rather than 4. There will eventually be 1 Kirk Session; and the admin part of parish life will be 'one'.

ALL areas will still retain a congregation, and a place of worship. So Sunday mornings will continue as is - the only adaptation which might be required would be a tweak of timings!

Over the past few months various groups from each congregation have been meeting: getting to know each other and begin chatting about how things are done, and how we can work together. The Christian Aid group formed between the parishes has found working together productive and fun.

Session Clerks, property conveners, treasurers, safeguarding officers, communication folk - even ministers - are already working well together and there is a determination and a positive mindset to make this work to bring about the best possible outcome.



Bible Studies

We have 2 groups running. Fortnightly Monday evening, 7.30 pm, group; and a weekly Tuesday 11.30 am group. Both are very open to any and all. There is no requirement to have a certain level of Bible knowledge - in fact that is what Bible Studies are all about: learning! So come along - check us out.

Some reckon we are ultra serious/religious/holy! Here is a wee story that might help counteract such thoughts. As a Minister giving a good lead to the flock Christine emailed the group to suggest a couple of Hebrew words we might think about. Being less than adept on a keyboard (of any sort) her typing is not always perfect. On gathering the group started to discuss, at some length, the first word offered but had found it hard to find anything - they had spent hours on this. Someone found a Lithuanian word that they thought might be helpful! The word they were looking up was 'butas'. Sadly this was a mistook in typing: it should have read 'But as.....' Some have since renamed us as The Butas Group!)

Sunshine Group

2.00 pm - 4.00 pm 1st & 3rd Thursdays of the Month Dalgety Parish Church

The Sunshine Group is for people with Dementia who live locally and might enjoy group singing. The group also provides support for their carers.

Each meeting starts with refreshments, giving a chance for a chat. After that, we sing together in a relaxed atmosphere for around 45/50 minutes. There will be words on the big screen for everyone to see easily. Someone will lead the singing and will be accompanied by various instruments. Our repertoire is varied and includes favourites from yesteryear, hymns, songs from musicals and films. There will be a Christian input with prayer and a blessing. We sit in a horseshoe to allow everyone to see each other, this helps to promote feelings of belonging. For more details please contact: Isabel Stanners tel: 01592 874729 or email: isabelstanners@yahoo.co.uk

Services

Sunday 4th December

10.30 am Service

3.00 pm quiet service to reflect on Christmas - remembering those we miss, giving thanks for the blessings we have, thinking again about the real meaning of the season.

Sunday 11th December

10.30am service

4pm Family Service which might even be Christmas themed.

Sunday 18th December

10.30 am is our Christmas Service with a 'nativity'

7.30 pm - Christmas Evening celebration

Saturday 24th December

Christingle Service at 6.00 pm Watchnight Service at 11.30 pm

Christmas Day

10.30 am Family Service

Sunday 1st January

10.30am Service

Sunday 8th January

10.30 am Service which will include our start of the year Covenant Theme

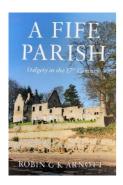
Sunday 15th Janaury

10.30 am Service

The second Wednesday of each month is our 7.00 pm Communion Service and on the last Sunday of January we have a 7.00 pm evening Service. (There is NO evening service on the last Sunday of December!)

Concert

Saturday 21st January there will be a concert featuring Bruce Davies - all proceeds to SeeScape.



A Fife Parish – *Dalgety in the 17th Century,* by Robin Arnott

We all know the Church is changing, with congregations coming together and new clusters and groupings being formed. Such was the position in the early 1600s. At various times, Dalgety was grouped with Saline, Auchtertool, Beath and Aberdour before Parliament declared it a church in its own right in 1643.

The life of Church and State was not easily separated during the 17th Century, although Mr Andrew Donaldson who was admitted as minister in 1644 tried his best to keep God at the forefront of people's lives. His Presbyterian principles, strong preaching and his service to the parish made him an outstanding minister. Founding schools and caring for the poor were his hall marks; all done while contending with civil wars and the



Linlithgow Burgh Halls, once the jail for Andrew Donaldson

burning of witches. Not one to relinquish his principles, he fell foul of authority and languished in a prison cell before release and an eventual return to his pulpit.

As a 'new' town Dalgety Bay, as we know it, is less than sixty years old but it hides a wealth of history and some of that is very ably told for us in "A Fife Parish – Dalgety in the 17th Century", published earlier this year. Through the book, you can explore the rich history of Dalgety four hundred years ago and learn how families lived and worked and how the church attempted to control their lives.

Looking for that Christmas present – what better gift than this book? Copies of the book (ISBN: 978 1803130 064) may be purchased from the Church office or from the author at £10 (plus £2 P & P where applicable) or from all booksellers at £11.99 (RRP). Robin Arnott may be contacted at 11 St Colme Drive, Dalgety Bay KY11 9LQ; by email: robin.arnott@nibor.org.uk; by telephone 01383 822293 or mob. 07714102251.

Wall of Work Can you help?

More volunteers for Cafe Connect Rota

As often or as seldom as suits you

Please contact Anne Marshall or Elizabeth McKenzie to find out more.

'Tablet Ministry'

Can you help our youngsters?

People to record Bible Stories for our young people

or

To send each week's programme to families

or

To upload onto the tablets the week's programme

Please speak to Andrea if you can help

Please keep checking out the Wall of Work Board in Room 1 as more opportunities to help come up.

Dalgety Parish Church Christmas Card Postal Service

To addresses in DALGETY BAY ONLY.
Suggested donation 40p per card.
Proceeds to
Frontline Fife, Homelessness Services.
Last Posting Date
Sunday 11th December
Post Box in Hall of Fellowship



Advent Prayer

Have a go at writing your own Advent Prayer using the letters of Advent as the first line. Below is an example

Asking for a

Divine

Voice to

Enter, for a

Nativity we can

Touch.



Church Family New Members

Kathryn Campbell Rev Marjory McPherson

Baptism

Orlaith Brough daughter of Jennie and Ian

Deceased

Clair Elwood Helen Condie Florence Johnson

Who To Contact

Minister

Rev Christine Sime, 01383 822316, CSime@churchofscotland.org.uk

Session Clerk

Elma Doig, 07912445219, elma@dalgety-church.co.uk Church Office, 01383 824092 office@dalgety-church.co.uk

Church web site: www.dalgety-church.org.uk

Dalgety Parish Church, Regents Way, Dalgety Bay, KY11 9UY



Dalgety Parish Church of Scotland