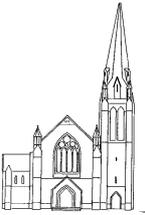




THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND NORTH PARISH CHURCH, GIRVAN AYRSHIRE.



**Interim Moderator - Dr James Anderson
Locum - Glenn Ronald**

December Newsletter

Dear Friends

For planning purposes the Presbytery of Ayr is divided into four Mission Focus Groups (MFGs) (North, Central, East and South). We are in the South MFG and it, in turn, is divided into North Carrick based on Maybole and South Carrick based on Girvan.

We in South Carrick have been allotted two full time ministers. There already is a minister in post at Ballantrae linked with St Colmon, so Girvan has one post.

This means that Girvan South and Girvan North must unite and look after Dailly and Barr, leaving Ballantrae and St Colmon as they are. The Presbytery has decided to suspend any new 'permission to call' until May 2021. But this does not mean that nothing happens until then.

With the aid of Brian Duncan, Convener of the South MFG, we, together with the five other churches in South Carrick, are working through 'Information for Mission Focus Groups', which will result in a plan for South Carrick that will be ready for the Mission Committee in May 21.

It would be great if we could return to the days in which we had two ministers in Girvan but there is currently a great shortage of ministers, and even if we had many it is doubtful if the church nationally could afford to pay them.

However the changes we need to make should be faced positively and enthusiastically. We all know that church-going has declined in recent decades; this is an opportunity to consolidate our resources and demonstrate more strongly whose we are and whom we serve.

I wish everyone a very blessed Christmas.

Jim Anderson

Dear Friends,

In the town of Nazareth, around 2,000 years ago, there was a young woman called Mary. She was engaged to be married to a carpenter named Joseph. One day an angel appeared to say she had been chosen to have a special baby. It would be God's son, and he would be called Jesus. Soon after the angel told them this news, Mary and Joseph married. Mary was heavily pregnant, and Joseph and Mary were told they must go on a long journey to Bethlehem, Joseph's hometown. Sadly, there was no room at every inn they went to, as it was full of people who were paying their taxes. One kindly innkeeper allowed them to stay in their stable. It was there Mary gave birth to Jesus. Shepherds on the hillside overlooking Bethlehem were told the Good News of Jesus' birth. The shepherds arrived and worshipped baby Jesus. Then the Magi, or Wise Men, worshipped the Christ child, each bearing gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. They followed a star which guided them to Bethlehem where baby Jesus lay. King Herod said he wanted to worship him too but secretly wanted to kill him.

The Christmas nativity is probably one of the most recognisable elements of the Christmas period. They generally contain baby Jesus in a manger, Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, angels, various stable animals, and sometimes the Three Wise Men. St. Francis of Assisi created the first nativity scene in 1223 to promote what Christmas should truly mean for us, and why Jesus Christ should be worshipped. It is difficult now to imagine a time when a nativity scene does not occupy a prominent role in a church, in a house, or in a play at this time of year.

Most nativity scenes took place in a stable or in a cave. Whilst Jesus may have been born there, it is just as likely that Jesus was born in the lower level of a home, amongst animals who were brought in for the night. The angelic involvement took place on the hillside with the shepherds rather than the angels hovering over the stable where Jesus lay. Also the Three Wise Men who often feature in the nativity did not see Jesus on the night of his birth. They instead saw Jesus when he was around two years old. Despite these differences nothing can take us away from the importance of this nativity scene.

The most significant message for any nativity scene is what is communicated to the world. As the sins of humankind needed a perfect sacrifice to be laid before God, our heavenly Father sent his own Son, Jesus Christ, to live amongst us as a human being who would also die a human death. It was a tragically painful death which that child of Mary would ultimately suffer on the Cross, but this human child was also a Divine being and so would rise again. Every person who believed in this would be forgiven of all sin and promised eternal life.

This is the purpose of the nativity story. It focusses our mind on the Christ child rather than on ourselves. Christ's birth can help to redeem a broken world, can help reconcile those who were previously irreconcilable, can help to end all wars, and can help each of us have a fresh start. Everything that has happened before is in the past, but it is what is happening today, and in the future, that matters so much more.

Best wishes, Glenn.

Christmas Message from the Treasurer.

A huge thank you to our members who have continued to support Girvan North financially during 2020 in spite of all the difficulties of the pandemic. Our income is obviously down as we have had no fundraising events or hall lets for 9 months. However our income from standing orders, FWO envelopes, cheques and donations have been very heartening. In the October newsletter I appealed to members to give a donation in lieu of money they would have spent at our fundraising events. This appeal has brought in £2525 with donations still coming in to me. This is a wonderful response.

Thank you all.

The necessary closure of our church for a further 3 Sundays has again impacted on our income. It would be very helpful if members could get their offerings, FWO envelopes or donations to me before the end of the year so that I can include them in the 2020 accounts. These can be put in the offering boxes at the church or sent to me at 1 Rodney Drive. KA26 9DZ.

Sincere thanks.

I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a Covid free, more normal 2021.

Margaret Benson

Answers to Wheels Quiz in October newsletter.

1 train	7 clock	13 tractor	19 car	25 water mill
2 suitcase	8 golf cart	14 pram	20 penny farthing	26 trundle wheel
3 tombola	9 rollerblades	15 trolley	21 bus	27 computer mouse
4 trailer	10 fire engine	16 post van	22 taxi	28 sewing machine
5 truck	11 skateboard	17 London Eye	23 carriage	29 ambulance
6 barrow	12 aeroplane	18 pushchair	24 rickshaw	30 baby walker

Hope you enjoyed it!

From the Session Team

The Mission Focus Group are working at the way forward when we have to decide what we have to put forward to Presbytery and 121 George Street..

Thanks to Glenn for all his hard work and his weekly services.

The Church has been decorated for Christmas not like past years and our thanks to Billy, Anne, and Anna for all the work and to Agnes for the Advent candles and the Poppy arrangements for Remembrance Sunday.

I hope everybody is keeping well.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a better New Year,

Yours the Session Team.

Topics for Prayer

In the words of the hymn:-

“Give thanks with a grateful heart, Give thanks to the Holy One”

Yes, even in the midst of a pandemic, give thanks to our almighty God for all His blessings, especially for the coming of the Saviour into the world. Remember the circumstances of His birth: the long arduous journey to Bethlehem, no room in the inn, only a cold draughty stable and a manger bed for the King of kings! What a welcome!

Give thanks and pray for the work of all who are reaching out to the needy, all charities and missions like the Salvation Army, Mission Aviation Fellowship, Open Doors and the Leprosy Mission.

Pray for all caring for the sick, for the homeless and alone and for those recently bereaved.

Pray for our leaders for wisdom for a way forward.

Ask God for a responsive heart to heed His prompting to reach out to others with a card, a letter or a phone call.

Pray that the angel’s song might come true this Christmas;
“Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to all men”

Carol Singing

The advice from Presbytery is that Carol Singing is not permitted either in groups or in the street. I believe this was also endorsed by Jason Leitch, the National Clinical Director of the Scottish Government. Therefore to any Church or Congregation planning Carol Singing then I would ask you to cancel.

However you may wish to check out the Church of Scotland Website in which a Church of Scotland Minister is urging people to take part in a nationwide Christmas Carol concert on their doorsteps on the 20th December at 6pm. As this article promotes: "Doorstep Carols is an opportunity for people to come together in small numbers in a socially distanced and responsible way as part of a wider community across Scotland and celebrate this special time of year."

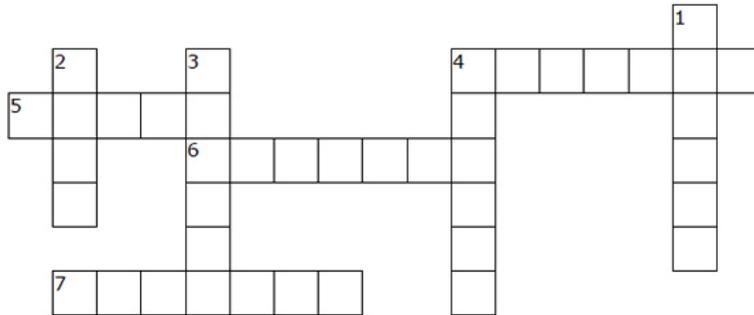
Once again to all Churches please refrain from traditional Carol Singing in the streets.

Thank you for your understanding, support and cooperation.



Merry Christmas

Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

4. One who speaks for God, or tells what will happen in the future
5. The sounds that are made when people speak or sing
6. To get ready for something that is going to happen
7. What John did to people in the Jordan River

DOWN

1. An area where there is little rain and not many plants
2. The man who preached that Jesus was coming
3. To be sorry for something bad you have done and make a change
4. To deliver a sermon

VOICE	PREPARE	DESERT	PROPHET
REPENT	JOHN	PREACH	BAPTIZE



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Children's Worship Bulletin

Are You Ready for Christmas?

Matthew 3:1-12

Word Search

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

LORD	PREPARE	KINGDOM	JOHN	HAIR
BAPTIZE	STRAIGHT	PATHS	PREACHING	WILD
REPENT	LOCUSTS	HONEY	CAMEL	BELT

Your Church Name
City or Town

Decoder Puzzle

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

- 16-18-5-1-3-8 _____
- 2-1-16-20-9-26-5 _____
- 16-1-20-8-19 _____
- 4-5-19-5-18-20 _____
- 19-20-18-1-9-7-8-20 _____
- 12-15-3-21-19-20-19 _____
- 16-18-5-16-1-18-5 _____
- 8-15-14-5-25 _____

BAPTIZE	PREPARE	STRAIGHT	LOCUSTS
PATHS	HONEY	PREACH	DESERT



Color Me



JOHN THE BAPTIST

Matthew 3:3, Mark 1:3, Luke 3:4