



Dear Friends.

We are about to be celebrating our first Christmas together, which is exciting!! It is a lovely time of year when everyone seems to want to be happy, when you can bump the person in front of you with their trolley and they don't turn round and give you a nasty look - instead they laugh.

Soon we will all be working like mad to make sure we are ready for Christmas: Christmas cards bought, written, sent - tick; presents bought wrapped and delivered - tick; tree and decorations up - tick; food bought - tick; turkey ordered, collected and cooked - tick; set the table.... oh, no we forgot Christmas crackers!!

Soon our churches will be brought to life with trees and lights and the singing of Christmas Carols.

But what about people elsewhere in the world?

Do you believe that there was once a time when I was really afraid to go to a church service? It was the Christmas I was in Sialkot. The government had decided that at some point, but the date was kept secret for fear of rioting, they would lift Martial Law. We had a few frightening months when gun sales were going through the roof and people shared stories of how frightening life had been before Martial Law. Newspapers reported date after date when it would be lifted. The dates passed and nothing had happened. One of the dates reported was 25th December, the birthday of Mohammad Ali Jinnah (founder of Pakistan).

Christmas Eve came and throughout the evening the noise from gunfire got more and more frequent. No-one knew what was happening. Had Martial Law been lifted and this was a demonstration? Was it more like a battle? Was someone celebrating the birth of a son? Why was there more and more gunfire? It didn't stop till well into the wee small hours. Helen MacMillan who was Mission Partner to this Presbytery, decided to go to the watchnight service regardless of gunfire, about a 10 minute walk up a dark road. I waited up till she got back. The church had been full of Pakistani Christians and I felt ashamed that I had been too afraid.

This story shouldn't make us feel guilt, what I hope it will do is remind us that we need to put Christ right into the heart of the Christmas celebrations. That was what was important to the Christians in Sialkot. They knew that Christmas would not be Christmas unless they truly celebrated Jesus' birth and coming among us to be with us always.

Wishing you a wonderful Christmas. Love Alison

She's here!!!!

At long last we have our new minister. Alison Burnside.

Alison was inducted into the charges of Bengairn and Castle Douglas on 20 September 2018 at a service in Castle Douglas Parish Church led by the Moderator and attended by many members of Presbytery and also many of her new parishioners. Of course some were there out of curiosity but most because they are so pleased to have a minister after a two year vacancy. We have been so lucky to have had John and Oonagh during that time and they **couldn't have served us better. John went straight** from here to a new vacancy in Sanquhar and Kirkconnel and we hope he and Charlotte enjoy their time in that part of the County although, no doubt, they could have done with a few weeks to recover first. Happily Oonagh is still with us.



The induction service was followed by a social with mounds of food provided by members of both parishes, entertainment from Szeying Wylie, the CD church choir who were joined by members of Bengairn and the Presbytery, a sketch from Julie Baird and Richard Brown and a poem from Jean Brown. Presentations were also made:- a welcome to Alison and sincere thanks to Oonagh and John and to David Bartholomew our **Interim Moderator who steered us through the vacancy and as for the 'mound of food' ? Well it was greatly depleted but there was still plenty at the end of the evening to send off several doggy bags and those doing church teas on the Sunday didn't have far to look for supplies.**

On Sunday 23 September, Alison was preached in to both services by her long time friend and OLM Rev Mary Ellen Thomson from the Presbytery of Abernethy. We heard several stories **of Alison's caring and friendly ministry in Kingussie and what had pointed her in our direction.** It is obvious that they will miss her greatly.

Alison is going to be a very busy lady with a family of two boys and two girls not to mention dog, hens, etc. and we look forward to getting to know them all (the family at least) as they settle into life in the Stewartry.

Dear Friends Once again the Christmas season is fast approaching. We are getting used to working with our new minister, and looking forward to a long and fruitful relationship with her. Oonagh is still with us, and we were much appreciative of a different and moving service on Remembrance Sunday. The November weather was rather unkind for the acts of remembrance at the war memorials but it did not keep people from attending.

Fund raising will once again have to feature in our programme since several further fabric problems have become apparent.

You may have noticed slight differences in the format of the communion at Kelton, and this may be further tweaked in the future.

I am especially grateful for the support of the congregation and office bearers over the last two years and this should set us up for the future. Together we are better.

Peter Session clerk

Auchencairn Community Choir Winter Concert

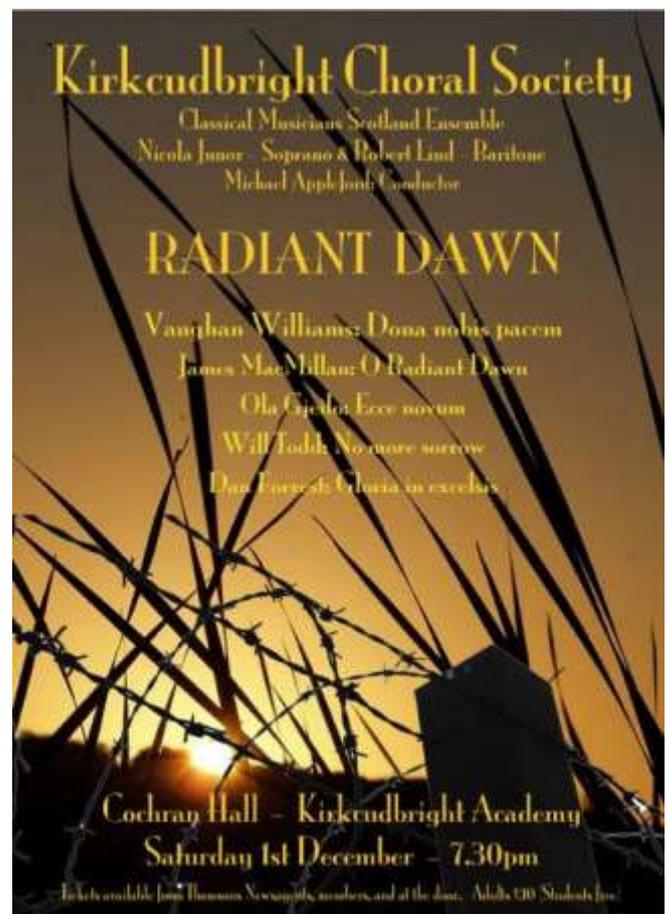


Tuesday 18 December

7.30 pm

Auchencairn Village Hall

Tickets £4 at the door



The Guild

On 7th October in Kelton Church the members of the Guild were given great encouragement by the words of Rev Alison Burnside as she dedicated us in the service of our Lord.

At our meeting on 10th of October Mrs Nicky Smith, after devotions, gave a warm welcome to the Rev Alison Burnside. Alison shared with us the determination from her earliest years to become a minister and share her love for Jesus Christ. During a year spent in Pakistan Alison worked with Helen McMillan who was teaching at a girls Christian school in Sialkot. Helen for many years was our missionary partner at Kelton and other churches in the area. During the talk we heard that Alison had been christened in Paisley Abbey by Rev James Ross who had been a much loved minister at Kelton. Another link between Alison and our parish. Alison endeared herself to the members with her warmth and obvious commitment to lead us forward in faith.

On 27th October a successful coffee morning was held in Castle Douglas Church Hall when the sum of £650 was raised for church funds. The Guild are very grateful for the support of Bengairn Parishes congregations. A Christmas stall will be available after church on 2nd December in Kelton Hall.



The meeting on November 14th was led by Mr John Love, making Guild history by being our first male leader. John welcomed members and speaker Pastor Mike Smith of New Life Church Castle Douglas. After devotions John introduced Mike and spoke of the warm welcome he and many others from various churches received each month at the Elderberries Lunch. Mike told us that Elim Church "New Life" had been 25 years in Castle Douglas. Founded throughout Britain 103 years ago, there are now 580 churches. We heard how **New Life Church has become a corner stone in many people's lives. One of the vital community** roles is the Food Bank based at New Life Church. With youth groups, toddlers and mums sessions and a congregation of 70 plus each Sunday of all ages Jesus is being brought to all through words and song. John thanked Pastor Mike for a talk which gave us much to think about.

Wendy told us of the arrangements for the Christmas outing to the Market Inn and then to the panto on December 19th. At the January meeting members will speak of their favourite hymns. All welcome. Margaret.

Bengairn Word Alive

“Tell me, and I will forget. Show me, and I may remember. Involve me, and I will understand.”

This is why coming along and being a part of Bengairn Word Alive works so well. We read the Bible together, we ask questions of each other, we discuss a wide range of topics, there is often laughter. Reading the Bible with others helps us to see it through their perspectives and we **often gain new insights from other's thoughts as we discuss what God may be challenging us** to do, both as individuals and as the people of God in Bengairn. Studying the Bible together is not just to make us more knowledgeable about the text, although that is helpful, it is to plunge us deeper into life with God, and therefore deeper into life with one another. When we read with others we feed our souls and activate our conscience, allowing the Scriptures to renew our minds so that the Spirit of God can transform our lives.

“Without wavering, let us hold tightly to the hope we say we have, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. Think of ways to encourage one another to outbursts of love and good deeds. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as many people do, but encourage and warn each other.....” Hebrews 10:24-25 (New Living Translation)

We began reading the Book of Acts in September and will continue to do so for a number of meetings yet. The current set of 6 fortnightly meetings finishes on Monday December 10th. Our next 6 meetings will begin on Monday February 4th and meet fortnightly at 1:30pm in **Kelton Kirk Room. If you haven't managed along yet please try and give it a go** – you can be assured of a warm welcome.

Nicky



Be sure to check out the Diary Dates. There must be something for everyone from concerts to special services.

Last year we laid on a party in Gelston Village hall for everyone who wanted to come along. Our Christmas Cracker was so successful it will be repeated again this year on 14 December. There is no charge but if you would like to give a small donation towards costs that would be very welcome.

New this year is the Celebration of Loved Ones when we remember those who are no longer with us. Also new are the Gift Service on 9 December when you are invited to bring along a wrapped gift for a child.

(remember to add the age it is suitable for and whether for a boy or girl) and the Ecumenical Service in Wallets Mart on 23 December again meant for everyone.

Hope to see you at at least one of these.

Bengairn Parish Duty Rota

Please arrive 20 minutes before the start of the service.

If you are unable to attend please arrange a substitute.

Jan

06	(K)	A Hyslop	E McArthur
13	(A)	R Ramsay	J Jardine
20	(K)	N Smith	J Hendry
27	(A)	P Davis	J Walker

Feb

03	(K)	B Wright	J Brown
10	(A)	D Henry	K Ross
17	(K)	R Bellamy	R Gladstone
24	(A)	W Hean	C Ashton

Mar

03	(K)	A Campbell	A Ross
10	(A)	W Kennedy	A or M Dunlop
17	(K)	M Shanks	F Twiname
24	(A)	A Hyslop	E McArthur
31	(K)	R Ramsay	J Jardine

Apr

07	(K)	N Smith	J Hendry
14	(A)	P Davis	J Walker
21	(K)	B Wright	J Brown
28	(A)	D Henry	K Ross

May

05	(K)	R Bellamy	R Gladstone
12	(A)	W Hean	C Ashton
19	(K)	A Campbell	A Ross
26	(A)	M Shanks	F Twiname

Jun

02	(K)	A Hyslop	E McArthur
09	(A)	R Ramsay	J Jardine,
16	(K)	N Smith	J Hendry
23	(A)	P Davis	J Walker
30	(A)	B Wright	J Brown

(K) Kelton (A) Auchencairn



On a lovely evening in September members of our congregation gathered at Orroland to say “Thank you so much” and “We’ll miss you” to John and Charlotte Lochrie.

John has done so much more than the Sunday plus two days a week he was supposed to do during the vacancy. As well as Sunday services he was a willing visitor in hospitals and homes and he and Charlotte supported as many fund raising events as they could do. They are now spending time between their home in Ayrshire and Sanquhar and Kirkconnel where he is covering yet another vacancy.

Everything I need to know about Life I learned from Noah's Ark

- ◇ Don't miss the boat
- ◇ Remember that we are all in the same boat
- ◇ **Plan ahead.** It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark
- ◇ Stay fit. When you are 600 years old someone may ask you to do something big
- ◇ **Don't listen to critics** - just get on with the job that needs to be done
- ◇ Build your future on high ground
- ◇ For safety's sake travel in pairs
- ◇ **Speed isn't always an advantage;** the snails were on board with the cheetahs
- ◇ **When you're stressed float awhile**
- ◇ Remember the Ark was built by amateurs. The titanic was built by professionals



CHRISTMAS COLOURING BOOK



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Christmas Present Ideas

This Christmas Colouring book designed by two of our members costs just £3.50. Ideal as a stocking filler for smaller children with text and pictures depicting modern day Christmas as well as the Christmas story. Can be picked up in Church any Sunday, through Kelton Playgroup or contact the magazine editor. Sold in aid of church funds.

At Christmas time amongst the presents received are often gift tokens for gardens, books etc. What about a "new look" token this Christmas. Wouldn't it be nice to get a card with a note inside saying "this is a coffee token I'd like you to come and share a cup with me". Or a 'company' token for someone who hasn't many visitors, I'm sure there are many other tokens we could think of. The coming of Jesus Christ was God's token of his love for us. By our tokens of friendship let us share that love.

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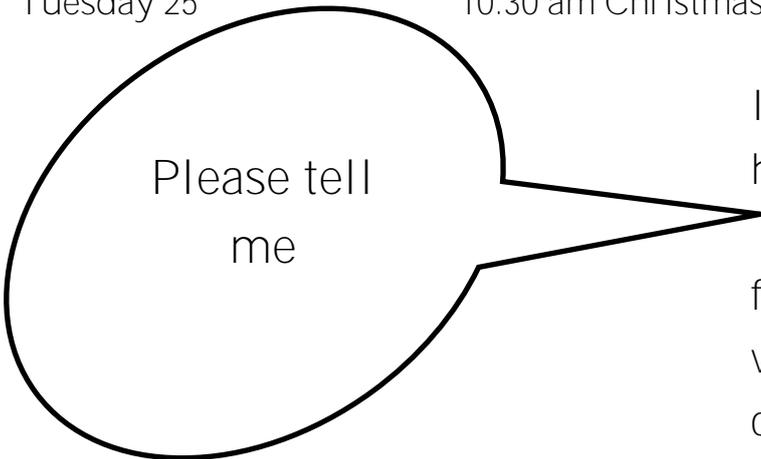
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Diary Dates for December

Saturday 1	7.30 pm	'Radiant Dawn' Kirkcudbright Choral Society A commemoration of the end of the war followed by music for Advent. Cochran Hall, Kirkcudbright Academy
Sunday 2	9.30 am	Oonagh will take morning service at Kelton which will be followed by Christmas gift stalls in the hall
Monday 3	7.00 pm	Celebration of Loved Ones at Auchencairn
Sunday 9	9.30 am	Gift Service at Auchencairn - please bring a wrapped toy for a child, with details on the tag as to whether it is for a boy or a girl and the age group
Sunday 9	6:30 pm	Candlelit Service at Kelton
Tuesday 11	6.30 pm	Carol Service Auchencairn Church
Friday 14	7.00 pm	Christmas Cracker. Gelston Village Hall
Tuesday 18	7.30 pm	'Winter Concert' Auchencairn Community Choir Auchencairn Village Hall
Wednesday 19	5.30 pm	Guild dinner and visit to pantomime
Sunday 23	3.00 pm	Community Carols in Mart Ring 1 at Wallet' Mart This is the start of a 'new' ecumenical, community event to celebrate the fun and excitement of Christmas.
Monday 24	11.30 pm	Christmas Eve Service at Auchencairn Also (11.15 for 11.30pm at Castle Douglas)
Tuesday 25	10.30 am	Christmas Day Service at Castle Douglas Parish



Please tell
me

If you know of anyone in hospital or at home who would like a visit please tell me by filling in one of the cards you will find at the back of the churches.

 Father

We thank you for all the wonderful things we have at this time of year. The love of family and friends, a stable society, comfort, warmth, food. We have to remember, though, that not everyone is so blessed and we ask your help in doing what we can to make Christmas happy for those who are not so lucky. Give hope to those who are struggling to make ends meet never mind find extra for even the smallest Christmas treats and show **them that they are not alone and help will come from 'somewhere'**. Give them strength to ask for help when they need it and give us the compassion and love to do what we can to help. Amen



Alison and Louise would like to thank everyone who supported them in Sober for October. We raised £525 with the money being divided between McMillan Cancer Care and the Church of Scotland's support services for people with mental health issues and/or addictions (Crossreach). Suddenly being sober for a whole month seems worth it. THANK YOU!!

 Dear Friends,

Jeremiah 29:11

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future".

As we move towards Advent, that time of waiting with Hope; isn't it a blessing that our waiting time for a new Minister is past and we look to the future in her company?

I feel personally blessed by both the safe arrival of grand-daughter Rosie, and the beginning of **Alison's ministry. Working as an OLM with her is a real privilege and her enthusiasm is infectious.** The future opening up before us, to share the Good News of our faith in God in **new ways; to worship together with new nuances; it's an exciting opportunity.**

May the love of the Lord continue to fill our hearts and minds with the joy of deep trust for today and bright Hope for all our tomorrows,

Yours, as ever,

Oonagh.

Items for the next newsletter should be given to the Editor IN WRITING at Church, by e-mail to rosemarygladstone@gmail.com or by post to Mrs R Gladstone, Lansdowne, 93A St Mary Street, Kirkcudbright, DG6 4EL. Contributors should give contact details in case of any queries.