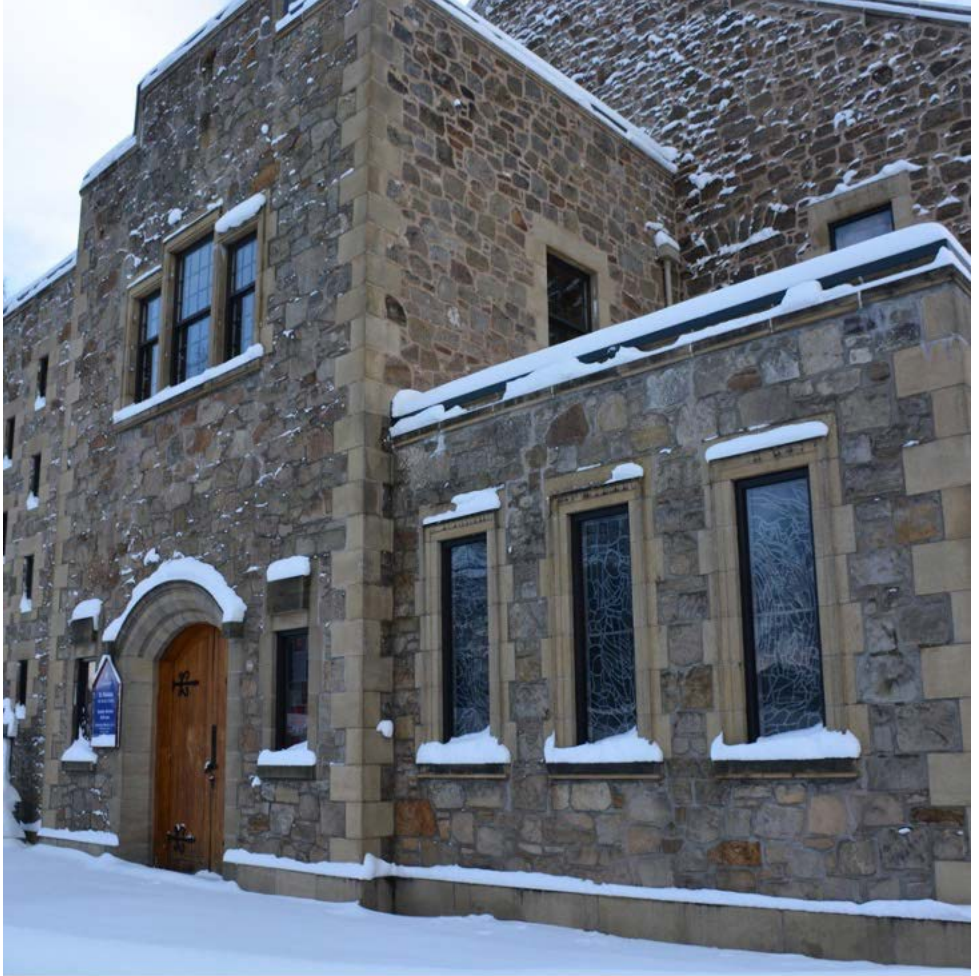


ST. NINIANS OLD PARISH CHURCH

PARISHIONER

WINTER 2023



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From the Manse

Dear Friends,

First of all, I would like to thank everyone who attended the service on the occasion of my silver jubilee as Minister of the Church and Parish of St Ninians Old.

It was wonderful to see so many people from the congregation and parish, and it was a joy to have my family, and friends from other places, join us for the occasion. I also thank those who joined us via the live stream, and all involved in making the arrangements for the lunch which followed the service in the Parish Halls.

I was delighted when my friend from university days, the Rev Colin C Renwick, Minister of Dunblane Cathedral, accepted my invitation to be the guest preacher. He was kind in what he said, gave us food for thought, and charmed us with his warmth and good humour!

Robert Robertson was our guest soloist and having him sing at the service gave pleasure to many. He is a gifted young man and his presence added to our joy. Robert's grandfather, the late Daniel S Paterson, was the senior elder at the time of my Induction, and I recall with affection, presenting him with a certificate to mark the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the eldership on the 2nd of October 2005.

I want to say a word of thanks to our young people who participated in the service. Their contribution was greatly appreciated and caused quite a few ripples of laughter! Thanks, is also expressed to the Sunday Club leaders, one of whom, Elaine Ronald, a fellow Campbeltonian, read the lessons.

I was delighted that members of the Company Section of the 8th Stirling (St Ninians) Boys' Brigade were in attendance at the service, and I want to thank the Officers and boys for the gift they gave me. It is a huge honour and great joy to be Chaplain to the Company.

I wish to sincerely thank all who contributed to my presentation. Your generosity moved me to tears, and I am grateful to you, and to our Session Clerk, Leslie Asher, for his kind words.



My thanks is also extended to our depute Session Clerk, Sally Andrews, for the welcome she gave at the lunch, and to my colleague, the Rev Attie van Wyk, for saying the Grace prior to us tucking into a lovely lunch prepared and served by Michael More and his staff.

An anniversary such as a silver jubilee is a time to reflect as well as to look forward. As I have done that, I have remembered many people who were here when I arrived, and whose support was invaluable in the early years of my ministry among you. I give thanks to God for them, and for those who continue to support me today.

Looking ahead, there are challenges to be faced as we adapt to the changes taking place within our denomination. The decline in the number of Ministers is to be regretted but, on a positive note, many people within congregations are undergoing training in order to lead services, and I believe this to be an important way of ensuring that services continue to take place when there is not a Minister available.

In his sermon on the 19th of November, Colin referred to the Body of Christ and the role we all have to play in continuing the work of our Lord and Saviour. Now, perhaps more than ever, we need to work together using the gifts God has given to us for the good of the kingdom.

The organisations of the Church are in full swing after the summer recess and now we are in the season of Advent, a time to prepare to celebrate, once again, the coming of our Lord whose birth we celebrate at Christmas.

Advent also marks the beginning of the liturgical year. As such, it is a good time to commit ourselves afresh to God, to make room in our hearts for Christ who came and will come again, and to step into the New Year knowing that we are not alone, that God who came to us in human flesh, is with us still, to guide and strengthen us for all that the days shall bring.

At Christmas, I will be particularly mindful of those of you for whom this year has not been easy, and of those who will miss the presence of a loved one.

May you all know God's peace and joy.

Every blessing,
Your Friend and Minister,

Gary J McIntyre

Services

Sunday 3rd December – First in Advent

10:30am Morning service with the Sacrament of Holy Communion

Sunday 10th December – Second in Advent

10:30am Morning service – Gift Service

Sunday 17th December – Third in Advent

10:30am Morning service

6:30pm Joint Christmas service
in the Church of the Holy Rude

Friday 22nd December

10am St Ninians Primary School
Christmas service in the Church

Sunday 24th December – Fourth in Advent

10:30am A service of Lessons and Carols followed by tea, coffee and mince pies
in the Parish Halls.

11:30pm Christmas Eve service with retiral collection for Neuro Central

Sunday 31st December - New Year's Eve

10:30am Seasonal Worship

Carol Services

Monday 18th December 2:30pm

Roselea Court Care Home

Tuesday 19th December 2:30pm

Westerlands Care Home

Wednesday 20th December 2:30pm

Eccles Court

Volunteers to help with the singing will be welcome!





'The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world did not know Him'. John 1 v 9- 10

A Timely Word

"Fear not! Do not be afraid!" The angel spoke these words to Zachariah, to Mary, to Joseph, and finally to a group of shepherds on a hillside near Bethlehem.

"Do not be afraid; for behold I bring you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord."

Do not be afraid

Fear has a way of tying our stomachs up in knots, paralyzing our thinking, inducing panic. Fear, and its cousin worry, can capture our hearts when we see ourselves caught in a vortex of disasters beyond our control.

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus talks about tiny, defenceless sparrows in the context of fear and worry:

*"Therefore I tell you, **do not worry** about your life, what you will eat or drink.... Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?"*

In another place he reassures his followers:

"Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows."

The first Christmas

Our world today is deeply troubled. There is war and conflict, numerous go without food to eat and water to drink. In our own country countless numbers are homeless and many, struggling due to the cost-of-living crisis, depend on food banks in order to provide for themselves and their loved ones.

The world Jesus entered at the first Christmas was also deeply troubled.

A census was being conducted in order to raise already high taxes. Murderous, paranoid Herod the Great was king of the Jews. It was probably winter on Bethlehem's hillsides and cold. Inside a cave in the town sat a poverty-stricken carpenter and his young wife, far from home, chilled to the bone. She was in labour. Her child would be born in a stable, of all places. *'Why is it like this?'* she may have asked.



And then she recalled an echo of the angel's words to her, *"Do not be afraid, Mary...."*

A Saviour is born



On the windswept hillsides outside of town, shepherds were huddling, too. All of a sudden, the sky lit up and an angel proclaimed:

"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord."

"Fear not". The shepherds' fear was turned to joy as they heard news that a Saviour had been born. The Messiah! In Bethlehem, the city of David himself!

And so, they ran down the hillside into the town and hurried to the stable where they found the Child in the manger, just as they have been told. Tucked in that manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes against the cold, was the Saviour himself.

The Saviour will provide

A Saviour comes to rescue people in danger, preserve those who are threatened by harm, and to protect his people from the troubles that surround them.

That's what Jesus came to do for us.

Do not be afraid because God has sent a Saviour to us -- Jesus Christ the Lord. He is the One who will:

- Never leave us or forsake us.
- Give to us all the things we need as we seek him and his Kingdom.

Christmas is about a Saviour

Many in our world do not know the wonderful truth at the heart of Christmas. They think that Christmas is about gifts under a tree and a spirit of good cheer, with Christmas dinner and family around the table. But as good as all that may be, it isn't nearly as good as the real Christmas.

The real Christmas message is this: God has sent a Saviour for you. Why? To save you from your sins and to help you in this life -- to lift your burden and ease your fears. A Saviour who is Christ the *Lord*, God himself!

The world is gripped by fear. But fear's hold has been broken in those of us who believe the angel's words:

"Fear not ... for a Saviour is born to you -- Christ the Lord!"

Services 2024

Services are held every Sunday at 10:30am and all are welcome.

The children of the Sunday Club meet in the Church for the first part of the service and then they go to the Parish Halls for a programme of activities.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be celebrated on Sunday 10th March.

Services will be held on the fourth Wednesday of the month in Eccles Court at 2pm and Westerlands Care Home at 3pm. Like some of the residents in Eccles Court and Westerlands, our friends in Roselea Court Care Home join us in worship on a Sunday via the live stream.

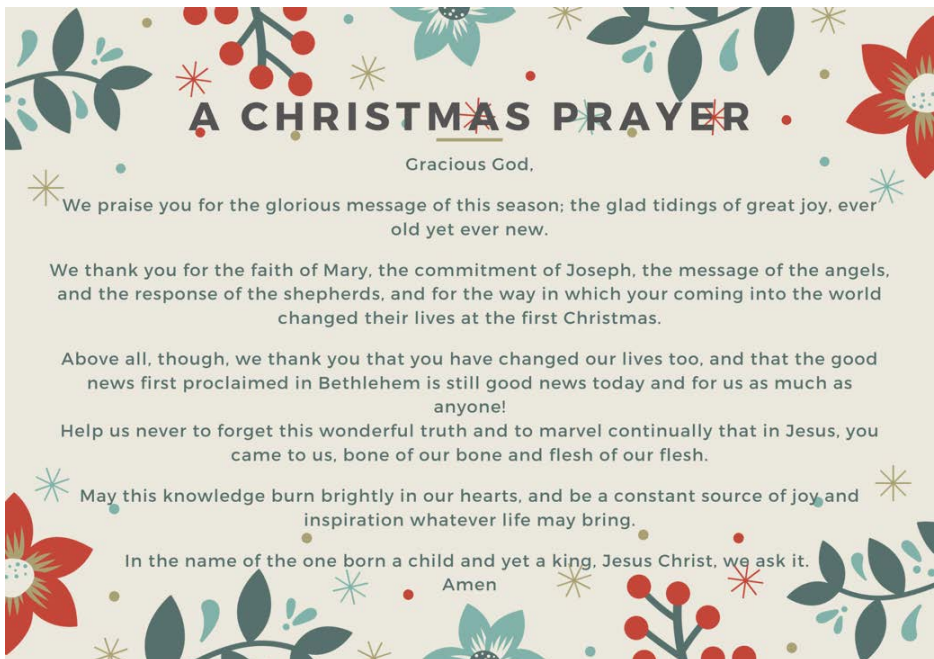
The Kirk Session

The Kirk Session will meet in the Parish Halls at 7:30pm on Tuesday 30th January and Tuesday 19th March. Apologies for absence should be given to Sally Andrews, Depute Session Clerk.

David Barr

In the course of the next six months David will spend time with Mr McIntyre and learn about the work of a Minister of Word and Sacrament. David will also participate in at least one service a month, and he will attend meetings of the Kirk Session and other midweek activities.

We look forward to getting to know David and pray God's blessing upon him as he seeks to discern God's will for his life.



The 8th Stirling (St.Ninians) Company of the Boys' Brigade

Our Company has had a very good start to this year's session from late August/early September with all three sections functioning well with around 45 boys attending each week.

The BB nationally has linked up with the University of Bolton to produce ideas for a varied and interesting programme for companies on meeting nights which we have found beneficial.

The younger boys have recently enjoyed Halloween Parties and badge work, with the older lads participating in badge work, games nights and Ten Pin Bowling.



The older boys were given a talk by Mrs Rita Craig from CHAS (Children's Hospices Across Scotland), pictured here. The talk generated an awareness of the problems facing children with a terminal illness and their parents. The boys have therefore decided to hold a fundraiser for the charity.

On a brighter note, the younger boys are looking forward to their Christmas Parties. The Anchor Boys are going to Kidzworld Soft Play in Alloa in early February, and the Juniors are taking part in 10 Pin Bowling in January. The Company Section (older boys) are about to see an Ice Hockey game between Glasgow Clan and Guildford Flames. This is becoming an annual event which is greatly enjoyed by all. In early December our Juniors and Company Section are attending our BB Stirling Battalion Carol Service at St Blane's Church in Dunblane followed by a visit to Firpark Ski Centre for a Tubing session two days later. Tubing involves sliding down the ski slope in what looks like large, inflated vehicle inner tubes.

We are pleased to report that three of our Senior boys are expected to gain the new King's Badge this session. This is the highest award in the Boys' Brigade.

Another four of our Seniors are working towards gaining the President's Badge which should be presented at our Awards Night in late Spring/early Summer. This is the second highest badge in the BB and allows each recipient to begin work towards the King's Badge.

Just a wee reminder that our Company Meeting Nights are as follows: -

Anchor Boys P1 to P3	meet each Wednesday 6.15-7.30pm
Junior Section P4 to P6	meet each Friday 6.45 – 8pm
Company Section P7 to S6	meet each Friday 8pm –10pm

We meet in St Ninians Old Parish Halls, Kirk Wynd, Stirling FK9 9AY.

New members for all sections are always welcome. If you know of any boy who might be interested, please email the Company at

8stirling@boys-brigade.org.uk

Last but not least, we send our best wishes to our Chaplain, Rev Gary J McIntyre, who recently celebrated the Anniversary of his Induction to St Ninians Old Parish Church. Mr McIntyre has given us unflinching support over the past 25 years, as has the Congregation of St Ninians Old!

Church Grounds

A sincere word of thanks is expressed to the willing group of volunteers who helped maintain the grounds and paths around the Church over the summer. Your giving of your time to this task is very much appreciated! Following the last tidy up of the season in October those present were treated to an afternoon tea. Thank you to Janette and Dorothy for providing the tea.



Pastoral Care Group

GRACE McINTOSH

If you know of anyone who would benefit from telephone contact or a visit from a Pastoral Care Group member, please let me or the Minister know.

Social and Fundraising Committee



The committee would like to thank all who have attended the last two Soup & Sandwich Lunches.

There will be further lunches held in the Parish Halls between 12 noon and 1.30pm on the dates below:

- Saturday 2 December 2023
- Saturday 13 January 2024
- Saturday 3 February 2024

The committee hope you will come and enjoy our lunches.

Sunday Club

Sunday Club has had a busy and creative session so far.

We started the session by reading about two "Bible Heroes" Elijah and Esther. We had fun making the ravens from the story of Elijah. On Communion Sunday we talked about the Last Supper and Communion. We spent a bright Sunday morning tidying up our planters at the end of the growing season. We have also prepared a shoebox for the Blythswood Care shoebox appeal. We gifted shoeboxes, one for a girl the other for a boy. And made some poppies for Remembrance Sunday.



We also had fun preparing for and taking part in Mr McIntyre's Anniversary Service celebrating his induction to St.Ninians Old Parish Church 25 years ago!

We are looking forward to the weeks running up to Christmas when we will be talking about Advent, the Christmas story and making Christmas crafts.

Prayer Group

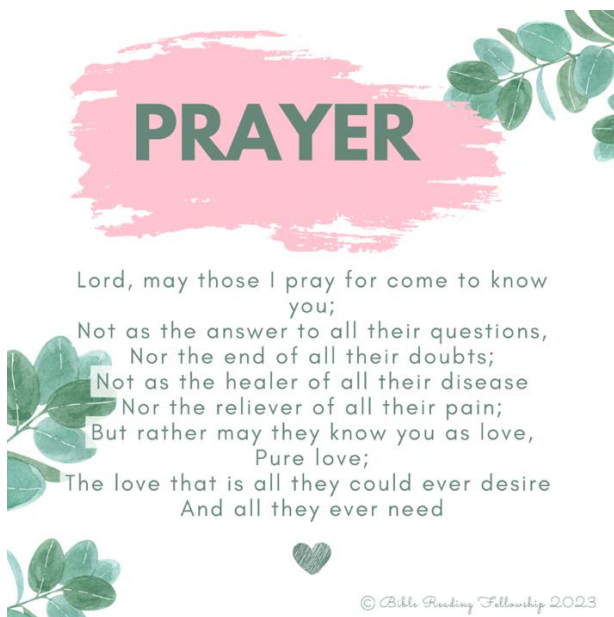
Do not be anxious about anything, But in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. Philippians 4:6

During the early stages of the Covid pandemic, a small group of members formed our Prayer Group, which still uses an online format. We pray for individuals, families, communities, national and international situations. People who ask for prayer for themselves or loved ones can be assured that we pray for them but do not pass any personal information to anyone outside the group.



If you have a prayer request, there is a dedicated email address prayer_request@stniniansold.org.uk

There is also a box for handwritten prayer requests in the Church vestibule, on the table next to the door to the McMichael Chapel. The box is checked weekly by a member of the Prayer Group.



Tuesday Group

MIRANDA MILLER



Many thanks to all who recently attended the opening event of an afternoon tea. There was a great turnout, and the committee provided a lovely selection of sandwiches, scones and cakes. We are fortunate to have a good team of people to help with the events.

The recent quiz afternoon was great fun and raised a lot of laughs. Some of the answers were hilarious and we are grateful to Chris and Elaine MacKay for putting it together.

A Christmas lunch at a cost of £22.50 for three courses will be held on the 12th December at Stirling Golf Club 12 noon for 12.30pm. Anyone wishing to attend should speak to a committee member after church.

The annual Burn's supper will be celebrated on the 23rd January. Tickets will be on sale in the New Year. On the 27th February the Rev Gary McIntyre will address the group. The AGM will be held on the 26th March, venue still to be confirmed.

The Tuesday group would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a good New Year.

Blythswood Care

A sincere word of thanks is extended to everyone who responded to the appeal by donating individual items and filled shoeboxes. Thanks also goes to those who gave monetary donations to help with the cost of transport. We donated 63 shoeboxes this year, and a good number of monetary donations too. Shoeboxes will be distributed to Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Kosovo, Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Ukraine before Christmas.



The Stirling Kirks Together

All- Age Friendship Lunches will continue every 2nd Wednesday of the month.

Wednesday 13th December 2023

Let us celebrate with Christmas

Carols after our lunch.



2024

Wednesday 10th January

Wednesday 14th February

 Wednesday 13th March

From 12noon-1.30pm

Venue: Park Church Main Hall, Park Terrace



Conversation

Soup & Rolls, Tea, Coffee and Home Baking

All welcome

(Optional £3 donation)

For further information contact Johan Stirling on 01786 461571

Presentation to Rev Gary McIntyre 19th November 2023

LESLIE ASHER – SESSION CLERK

It is a great honour and privilege for me to say a few words this morning on such a joyous and momentous occasion. Before I make this presentation a few thoughts about the Reverend Gary J McIntyre.

I am sure I speak for everyone in the sanctuary today, and everyone watching online, when I say as a congregation we feel very blessed to have Gary as our minister over the last 25 years. A real cause for celebration. His impact on this parish and its parishioners, and indeed the City of Stirling is nothing short of spectacular. For example, I have not met one person in the Parish of St.Ninians who does not know Gary McIntyre, and, I have not met one person in the Parish of St.Ninians that Gary McIntyre does not know, it is astonishing! If you want proof, just take a walk through the Parish with him, I have done this, and he knows everyone, he even knows their first names. His impact on this congregation and Parish is almost impossible for me to put into words. Gary has excelled as a Parish Minister.

He is very highly regarded by many congregations in the legacy Presbytery of Stirling and has served as interim Moderator at many Churches where he has used his very individual set of skills to great effect and is currently Interim Moderator at Bannockburn Allan linked with Plean and Cowie.

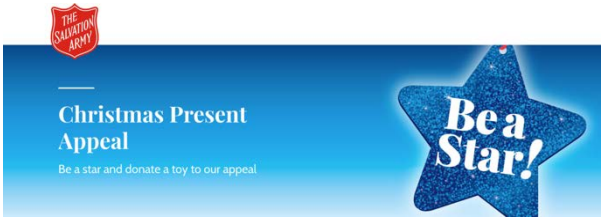
Looking to the bigger picture, Gary is part of, and chaplain for, the presidential team of the 2023/24 Royal Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland, their year culminates at the 2024 Royal Highland show in June at Ingliston, Edinburgh. This illustrates that he is very well respected way beyond St.Ninians Old and the City of Stirling.

I would like at this point to give you a short history of Gary's journey as a Minister. He was licensed to preach the gospel on 26th June 1992 at a service held in the Highland Parish Church in Campbeltown, his hometown. He then served as an assistant to the Reverend Ian Rennie in the Parishes of Upper Tweedale in the Borders. He was then ordained and inducted to his first charge on the Island of Bute as Minister of Kingarth and Kilchattan Bay Church linked with the High Kirk of Rothesay, after five and a half years in Rothesay he received the call to St.Ninians Old on 19th November 1998, and here he is today, 25 years later, and can I say, most sincerely, we look forward to having him here for many years to come.

Gary on behalf of everyone in the Sanctuary today and everyone watching online it gives me the greatest of pleasure to present you with this cheque to mark your 25 years as Minister at St.Ninians Old. A wonderful achievement by a wonderful man and a wonderful Minister. Gary we all love you. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.



Gift Service



This year, St Ninians Old will be holding their Christmas Gift Service on Sunday 10th December. As in previous years we will be supporting our local Salvation Army appeal and

through them donated gifts will be distributed within the local area.

They are collecting gifts for children of all ages, but there is most need for items suitable for teenage boys. Donated gifts should be left unwrapped, this means the parents have knowledge of what the gifts are and can select those most suitable for their child.

Any donations of gifts should be brought along to our Gift Service on the 10th December. Thanks for you continued support.

Christian Aid

ELAINE WALKER

Thank you to everyone who made our coffee morning special.

Whether you joined us for the cause, the chat or the tasty treats your generosity helped raise a fabulous £900.

A big thank you too, to the people who donated baking and home-made jam. Thank you too, to St.Ninians Old Parish Church Craft Group who gave items for our sales table.



WaterAid

Our harvest thanksgiving collection for WaterAid raised the wonderful sum of £1382 with gift aid included.

Thank you to all who supported this worthy cause.

Photo Gallery

PETER KALE

The Clock Tower, Old Chancel and Cemetery on a clear bright day.



Just a Wonder

Submitted by IRENE HAMILTON

A row of bottles on my shelf
Caused me to analyse myself.
One yellow pill I have to pop
Goes to my heart so it won't stop.
A little white one that I take
Goes to my hands so they won't shake.
The blue ones that I use a lot
Tell me I'm happy when I'm not.
The purple pill goes to my brain
And tells me that I have no pain.

The capsules tell me not to wheeze
Or cough or choke or even sneeze.
The red ones, smallest of them all
Go to my blood so I won't fall.
The orange ones, very big and bright
Prevent my leg cramps in the night.
Such an array of brilliant pills
Helping to cure all kinds of ills.
But what I'd really like to know...
Is what tells each one where to go!

Photo Gallery

ARTHUR WALLS

Hoping for a white Christmas.



Allan Church Christmas Festival



<u>ALLAN CHURCH CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL</u>	<u>ALLAN CHURCH COMMUNITY HALL</u>
<u>Friday 15th December</u>	<u>Friday morning / afternoon</u>
11am till 3pm	Coffee/Tea, mince pies & shortbread
<u>Saturday 16th December</u>	<u>Lunch</u>
10am till 4pm	Filled roll, mince pies, shortbread, teas/coffees
Christmas Trees and Tableaux depicting	<u>Saturday morning/afternoon</u>
Peace, Love, Hope and Joy	Coffee/Tea, mince pies & shortbread
Entry to the church festival by donation	<u>Lunch 12noon till 1.30pm</u>
	Soup, Festive paninis & tea/coffee
	Christmas stall, Craft stall, Cake & candy, Tombola & "Play your cards right"

The Wonder of Technology

JIM & MARGARET MACLEOD

We regularly watch Sunday Services online from our home in Milton Keynes. This is very much one of the upsides of modern technology and enables us to feel part of the St Ninians Old congregation.



But another benefit is being able to join the service whilst on holiday.

Accordingly, Margaret and I were able to participate in the September communion service from Crete!

So, trying not to forget that we were two hours ahead, we dialled in through YouTube and were able to watch the service.

Crete is an incredible island to visit with thousands of years of history. What also made joining the service from there more poignant was the fact that the Apostle Paul had visited and stayed on the island during one of his many journeys.

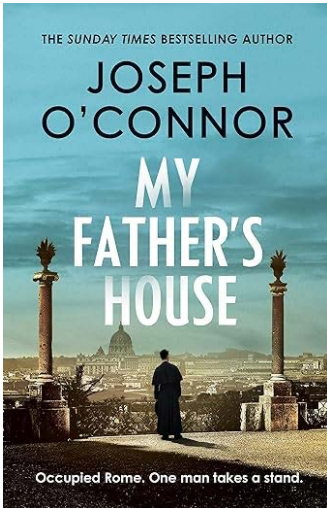
As we also found in other Greek islands we went to, was the considerable number of Orthodox Christian and Catholic buildings and how immaculately kept they were, inside and out. The churches were easily identified; the Orthodox ones having a blue dome and the Catholic ones being white.



Book Review

AVRIL SCOTLAND

My Father's House – Joseph O'Connor



The thirtieth of October this year marked the sixtieth anniversary of the death of Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty. His is not a widely known or well-remembered life but it does indeed deserve to be, for by his actions six thousand five hundred people of various faiths and nationalities were helped to escape from Rome during the latter years of the Second World War.

Hugh had grown up in County Kerry and his looks echoed his origins. He was tall, well built with a shock of thick, dark hair. But looks seldom tell the whole story for Hugh was possessed of a fierce intellect, having three doctorates and a proficiency in seven languages— one of these being a wonderfully fluent Italian. He had served the Church in a number of countries before being recalled to Rome. He loved teaching his students at the Vatican, and he loved the city itself, the food, the culture, the range of people who lived there — and he relished the easy, and cheap accessibility of opera. His was a well-known face, for every day he walked building up a formidable knowledge of the maze of narrow streets that make up that wonderful city. And, in common with all good clergymen, Hugh was a people person. He was available, he was always ready to talk.

As the war progressed, Hugh found himself appointed to the task of visiting the prisoner of war camps in the vicinity. It was not a post he would have sought, being fully supportive of the neutrality of the Vatican. Pope Pius had tasked him to minister to the Roman Catholics in captivity — to be a listening ear— but that was not Hugh's way. When he saw need, he had to address it. It was in these camps that he first uttered the words that were to become his mantra— God has no country.

Hugh O'Flaherty's story is told in fictionalised form in Joseph O'Connor's book, the author re-ordering events and timings to add drama and aid flow. The book begins with the transcript of a letter entrusted to Hugh by a young Scottish soldier to be sent to the mother of that soldier telling her that he is to be shot

the next morning. This letter was pivotal in propelling Hugh into action. The escape chain was begun.

Now at that time in Rome lived Delia Kieran, the wife of the Irish ambassador to the Vatican. She was a woman of great compassion who threw her home open to the many Irish students of the Vatican who found themselves marooned by circumstance in Rome. At Delia's they were certain of a good meal and a bit of mothering. Father Hugh, in investigative mode found his way there— but also found a kindred spirit. Delia was also a singer of some renown, so where better for Hugh's "Choir" to meet. Singing did occur, but so too were plans made, decisions on which shelves (safe houses) which books (escapees) would be placed, discussions on what items must be acquired.

Hugh had gathered about him a colourful array of helpers— from a newspaper seller to a Contessa. All were possessed of particular talents; from the organisational skills of Sam Derry to the more questionable ones of John May, one time jazz musician who could provide anything, from a case of fine whisky to a selection of Nazi uniforms. Accounts of how each of these people came into Hugh's orbit, together with their impressions of him, punctuate the narrative.

Of course, Hugh could not have operated in plain sight as he did without attracting the attention of the Nazi occupiers—the leader of whom pursued him with near obsessive zeal. Pope Pius, too, was much disturbed by the actions of this turbulent priest. The testimonies themselves gave proof that the group came through the war unscathed, so it says much of the skill of the author that he manages to imbue the *Rendimento*, the focal point of the book describing the removal from Rome of a huge number of escapees, with such a high degree of drama. To be admired too, is his portrayal of the privations suffered in an occupied city during the unforgiving cold of a Roman winter.

There are more factually accurate accounts of the exploits of Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty but in this book Joseph O'Connor conveys, in moments of high drama and in others much lighter in tone, the essence of a very special human being. That a man of such particular talents and personality came to be in Rome at this pivotal point in history was surely not a chance happening.

This is a life affirming book and Father Hugh will remain in your consciousness long after the book is returned to the shelf.

Accentuate the Positive Power Jesus Can Be in our Life.

ARTHUR S WALLS

Several aspects from Jesus Life, Crucifixion, and Resurrection plus the power of prayer are covered in this article. The New Testament of The Holy Bible is the source of all aspects of the article.

Keep Focus on Jesus to Overcome the Storms of Life, Which We All Have to Face From Time to Time.

An example of this is recorded in Matthew Chapter 14 from verse 27.

As Jesus's disciples were crossing the Sea of Galilee, a fierce and frightening storm kicks up. Very early in the morning Jesus comes walking toward them on the water. Thinking he is a ghost the disciples are terrified; they don't recognise Jesus as he approaches in the storm.

Sometimes we fail to recognise the Lord when he comes along side us during our own personal storm. But Jesus understands the immaturity of our faith. To His disciples the Lord speaks those words of comfort, "Take courage, it is I. Don't be afraid."

Peter, ever enthusiastic and impulsive, replies, "Lord, if it's you, tell me to come to You on the water."

The Lord invites Peter to come, and he steps out of the boat. Peter then walks on the water towards Jesus. However, his baby steps of faith last only a moment and then he takes his eyes off the Lord. Peter then hears the wind and sees the waves surrounding him and "he was afraid" and begins to sink. Jesus of course reaches out his hand and saves Peter from drowning.

For believers the lesson is unmistakable. If we take our eyes off Jesus and focus on our circumstances, we fall under the weight of our problems. If we call to Jesus in faith, he will catch us and lift us above our seemingly impossible situation. Peter let doubt displace his faith.

Good Can Often Come Out of Bad

Sometimes as we go along life's road something unfortunate happens but later,

we say, “thank goodness that happened,” or “just as well for that!”

There was no crueller method of execution for criminals condemned to death devised by the ancients than Crucifixion.

Our Lord Jesus was crucified. Out of that not only came the greatest religion in history, but more important good came in two other ways.

Firstly, Jesus, God’s Only Begotten and Beloved Son, took away the sins of the world as he bore the burden of the sins of all mankind past, present and future.

As we look up at the Cross and see Jesus there, he is our Lord and Saviour. The world has known no greater love than God’s, and Jesus, love for us.

Good also came out of Jesus Crucifixion in another way. After his suffering and dying on The Cross, Jesus rose from the Dead and he is with us now. There is a door to our hearts and the handle to that door is on our side. If we open that door and let Jesus into our lives, he is with us every minute of every day, unchanging in a changing world, through good times and bad, through thick and thin. We can feel that joy of putting Jesus at the centre of our lives and feel the joy through the Holy Spirit within us.

So, it’s worth remembering when things go wrong, good can follow bad.

The Power of Prayer

The power of prayer can be summarised in the famous passage of Paul to the followers of Jesus in Philippi. Philippians Chapter 4, verses 5 and 7.

“The Lord is near, do not be anxious, but in everything make your requests known to God in prayer and petition with thanksgiving. Then the peace of God, which is beyond all understanding, will guard your hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus.”

Jesus always answers our prayers in a way which is best for us, as he knows us better than we ourselves do.

Stirling Kirks Together

Stirling Kirks Together have recently made some donations to different organisations and have been thanked for their generosity.

These donations have been possible because of the support people have given to the Soup and Sandwich lunches and the recent coffee morning organised by Stirling Kirks Together.

A thank you letter was received from The Church of Scotland, Faith Action Programme for a donation of £300 to the Church of Scotland HIV programme.



The letter highlights that although HIV and AIDS may not make the news so much these days, there are still challenges for the many around the world who are infected or affected by HIV. The Church of Scotland HIV Programme is currently helping to fund 17 projects run by partner churches in Africa and Asia, as well as here in Scotland. These projects focus on education and awareness raising, care and support, and empowerment.

If you would like to find out more you can visit the HIV Programme pages on the Church of Scotland website,
<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/connect/campaigns/hiv-programme>



A donation of £460 was also made to Stirling Street Pastors. The letter received from Russell Boyd, Stirling Street Pastors Coordinator indicates that the organisation really appreciates the continuing financial and prayerful support, of Stirling Kirks Together.

The donation will be used to:

- Resource patrols on the streets with flip-flops, bottled water, blankets and essential items to care for people.
- Contribute towards employee and volunteer expenses.
- Pay for ongoing training and uniform costs.
- Help with costs of maintaining a base for patrol operations and other meetings.
- Cover essential administrative costs such as legal, safeguarding and insurance costs which they pay through our governing body, Ascension Trust (Scotland).

Start-Up Stirling also received a donation of £460. Their Communities and Fundraising Manager, Julie Christie, thanked the group for taking such good care of her when she attended the Coffee Morning on 19th August and giving her the opportunity to tell people more about what Start-Up do. There was a special mention for our own Freda Smart and her team and of course the delicious scones and meringues that Stirling Kirks Together events are famous for.



Julie indicated that the donation would help Start-Up to sustain their services, as we head towards the colder Winter months. Start-Up are already beginning to see an increase in the number of people that they are having to provide crisis food for. Last year, they provided the equivalent of 124,080 meals and helped 3,682 individuals, dealing with the highest referral rate that they had ever had in the ten years that the Crisis Food service has been in operation. If heating and food costs continue to increase, they anticipate that they are going to be very busy, helping to support people living in hardship across the Stirling Council area.

Thank you to all who support Stirling Kirks Together events and make these donations possible.

Today Dear Lord I am 80

Submitted by IRENE HAMILTON

TODAY DEAR LORD I'M 80

Today Dear Lord I'm 80, And there's much I haven't done,
So I hope Dear Lord, you'll let me live until I'm 81,
But then, if I haven't finished all I want to do,
Would you let me stay a while until I'm 82?
So many places I want to go, so very much to see,
Do you think you could manage to make it 83?
The world is changing fast, there is so much in store,
I'd like it very much to live until I'm 84.
And if by then I'm still alive, I'd like to stay till 85.
More planes will be up in the air, so I'd really like to stick,
And see what happens to the world when I'm 86.
I know Dear Lord, its much to ask (and it must be nice in heaven)
But I would rather stick around until I'm 87.
I know by then I won't be fast, and sometimes will be late,
But it would be pleasant to be around until I'm 88.
I will have seen so many things, and had a wonderful time,
So I'm sure that I'll be willing to leave at good old 89...
Maybe!!!

The Parish Register

Baptism 'In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit'

15th October 2023

October Fable Sloan, daughter of Alexander and Hannah

Deaths 'I go to prepare a place for you'

8th September 2023

Mr Allan Henderson

24 Keirford Avenue

Tullibody

5th September 2023

Mr David Coutts

26D Main Street

St Ninians

10th September 2023

Mr John Wingate

4 Dean Crescent

Riverside

16th September 2023

Mrs Joan McLaren

99 Newpark Road

St Ninians

19th October 2023

Mr Colin McVean

14 Ashbrae Gardens

Stirling (District 18)

22nd October 2023

Mrs Jenny Oliver

4 Muirton Road

Stirling

24th October 2023
Mr John Hall
28 Dunster Road
Causewayhead

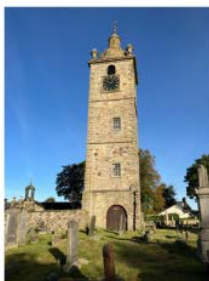
2nd November 2023
Mr Tom Wilson
7 Pathfoot Avenue
Bridge of Allan (District 1)

Our love and sympathy is extended to those who have lost a loved one.

Photo Gallery

STEVEN REID

Different perspectives of the Clock Tower.





RECIPES



Christmas Pretzels

THELMA JAMIESON

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Pkt of Star Shaped Pretzels (can be purchased from Aldi)
- 3 of 4 Pkts of Rolo sweets (dependent on how many you want to make)

METHOD

Lay out the pretzels on an oven tray lined with greaseproof paper. Use as many pretzels as you would like to make, you will need to have the same number to place on top.

Place a Rolo on top of each pretzel and put in a low oven for a few minutes.

Remove from oven and place another pretzel on the top.

Dust with a little icing sugar.

Chocolate Walnuts for Christmas

THELMA JAMIESON

INGREDIENTS

- 2oz Stork Margarine
- 4oz Icing Sugar
- 2oz Chopped Walnuts
- 3oz Coconut
- Dissolve 1 tsp of coffee in a little water

METHOD

Cream together the Stork and icing sugar. Add the coffee, walnut and coconut. Mix well. Form into walnut size pieces. Allow to firm in fridge. Coat with melted chocolate and put half a walnut on top of each. Good Luck 😊

Family Christmas Word Search

Find the words in the grid. Look for them in all directions including backwards and diagonally.

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

ADVENT
ANGEL
BETHLEHEM
BIRTH
BLESSINGS
CAMELS
FRANKINCENSE

INFANT
JESUS
JOSEPH
MAGI
MANGER
MARY
MIRACLE

MYRRH
NATIVITY
REJOICE
STABLE
STAR
THREE KINGS
WISE MEN

ST.NINIANS OLD PARISH CHURCH

PARISHIONER

SPRING 2024



**The Spring Edition of the Parishioner
will be out early March.**

Submission Date for Articles is:

Sunday 11th

February Thank you

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