

# St. Columba's Congregational Magazine



**Winter 2022**

**St Columba's Parish Church**  
**Old Aisle Road**  
**Kirkintilloch**  
**G66 3HQ**

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**Charity No. SC008735**

## **From the Manse**

It was just one year ago that the rollout of the UK vaccination programme to protect against COVID-19 began. We perhaps don't think very often about the research teams that developed the vaccines but there is no doubt that without their ingenuity and skill we would not have the freedom that we enjoy today. It is easy to take even the most precious gift for granted.

This Advent season, we turn once again to the familiar story of the coming of Jesus, God's indescribable gift (2 Cor 9:15), into the world. He came to bring us a freedom that is greater than any other freedom this world has ever known: freedom from sin and death and hell; and freedom to approach God as His adopted children. And yet, much like the freedom the COVID-19 vaccines bring, it is all too easy to take the freedom Jesus brings for granted.

Many of us are looking forward to singing Christmas carols once again this year. We really missed that last year! As we sing the words of these well-known and well-loved carols, let's really try to take in their meaning that we might be filled with wonder and gratitude to God for the gift of His Son. And let's not forget that just as we need to receive the vaccine to benefit from it personally, so we need to receive Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Lord to experience for ourselves the freedom He brings.

***O holy child of Bethlehem,  
Descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin, and enter in;  
Be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us,  
Our Lord Immanuel.***

Your minister and friend,  
**Philip**

# The Church Family



## **Deaths**

It is with great sadness that we record the death of Allan Woods. We extend our sympathy, love and prayers to the whole family.

**Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his faithful servants. Psalm 116.15.**

## **Births**

Many congratulations to Joan and Andy for the safe arrival of baby Theodore, a little brother for Bella-Marie.

## **New Member**

We are delighted to welcome Angela Welsh into membership at St Columba's Church.

## **Thank You**

Margaret Stewart, sadly passed away on Tuesday 31st August at her home surrounded by her family. Her husband Jackie, and family would like to thank everyone for their kindness, compassion and support during this difficult period. Margaret's funeral was well attended and the family are very grateful to Philip, the stewards and the sound engineers for setting up both the church and main hall for those attending the service.

Victoria McRae would like to extend her thanks to the church and prayer group for their well wishes and prayers during her illness. Victoria very much appreciates the support to her family, in particular from Margaret and Jackie Stewart during this challenging period. Victoria is recovering well and looks forward to seeing you all the next time she visits the church.

## **Church Membership**

If you are considering membership here at St Columba's, please speak with the Minister.

## **For Hearts that are Hurting**

In recent years, we have arranged a 'Bereavement Service' (usually on the second Sunday afternoon in December) for those who have lost loved ones and may feel that particularly keenly around Christmas time. Whilst this service has been attended in the main by those who have been relatively recently bereaved, others whose loss has been longer ago have also come.

Due to COVID restrictions, we felt unable to hold a Bereavement Service last year. This year we are pleased to hold a special service at 3pm on Sunday 12th December but would like to widen the scope of the service as being 'For Hearts that are Hurting'. It is very much our hope that this service will be of comfort to those who have been bereaved. However, we would also wish anyone whose heart may be hurting for some other reason to know that they too are most welcome to come.

The service itself will take place in the church building and is expected to last around half an hour. Tea and coffee will be served in the Halls afterwards.

**Philip.**

## **Midweek Service**

It has been great to see the Midweek Service restart this autumn at a new time of 10am on Wednesday mornings. The service lasts for about 35 minutes and we are able to sing, pray and learn from the Bible together. In recent weeks, we have been studying the beginning of the book of Acts. After the service, there is the opportunity for fellowship over tea and coffee for those who can stay.

One encouragement of the Midweek Service is that it has enabled some folks to worship together who have not been able to do so on a Sunday morning. Perhaps there are others reading this who aren't able to come on a Sunday but could be on a Wednesday? If so, you'd be very welcome!

The Wednesday morning service will be taking a break on 22nd and 29th December and will restart on 5th January.

## **Small Group Bible Studies**

It has been encouraging to see four small groups meeting week by week to study 1 Corinthians and to enjoy fellowship together this autumn. Having got to around the halfway point in the letter, we're planning to take a break in December and January before restarting in February. Most groups are now meeting face to face, in a home or in the church halls. If you'd be interested in joining up with one of these groups, please speak with the Minister.

## **Sunday Club and Bible Class**

We continue to appreciate having Sunday Club and Bible Class joining us as part of the regular Sunday morning service now that we are able to worship together in greater numbers. One of the themes both Sunday Club and Bible Class have been looking at recently has been 'Looking after God's Creation'. This has been helpful to think about while COP26 has been taking place in Glasgow.

The last day of Sunday Club and Bible Class for this year will be Sunday 12th December and both will restart on Sunday 9th January. We will be having All Age Services on the three Sundays in between these dates (19th & 26th December and 2nd January).

## **Live-streaming at St Columba's**

Earlier this year, the Kirk Session and Congregational Board decided to introduce live-streaming of our Sunday morning services to YouTube. We're delighted that the installation of the equipment for this is now complete. This has been funded for the most part through a grant from the Scottish Government's 'Adapt and Thrive' Programme.

When live-streaming, services will be recorded by video camera and simultaneously transmitted live to YouTube. By clicking a link on St Columba's website ([www.kirkintilloch.org.uk](http://www.kirkintilloch.org.uk)) or going direct to our YouTube channel (search for 'St Columba's Church Kirkintilloch'), a service can be viewed by anyone with internet access on a laptop or similar device or on an internet-enabled TV. It is our aim to start the regular live-streaming of services from St Columba's on Sunday 5th December 2021.

We continue to warmly encourage all who can to come to services in the church building in person to do so. Indeed, we are mindful of being instructed in the Bible not to give up the habit of meeting together (Hebrews 10:25). However, we do recognise that for a variety of reasons this is simply not possible for everyone. It is our hope that for those in that position, these live-streamed services may be of benefit and encouragement.

We hope too that live-streaming will also perform an important role in increasing the 'reach' of St Columba's. The apostle Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 9:22, "I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some". In that spirit, we are glad to introduce live-streaming here at St Columba's, as one of the "possible means" of our day, so that we might better play our part in making the Good News about Jesus more widely known.

## **Practical Matters**

The Church of Scotland has issued guidelines for congregations who are livestreaming services. The purpose of these guidelines is to protect privacy in line with data protection regulations and to ensure that everyone is aware of the areas covered by the cameras.

In our church building there are two video cameras. One of these is mounted at the rear of the building, high up on the vestibule. The other is high up on the right wall. Anyone sitting in the two last rows of pews on either side or on the soft chairs along the rear wall will not be seen by the cameras.

Our stewards will be familiar with the coverage and will be able to discuss this with anyone.

## **Christmas Services at St Columba's**

We're so glad to be putting on some extra Christmas services once again this year. We've put some dates for your diary below. Why not invite friends and family?

Sunday 19th December	10:30am	All Age Service (with a Nativity Flavour!)
	7:00pm	Carol Service (Joint with Hillhead Church)
Friday 24th December	4:00pm	Family Christmas Eve Service
Saturday 25th December	10:30am	Christmas Day Service
Sunday 26th December	10:30am	All Age Service

The service on the last Sunday morning before Christmas, Sunday 19th December, will be an All Age service and could well feature some members of the congregation in nativity costume!

We're delighted to be having a Carol Service once again on the evening of Sunday 19th December. This year it will be a joint Carol Service with our near neighbours, Hillhead Church.

The Family Christmas Eve Service at 4:00pm will very much have pre-school and primary school age children in mind, but we do hope it will be appreciated by all age groups.

The Christmas Day Service is an opportunity to give thanks to God for the gift of his Son, Jesus at this most significant moment in the Christian Calendar.

Whilst we do hope you will be able to attend these services in person, it is our intention to also make them available online via the church website and YouTube channel.

## **Church Prayer Diary**

Did you know we have a Church Prayer Diary here at St Columba's? It can be downloaded from the church website, [www.kirkintillochstcolumbas.org.uk](http://www.kirkintillochstcolumbas.org.uk). If you can't get a copy online, Janet Brown our Church Secretary will be able to provide a paper copy on request. There is a new edition available at the beginning of each month.

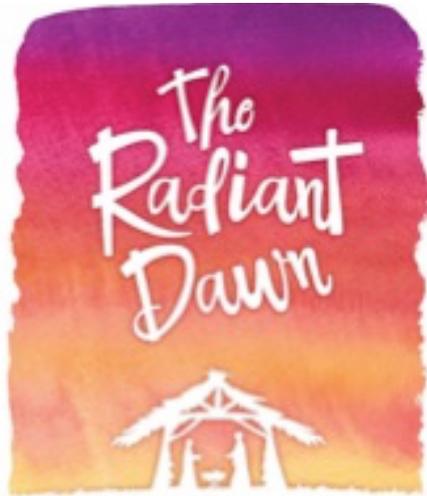
The prayer diary is set out with a prayer topic for each day. This may be a prayer request for our local church, for our community, for the church across our land, for our government and those in authority over us, for the worldwide church, or for one of our mission partners at home or abroad. It is a great way for us to join in prayer together.

***For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears are attentive to their prayers. (1 Peter 3:12)***

## **The Upper Room**

The next issue of these daily Bible readings and reflections, from contributors all around the world, will cover the months from January till the end of April. Our order will need to be sent before the middle of December. If anyone would like to sample this excellent booklet, for which there is no charge, and join the 24 other St Columba's recipients, could they please let Ian or Marilyn Gibb know by 12th December?

## Advent Readings



It's not too late to get hold of a copy of 'The Radiant Dawn' written by Christian author Tom Parsons, the book of daily readings for Advent we are promoting for Advent 2021. This is an excellent way of focussing our minds on the significance and the wonder of Jesus' birth this Advent season.

Rico Tice of All Souls Church, Langham Place, known to some of us through Christianity Explored, writes of 'The Radiant Dawn':

"Lights sparkle in the darkness that enfolds the Northern Hemisphere at this time of year -- until they are taken down and put back in the box in January. Luke points us to Jesus, the Radiant Dawn of a day that will never end. Let these Advent reflections direct your heart's gaze towards him, the shining source of confidence and joy in whatever darkness we experience."

There are FREE copies of 'The Radiant Dawn' available in the church building and these will also be available at the Wednesday morning service. Do contact Janet in the Church Office or the Minister if you are unable to access these.

## **The Friendship Club**

It is lovely to be back and enjoying our Wednesday meetings together. Our topics have included - feeding the five thousand, calming the storm, water to wine, the lost sheep and Jonah.

We also have games and crafts related to our themes, some of which are displayed in the small hall.

Wednesday 8th of December will be our last night before Christmas when there will be a surprise present.

## **Following Jesus Group**

This group is very lively and so pleased to be meeting one another again. Two leaders and a number of members from the Baillieston Prospects Group have joined us.

Unfortunately they are no longer able to continue.

This has been a very happy merge with a really nice welcoming atmosphere. Our theme for the term was "Jesus Makes a Difference." which included the wedding at Cana, Zacchaeus healing the deaf and blind plus a nativity drama and celebration. We also have games, quizzes and crafts.

Both Groups - have contributed to our filling a number of Samaritan's Purse shoeboxes.

Some from each group will be attending a Prospects Across Scotland Carol Service in Bridge of Allan on Sunday 5th December.

There will be a combined visit to Pro Bowl or Caulders early in 2022.

Have a blessed Christmas and please continue to pray for our members and their families.

**Pat Muir.**

## **Christian Aid Collection November 2021**

As St. Columba's was unable to hold a collection for Christian Aid Week in May 2021 it was held in November. £565.00 was raised with a further £85.00 that Christian Aid will be able to claim back from Gift Aid. Many thanks to everyone who gave so generously to this appeal.

Climate change is creating much hardship in the developing countries from severe droughts to homes, crops and livestock destroyed by tropical cyclones, which are occurring more frequently and with increased intensity. Fund raising is vital to help Christian Aid through its partner organisations in many poor countries to help communities rebuild their lives and feed and educate their children. A copy of the Autumn/Winter Christian Aid magazine is available in the church and more information on the work of Christian Aid and events taking place throughout Scotland can be found on their website.

**Geraldine Fox.**

## **The Guild**

We have had a very encouraging start to the 2021/22 session. Our meetings are now fortnightly on Tuesday afternoons at 2.00pm ( with the exception of 2 which are evenings)

We have a varied and quite local syllabus planned and have welcomed a few new members and also ladies from Hillhead Church who have joined us this session.

We are now looking forward to our Christmas Lunch at Kirkintilloch Golf Club on Tuesday 14 December.

We still have room for more – if you wish to join us in January you will be made most welcome. Our first meeting in 2022 is Tuesday 11th January, when our speaker is Mrs Gill Wright.

**Janet  
Guild secretary.**

## **Mens Club**

We have had a very encouraging start to the 2021/22 session, with the majority of our members returning to join us on a Monday evening. Of the remainder, some have other underlying illnesses, some are not fully confident yet in socialising with a group and some have become full time carers. However they have all been contacted and informed that they are most welcome to attend when they can.

At our recent EGM the members agreed to continue the various competition's but without trophies. No speakers in this part of the session but to be kept under review. No Christmas dinner but look to having an end of session lunch next year, Covid regulations allowing.

John Clayton and Iain Muir volunteered as Chairman and Treasurer respectively. Both were elected unanimously by the assembled members. Murray Scott was unanimously re-elected as Games Convenor.

Our previous Chairman Edward Rogerson is still very much missed by the membership.

Currently we are making our way through the various competitions, unfortunately without dominoes and darts at the present time, due to Covid restrictions. Everyone is complying with the current Covid recommendations from St Columba's Covid Group to keep us all safer.

We have welcomed three new members during this session and can assure anyone wishing to join us on a Monday evening at 19.30 (7.30pm), that they also would be made very welcome.

**John Clayton**  
**Chairman**



## **1st Kirkintilloch Company**

### **Anchor Section**

Now that our session is well under way we can appreciate how much better it is to meet face to face rather than by electronic means. It is great to see AND HEAR the boys having a good time playing games and helping each other with craft activities.

Our numbers remain low post pandemic but the boys who are attending have been faithful in their attendance and seem to enjoy themselves week by week.

So far this session we have had several games nights, the story of Jonah with associated crafts and games following the theme of the story. The boys took part in an evening of remembrance whereby they learned the significance of the Poppy.

We managed a COVID safe Halloween evening which went well and the boys were glad that they were not allowed to “dook” for apples and get sticky donuts off the string. They did however enjoy dressing up and getting a chocolate apple at the end of the night.

'Children in Need' night saw the boys icing Pudsey biscuits with bright yellow icing and lots of sticky decorations. Tables were in need of an even bigger clean than the COVID regulations required.

In the lead up to Christmas we hope to look at the importance of the Christmas story and some top secret Christmas crafts are planned.

Due to current restrictions we are not planning our usual Christmas party but hopefully we will be able to take part in the Out of the Box presentation on 16th December.

Margaret, David and myself would like to thank everyone for their good wishes and support over the recent months which has given us encouragement to get things back to as near normal as possible.

Finally may we wish you all a very happy and blessed Christmas and hopefully a more normal New Year.

**Fraser McCallum**  
**OIC Anchor Section.**

### **Junior Section**

We are well into our Junior Section Session, which is nearly back to normal. I'm pleased to report numbers are up this year with boys bringing friends, however as always we have room for a few more so if you know any boy in P4 - P6 who would like to come along they would be most welcome.

We have had a varied program so far, the highlight being our activities over Remembrance weekend activities where we had an act of Remembrance as a company on Friday night. Then on Saturday 3rd November, boys from the Juniors collected for the Poppy Appeal and on Sunday 14th took part in the Towns Remembrance Parade. These activities led to the boys Schools awarding them the 'Weekly Wider Achievement Award'. We are truly proud of these boys. We are not having a Christmas party this year but we are looking forward to attending Out of the Boxes 'Steve The Shepherd' on Thursday 16th December.

We wish the congregation a happy Christmas and a healthy New Year

**Lorna, David, Ross and Matthew**

## **Company Section and Seniors**

We are delighted with the way things have gone since we resumed indoor face-to-face meetings in September. As well as those who had participated on Zoom and had joined us in the summer when we could meet up outdoors, we were delighted to welcome back a couple of boys who had missed all of last session and to be joined by new recruits Joe and Danny.

All members over the age of 12 are required to wear masks unless taking part in physical activities or eating and drinking. While this is not ideal everyone is complying when indoors, but a few have been known to take respite by going outside for a break from mask wearing.

Attendances have been a bit mixed due to several positive Covid cases, one surgical operation and various other commitments but with Covid still active in the community who knows what effect that will have on attendances going forward.

We have been catching up on the activities we couldn't do when meeting over Zoom but with the commitment of everyone we are making excellent progress and badges are being gained under all headings and it is hoped that by the end of the session we will have more President's Badges to present.

At the start of October we divided the boys into two squads and reinstated the monthly competition. Squad 1 was the winner for October but only by 5 points, so Squad 2 are still very much in contention.

All of our seniors were recently promoted; Callum is now a Sergeant, Liam, Scott and Jackson are Corporals, while Nathan and Blair became Lance Corporals. We wish them well in their new roles.

Callum is starting to work towards his Queen's Badge, which should keep him busy learning new skills and having new experiences. We look forward to him gaining the top award in the next 18 months or so.

COP26 has featured prominently in our programme this session. It was interesting to learn how clued up on the subject the younger boys were. As every little helps, we continue to do our bit by ensuring that all of the empty drinks cans from the tuckshop are recycled.

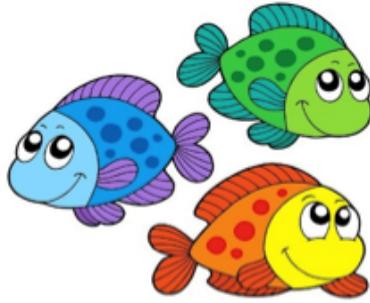
We were pleased to be asked to participate in the annual Poppy Scotland appeal by selling poppies in Tesco on 12th and 13th November. The sum raised is not known yet, but the cans were all very heavy despite each containing a good number of £5 and £10 notes. On Sunday 14th November, the Company was well represented in the parade from St David's Park Church to the Memorial Gates at Peel Park where Callum laid a wreath on behalf of the Company.

**STOP PRESS.** We have now been advised that the final sum raised for Poppy Scotland was £682.55.

Now that we are approaching the end of November thoughts are turning to organising a Christmas outing that will be enjoyable but Covid compliant. The boys have been asked to come up with suggestions, so we await their input.

From all the Officers and staff, 'Have a wonderful and safe Christmas and New Year.'

**Allan Geekie**



## **'Little Fishes' Toddler Group**

It has been lovely to be back in the halls and able to sing songs and have tea and coffee again. The families have been so positive and pleased to come and we have been enjoying meeting new families and new babies too. Congratulations to Joan and Andy on the safe arrival of Theodore, a little brother for Bella-Marie.

The team are very grateful for the support and interest of the church in all we do. We do ask for your prayers for a welcoming and kind environment for the families who come and safety, especially at coffee time, and for the team each week.

We are looking forward to the Christmas café on 4th December and invite all families to come and enjoy Christmas baking, crafts and a toddler play area. Thank you to Dorothy, Isobel, Wilma and others who have been knitting a heavenly host of angels for children for the 'Angel Hunt' – they are wonderful!

We continue to run on a Friday morning between 10.00am and 11.30am in the school term times. All are welcome - so if you know any mums or dads, grans or grandpas who are looking after wee ones then please do contact Gill on 07934 460 752 or Janet in the Church Office. There is no waiting list at present.

<https://www.facebook.com/littlefishestoddlergroup/>

**Gill Wright**

## Steve the Shepherd Live at St Columba's!

Many of you really enjoyed 'The Wise Men', put on here at St Columba's for Christmas 2019 by 'Out of the Box', a very talented Christian Performing Arts Charity. We were so disappointed that their planned visit to us last year had to be put on hold due to the pandemic.

However, we're delighted that they're planning a return visit to St Columba's to perform 'Steve the Shepherd'! Families with primary aged children will love it but we're sure those who are older – and younger – will too!

Please do pass on the word!

The show takes place at 6:30pm on Thursday 16th December in the church building. Entry is FREE but donations are welcome.



an 'Out of the Box' Christmas musical  
for the whole family

starring Philip Todd  
Matthew Todd  
Carol Hutchison  
and Chris Watt

# Steve the Shepherd

Thursday 16th Dec 2021

Story by  
Philip Todd

Music and Lyrics by  
Matthew Todd

featuring  
Dave  
the sheep

St Columba's Church of Scotland  
Old Aisle Rd, Kirkintilloch  
G66 3HQ

Show starts at 6.30pm  
Entry is FREE but donations welcome

Out of the Box (Scotland) Ltd - Scottish Charity No. SC 035781  
For more information check out [www.outofthebox.me.uk](http://www.outofthebox.me.uk)



## **COVID Challenge.**

As we come to the end of a year which has presented challenges we never expected, I wonder when we look back on 2021 what we will all remember most?

Was it wearing masks whenever we left the house? Washing our hands a dozen times a day? Missing our Sunday morning service in church? Coming to terms with not being able to socialise with family and friends in the carefree way we once took for granted?

Yes we learned to compromise. Our minister spoke to us on Zoom and that helped. Family got in touch by phone and online. We wrote letters to friends. I re-read books I'd enjoyed years ago. My husband tackled the mammoth task of tidying out his garage while I cleared out cupboards and drawers still stuffed with clothes, games and toys belonging to the childhood of our three sons and one daughter who are now all parents themselves.

The daily News bulletins were full of grief and despondency as cunning Covid claimed the lives of thousands of men, women and children in Britain and around the world.

Where would it all end, we wondered? This pesky pandemic was stealing lives, hopes and dreams and the carefree childhood and adolescence of thousands of young people.

In laboratories around the world, scientists worked long hours searching for medical clues which would give us hope that a cure could be found to halt the spread of cruel Covid.

At the vaccination centre where John and I went for our jabs we met up again with neighbours and friends from our early years in Kirkintilloch. It was the first social gathering we'd had for weeks and all around the room the sound of voices talking, laughing and having fun was a blessed bonus.

Covid was being challenged by medical science and the human willingness to be vaccinated. How blessed are we as individuals and a country to have the opportunity to protect ourselves against this cruel disease?

So many people around the world have suffered dreadfully this year. So much still needs to be done to help those in the poorest countries who cannot cope.

God willing this Christmas we are able to give thanks that by sending His son Jesus as a helpless baby to be born in a stable in Bethlehem our Saviour who knows how frail and foolish we sometimes are, yet He gave us the greatest gift of love ever known.

John and I wish you all a healthy and happy Christmas and New Year.

**Margaret Clayton**

### **Flower Rota 2022.**

#### **Donation**

##### **January**

- 2. Mr & Mrs W. Scott
- 9. Mrs J. Reid
- 16. Mr & Mrs F. McCallum
- 23. Mr G. Smith
- 30. Mrs P. McKinlay

##### **February**

- 6. Mrs Lydia Ramsay
- 13. Mr. & Mrs J. Clayton
- 20. Mrs C. Trail
- 27. Mrs J. Beattie

#### **Donation**

##### **March**

- 6. Mr & Mrs T. Sinclair
- 13. Mrs P. McKinlay
- 20. Mrs M. Boyle
- 27. Mrs A. Inglis

##### **April**

- 3. Wed. Morning Service
- 10. Mrs Dawn Hall
- 17. Mr & Mrs B. Ashcroft
- 24. Mrs J. McCallum

Currently all deliveries are being undertaken by the Minister until further notice.

## **SERVICES**

**Sunday Morning Service: 10.30am**

**Now livestreamed from Sunday 5th December.  
See page 7 for more details.**

**Midweek Service**

**Wednesdays at 10am in the Large Hall**

**Kirkintilloch: St Columba's Parish Church  
"To know Him and make Him known"**