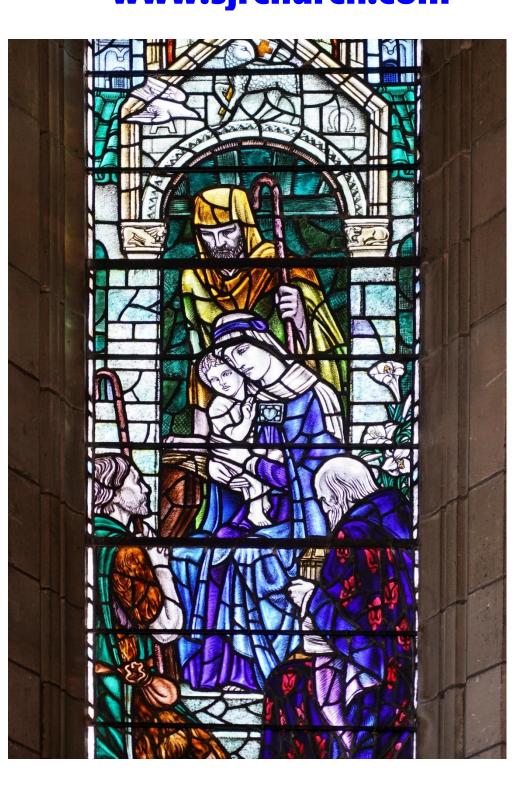


The Beacon

St. John's-Renfield Church Magazine No 381 www.sjrchurch.com



2023

Feb Mar April May June Sept Oct

Nov

Dec

Minister's Letter

There is something very special about a children's Nativity Play, whether in school or church. The expressions on their

faces (joy, nervousness, mischief), the times they go off-script, act entirely naturally and so on, make them highly entertaining. It's nice to get a Christmas card that actually has a nativity scene on it, though everyone and the stable



always look so perfect and tidy - quite unlike any family with a new baby, or visitors who have travelled through the night. It all adds to the way we celebrate Christmas, but it does tend to take us away from the harsh reality of the story that the Gospels tell.

What would the scene be like if a young, unmarried lass, in a small community, in a very traditional society, tried to tell her parents that she was pregnant, and her fiancé wasn't the father? How would a pregnant woman feel having to travel on foot (how easily could a pregnant woman climb onto a donkey, let alone sit on it for a long time?) the equivalent of Glasgow to Edinburgh and a bit more, perhaps having on the last stretch having to climb the equivalent of Ben Lomond (most Galilean Jews avoided travelling through Samaria, by travelling down the Jordan Valley, and then making the climb from Jericho to Jerusalem)? Far away governments issuing rules that drastically affect ordinary people's lives, without any thought to the actual impact on real people. The cold-blooded killing of innocent children and babies. Getting up in the middle of the night and fleeing for safety with only what you could carry.

Those are all elements of the story as told by Matthew and Luke. They aren't suitable for children's Nativity Plays, or Christmas cards, or most Christmas carols, but they speak to us of God's concern to experience human life as it is for many people. His experience of the pain and realities of life continued through to Good Friday and Easter Day, and through the Resurrection offers hope and healing to the world.

We don't need to give up our Nativity Plays and Nativityscene, cards and go all gory, but when we do see the realities of life in Glasgow, Gaza, Ukraine or wherever, we can remember that the God who came to earth at Christmas knows and shares the pain that people there face. He offers a way to bring peace and justice to the earth, and promises us that in the end goodness, love and truth will have the last word.

Whatever you are doing at Christmas, may you know God's blessing, and find ways to share his love.

Ian Johnson

LOOK FORWARD IN FAITH

This is the last Beacon of 2023 and we in the Leadership team would like to take this opportunity to thank the folks who have helped and supported St John's-Renfield through the year.

It's never easy for a church with a vacant ministerial role and no locum minister, however, we have been able to stand firm and are delighted to be welcoming on average 70 people every Sunday.

All our fund-raising events have also been very successful. Thank you to all members and friends of St John's -Renfield.

We are deeply indebted to our member and friend the Rev. Ian Johnson for his willingness to lead us in worship so regularly despite being recently retired from the ministry. Thanks, are also due to Rev Eric McLachlan, who was also very much part of our church until June, and to Rev. Tom Pollock who has willingly covered several services over the year especially during Easter and Advent. We are fortunate that our Worship team are also able to lead us in worship.

Howard Hudson at Glasgow Presbytery has been very helpful in finding us people to lead us in worship when required and we have enjoyed the experience of their input to the life of St John's-Renfield.

Our Mission Planning group have worked hard over 2023. It's a huge challenge and our team continue to have talks with the

other churches in our group. We ask God's blessing upon them as they continue their discussions in 2024.

Our interim moderators, Rev. Dr Kleber Machado and Rev Audrey Jamieson, have also been hugely supportive and their willingness to be there giving their time so generously to us as well as having their own church and congregation to support is deeply appreciated.

So, as we enter 2024, we will go forward together in fellowship and faith and to quote the Rev Ian Johnson, "The Good Lord will have a plan ... he's just not keen on sharing it far in advance!"

Christmas Blessings and good wishes to all for 2024 from the Leadership Team.

Susan, Fiona, Graham and Roddy.

PARISH RECORDS

Funeral and Memorial Services

"Nothing can separate us from the love of God"

Dr Bryan Whitty of Cleveden Road, Glasgow

Catherine McDonald of Falkland Street, Glasgow

HAVE YOU HEARD THAT...

...it would be appreciated if Annual Review of Giving forms could be returned for the attention of the Asst Treasurer, as soon as possible so the finance committee can accurately budget for 2024. Many thanks



... Olive Tree Scotland had a very successful visit to SJR Church on Sunday the 12th of November. Juliet Robb was so delighted to have received a little over £700 and she sends her thanks everyone who purchased goods from the stall. For those who missed out, Olive Tree will have a stall along with Embrace on 9th December in Glasgow Cathedral at 2.00 pm.

...there will be a special Christian Aid Middle East collection on Sunday 3rd December.

... our wonderful Youth Group have offered their time and skills to decorate our sanctuary and halls for Christmas. They will be decorating the church Christmas tree at 7pm on Sunday 3rd December. Everyone is welcome to come and help.

As always, a stocking will be hung on the tree for Glasgow Lodging House Mission donations. LHM envelopes are available in the east vestibule or from any member of the welcome team. Please remember if you are a tax payer your donation is increased significantly if you complete the gift aid part of the envelope. Glasgow Phoenix Choir present a Christmas Celebration - a feast of seasonal music, conducted by Cameron Murdoch, and with special guests Glasgow CREATE Junior, Senior and Chamber Choirs and the Whitburn Band. Friday 15th December at 7.30 in the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall. Tickets are available from the Concert Hall Box Office.

... Jim MacDonald has raised a wonderful £125 for the church from the sale of Crossreach calendars. He has now sold out and sends his thanks to all those who purchased from him.



...Parish Cards, to advertise our Christmas Services will be making their way to the homes of Kelvindale. If you can help deliver them, please let the office know.

...demand for help from St. Gregory's foodbank is still increasing and as Christmas approaches, we're making an extra appeal for additional funds to support those struggling to feed their families. If you're able, it would be greatly appreciated if you could make a payment direct to the Church bank account, sort code 80-07-52, account 00813139, quoting the reference "foodbank" or put an envelope marked "Foodbank" in the retiring collection. If this could be done by the 10th of December it will enable us to forward an extra payment to St Gregory's in time for them to provide a little cheer to those in need this Christmas. ...on Thursday 16th November Kelvindale Toddlers had a "spotty morning". Children and their carers were encouraged to wear something spotty: there were a few spotty decorations, spotty biscuits and spotty stickers. Our usual weekly charges (£2 per child plus £1 for additional children) and donations were sent to the BBC Children in Need Appeal. We were delighted to be able to send £75.

...long standing member of SJR, John MacMillan turns 90 on the 15th of December. Happy Birthday John!

Let there be light...

Anyone who has visited the church at night will have become aware that the light levels in the Sanctuary have been decreasing as old lamps failed. They have all been replaced! Every lamp in the Sanctuary has been



replaced by an LED lamp (apart from a couple where the fitting is so decayed as to be unusable).

In the Large Hall the ten existing fittings have all been replaced with fittings similar to the previous high bay ones, but this time they all come on immediately as they also are all LEDs. The fluorescent lamps in the passage and other areas have also been replaced, with dramatic effect.

The Property team think that it has been money well spent (about £7000). We expect the LEDs to have a very long life.



The Christian Aid website (christianaid.org.uk) carries a detailed description of current events in Gaza and offers the means to make a donation that will help its Christian Aid partners to alleviate the suffering there. There is an opportunity to sign a petition urging the UK to do all in its power to work for peace in the region.

It also provides the following prayer for all who share their concern:

A prayer for the Middle East

God, hear our prayers for peace in the Middle East.

May all people in the region be protected, safe from harm.

We pray that this crisis will end now, with no further loss of life.

God, may the injured and distressed know your healing presence.

May the powerful and the decision-makers follow the paths of justice, mercy and peace.

We pray for recognition of the dignity and value of every life.

May the clamour of violence cease,

Replaced by the beating of swords into ploughshares.

God, in your name,

Amen

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Sunday 10th December – Gift Service at 11 a.m. Collecting gifts for Glasgow...The Caring City



Friday 15th December – Christingle Service 6.30 p.m.

Sunday 17th December - Morning Worship – 11 a.m. Nine Lessons and Carols – 4 p.m.

Sunday 24th December- Morning Worship – 11 a.m. Watchnight – 11.30 p.m.

Monday 25th December - Christmas Day Family Service 10.30 a.m.

Sunday 31st December - Carol Service – 11 a.m.

SJR Welcome Team Door Duties



<u>December 3rd, 10th, 17th,24th,31st</u> Lead Elder: Roddy Watt with Elizabeth Arthur and John Finnigan Reserve: Marjory Watt

GIFT SERVICE



This year our Gift Service will take place on 10th December at 11 am. The church will also be open on Saturday 9th December between 11 am and 12 noon to allow gifts to be donated, if you are not attending on Sunday.

The gifts will again go to: **Glasgow ...The Caring City**. This year we are being asked for gifts suitable for children of any age.

Please contact Susan Finnigan for further information.

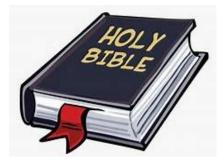
Arranging your Flowers in December

Liz MacDonald Susan Finnigan Eleanor Murphy



Reader Rota - December

- 3rd Fiona Robinson
- 10th Wilma Murphy
- 17th Seonaid Gibson
- 24th Leadership Team
- 31st No reader Carol Service



Christmas Surplus Stall

It's that time again! Hard on the heels of the great fundraising success of the Bonanza it's the turn of the Christmas Surplus Stall. This is your opportunity to contribute items associated with Christmas which are overflowing from your Christmas decoration box. They will be on sale in the Hall at Coffee Time on the dates below. (It goes without saying that items should be in saleable condition!).

A basket to receive items will be at the Church Door. We are looking for decorations, books, music, crafts, baking, wrapping

No prices – just monetary donations.

The dates are:

Sunday November 26th - Donations only

Sunday December 3rd - Donations and Sale at Coffee Time



Sunday December 10th - Donations and Sale at Coffee Time

Sunday December 17th - Donations and Sale at Coffee Time

With the help of Liz and Jim MacDonald, we are currently investigating charities supporting Ukraine – the need is as great as ever but it seems to have slipped off the front pages.

What are the Four Cs and why are they important?

The last Presbytery meeting concerned itself with one issue – Mission.

We were addressed by the minister and one of the members of Greyfriars Kirk in Edinburgh who talked about **HeartEdge**, an organisation whose mission is to **help you discover** what God is doing in your **church and community** and equip you to develop your plans to be a **transforming presence** for good.

There is deliberately no space between Heart and Edge as people at the heart of the congregation are as important as those on the edge and all need to be involved in the journey.

Yes, the two speakers talked eloquently about their own initiatives but also the people that influenced them along the way – most of these on the edge but ultimately at the heart of what they are trying to achieve.

They took us through various scenarios and each time they did that they referenced the four Cs.

- 1. **Congregation**: Day to day community life, living out our faith and values in all their diversity.
- 2. **Compassion**: Partnering with others in forming relationships, releasing the gifts of strangers, walking alongside people on the edge.

- 3. **Culture**: Re-imagining our ethos for the present, creative opportunities for sharing the gospel story through the arts.
- 4. **Commerce**: Finding income streams to achieve financial sustainability and grow flourishing programmes for mission.

So, yes Greyfriars have the Grassmarket Project but we have the Pop-in Café. It's not on the same scale, I know but it is a place to meet and to talk. They are both offering fellowship and presence (C1), wellbeing and pastoral support (C2), events, stories and music (C3), receive donations towards food etc. (C4). There are other initiatives such as our donations to the foodbank but there are also opportunities for us to develop our mission by engaging people in conversation before or after church on Sundays. We need to engage with people of all ages, young and old, as we will never know if any of us, inside or out, down and outs or up and ins, are feeling vulnerable or distressed.

Another area touched on was work related, church work that is. We are looking for administration and activity support. It might be part of the welcome team, making tea/coffee after morning worship or gardening or writing Beacon articles for instance. A wide and diverse range of skills are needed and welcomed. (C1) The end result may be to overcome barriers and enable participation. (C2) This may lead to increased access and an increased profile for the church. (C3) Inevitably some of this will involve finance, fund raising in the job or applying for grants etc. all part of the work of the church. (C4) So, let's come back to HeartEdge and what they are trying to encourage us to do. They are encouraging us to re-imagine church life as part of a community. To ask the question, "What do you want us to do for you?" Culture has changed. We can now expect only 2% of the population to be involved in church. We should be looking for unhurried encounters, being partners and be looking towards community development within Kelvindale and beyond.

Find out more at <u>www.heartedge.org</u>.

Robin Hutchison Presbytery Elder.



Action of Churches Together in Scotland

The aim of ACTS is to encourage Churches to foster greater unity and understanding through a variety of organised events.

West End ACTS comprises representatives from several Churches in Glasgow's West End. These include Wellington, St Mary's Cathedral, St John's-Renfield, St Aloysius, Hillhead Baptist and the Unitarian Church.

WEACTS going forward

At the committee meeting in October, there was a discussion about how WEACTS should 'go forward together in a different era'. The following 5 headings were used.

1. Joint activities for our congregations

- 2. Joint activities shared with our wider community
- 3. Are there other congregations whom we should invite?
- 4. How do we see our focus in the new set-ups at national level
- 5. Should we embrace inter-faith activities more fully?

It was agreed to ask all representatives to raise these matters with their congregations and give any feedback at the next meeting in January.

Please let me know any thoughts or ideas you have on this. <u>Moiraeaglesham@aol.com</u>

Thank you

Bonanza 2023 – Update

Grateful thanks to all who supported us from near and far and we

are now able to report that our final total for the Bonanza was £5510.00.

We also had huge support from local businesses and we would like thank them through this article in The Beacon!

Bliss Within; Café Source Too; Catani; Cleveden Deli; Crabshakk; Cresswell and Co; Dance Studio; GWR; Fabrice Maufrais Salon; Londis in Kelvindale Road and Spar in Cleveden Road – your support is much appreciated.



As with every Bonanza, anything unsold on the day is distributed to various charity shops around the area so they also get a chance to raise funds.

Here is the breakdown by stall:

Books£321.80Bottle Stall£203.60Cake and Candy£220.40Car Wash£97.00Catering£324.90Discarded Treasures£738.05Jam and Wood£345.20Jewellery£95.00Raffle£408.10Tickets and Donations£818.55Time, Talents and Treats£747.00Toiletries£242.46Toys and Games£287.77Tuck Shop£44.48Whisky Raffle£109.00		
Cake and Candy£220.40Car Wash£97.00Catering£324.90Discarded Treasures£738.05Jam and Wood£345.20Jewellery£95.00Raffle£408.10Tickets and Donations£818.55Time, Talents and Treats£747.00Toiletries£242.46Toys and Games£287.77Tuck Shop£44.48	Books	£321.80
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Tuck Shop£44.48	Toiletries	£242.46
•	Toys and Games	£287.77
Whisky Raffle £109.00	Tuck Shop	£44.48
	Whisky Raffle	£109.00

Please note further donations were made after the day creating our fantastic grand total of £5510!

With thanks to all from The Bonanza Team at SJR

Walking Group Adventures

The St. John's-Renfield Walking Group undertook an additional 'short notice' walk in late October, hoping to squeeze in an extra outing before the risk of icy mornings arrived.

On a beautifully sunny autumn day (and in stark contrast to the monsoon previous of our outing...), our intrepid group of seven set off to undertake a linear walk Robroyston from to Hall. We'd Provan agreed to make this a



'public transport' walk, as we've usually done at least once a year in the past. The short train journey into Queen Street was followed by a further journey on to the new station in Robroyston (opened 2019). A short walk from the station saw us enter Hogganfield Park, now part of the Seven Lochs Wetland Park. The park was busy with dog walkers, joggers and families and is a well-kept and well signposted area. A coffee break was enjoyed at a friendly kiosk by the loch, before setting off on the next leg of the journey.

This soon took us out of the park along Gartloch Rd through Ruchazie and Garthamlock towards The Fort Shopping Centre. An area not so familiar to most of the group, it's a much changing landscape with lots of new housing. Our final destination is a bit if a hidden gem, tucked away just opposite the shopping complex. Provan Hall was built as a hunting lodge for the Bishops of Glasgow in the 15th century. It has recently undergone a £3.5M refurbishment and is now run by a Community Management Trust as a community hub and visitor attraction. It is well worth a visit, with an interesting text and audio-visual exhibition in the oldest building, a small terrace garden and temporary exhibition of Easterhouse memories - <u>https://www.provanhall.org/</u>

The trip was rounded off with lunch at The Fort, before hopping on an express bus back to town and another back to Kelvindale. Thanks to John McFadyen for kindly scouting the walk in advance and leading on the day.

The weather is likely to curtail our activities until Spring, but we look forward to further adventures next year!



HALLOWEEN POP-IN CAFE















Join the Christmas fun at our community café!

Wednesday 6th December From 2- 3.30 pm At the Large Hall, St. John's Renfield Church,



Beaconsfield Road, Kelvindale



Free Tea, Coffee, Cake (served until 3pm) No booking required Bring the kids - everyone is welcome to join the fun & chat

Contact us: <u>office@sjrchurch.com</u> or call (0141) 334 0782 - <u>www.sjrchurch.com</u>



LODGING HOUSE MISSION NEWS

WINTER WEDNESDAYS

You're Invited to Celebrate with Us!

2.30pm, WEDNESDAY 22nd NOVEMBER Annual Service of Remembering

1.30pm, WEDNESDAY 6th DECEMBER

Christmas Show Capacity is limited so book through June/Angela

2.30pm, WEDNESDAY 13TH DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS SERVICE of CAROLS & READINGS With Guest speaker & Mission Voices

Closed January 1st & 2nd

LHM, 35 East Campbell Street, Glasgow, G1 5

pr



HELPING THE FOODBANK THIS CHRISTMAS

During the festive season we normally receive an increased number of donations. This helps us in the upcoming year, as well as allowing us to provide extra to service users over the holidays.

We are currently being helped massively by food donations from M&S, which means that there is currently no need for extra food basics. However, around Christmas time we appreciate being able to give our service users treats to go alongside basic food and toiletries. Suggested treats are: Boxes of biscuits, chocolates and nice toiletries.

If you are looking to donate then it is most useful to us if we receive these donations in the first or second week of December (but the earlier, the better!). Our busiest week this year will begin on the 18th of December where we will distribute Christmas gifts to service users.

Please note that we are not accepting toys. This is so that we can best utilise our space for food products to keep up with high demand.

If you are considering a monetary donation to St Gregory's Food Bank then we are always grateful and this allows us to purchase products for our basic bags. There is a page on our website for donations, and we accept in-person donations during our opening hours, Mon-Fri, 10:00-12:00.

As always, thank-you if you are considering helping those most in need.

St Gregory's Food Bank





Boys' Brigade News

5th Glasgow Boys' Brigade Anchor Boys and Junior Section

The session continues with all 22 boys continuing to attend regularly and participate with the same enthusiasm with which we started out.

The programme for both sections includes, Get Active, Get Adventurous, Get Creative, Get into The Bible, Get Involved and Get Learning.

So far, there has been lots of *activity* including an evening of fun on the trampoline, the Anchor Boys have *created* a huge 140 currently on display in the Large Hall along with a brief explanation of the origin of The Boys' Brigade, we have been *involved* in helping out at The Beacon Bonanza where the boys enjoyed selling raffle tickets, and both sections showed great interest in exploring the sanctuary where they *learned* about the different artefacts and the history of the retired Boys' Brigade Colours in the glass case at the back of the church.

Currently we are *learning* about The Bible and will be hearing some stories from the Old Testament.

Before the end of Term 2, the Junior Section boys are looking forward to a Sleep Over at Glasgow Science Centre on 24th November and an evening of Ten Pin Bowling at Braehead on 5th December. Of course, there will be a Christmas Party with (hopefully) a special visitor on 19th December.

We will be starting back for Term 3 on Tuesday 9th January 2024 for lots more activity, creativity and learning. We look forward to further visits to the sanctuary, hearing more Bible Stories, getting involved in the BB Coffee morning in March and some outdoor adventures.

Allan Watt and Aileen Morison (Officers-in-Charge)

Company Section

November was a busy month for Company Section which started with the Bonanza weekend where the Seniors and staff got in a lather with the Car Wash!

Our Senior boys "ran the show" on 17th November and did a great job at organising and leading our Friday night activities.

On the Partick District front, the Laser Quest competition took place in early November with Pte Harris Gault winning the Junior competition and Pte Hamish Matheson victorious in the Senior event. Well done to all the boys who participated.

As we go to press, the District competitions continue with Squad Drill and Tenpin Bowling in early December. Keep an eye on our social media feeds for the results! December also sees the boys doing a spot of baking followed by our Christmas night out at The Loading Bay at Port Dundas for a Parkour and Skateboarding coaching session.

Please continue to keep up to date with our weekly activities on our social media feeds and please don't forget to 'like', 'share', and 'retweet' our posts if possible!

Going into the New don't please Year forget we have the return of the BB Quiz & Night Chippy to brighten up your January!! Saturday 20th January 2024 is the date to remember, in the Large Hall at 7.30pm. Tickets are on sale now, at £10 per



person. Ticket enquiries should be directed to Allan Watt at the following email address: <u>allanwatt74@gmail.com</u>

Finally, if you know of any boys from P7 upwards who would like to join us then please don't hesitate to get in touch. They will be made most welcome.

An Evening with Gordon Cree

Join one of Scotland's most versatile entertainers, Gordon Cree for a wonderful evening of songs, laughter and reminiscences.

> Friday 1st December 2023 at 7.00pm St. Andrew's West Parish Church 260 Bath Street, GLASGOW G2 4JP Admission by donation (suggested £5.00)

Mackintosh Choir

Christmas Concert

х

Musical Director - Au Arias Accompanist - Gordon Cree

×

Sunday 10th December 2023 at 7pm

Admission £10/Children under 12 free

Tickets available from **tickets@mackintoshchoir.com** or from choir members

St John's-Renfield Church

22 Beaconsfield Road Glasgow G12 0NY

www.mackintoshchoir.com

CHARTLY AUMULE SCOOPER

LIFE AND WORK DECEMBER 2023

OFFICIAL UPDATES

Assembly Trustees - page 25

The Rev David Cameron urges the Church of Scotland to celebrate its identity in the season of Advent.

Faith Action Programme - pages 28 & 29

Members of the Faith Action team reflect on the season of Advent.

REACHING OUT AT CHRISTMAS

Churches and charity support for local communities

'WE MUST CARE FOR THE VULNERABLE'

Why campaigning for those living with HIV and AIDS matters

VIEW FROM THE PULPIT

Team ministry in Aberdeen

LETTER FROM THE HOLY LAND

Reflection on the message of the birth of the Prince of Peace

'NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD'

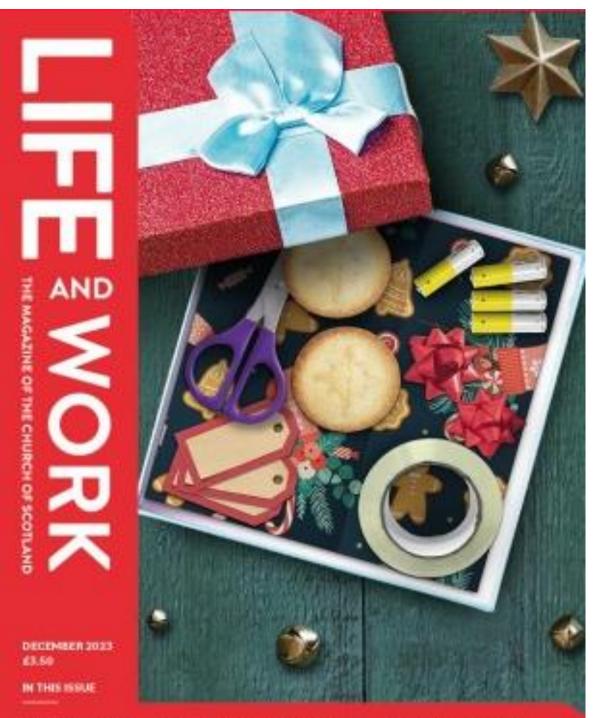
The Moderator urges readers to 'listen for the Spirit' during Advent

CHRISTMAS OFFER - THREE PRINT ISSUES ONLY £9

Online

Visit <u>www.lifeandwork.org</u> for more news and exclusive features Buy or subscribe, in print or digital, at

www.lifeandwork.org/subscribe, or speak to your church's Life and Work promoter.



Reaching out at Christmas Dwnikes and charity wapport for incal conversities

"We must care for the vulnerable" Why compaging for these living with HW and ADS numers View from the pulpit

Letter from the Holy Land Reflection on the measure of the birth of the Poince of Passe "Nothing is impossible with God" The Hidentor argen readers to "Intention the Spirit" during Adverse

and much more all for £1.50.

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WHAT'S ON DECEMBER 2023

Sunday 3 rd	Morning Worship – 11.00 a.m. Communion, Christian Aid Middle East collection
	Christmas tree decorating at 7pm
Wednesday 6 th	Pop-In Café
	SJR Large Hall from 2.00 to 3.30 p.m.
Sunday 10 th	Morning Worship – 11.00 a.m. Gift Service
Friday 15 th	Christingle Service – 6.30 pm
Sunday 17 th	Morning Worship – 11.00 a.m. Nine Lessons and Carols – 4 p.m.
Sunday 24 th	Morning Worship – 11.00 a.m. Watchnight – 11.30 p.m.
Monday 25 th	Christmas Day Family Service – 10.30 a.m.
Sunday 31 st	Carol Service – 11.00 a.m.

Please note: Events are subject to change

Thanks to Kate Russell Photography for the beautiful photo of our stained-glass window

OFFICE BEARERS

Minister – Position Vacant

Interim Moderator – Rev. Audrey Jamieson

Leadership Team

Susan Finnigan, Fiona Robinson, Graham

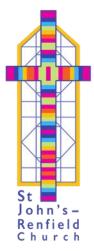
Moore, Roderick Watt

Editor of Beacon Alan Christie

Material for the February 2024 Beacon is required by

Friday 19th January 2024 midnight

Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 9.30 a.m. – 12.30 p.m. Tel: (0141) 334 0782 Email: office@sjrchurch.com <u>www.sjrchurch.com</u>



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