

# By the Way



**The Magazine of St Augustine's Scottish Episcopal Church, Dumbarton**

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**The Hall turns PINK for  
Get Connected (See Back Page)**



# Parish Directory

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**Flowers:** Maggie Wallace



# Photos! -

Georgie Duncan awarding thousands of pounds from Beanfeast to various charities, the Pantodine Cast, and the St Andrew's Night!



# St James the Least of All

The Rectory  
St. James the Least

*My dear Nephew Darren*

Carol singing is not what it used to be. My fond memories of a group of choristers, muffled in scarves and overcoats, carrying lanterns and walking from door to door in the snow, as they sang 'While shepherds watched ...' had to be suddenly revised when I saw your own music group, in T-shirts inscribed with 'Jesus loves You', singing 'Little donkey', in your shopping centre. I suspect any money you raised would just about have paid for the electricity used to power your banks of electronic equipment. Singing in the main square of the Centre next to the fountain may have looked good, but it seemed to mean that the choirfolk were obliged to make constant trips to the lavatory.

Here at St. James the Least of All, carol singing is regarded as a staff perk for the choir; the year when the Boys' Brigade tried to break their monopoly was suppressed with a ruthlessness that would have impressed Genghis Kahn.

Our annual carol-singing route involves months of meticulous planning. We find that a transparent collection box is vital, so that donors can see what earlier patrons have given. This means that those who are bound to put in notes must be visited first – 'pour encourager les autres'. It also needs a detachable base, so that if coppers are given, they can be removed from sight before the next call.

Those homes that contain several children are visited just after bed-time, so that parents will give generously simply to get the choir to go somewhere else. Veiled threats to stay and sing more carols (unless they give generously) are usually very effective. Getting whoever looks the most innocent and photogenic to ring the bell and ask for money is a far more subtle way of ensuring a donation than planting any number of mafia lookalikes (such as our church treasurer) on the doorstep.

The choir always finishes its evening at the local pub – but again, the timing has to be carefully managed. Too early and there will only be the landlord, his wife and their Labrador to listen; too late and people will be so full of Christmas cheer that any carols will be hi-jacked and become the equivalent of back-of-the bus rugby songs.

I am never entirely sure what charity our choristers collect for, but the fact that all the men return to the pub once the boys are taken home does rather give one pause for thought.

So, you have just attended a course on 'Diary Management', to get you prepared for another year. If you had visited me, I could have told you all you need to know in half the time. Allow me to provide you with useful information which was probably not provided in your conference hand-outs.

First: buy the smallest diary you can find: large blank pages only encourage you to fill them with too many appointments; the smaller the page, the easier it can be made to appear that your days are fully booked.

Second: make sure that it is of a size that will conveniently fit into any pocket. When dates are being arranged for subsequent meetings, you can theatrically start going through jacket, trouser and overcoat pockets. By the time you discover it was in your briefcase all along, all the dates will have been fixed and no one will notice you never got any of them.

Third: adopt your own private code for bookings. This means that any parishioner looking over your shoulder and seeing "1.30pm PLS" or "7.30pm WTD" will assume you are attending important church meetings. The fact that they mean "Post Lunch Sleep" and "Walk The Dog" will be known to you alone – although do have alternative possibilities for your acronyms should you ever be challenged. My congregation know I am assiduous in attending the "Pauline Letters Seminars" and my membership of the "World Theology Directorate" is of many years standing.

Fourth: Record everything in pencil so that once you return home, you can rub most of it out and can then deny you knew anything about those meetings you were supposed to attend – and to prove it, you can show the blank page in your diary.

Fifth: Put someone else's address inside your diary. Should you ever have to resort to the ultimate act and need to lose it, you do not want some Good Samaritan returning it to you from the churchyard compost heap.

So you see, your day of flip charts and group discussions were quite wasted – and I would gladly have presented my course for half their price.

Your loving uncle,

*Eustace*

## Smile-Lines

### Top ten things to say about a Christmas gift you don't like

10. Hey! There's a gift!
9. Well, well, well ...
8. Oh dear. If I had not recently shot up four sizes that would've fit.
7. This will be perfect for wearing around the garage.
6. Goodness. I hope this never catches fire! Though, there are lots of unexplained fires.
5. If the dog buries it, I'll be furious!
4. I love it - but I fear the jealousy it will inspire if I go out in it.
3. Sadly, I am allergic to whatever this is made of.
2. To think - I got this the year I vowed to give all my gifts to charity.
1. What have I done to deserve this?

### Father Christmas

You know you are getting old when Father Christmas starts looking younger.

### 10 Invitation Replies to a Christmas Party

1. Einstein thought it would be relatively easy to attend.
2. Pierre and Marie Curie were both radiating with enthusiasm.
3. Newton thought he might drop in
4. Geiger said we couldn't count on him coming.
5. Beethoven said he would make a note of the date.
6. Wilbur Wright accepted, provided he and Orville could get a flight.
7. Dr Jekyll declined as he hadn't been feeling himself lately.
8. Pavlov was drooling at the thought.
9. Darwin said he'd have to see what evolved.
10. Morse said he would be there on the dot, but would have to dash away early.

### True responses on Science tests

~ One horsepower is the amount of energy it takes to drag a horse 500 feet in one second.

~ You can listen to thunder after lightning and tell

how close you came to getting hit. If you don't hear it, you got hit, so never mind.

~ When they broke open molecules, they found they were only stuffed with atoms. But when they broke open atoms, they found them stuffed with explosions.

~ When people run around and around in circles, we say they are crazy. When planets do it, we say they are orbiting.

~ While the earth seems to be knowingly keeping its distance from the sun, it is really only centrifuging.

~ Most books now say our sun is a star. But it still knows how to change into a sun in the daytime.

~ A vibration is a motion that cannot make up its mind which way it wants to go.

### Christmas in my heart

Christmas is in my heart twelve months a year and, thanks to credit cards, it's on my Visa card statement twelve months a year, also.

### Turkey

He ate so much over the holidays that he decided to quit cold turkey.  
Which side of the turkey has the most feathers?  
The outside.

### Sums up Christmas

Three phrases that sum up Christmas are: Peace on Earth; Goodwill to Men; and Batteries not included.

### Red

What's red and white and red, red and white, and red and white? Father Christmas rolling down a hill.

### Stronger

Statistics prove we're all getting stronger. Fifty years ago you needed an estate car to hold £50 worth of Christmas presents. Twenty years ago, it took two people to carry £20 worth of Christmas groceries - now a five-year-old can do it.



## From our New Associate Priest!

Dear Friends,

Come to Dumbarton and Alexandria, the advert said 'opportunities, challenges and lots of fun!' So here I am, on my way, starting to plan the removal and looking forward to meeting you all.

And already having visited twice, I can see that 'opportunities, challenges and lots of fun' is spot on.

Certainly soup on a Friday in St Augustine's fair buzzes with laughter and noise! And the tours of Dumbarton and Alexandria and the two churches on interview day highlighted some of the good things that are already happening as well as some of the challenges.

I guess you'd like to know a little about me! At the moment I'm the Rector of 3 small city churches in Dundee. They were linked on my arrival 3 ½ years ago, my job was to link them, so I've experienced some of the joys and possibilities and, it has to be said, some of the more sticky bits of becoming Linked Charges.

And while I'm going to miss the silvery Tay, I'm sure the Clyde, the Leven, and Dumbarton Rock will be beautiful alternatives! It's clear however that I'll have to lay aside my Dundee phrase book for a West Central version instead – and I was just getting used to it!

Before returning to Scotland I served in 3 different parishes in Lincoln, having been ordained there in 1996, and I've also had some time away from ministry when I did all sorts of things such as working in a supermarket, as a finance assistant in a college, even a year of social work training, not to mention struggling with the benefit system ... But always that sense of call to ministry wouldn't let me go – God is very persistent!

The astute among you will have clocked 'returning to Scotland'. Although I was born in Nottingham (hence the accent), my mother's family are Scottish and when I was 8 we moved to Gullane, near North Berwick and later I studied Physiology at St Andrews University before life took me off to England.

However, my partner, Angela, and I both love Scotland and we leapt at the opportunity to return here - now wild horses wouldn't drag us south again.

We're really looking forward to moving to Dumbarton and getting to know the area – and my three children, Iain, Alastair and Kirsty, all grown up and independent, are looking forward to visiting us too ('free holiday' was mentioned!).

So roll on February 21st, and the start of our new journey together, linking St Mungo's and St Augustine's: creating opportunities, helping with each other's challenges and having lots of fun!

Blessings

**Alison**



### Qualities Needed!

Alison brings gifts, talents, experience and qualities into this new Linked Charge of St Augustine's and St Mungo's. It is not going to be an easy task, and we must appreciate that she is a part-time priest, paid half-stipend, and will not always be available. She and Angela will live in the Rectory in Helenslee Crescent, and I'm sure it will be a welcoming home.

Both are great at the "Craft Stuff", and I can see a few wee groups of interested people getting torn in to some of that! Her depth of spirituality and her fun-loving nature is just what we need, and we look forward to her coming to the most beautiful part of Bonnie Scotland!

## Rainbows at St Augustine's

Guiding is back at St Aug's. The 2nd Dumbarton Rainbow group now meet in the hall every Wednesday from 6 to 7pm. There are some spaces so if you know a girl aged 5 to 7 who might be interested you can contact their leader Pauline Black on 01389 755527 or 0751 2867434.

For those of us who don't know much about Rainbows, they have been around for about 25 years and are "pre-Brownies".

The Girl Guide Association web site says:

"Rainbows is all about developing self-confidence, building friendships, learning new things and having fun. Girls get their hands dirty with arts and crafts, trying out cooking and playing games. Rainbows is all about learning by doing.

"Rainbows follow a programme called the Rainbow Jigsaw, through which they can take part in lots of different activities with girls their own age.

"The Rainbow Jigsaw has four areas:  
**Look Learn Laugh Love**"

That could well be St Aug's motto too!



## The Panto Meets St Aug's

We are all very aware of the local pantomime put on by the DPT, and the role that many of our congregation play in it.. But we didn't expect a visit to our Saturday Coffee Morning!



Maybe next year the Rector might get a part! (Hint, hint!). Id The Revd Ian Miller can star, then so can I, as long as I get a fancy dress!

Seriously, thanks are due to all our members who make this annual event an absolute joy to so many people in our community!



# Annual Report of the Rector

## 2013

### General:

After 12 years, I come yet again to write an Annual Report for the Magazine. It's a time to reflect on all that has gone on over the past year, and point to highlights, or things we could have done better. Whenever I get around to doing this every year, I give thanks to God that I'm in charge of a healthy, outward-looking parish which is not averse to taking risks for the sake of the Gospel, and is highly regarded in the community as a church which cares about what happens in the town, and indeed serves the town well. We do have that sort of reputation, as a parish which reaches out to all, and as a church where **everyone** is welcome. The fact is that I am rather proud to be your Rector, and although I may have a little niggle at you from time to time, I will defend you as the best wee parish in the West of Scotland to anyone who may dare to be critical of the sort of ministry that has developed here over the years. It is strong, it is brave, and it is costly, not least in the time we spend in ministry as individuals and as a group, but costly, too, financially.

### Changes:

Actually, 2012-2013 has been a year of great change and more than a little upheaval in St Augustine's, and those of you who know me well will appreciate that I don't always cope very well with change! It takes me more than a little outside of my "comfort zone", and I know that some of you feel the same way. The addition to the parish of a Curate-in-Training called for a different way of working, and, in many ways, Pat's arrival was a blessing. She had undertaken a fair amount of visiting, and stepped in to take funerals when necessary. Her Diaconal year was not short of opportunities to learn and reflect on life in a parish!

Other changes included implementing our Mission Action Plan, and much has been said about this elsewhere. The Music Group set up a dais and our seating arrangements became "different", but I think we will mostly agree that we have a better arrangement in church and fewer trailing wires to trip over!

The URC Church have moved into the Community Hall to worship, and it has been a pleasure to have them here. On many occasions throughout the year they have joined us for worship, and that has been a relationship which has needed tending and developed. Pat took one of their services this year, and that was a great breakthrough.

There was also a big change with our work with Circle Scotland. Caroline Marsland has replaced Janet Rae, and this has meant a closer working arrangement with Circle. I am now much more involved with the work going on there, and provide professional support to Caroline.

A new bow to our arrow also emerged this year with West Dunbartonshire Foodshare taking up residence in the church building. Ricky, Ghislaine and their team are doing wonders with food parcels for those in need, but again the pastoral load has been increased as a result. It is important to share with you that I often feel that I am called on so often to meet the pastoral needs of folk outside the congregation, that I have little time left for my people. This burdens me and makes me feel guilty, but that is how ministry is shaping up just now and I am having to find new ways of working.

Another big change, perhaps the biggest, was the fact that St Augustine's are due to merge with St Mungo's Alexandria as a Joint Charge. I have been acting as Interim Priest-in-Charge since the summer in Alexandria, and we have found an Associate Priest to join the Ministry Team before the Linkage can formally take place, on Feb 21st. This has heaped some extra pressure on me, but I'm hoping that by Easter, everything will have settled down a bit! The Bishop has agreed that Linda and I should move into the Rectory in Alexandria, leaving the Dumbarton Rectory free for the new Associate Priest. That has now taken place.

### Curate

It was with great joy that Pat was ordained priest in late September this year. It was a wonderful day for Pat, obviously, but for St Augustine's it was a great day too as we welcomed two bishops and many visitors from across the Diocese. We put on a good show and everyone seemed to go home impressed, and with words of praise for St Auggie's! Pat is now taking a break and she and the Bishop will be deciding her future shortly.

### Mission Action Plan

Well, the Bishop came in February at the end of our MAP 1 Year, and we put on an excellent presentation for him. He went away extremely impressed by our work and called us "Trailblazers" in the Diocese! Together with our facilitator, Revd Anne Tomlinson, we have been progressing with our Mission Action Plan, and MAP2 was signed on October 27<sup>th</sup> 2013. The first year's goals had all been met, and the little MAP Group, reporting to the Vestry, has had to work hard to discern how we are



doing now, and how we can grow as a parish in the next year. Liam McLarnon has now joined the MAP Group. MAP2 is an extensive document, and you should all have a copy. It is OUR MAP, and it belongs to each and every one of us. We will all have a part to play in the coming year.

### **Community Hall:**

Margaret Wallace has reported substantially on the Community Hall, and the groups who use it, elsewhere. I take great pride in the ministry which goes on there daily and the number of people in our community who are cared for as a result of us having our doors open.

When I say that our mission is costly, I often mean that we accommodate groups who cannot pay their way due to cutbacks or lack of funding. We could go for an alternative option of only entertaining people who can pay top-notch rent and make the hall into a purely commercial unit which raises funds for us. We have chosen not to do this, and although it is hard to quantify, the Hall probably makes a little money for us, but it could make much more

Those who use our Community Hall are becoming more and more a part of the St Augustine's family and that is pleasing to see. Hall users come to our parties and events, sometimes to worship, and work with us in things like the Community Fair. It is establishing this wider St Augustine's Family that I am interested in, and I hope that you will accept that MAP 2 is actually trying to address this issue and bring us all more closely together.

### **Holy Week:**

It was wonderful to have our Bishop with us all through Holy Week, and he went away impressed by the devotion and liturgical practice of St Augustine's during this most important time.

### **Numbers:**

The Parish Return have still not been completed, and it's therefore difficult to give you definite numbers at this time. However, there is no doubt that although our Sunday 9am congregation is growing in numbers, the midweek services are poorly attended these days. It is with sadness that I see numbers at the 11am declining too.

It is not that we have lost people, but simply that some of us are not attending as often as we did. We all need to look at our commitment to each other and make a special effort to be in church every Sunday that we possibly can be.

### **Giving:**

WE always need to look at what we give to the church, and compare it with what we spend on other things in our lives. Energy Bills and everything else, are rising in cost for the parish as well as for you, and therefore our giving should increase annually. If you pay tax at all to the Inland Revenue, can I beg you again to sign a Gift Aid form? It means we get about 25% more on every penny you give us, at no inconvenience to yourself. If you link that, too, with taking envelopes, so that your collection gets put away even on Sundays that you are not here, then the increase to our income will be surprisingly significant. Direct giving still needs to increase, even in this time of austerity, maybe even because of this time of austerity.

### **Pastoral Care:**

We are now gearing ourselves up for a Team Ministry to look after both churches, St Mungo's and St Augustine's, and the sooner that is in place the better! I have already shared my personal disappointment in not fulfilling the expectations of many, in my own ministry, but hopefully things will get better. Tim Rhead has been a tremendous help to Pat and me, and is a faithful visitor! My Diocesan commitments continue unabated, and although I have been trying to drop some of these, there doesn't seem to be the will in the Diocese to let me!

### **Study Groups and Prayer Groups:**

Can I record my thanks to Peter Cairns for his input into this aspect of parish life. Peter has been immense, and we have big plans for the coming year including a weekend away in Millport!

### **Friends and MAD:**

Without Friends' we would simply be an ordinary wee parish, and I cannot begin to thank the Executive for all the work they do to keep this going. They are at the forefront of our welcome, our mission, and our fundraising, and give people heaps of fun in the process. Well done!

### **Friday Lunches/ Saturday Coffee:**

The faithful band of people who sustain these fundraising events are to be commended for their continued commitment, not only for raising money to keep us afloat, but for keeping our profile high in the Town Centre, and using these fundraisers as a vehicle for our mission and outreach. We need to freshen up our helpers a little, and new volunteers are always welcome.

**(Continued.....)**

**Ecumenism:**

The Minister's Fraternal in the town has not met for over three years, one of the reasons being the great change in personnel within the various churches.

We have plans now to begin meeting again, in St Augustine's in January, and hope to resurrect something which should never have been allowed to die in the first place. Dumbarton Churches Together goes from strength to strength, and although we are represented, we could do with another couple of people who might wish to get involved. Again the various churches collected for Christian Aid together, had the Good Friday Walk of Witness together, came together for the Spring Festival, and participated together in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Our special Maundy Thursday Ceremonies were well attended again, and sometimes we just manage to feed everyone by the skin of our teeth.

The Allsorts Choir goes from strength to strength.

**Sunday School:**

Barbara Barnes trudges away with what is a very difficult task. This year, we had hoped that Pat would become a bit more involved when the Team Ministry comes along, but that will not now be possible, I think, and we are always on the lookout for new Sunday School teachers. Perhaps this is a ministry that you are called to?

**Fabric:**

Thanks to all who make sure the jobs are done and the buildings maintained. Fran and Margaret Hardie are immense when it comes down to bricks and mortar!

**Parish Website:**

It's important that this is kept up-to-date, and my thanks go to Morag who keeps the events page as current as possible. You can download past magazines from the website. It is an important part of our witness and outreach in the modern world, and the site attracts lots of traffic. Most folk, when choosing a church to go to, will first of all turn to the internet before deciding to visit!

**Music:**

Now they have a new platform, there has been no stopping our musicians. I can get extremely upset when *anyone* dares to criticise this dedicated group of people. Their commitment to this parish and its worship can put most of us to shame, and I am very aware of the work they put into providing fresh and relevant music although some of you may not like some of it. After the Ordination, they were praised

to the highest heaven by visiting clergy, many of whom admitted jealousy that they didn't have an equivalent in their own parish.

**Youth:**

The St Augustine's Girls' Group, "Get Connected" is going from strength to strength and it's with gratitude to Anne Dyer, Carol, and their group of mums for getting this off the ground. The girls have been sharing the work they do with the congregation, and it was wonderful to see them do the Nativity Play last Christmas. Their trip to London was exceptional, even although they felt it necessary to kidnap me to raise funds!

**Passing the Baton:**

Unfortunately, this has failed to get off the ground through no fault of our own. However, things seem to be getting off the ground again!

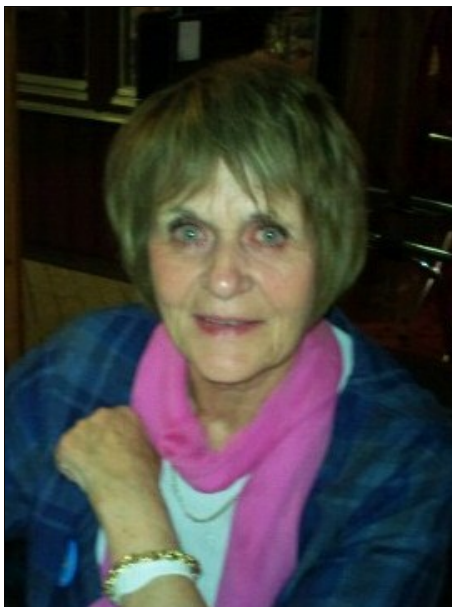
**Thanks**

There are so many people to thank that I would surely miss people out if I began to single out individuals. However, I need to say a special "Thank You" to both our Trustees, Barbara Barnes and Margaret Wallace, for their tremendous support and hard graft, and a "Thank You" to Tim Rhead for his work as a "Pastoral Assistant" through the last year. A big "Thank You", too, to Georgie Duncan who keeps the Sacristy going, and whose work is, on the most part, unseen. Without those four we would all be sunk!" I simply repeat what I was saying last year and the year before! The time has come for Georgie to step back a bit and I'm looking for new volunteers to help with the Sacristy!

**The Last Bit**

I have found the last year to be extremely stressful in so many ways, and there is no doubt that my health has suffered as a result. For that I must apologise. However stressful at the moment it may be, exciting times lie ahead, and the linkage with St Mungo's will mean an entirely new job and new remit for me. You will probably see just as much of me as you see now, as I continue to be your Rector, but there will be another parish to look after and another priest to help share the load, albeit on a part-time basis. We are held in high regard in Diocesan circles, and our work is truly incarnational and of the Gospel, however frustrating that may often be. Together we take Jesus to people, and bring people to Jesus, and that is a sign of a living parish. I thank God I am part of it all.

KLM



# Wait Till I Tell You

## The Gossip Column

*Janette looks back on the Friends' Pantodine, the Festive Bingo Night and other significant and social events before giving a sneak preview of the Christmas Party.*

### POINTED HATS AND A COLLAPSING BED!

Once upon a time in the Kingdom of Dumbarton there lived a beautiful Princess called Snow White who had the most dysfunctional family imaginable and ended up being saved by the Augs – a clique of 'heidbangers' in pointed hats who inhabited St. Aug's Community Hall and sang 'Hi Ho, Hi Ho, it's off to work we go!' at every opportunity.

But how they worked! Not only did Roberta, Chrissie, Ghislaine, Margaret S, Margaret H, Linda and our latest star Cathy Hoatson appear in this year's Pantodine, they also cooked a delicious 3-course meal and served it elegantly to an appreciative audience. That was the Pantodine held on 26<sup>th</sup> November.

Preparations had begun earlier in the week when a beautiful death bed was constructed and decorated for the unfortunate Princess – Gillian hadn't seen the contraption at this stage but had taken advice from a Health and Safety expert who advised that a helmet might be appropriate! Oh no it wouldn't! Beautiful Princess Snow White in a hard hat? The black wig was bad enough! But she did make a lovely ingénue beautiful enough to upset her wicked stepmother who appeared to enjoy pushing everyone around. You know her type – every parish has one!

The 'Get Connected' Girls' Group also got into the action as hardworking palace servants and carried on acting right through the evening as charming and efficient waitresses at the supper. Well done, girls! And they knew their words! Young Rachel and Jackie were easily the most colourful – their remit was to be the dear little birds which Snow White fed. They certainly made an impact in exotic feathers more akin to Birds of Paradise but they looked great and added much colour to their scenes.

Highlight of the evening was Snow White being kissed back to life by the handsome Prince Charming played by Fran, suitably dressed from her own domestic wardrobe. Honestly, Fran has outfits for all seasons, occasions and

sizes. She stormed up the aisle to conclude the story, acknowledging the Bishop on her way, and delivering the kiss with great aplomb, we think!

Right on cue Snow White awakened but arising from the bed elegantly was not easy. The bed, played by the hall table keeper, was just that little bit unstable. And she also had to switch on her fairy lights and adjust her elasticated fit-all Disney style frock. However, after much giggling and hauling by Fran she arose to the cheers of the audience to live happily ever after.

There have been complaints in the press this year from the politically correct about panto characters mixing up the sexes but who cares? The big 'wimmen' are always chosen to be the principal boys particularly ones with acceptable legs. TBag O'Neill was also cast in the opposite sex as Ifone the Terrible, the Helensburgh Huntsman, whose task was to kill Snow White and bring her heart back to the Queen. That was the plot and half way through the action Ifone was still searching for it giving rise to much hilarity!

Oh, we had men in the cast – Kenny and Liam. Liam made his debut as the bungling King ASDA whose kingdom was rapidly deteriorating while he concentrated on his appearances on 'Strictly Come Dancing'. And Kenny had flown home from Barcelona to find himself framed magnificently in the pulpit as a Magic Mirror selecting the fairest of them all. Oh, you all know the story and everyone listened so avidly to his words from the pulpit that he's thinking of reintroducing the illuminated frame for his sermons.

Maggie tried to keep everyone in order as Narrator and the Bishop arrived almost not on cue but confident that his 'not knowing' would play an important part in the story. He's used to coming to St. Aug's and not knowing what's going to happen next! After all, Bishops have no time to rehearse. Come to think about it neither do any of us and Ricky's help to get the show on the road was greatly appreciated. Indeed, Ghislaine rehearsed between



sessions of handing out Foodshare bags! And Ken Waters, our Music Man, was never fazed by our confusion – and accompanied the singing with great enthusiasm. But the stars of the evening were the Aups – where else but at St. Augustine's would you see middle aged women in tutus, shorts and braces inviting the audience to join them in the singing before urging them to eat up their apple pies after the Wicked Queen had poisoned the apple! Aye, the Pantodine is pure escapism where all reality is suspended until the pointed hats go back into Roberta's dressing up box.

### THE PRINCESS FACTOR.

To ensure that everyone got the chance to be just a little bit daft, we encouraged the audience to dress up as Princesses and invited the Bishop to select a winner. We don't know how Lady Gaga got in but she looked decidedly dodgy and almost unrecognisable in the line-up. Thankfully she was kept under wraps until after the watershed. However, the Bishop chose Linda (Jenkinson) and Eilidh – congratulations, your highnesses, you both looked great!

### REALITY AND THE MORNING AFTER.

At 10am the Pantodine was drawing to a successful close but extreme fatigue was starting to set in and the hall kitchen was not a sight for the faint hearted. A decision was taken to clear enough space for the Saturday Coffee and return revitalised to the task in the morning. '*Hi Ho, Hi Ho – it's off to bed we go!*'. And we did – special thanks to those who helped clear up both later on that night and on the Saturday morning.

### WHOSE MAP IS IT ANYWAY?

Less than 48 hours after the Aups had been turned back into sides persons, vestry members and miscellaneous worshippers, we assembled at the 11am Eucharist for the signing of the M.A.P. which had been produced by the Outreach Group. There would be a photograph on the Diocesan Website – and how we love a photo opportunity. This time there would be no tutus or pointed hats – Kenny insisted that we took a serious grip on the MAP. It belonged to everyone and he made a plea for enthusiasm and interest.

But unquestioned acceptance is not a feature of our congregation and the pen was not lifted until the wording was to the satisfaction of all. This meant the start of the AGM was delayed and the prospect of spending all afternoon in the hall loomed large. But it all ended happily ever after – we had a signed MAP and an AGM before returning home to Thursday night's dishes!

### PRE-CHRISTMAS BINGO BASH.

Suddenly it was November and Friends' Executive was faced with a cancelled event. The answer to all Friends' problems is always 'a wee Bingo Night' with Fish Suppers from Andy's and a theme. So we played for Christmas decorations and only had to butter the square sliced bread and pour the drinks. OK – so it wasn't even Ad-

vent but the shops have been in tinsel overkill since Hallowe'en. Of course, Roberta, Chrissie and Margaret S wore their Santa suits – they had them in their dressing up boxes! This was a well-attended event, enjoyed by everyone even the few men who came along for the fish supper.

### HAVE YOURSELVES A FAIRY MERRY CHRISTMAS.

On Sunday, 22<sup>nd</sup> December with Party, Buffet, Games and Bubbly in the Hall at 4pm then moving to the Church at 6pm for Candlelight, Carols, Nativity and the Christmas Tree. The Friends' Exec had originally planned not to invite Santa this year. After all he had been seen dashing around Levensgrove the previous Sunday with Anne Dyer when he should have been in Church. Ho!Ho!Ho!

But we forgave him and he has accepted our invitation. He will arrive by sleigh driven by his elves and we have promised to listen out for him just after 6pm. So don't miss our Fairy Merry Christmas – wear anything ethereal or magical and carry a wand. For the unimaginative this can be a lavvy brush or a knitting needle decorated with a daud of tinsel! There's bound to be something suitable in Fran's house or Roberta's dressing up box! We welcome all ages but please put your name on the list in the hall so that the fairies can cater. There's no charge for the Christmas bash but a wee donation is always welcome.

### STRICTLY FIRST THEN SWITCH TO 'THE BIBLE'.

Surely the programmes for church going Saturday night telly viewers just now. Indeed Strictly Come Dancing was the subject for our sermon on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> when we were visited by the Priest from the Base. Simon, in a shirt more suited to the Paso Doble illustrated judgement with reference to the popular TV programme.

Oh, and everyone was listening. He didn't go as far as to include prayers for the dance off victims but he held the attention of those whose minds have a tendency to wander. His red shirt festooned with white hearts was not unveiled until the après Eucharist coffee but it certainly was a talking point – more than can be said for the much publicised programme about the history of the Bible on Channel 5.

They really should stick to 'Neighbours'!  
But, for those whose Biblical knowledge is confined to,  
*Matthew, Mark, Luke and John*  
*Haud the cuddy till I get oan!*

Don't get too excited! Abraham was a struggle in the first episode – he went on too long! This guy was no Charlton Heston who had enlightened us about the Old Testament heroes', Hollywood style, years ago at the Picture House! But epics don't go down well on the small screen.

Nevertheless, I stuck it out and one day I may be able to

bore others with my biblical knowledge at a Lent Group!

And being Channel 5, everything was interspersed with adverts which allowed one to flip over to check what was happening on the more familiar reality programmes. But the missed opportunity of the year for 'The Bible' came just after the credits rolled. A voice rang out '*What are you doing this Sunday?*' Would it be followed by '*why not seek out a Church near you!*' Oh, no it didn't – it was an advert to stay at home and enjoy a selection of Channel 5 movies!

### THE TRUTH ABOUT THE MALE BRAIN

It took a team of eggheads at Pennsylvania University to publish this report on a subject which has been obvious for years. Male and female brains are wired differently. So what? Women are much better at multi-tasking while the male of the species is an expert at parking a car. OK – but we girls can do it while renewing our lipstick!

### COULDN'T RESIST TAKING A SELFIE!

After watching President Obama taking a selfie (new word of the year) with his camera phone, along with David Cameron and an attractive blonde from Denmark at the Nelson Mandela Memorial Service I got out my phone and gave it a go. Jings, crivvens and help ma boab – is that me? Make sure you know how to delete before you try it. You wouldn't like unflattering pictures like that flying through cyberspace! Must get a new phone – or a new face!

### WILL THE PANTO SEASON NEVER END?

As well as the DPT's 'Sleep In, Beauty' playing to packed houses at the Denny Civic, there is another pantomime being played out in the local press, Facebook and within WDC. It's called 'Saving Posties Park' and is the tale of a powerful Education Director who wants to build a big, ugly school on precious land where the peasants walk their dogs, push their prams and enjoy uninterrupted views of their beloved Rock. He is aided and abetted by a band of comic councillors who agree to his every ridiculous whim down to supporting a bridge across the second fastest flowing river in Scotland, thus luring the local children into falling in the Leven or becoming tempted by the perils of the High Street – buns, burgers and buses! Oh no you don't!

The peasants are revolting. Scunnered by the state of their Kingdom which already boasts a boarded up Burgh Hall, a horrible High Street, a derelict distillery and a terrible Town Centre they are taking action and vowing to attend a meeting to defeat the villains who wish to possess power over the fate of Posties Park.

Will the peasants overthrow them? Will they get a venue to accommodate all the protesters? We'll just have to wait and see but TBag and I will have our banners out on January 8<sup>th</sup>. We haven't had a good protest since the Vale Hospital!

### AND SO TO CHRISTMAS.....

My street is already looking like Disneyland - trees festooned with lights, waving Santas, big green stars and twinkling icicles. But Bleak House is where I live..... and things are going to improve. Time will be made to get into festive mode. So, compliments of the season to all my readers.... now where is my fibre optic snow covered Homebase tree that was shoved in a box last January? No need to be too ostentatious!

*Janette*



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## Tina's Traumas

The little town of Bethlehem wasn't lying very still when I visited a few weeks ago. The pre-Christmas buzz was underway. Stars and crescent moons – an indication of the religious mix of the population – were strung around the streets. Work had begun equipping Manger Square for the deluge of curious and committed who swarm there every year. The shops were crammed with Christmas paraphernalia, the shopkeepers anxious for a visit from modern-day Magi in search of a gift.



Business as usual in Bethlehem. Against this festive backdrop we met Issam Juha, deputy mayor. We heard stories of injustice and oppression which the people of Bethlehem endure every day. Water supplied only every two weeks. Two hour queues at the checkpoints. Humiliation and intimidation on a daily basis. Business as usual for the people of Bethlehem.

We met Randia Yatim, a student teacher at Bethlehem University. We heard how she grew up in a refugee camp. How she watched a soldier putting a gun to her mother's stomach. How she and her friends gathered five bags of bullets from around their house one day after a shooting spree by Israeli soldiers. Business as usual for the people of Bethlehem.

We met Elias Halabi, a photographer who grew up and lives in the shadow of the Separation Wall. We heard how as a teenager he watched friends killed by snipers. How as a man he watches soldiers pretend to aim their rifles at little children to scare them. How he tries to tell his town's story in wonderful images shared through social media, only to have his Facebook page closed down. Business as usual for the people of Bethlehem.

We met countless others for whom daily life in a once thriving Christian town is a constant struggle for dignity while the world sleeps on, largely unaware or disinterested; for whom their sleep is never dreamless but haunted by the nightmare of life behind an ugly, divisive, apartheid wall. The story of the people of Bethlehem and the Occupied Territories cannot be told silently, silently. It needs to be shouted from the rooftops as loudly as the declaration made by a host of angels one night when that town would have been every bit as noisy as it is today.

One night when peace was born at the heart of conflict and love opened a door to a stable, not to close people in but to let itself out into a world crying to be free.

Despite their hardships, the people of Bethlehem have amazing faith, embodied in a hope that comes from their past, speaks to them in the present and makes promises for a better, fairer future for all. For that's business as usual for the God of Christmas.

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## Tina's Bit

We cannot be but moved by Tina's recount of her visit to the Holy Land earlier this month. I stood with the Revd Norma Moore at a service this week. Norma travelled with Tina to the Holy Land. She wept her way through "O Little Town of Bethlehem". She couldn't sing the words.

The lands in which Our Lord was born and travelled through are indeed troubled. We cannot even begin to understand. Palestinians, Libyans, extremely questionable Israeli politics and policies take a land of the "Holy" into a land of the unholy.

Maybe now, we can begin to see that this is where Our Lord had to be born. In the chaos, in the evil, in the bloodshed in the utter inhumanity and incomprehensible suffering, a light is born.

Emmanuel. God with Us! In all, and through all, Emmanuel. The baby in the manger, the Prince of Peace, who unites all humanity and begs us to love one another.

Yes, the tinsel is up, and the folk in America and the UK and lots more places beside have put up their trees and sing carols about sentimental tosh. I do not write that thoughtlessly.

We have forgotten Advent, you see. Forgotten that we are praying for a Kingdom yet to come, where humanity can dwell with each other in the love of this Christ-child which has been given to us.

As we sit down to our turkeys, will many of us remember the Kingdom? The Kingdom of God? The Kingdoms of the Holy Land?

More will come from Tina and Norma, and we need to listen. Listen not to the propaganda which tells us that all will be well, but words of truth from those who have been, and have seen it in all its inglorious glory!



# Sunday Rotas

**Sunday December 15th**

**11am Eucharist**

Readers Barbara Barnes & Gavin Elder

Intercessions Sharon Rowatt

Chalice David Rowatt & Tim Rhead

Sidespersons Liam McLarnon & Maggie Wallace

**Sunday December 22nd**

**11am Eucharist**

Readers Linda Macaulay & David Rowatt

Intercessions Margot Rhead

Chalice Margaret Hardie & Maggie Wallace

Sidespersons Tim Rhead & David Ansell

**Tuesday December 24th**

**Eucharist of the Nativity 11pm**

Readers Tim Rhead & Janette Barnes

Intercessions Maggie Wallace

Chalice Barbara Barnes & Peter Cairns

Sidespersons Roberta Mailley & Chrissie Ashman

**Sunday December 29th**

**11am Eucharist**

Readers Morag O'Neill & Liam McLarnon

Intercessions Maggie Wallace

Chalice Fran Walker & Janette Barnes

Sidespersons Margaret Swan & Ronnie Blaney

**Sunday January 5th**

**11am Eucharist**

Readers Margot Rhead & Evelyn O'Neill

Intercessions David Rowatt

Chalice Tim Rhead & Peter Cairns

Sidespersons Liam McLarnon & Linda Jenkinson

**Sunday January 12th**

**11am Eucharist**

Readers Barbara Barnes & Margaret Hardie

Intercessions Fran Walker

Chalice Sharon Rowatt & Maggie Wallace

Sidespersons Gavin Elder & David Ansell

**Sunday January 19th**

**11am Eucharist**

Readers Linda Macaulay & Liam McLarnon

Intercessions Peter Cairns

Chalice Janette Barnes & Margaret Hardie

Sidespersons C. Ashman & Roberta Mailley

**Sunday January 26th**

**11am Eucharist**

Readers Fran Walker & Maggie Wallace

Intercessions Margot Rhead

Chalice Peter Cairns & David Rowatt

Sidespersons Margaret Swan & Liam McLarnon

## FLOWER ROTA

**DEC. 24 Christmas Eve**

**Morning.....Maggie Wallace, Moira McGown**

**Wk ending 28th Dec Maggie & Linda M. check**

" " 4th Jan I.Telford & M.McGown

" " 11th " B.Barnes & Maggie W

" " 18th " Linda Macaulay

" " 25th " Maggie W & M.McGown

*Cathie  
McCechnie*

*Wishes all her friends at  
St Augustine's a very  
Happy Christmas and  
a great New Year!*





**FRAN AND FAYE  
WISH EVERYONE AT ST AUG'S  
PEACE AND JOY THIS CHRISTMAS.**



**Evelyn and Morag O'Neill**  
**Wish you all a joyous Christmas.**

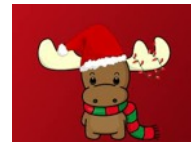


*To all my friends.  
Wishing you all  
a joyful and peaceful Christmas  
and a healthy New Year.*

*From Rosemary Mcleay.*



**Janette**  
**says to everyone at St. Augustine's –**  
**'Wait Till I Tell you ....**  
**to have a Merry Christmas**  
**and a Happy New Year'**



**Barbara Barnes**  
*sends all her friends at St. Augustine's  
very best wishes for a wonderful Christmas  
and a joyous and successful New Year.*



**Happy Christmas**  
**and a joyous New Year**  
**From**  
**Tam and Linda Jenkinson**





*Hope you have a lovely Christmas  
To all at St. Augustine's  
From Chrissie*



*All the very best  
At Christmas  
And  
New Year  
From Margaret Swan*



*Wishing all my friends in St Aug's  
A truly blessed Christmas  
and a happy healthy New Year  
From Maggie*



**A Merry Christmas  
And a Happy New Year  
To all at St. Augustine's**

*Love from  
Betty Gordon*



**KENNY AND LINDA  
WISH EVERYONE A VERY JOYFUL CHRISTMAS  
AND A HAPPY AND PEACEFUL 2014**





**Happy Christmas to  
all my friends  
at St. Augustine's  
From  
Margaret Hardie**



**TO ALL AT ST. AUGUSTINE'S  
MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**LOVE FROM  
SYLVIE, RAY AND JENNY**



**Yvonne and Kenny McAlpine  
Wish all their friends at St. Aug's  
A Merry Christmas  
and a Happy 2014**



**Wishing all at St. Aug's  
A Happy Christmas  
And all the best for 2014  
Lots of love  
Roberta**



## **NEWS FROM TIM**

The interchurch quiz held recently plus the amnesty quiz church team which took part raised £350.

## **Christmas Time at St. Aug's**

Not many sleeps to 'A Fairy Merry Christmas' in St. Aug's on Sunday 22nd December! And Santa is definitely coming - by sleigh, magic sleigh driven by his elves. So, see you in Fairyland at 4pm - wear fairy costumes - prize for the best and enjoy Party Food, Bubbly and Games. Then it's off in search of Santa, Carols round the Tree, Candlelight and Nativity at 6pm in Church. All welcome but please put names on notice board in Hall so that the Fairies can ensure there is enough to eat. No charge but donations are always gratefully received.

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## Sunday and Thursday View

As we enter Advent it's appropriate that we recognise the other Archangel that appears in the reredos and in the window above it – Gabriel, the Messenger of God, with long hair and holding a lily. (He appears on the front of this edition of the Magazine too)

Gabriel is recognised by Christians, Jews and Muslims as the Angel of Revelation, the one chosen by God to deliver important messages.

In the Bible Gabriel is mentioned in both the Old and New Testaments.

In Old Testament times Gabriel appeared to the prophet Daniel, assisting him to understand his visions. Jews also believe that the angel sent to destroy Jerusalem, in the book of Ezekiel, was Gabriel. Muslims consider one of the three who had earlier informed Abraham of the forthcoming birth of Isaac to be the archangel Gabriel who is believed by Mormons to have lived a life on earth as the prophet Noah.

Gabriel's special role in New Testament times is more straightforward. Both Christians (Luke's Gospel) and Muslims (Qu'ran) believe that Gabriel was the angel who appeared to Zechariah and to Mary, foretelling the births of John the Baptist and Jesus.

Subsequently, according to the Qu'ran, God sent the words of that holy book to Muhammad through one of the primary archangels, Gabriel (Jibra'il).

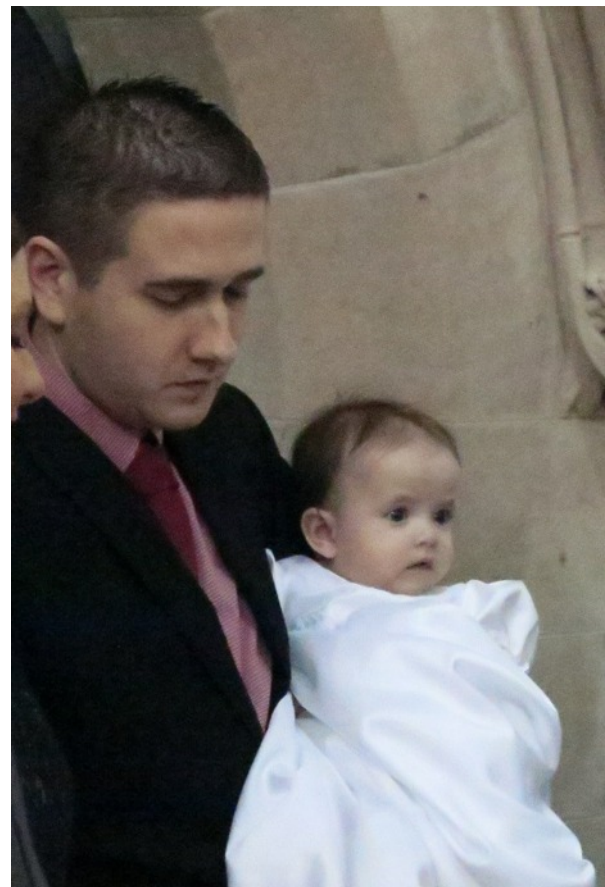
In the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Eastern and Oriental Orthodox churches these primary archangels, Gabriel plus Michael and Raphael, are considered saints and are celebrated together on

September 29<sup>th</sup> each year. Specifically Gabriel is the [patron saint](#) of messengers, those who work for broadcasting and telecommunications such as radio and television, [remote sensing](#), postal workers, clerics, diplomats, and stamp collectors.

God wasn't picky about those Gabriel visited: Daniel, the exile from Israel who became the adviser to kings, Zechariah, the husband of Elizabeth (the older, childless woman) and the young Mary, newly engaged. Men, women, old, young, with or without status in society but all God fearing, all very surprised and, although initially fearful, reassured not to be afraid. So just remember, if Gabriel unexpectedly visits, you can be sure that God has something significant to say to you.

And as a PS, mainstream Christian theology considers all angels to be asexual, and they are generally depicted in art with prepubescent features. Some recent popular works on angels consider Gabriel to be [female](#) or gender neutral.

## Baptism of Olivia Alexander



Safe in Daddy's hands after a Bad Man had poured water all over her head! What a soldier!

# The Front Page Explained!

## The Hall turns PINK for Get Connected

News that one of the Girls Group members mother had recently discovered that she had breast cancer for the second time round hit the group members and their parents really hard.

However they thought about how they could rally round and do something really positive from this sad news.

After discussion with the mum in question she asked if the group could possible fundraise to buy a little child a wig who has lost their hair due to cancer treatment and so the energy was lifted as everyone started to plan for an event.

The girls group decided that they would host a **Pink Coffee Moring** to raise funds for the Little Princess Trust who make real hair wigs for the foundation and quickly set about their tasks.

In tandem with this the mum along with some other ladies from the community ( including one of the youth leaders ) set up a craft group in the hall. They met one night per week and produced some beautiful items to sell at the coffee morning and so the coffee morning idea grew into Coffee & Crafts.

The girls then worked on a list of home baking and flung in some gifts of bric a brac and so just like the ideas in the group we had started to grow in our ability to pull this event off a very short space of time.

The night before the event we set up the hall and turned the room PINK... at last we were ready. On the day church members, community members and connections to each family showed up to give support.

We even managed to get Kenny into a pink feather boa!

We had a huge success and raised £480.00. One wig cost £350.00 so we made our target with room to spare

We are delighted with our event and in this season when a some families wish would be good health for their child we are rest assured that we have done a little bit to help.

## WELL DONE GET CONNECTED

PS Mum is home now a doing really well!

## Christmas Services

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec:** 6pm  
Carol Service

**Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> Dec:** 11pm  
Midnight Eucharist of the Nativity

**Christmas Day:**  
9.30am Eucharist (St Augustine's  
and 11am (St Mungo's)

**26<sup>th</sup> Dec: St Stephen:** Eucharist  
10.30am.

What a chance to ask a friend to come to church with you. Here we proclaim the Good News, and it is your duty to make your Christmas Communion.

If you need a lift, either to church or home for the 11pm Service, then please give Linda a call on 07725 749036 or at The Rectory 01389 513365.

We will gladly help! Have a joyous Season and may there be peace, love, and serenity in your homes this Christmas!

The new Rectory still has Open House on Hogmanay, but few St Mungo's folk know. Let's begin our celebrations for New Year 2014 in our "New Hoose"! Lifts and drink will be provided!