

# By the Way Together

The Magazine of:  
St Augustine's Scottish Episcopal Church, Dumbarton  
and  
St Mungo's Scottish Episcopal Church, Alexandria

Issue No 41 December 2018/January 2019



*The light  
shines in the  
darkness  
and the  
darkness has  
not  
overcome it*

*In this issue: Christmas Greetings from your friends... details of Christmas Services...fabulous photos of wonderful concerts, the Witches Brew Morning and poignant Remembrance Services!... Letters from the clergy and your Christmas Card from the parish!*

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Due to a slight hearing problem, history does not remember  
 Doug and Gary, chicken herders of Bethlehem.

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## ***From Kenny...***

My goodness! We do not know from one minute to the next what is about to happen that will affect us, or what will be said that might hurt us or heal us, and maybe that is just as well. Who was it who said that there is nothing certain in life except death and taxes? If I had known that 2018 would involve a ten week period off work with an injury, I think I might have just given it a miss. However, that's life, and wonderful things happen that far outweigh the sad bits, eventually!

Life will always provide us with uncertainties, and maybe that's the other thing that is certain along with death and taxation. That is what makes life interesting and wonderful.

Are there any certainties other than death, taxation and uncertainty? In Advent and Christmas, we can chalk up another one, and that is that God will always be with us. So, if God is with us, the Emmanuel, we never lose hope, and God will never lose hope in us.

In 1980, I was sent to St Matthew's Possilpark which had about 18 people attending on Sunday, and I was asked by my bishop to close it and prepare the people to unite with St George's Maryhill. One of the first things I noticed in Possil was a big stone on the outer western wall with the words, "Emmanuel. God with us", carved in the stone.

My first youthful thought at that moment was simple. If God is with us here, why are we talking about moving our presence here in this community? It is a long story, but St Matthew's is still there, and the stone is still on the back wall, more than 38 years later.

The Nativity stories contain more uncertainties. Poor Joseph hears that Mary is pregnant, possibly on a wet Wednesday afternoon in work, and the only thing he is sure about is that he had nothing to do with it. As a typical man, he gets himself off to bed.

Now, going to bed in the bible is not always the best thing to do! It can be quite dangerous!

Strange things happen in dreams, and often angels are involved. Angels are the original bearers of the SMS, or, as we call them in the modern world, text messages. Short sharp messages, or "callings". Joseph gets one that tells him that he must not be afraid to take Mary as his wife. He does what he has been told and a new adventure begins!

Perhaps the calling of Liz to Haddington was not quite as dramatic, but she has obeyed that call, or text, and that has caused uncertainty. Taking up a new charge has many uncertainties! All of us are uncertain about what the future holds, but in the midst of that, we must hold fast to that word, Emmanuel. God with us. It is exciting for all of us, because we are all on the way to a new adventure with this Emmanuel.



Naturally, there will be uncertainty, but we cling on to that hope, and can say with Juliana of Norwich, that all indeed will be well. It might be different, but it will include God being with us.

St Mungo's folk are facing a time of hard decisions and change, but they are not alone. We do not know how much longer Food for Thought can sustain a full-time worker in St Augustine's, and so there is uncertainty.

This time next year I will be looking to retirement, and that, again, will produce uncertainty. Why should we care?

The Church is a huge great living presence in the world, and it will always learn and adapt and be ready to move position because it **is** alive! The Holy Spirit does not sit down smoking and watching us from afar! None of us. She is actively involved. The future is always an adventure when the Spirit is involved. Advent teaches us always to be prepared for that.

Meanwhile, we will get on with the day job, loving ourselves and loving our neighbour, and ensuring that Christ is born, again and again in our own worlds wherever God is leading us. **Kenny**





# CHRISTMAS SERVICES



<b>Sunday, 23<sup>rd</sup> December:</b>	St Aug's	6pm	Strictly Come Carol Singing!
<b>Monday, Christmas Eve:</b>	St Mungo's St Aug's	8pm 11pm	Christmas Eucharist Midnight Eucharist
<b>Tuesday, Christmas Day:</b>	St Mungo's St Aug's	9.30 am 10.30am	Said Eucharist Family Eucharist
<b>Sunday, 30<sup>th</sup> December:</b>	St Aug's St Mungo's St Aug's	9am 11am 11am	Said Eucharist Sung Eucharist Sung Eucharist

*FRIENDS OF ST.AUGUSTINE'S*

*It's almost Christmas....*

*Join us on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> December*

*6pm till 7.30pm for*



**'Strictly Come Carol  
Singing'**

Your favourite Carols & Readings.  
**Seasonal Refreshments**

*All welcome*

## *Nativity Prayer*

Let the just rejoice,  
for their justifier is born,  
let the sick and infirm  
rejoice,  
for their saviour is born,  
let the captive rejoice,  
for their redeemer is born,  
let the slaves rejoice,  
for their master is born,  
let the free people rejoice,  
for their liberator is born,  
let all Christians rejoice,  
for Jesus Christ is born.

**CHRISTMAS  
IS THE SPIRIT  
OF GIVING  
without  
A THOUGHT  
of getting.**  
THOMAS S. MORSON

## **"Thank You" Bishop Gregor- St Aug's/Gambian Style**



Bishop Gregor retired as our bishop at the beginning of October. At the service of choral evensong that marked the event he was presented with all sorts of goodies from friends and congregations around the diocese (including I believe, a copy of Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, first edition maybe). St Aug's vestry thought that the Bishop would probably receive enough 'stuff' so decided to give rice instead. Five sacks of it, that would feed the children of London Corner Nursery School for several weeks.

But how to tell him what about a card? Well, by chance I had to go to The Gambia for family reasons and was able to visit the school, armed with large pieces of paper and a thank you message for the Bishop. It was a very hot, sunny day. So the children were arranged for the photo shoot in the small patch of shade with 2 full and 3 empty sacks in front of them. I just wonder what they thought about it!

*Fran*

## **Church Mice**





As we head towards the end of the year, I'm sure you, like me, are in planning mode for Christmas. Presents, cards, menus, food... they don't

organise themselves and it has to be done – there's a deadline coming up! Once Christmas is over of course, then the pressure is on for New Year – parties or family get-togethers are plentiful as the end of 2018 is celebrated and the beginning of 2019 is heralded.

As I write this I hope that the last year has been a happy and fruitful one for you. Life has its ups and downs for all of us – but it's wonderful to be able to look back and be thankful for the good and happy times we have had. There are some of you, perhaps, who will look back at the last twelve months with pain, remembering some event or loss, and will only be thankful for the passing of the old and the beginning of a new. If that applies to you, then I pray that you will soon be able to move forward with hope for the future.

Because life involves change. 'This too shall pass' as they say. Things never stay the same. As we go through the year the seasons change, the temperature changes, the amount of snow or sunlight we receive changes... no year in nature is exactly the same as the last. When we look back at past photos we realise that our life has changed – friends come and go, circumstances change... even how we spend our leisure time often changes. And although as humans we are instinctively resistant to and dislike change – it is often very good for us. Can you imagine how stifling it would be if every year, every month, every week was exactly the same? We would soon get bored, soon get restless... because our minds and our spirits wouldn't have the chance to grow... they would be fenced in by routine, and monotony. We all need a certain amount of change around us (perhaps dependent on our age!) and we have to realise the need for change in ourselves. We are

part of God's creation... and that creation is, by nature, never static but rather dynamic. If a seed fell on the ground and stayed the same, how we would miss the trees and flowers that come from the process of germination. However cute and

appealing wee children are, if we all stayed in our childhood state how we would miss the joys and depths of later life maturity.

And this is just as true for our faith and in our spiritual life. A friend said to me in conversation the other day: "To be Christian is to be committed to change". And that stuck in my mind. It's not necessarily thinking about change in terms of modernising the hymns or bringing in nave altars (although that might come into it for some), but I think more importantly it's referring to the commitment to desire change in ourselves. "God loves us too much to leave us the way we are," as someone once said. We are, all of us, on the path to glorification... to the emergence of the person God created us to be. We are a work in progress – and God hasn't finished with us whilst we are still on this side of eternity. We can resist that call, ignore it, turn our back on it – but we will be all the poorer and lesser for it, if that's what we choose to do.

As many of you know, I have accepted the position of Rector of Haddington, east of Edinburgh, and it's going to mean a huge change for me and my family. When we came up to Scotland and moved into Skelmorlie the children were 4, 2 and 6 months. They are now 22, 20 and 18. And it is now time for another significant change. Over the past year I have felt God's nudging and heard his call... and I ignored it as long as I could. I shall be sad to leave, but know it is the right thing for me and also for you. I have loved being with you and being your priest... and have come to love you all as family. But as priest and individual I know I need to move on and have a new charge of my own in order to follow God's wishes and continue to grow in my faith and my calling. In St Augustine's and St Mungo's I know you will face further changes, but I pray that however and whenever that happens it will allow for new growth and opportunities. I shall keep in touch and watch with love the adventures God has in store for you.

My thanks go to each and every one of you for teaching me so many things over the past four years... but especially for accepting and loving me for who I am. We all move forward in God's grace and I am thankful for what has been... and looking forward to what will be. *With love, Liz xx*



## St Augustine's Quinquennial Review

'Quinquennial': a very long word that means every 5 years. And every 5 years the Vestry has to organise a survey of our buildings (church, hall, rectory) to make sure that they are kept in good repair.

It means that every 5 years we know there is going to be expense! For St Augustine's this October was that time again. We have now received the review. There are a few urgent things that need to be done: extractor fans not working, rotten steps by a fire door and ground to be cleared by the side of the church. These are fairly straightforward.

The next thing to do is to go through all the recommended repairs, see what we can do for ourselves and work out a programme that addresses the remaining ones in some sort of logical order. No point in fixing internal décor when there is still a problem on a roof!

David Rowatt, John Wiggins, Margaret Hardie and Fran Walker are meeting to take a more detailed look at the review.

If you would like to become involved, offer expertise or muscles then please let any one of us know.

Thanks

Fran



Recently a group of local women from the Vale and Dumbarton including many Regional Councillors set out to raise funds for **Food For Thought**. Together they raised a fabulous £1,500 thanks to the generosity of family and friends, colleagues and the public. All money will go towards giving those in need a wonderful Christmas as well as provisions on the other 364 days of the year.

### *'Tis the Season of Goodwill...*

But for whom? Surely not everyone... not the elbow their way to the front of the queue

types...not the "I'd rather check my nails than see to your coffee" barista... not the "well no, I don't see it quite like that", the less-than-desirable or even-slightly-dodgies. Good will towards all? Really?

Those angels gave their message of goodwill to a bunch of not-to-be-trusted shepherds roughing it on the hillside. "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, goodwill toward men." Those words always get me thinking. A season of goodwill. That's what Zacchaeus was given BEFORE he sorted out his dodgy business dealings (imagine he had ripped you off!). That's what that woman caught in adultery was offered without a signed-in-blood affidavit that it wouldn't happen again. That's what the sinful woman who washed Jesus feet with her tears had - a season of good will. Acceptance. Hope. Love that gives the space for healing and transformation.

It is a challenge for me to offer goodwill towards all, even for this short season, but it is what Jesus is calling us to and I suspect that as we do so, preferring the other, serving each other we will see the Kingdom form among us after all it has been said that one learns to love God by loving men!

Happy Christmas Everyone... and if I have not loved you well, I'm sorry!

Goodwill

To all.

No exceptions.

Kirsten x

### Mission to Seafarers



That's 55 hats, 4 pairs of wrist warmers, 2 scarves and a hat and matching gloves set. All sent off to the Mission for Seafarers, with many thanks.

Anyone who would like a hat/scarf/balaclava/fingerless mitt on their pins can get patterns from Fran.





*To all at St Augs,  
Wishing you peace, love  
and joy this Christmas,  
love from Yvonne and  
Kenny McAlpine*

Sending love and wishes for a  
Peaceful, joyful Christmas to all  
Our St Augustine family  
Tam and Linda Jenkinson



Faye and Fran wish  
all our friends peace  
and joy this  
Christmas!



WISHING EVERYONE AT  
ST AUGUSTINE'S A HAPPY  
AND  
BLESSED CHRISTMAS  
MAGGIE WALLACE

I would like to send  
heartfelt thanks to  
everyone for their  
prayers and support  
this year. Have a very  
Happy Christmas and  
New Year. Barbara



*A sincere thank you for a  
wonderful welcome back to St  
Augustine's. A peaceful, holy  
Christmas to you all. Theresa  
xxx*

Wishing everyone from St  
Augustine's and St  
Mungo's a happy  
Christmas: love from Anne  
Bardsley



Wishing you all a merry  
Christmas and a Happy  
Year  
Love Cathy McKechnie

To all at St Augustine's:  
Merry Christmas from  
Margaret Murnin



To all my friends: Merry  
Christmas and a Happy  
New Year, love Roberta



Wishing everyone a  
peaceful and joyful  
Christmas: with love from  
Evelyn and Morag

*Janette says: 'Wait Till  
I Tell You All... to have  
a Merry Christmas and  
a Happy New Year'*



*To all my dear friends at St  
Mungo's and St Augustine's. I  
wish you a Holy and Happy  
Christmas. All my love, Carol*



To all my friends: May this season  
bring you everything you are  
looking for! Love, Chrissie

To all our friends at St Mungo's and St  
Augustine's. Praying for a joyful and  
peaceful Christmas and New Year for each  
of you. John and Dot Russell (and Karis) xx







Harvest at St Mungo's was full of fresh fruit and vegetables thanks to the hard work and co-operation of the Leamy Foundation. They not only grow produce all the year round but they keep our grounds looking colourful and beautiful. We give thanks.

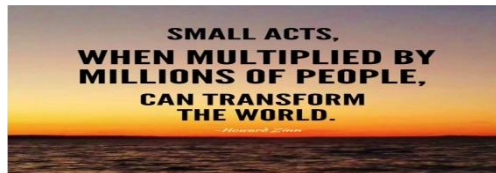


Christine and Maxwell Macdonald were married in St Aug 26th October 1978 by Archie Macpherson. They spent a week in Donegal, Ireland to celebrate.



(right) Amanda, David and Anne had a wonderful time in Blackpool with the Golden Friendship Group!

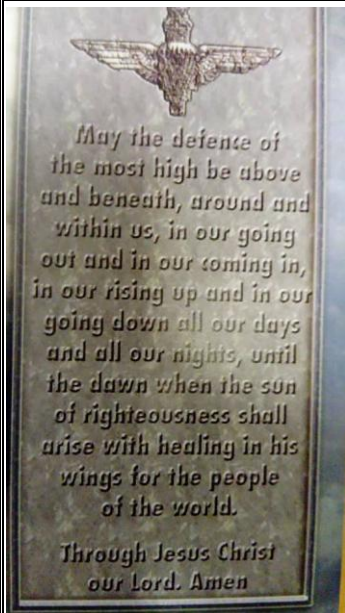
There was a Hallowe'en theme to our Witches' Brew Coffee Morning on 27<sup>th</sup> October! £300 for Church funds was raised, with both Food For Thought and St Mungo's raising £100 apiece!



Anne sells her handmade jewellery... she gives thanks to Liz Moore who helps her and supports all St Mungo's endeavours







## Remembrance Reflection

Who do you bring to mind when it comes to Remembrance Day? Men and women you actually know/knew, people who are part of family history?

This year the end the First World War was particularly significant. It was a hundred years ago but I bring to mind a grandfather who was left for dead at the Battle of the Somme yet dragged himself to safety over several days, another grandfather who was in the navy and survived. Whilst he was based at Rosyth he met one of my grandmothers. She was a navy driver and I have letters and diaries describing her life there, her battle for equal pay, the dread that, particularly after the Battle of Jutland, ships would not return to port.

Another woman I bring to mind is my Auntie Connie. She served as a nurse in Malta where she cared for men injured at Gallipoli and Salonika. She never married – her fiancé was a member of the Royal Flying Corps, got shot down, came home but couldn't remember who Connie was. So many women left 'manless'.

The Second World War brings more recent memories. My dad was a farmer and a member of 'Dad's Army', mum worked on the farm along with Italian prisoners of war. Naval grandfather lost his life in an Atlantic convoy. Sitting at coffee after our remembrance service Dot talked about her father who was in the navy (but wouldn't talk about it) and her mum who worked in a munitions' factory. May (who was born in 1939) spoke of her father who was in a reserved occupation, working in the Torpedo Factory in Alexandria. Like many in this area Peggy worked at Denny's whilst her husband enlisted in the navy and was at the D-Day Landings.

But what about since then? A colleague comes to mind who had a rough time in Malaya, a friend who lost his life in the Falklands campaign, people who have come back from Afghanistan/Iraq etc whose lives will never be the same again, my late husband who couldn't speak about what he saw at Lockerbie.

I do remember them, we do remember them. And pray that one day peace will come to this world.

*Fran*



**Our service to remember those who have died from addiction** was as busy as ever. Candles were lit, not only to remember those who have lost the battle but also as a sign of hope for those who are in recovery. There is no darkness that light cannot overcome.



"THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS GETTING SOMEWHERE IS TO DECIDE THAT YOU ARE NOT GOING TO STAY WHERE YOU ARE."

UNKNOWN



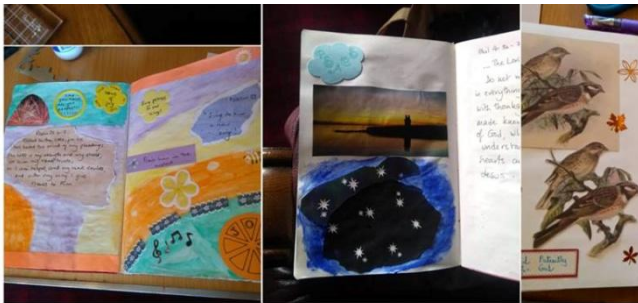
## On Retreat - Creative Bible Journalling

The end of October saw me take up a place at a retreat on Cumbrae, a retreat on Creative Bible Journalling. I had no idea what it was about but the idea of getting involved with glue and glitter as well as a Bible sounded good to me.

Pictures and images are important to all of us; we hear something and it immediately evokes an image in our heads. And creative Bible journalling is an extension to that, really. The basic idea is that you take a passage of scripture, you read it, you pray about it and you wait for the images to come to you. Then you put them down on paper in whatever way you want to.

We were looking at Galatians 5: The Fruit of The Spirit. My images included pictures from magazines that make me think of peace and peacefulness, words of songs and hymns that mention some of the concepts of the Fruits of The Spirit and even some paint and stickers. You don't have to be a great artist, just have a willingness to Let Go and Let God inspire you with some paper, pens and a bit of glitter.

*Morag O'Neill*



### St Mungo's Episcopal Church

We have just gone through the season of AGMs. This year we had three – all in a row – Sunday after Sunday. They all went very well – although it was the AGM of St Mungo's which sadly had a very concerning agenda. The Vestry knew what was going to be discussed, indeed what was going to HAVE to be discussed, so we sent letters out to everyone on the parish roll before the meeting to inform them of the position in which St Mungo's now finds itself. Therefore it was of no surprise to anyone attending the AGM when the treasurer had to report on the dire position of our finances.

The reality is that for some months now our outgoings have been far outstripping our income. Not because we are being extravagant – but purely because there is not enough money coming in to cover essential expenses. We knew that this could not carry on indefinitely. We have now come to the place where even stipend cannot be fully met by the parish. However the Diocese have assured us that they will pick up the shortfall and stipend will be paid however difficult things become, which is comforting to both the parish and clergy.

The situation is sad and worrying for everyone concerned. And heads may well be down because of it. But I do not think that all is lost. There is no doubt that hard decisions will have to be made in the future... that conversations with the Diocese will have to be had... but I still believe that if the situation is thought about creatively, with a will and a desire to carry on, then perhaps solutions can be found. Those solutions may entail a change in direction, a change in expectation – but it would mean that St Mungo's could carry on in some sort of shape and form. Alexandria is so lacking in churches now that I think it would be very sad if we too just shut the doors and gave up without exploring the possibilities.

So, as the Gospel encouraged us last Sunday, I urge all of the people at St Mungo's to 'stand up and raise your heads'. Keep hopeful. Think of ideas and dream dreams. Think of 'whataboutery's' as Kenny would say: think about 'what about this or that...' or 'what about if...'. You never know where such thoughts might lead! We will be doing such thinking and talking as a Vestry and congregation over the next few months, and if we could ask the rest of you to pray with us and for us, I am sure that would be helpful and positive.

God bless all at St Mungo's and I thank them all for their faithfulness and steadfastness. God remains faithful too. All shall be well.

*Liz O'Ryan*







### ***Bible Study Bits***

Thank you to the faithful attendees who turned up without fail as we laboured our way through Paul's letter to the Romans. Thank you for your insights and your questions. Thank you for your honesty and your humour. Thank you for your persistence and patience as we strived to make sense of the apostle's angsty deliberations! I hope and pray that each one got something positive from our journey together that will sustain you



going forward. The highlight for me was Romans 12...love must be sincere. Hate what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honour one another above yourselves. A tall order but I'll keep trying...thank you for encouraging me with your love.

*Kirsten x*

PS. The bible study is NOT for academics. It is for **anyone** who wishes to look a bit more closely into the bible and tease out what some of the scriptures we read week by week might mean for us today. It is a great opportunity to get to know fellow worshippers a bit better and to both give and receive the support we all need to keep on keeping on. The next session will begin sometime in the new year!

### ***Societal Sepsis***

Ricky has recently become a reluctant celebrity as he shared his story of his (near fatal) encounter with sepsis with the newspapers and television. Sepsis occurs when the body over-reacts to an (often minor) infection and the immune system goes into overdrive affecting organs and tissue, leading to severe damage that can lead to amputations and death. Ricky considers himself



lucky to be alive, and he is recovering, although still in severe pain. It got me thinking about how Ricky's experience could be viewed as an allegory of the trend in society to

buy for blood the moment a person falls short of expectations.

Hardly a day goes by when some politician or celebrity has to fall on their sword because they made an error of judgement or inappropriate quip that was blown out of proportion. It's like being back in the dark ages or during the inquisition, where the slightest transgression led to torture and often execution. Of course sometimes the transgression is a bit more than biting one's nails (as Ricky did), so perhaps "they got what they deserve" or "they brought it on themselves." Sadly, none of us are perfect, we all have a past and fall short, and if it was not for God's grace, we would all be in a bad way. What a relief that we are taught in our faith that we should be different from wider society and not over-react to our transgressions and risk a sepsis from which the body might struggle to recover!

*John Wiggins*

### ***St Augustine quotes!***

*Q:* Who said:- "It is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all"

- William Shakespeare
- Charles Dickens
- Robert Burns
- St Augustine of Hippo

*(Answer is: Augustine of Hippo)*

"God had one son on earth without sin but never one without suffering"

"Hope has two beautiful daughters' their names are anger and courage. Anger at the way things are, and courage to see that they do not remain as they are"

"God gives where he finds empty hands"

"It is no advantage to be near the light if the eyes are closed"

*given by John Russell*



## *'Wait Till I Tell You.....*

*Janette, now that winter is officially here, recalls a very successful Hallowe'en Coffee Morning and some pantomime moments while looking*

*forward to all the delights of the festive season and onwards to the celebrations for Rabbie Burns. Anything to keep away from the twin horrors of Brexit and global warming!*

### **THE 'DEIL' WAS AT THE FRIENDS' WITCHES' BREW!**

Just to make sure that his 'ongauns' were suitably executed, 'Auld Nick, inshapeo' Cathy Hoatsen,' made a surprise visit to the Witches' Brew Coffee Morning on 27<sup>th</sup> October. Cathy, in a Mohican rainbow wig, a fiendish false face and carrying her very own pitchfork was a sight to behold as she impersonated 'the devil and all his works' while serving the coffee. And then there was Rocco with forked tail– the 'wee fire'only Valedug' beloved of the Saturday clique – cringing under the table in his 'devil dog' fancy dress costume. *'The wee sowell!*

There were witches everywhere – keeping the action going at this Hallowe'en Scare. Chrissie definitely came first in the glamour stakes- in a purple themed outfit and with not a hair out of place, she made it on to the front page of the Dumbarton Reporter. Pity the lead story sharing the page was that of an Orange Walk riot! We're sure Chrissie had nothing to do with it! The young photographer was clearly under the spell of St. Aug's executive witches and took dozens of photographs for his next edition – just like an OK Magazine photoshoot! And we had a good attendance from the congregation and members of the public. They queued for Roberta's vampire licking lollies, crowded round the Trick or Treat Tombola, hoped for a spirit or two at the Bottle Stall, and thrust tentative fingers into the spider's web that was the Unlucky Dip. The Haunted Scone Baking Stall went down a treat – no tricks with Kirsten and Linda's home-made delicacies. In the corner sat Anne Bardsley, selling her designer jewellery for St. Mungo's while Caroline held a Food for Thought Art Sale and raised over £100 even without 'the Scream' in her collection. Anne went back to the Vale with around £100. Well done!

For their part, the witches raised £300 for St. Augustine's and avoided a ducking in the Leven

as would have befallen their seventeenth century sisters!

### **HIT BACK AT THE EUROBULLIES THIS CHRISTMAS!**

It hasn't been funny recently watching the negotiations for a good deal from Europe. Messrs Junker, Tusk, Barnier and co. all seem to think we're a push over! Raab C couldn't hack it though Big Theresa bulldozes on with her favourite party piece 'My Way!' How will it all end? With all the defeats surely the end is nigh! Even the Gibraltar apes had to be appeased and with Macron thinking he can send his French fishing fleet to cast their nets off the coast of Rothesay, then it's time to take a stand. For those of us who wouldn't know a backstop from a bus stop here's how we can beat the bullies or show the magnificent twenty seven that Britannia still rules the waves.

And you don't even need to join a political party to participate in my pre- Christmas plan for pressure by the punters!

It's simple! Keep the Brussels Sprouts off your Christmas Dinner menus. What? It's the only day in the entire year that we eat them! No! Your country needs you to open a tin of peas instead. Just imagine millions or even trillions of the windy cabbage like creatures left mouldering on the supermarket shelves along with this season's latest horror – the Brussels Sprout flavoured crisps for nibbling with your Prosecco!

It'll be easy – nobody likes them anyway. Boxing Day always means brown bins stuffed with uneaten ones. So join the campaign to 'scupper that sprout' and we'll have a good deal by Hogmanay! And since English will soon be relegated down the European language list they won't have a clue what's going on!

### **PANTOMIME – THE PERFECT ESCAPE! OH, YES IT IS!**

Yes, it's getting to that time of year when all those with panto tickets for the Denny Civic Theatre to see 'Freezin' will join in an evening of fun and nonsense while booing Sharon Rowatt as the evil queen all the way to her comeuppance! TBag O'Neil has been involved with the choreography – her obsession with 'Strictly' gives her the necessary qualification to call herself Dame Darcy Brucehill!

Sharon used to be such a nice lassie tae! But when you see how she treats her unfortunate spouse, the King, you'll wonder how David puts up with it and grumbles when you put 10p in the plate on a Sunday morning!



The DPT panto will be running from 8<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> December but now we hear that we are going to be upstaged by an alternative panto down at Westminster the very same week. Which part will our stoic PM aspire to? Sweet little Cinderella bullied by her blonde and brooding Brexiteers with Arlene as the wicked Stepmother?? Maybe she'll opt for the cheesy Buttons character and sell happiness and good deals to everyone around her. The Good Fairy might cause her a few problems since she'll need a super powerful magic wand to solve her own situation before she even finds a pumpkin for that magic coach. Principal boy? She's certainly got the legs for it but she'd hardly be a hit at the Ball when she has to put into practise her questionable dancing skills. As for the doubtful and longed for TV debate with wee Jeremy – who knows what she'll turn him into before he finally finishes reading the Chequers document! Watching paint dry might just be a preferable alternative. Will we all live happily ever after?

**HOW TO BECOME A CELEBRITY IN THE POLITICAL JUNGLE.** Funny how there are some politicians who are largely unheard of till they decide to resign. Then they do so, with so much confidence and aplomb, making sure they're never off the box trying to impress us with their moral principles. *Sorry, what was your name again?*

Then there was that Scottish footballing MP and her pals who got all that media attention and publicity over a game of keepee-uppie in the chamber. She (yes, she was a *wumman*), upset the Speaker with her aspirations to be a striker. Did **she** have an opinion on the intricacies of Brexit? Happily nothing got in the way of the ball or it would have been a Brexit! But she did have that celebrity moment. She'll be aiming for the jungle or the glitter ball next!

### **STRICTLY COME CAROL SINGING.**

By 23<sup>rd</sup> December you'll have all your presents wrapped, menus planned, purses emptied and credit cards maxed. Now is the time to forget the seasonal clamour and drop into St. Augustine's for some traditional carol singing by candlelight round the Christmas tree. Friends will have some seasonal tit bits and refreshments for your enjoyment and you can even request your favourite carol and if we can, we'll include it. Yes, you will enjoy the peaceful and reflective atmosphere and still be home in time for yet another Christmas TV movie! We hope to start at 6pm and finish around 7.30pm. It would be

appreciated if you could put your name on the list in the Community Hall – it'll help with the catering. We don't want to run out of pies again!

### **FOR THE MAN (OR WUMMAN) WHO HAS EVERYTHING.**

We all know those people who are impossible to buy for. And socks, hankies and gift vouchers are so unimaginative and even naff. Well, waiting for the latest instalment of 'Neighbours' one night, I was intrigued by an advert for VIPoo – suggesting that it was the perfect present for the pernickety. No kidding! It's under a tenner, comes in an attractive range of packaging and won't end up on Barbara's tombola table sometime in March. What is it? It's a spray containing stuff that will neutralise or even exterminate any nasty bathroom smells. It's easy to use, even for technophobes. Keep VIPoo in your handbag or back pocket and, before you sit down for a..hmm..number two, spray the pan. No one will ever know you've been in. Aye, we humans (*and big wans*) have come a long way from the communal *sterrheidlavvewi*' the *Lennox Herald* sheets tied wi' string and nailed to the back of the door!

### **THE STAR O' RABBIE BURNS.**

Our national bard wrote in 1795 '*As I am in a complete Decemberish humour, gloomy, sullen and stupid*'. It was winter, he was skint and another birthday was approaching.

Today, we celebrate that birthday all over the world and Friends of St. Augustine's give a party that is equal to any of them. This year it's on 20<sup>th</sup> January starting at 6pm with a traditional Scottish Meal and wine. The haggis will be toasted and we shall be entertained by AGM – Alistair, Gina and Michael. There will be a few other '*hingers – oan*' and the evening will end with 'The Star o' Rabbie Burns' sung from as high a location as your zimmer will allow you to climb. So look out that tartan gear and watch for notices appearing. Last year it was nearly standing room only.

### **AND BRING ON 2019.....**

And changes will definitely be afoot. A congregational away day is being planned where our future can be discussed. And you won't need new pyjamas 'cos we're all going to the Vale – to the green pastures of St. Mungo's. Try to attend and get involved or you never know what suggestions you may be lumbered with in 2019.

Back next month.....

**Janette**



## A Waggy Dog Tail

Walking my dogs recently I was struck by how far the Little Apprentice and the Old Master have come. They were thoroughly enjoying being out with me - in community. The community of two that I had with Sooty has definitely gone- or is it that it has **changed**?

Our faith community changes when people move on (we pray that they are continuing their calling elsewhere) or when others join us. We pray that they will stay; the canine usurper is certainly here to stay. She is an individual - bold where

Sooty is timid, dominant where Sooty is submissive - in fact she could scarcely be more different from Sooty! As such, she approaches life in an entirely different way. Similarly, when someone new joins our faith community they bring with them a new way of looking at things, of viewing and doing life. That freshness is exhausting and invigorating in equal measure. It is good, though not always comfortable. Sooty has had a lot to cope with these last few months and I'm sure she has often done the doggy equivalent of wishing the pup away. Even so, the pup has been good for her- she has upped her game, lost weight (no- the pup has **not** been stealing her dinner. It's the other way round when it comes to food!) and found levels of alertness and fitness I thought were gone for good. Simply by being herself and doing what she does best, Sooty has taught Rosie all she needs to know. Instead of being a pest, she is now an asset! A very fast asset. But just sometimes we need Sooty's experienced nose to find that ball and then we truly work together. Sooty - go and help her! In community.

When our faith community changes, we too must just keep on doing whatever it is God has called and given us grace to do. Others will and indeed should do things differently. It may seem for a time that they are taking over, that we have been squashed out. Why do they have so much more energy/insight/gifting? But there will always be those wisdom moments when our experience is what is needed to complete the task and we feel God's prompt to go and help them!

Two dogs with me: us together in community with each other and God. A community subject to growth and change but always under the Father's control and guidance.

Does Sooty love the Little Apprentice? I'm not sure...but if I sneak in on them I do occasionally find them snuggled up together!

May God grant us grace to share our skills and talents with the next generation of His servants and even to find love and friendship in that process. *Kirsten x*

## HOME ALONE?

Dear Christian,

I hope you are well. I have not seen you at the study groups lately. There are several groups throughout the church year. At present it's the Advent Group, meeting at St Mungo's Rectory each Wednesday evening starting on 5th December. We will be studying "Angels" this session! At several dates through the year there are also meetings at "the Wiggins" home in Dumbarton, we recently finished studying the Epistle to the Romans.

I know you have said you're not a scholar but that's the point, Christian. It is a very informal group and we always finish with a cuppa and a natter. I understand it's quite a varied group with different ages and levels of knowledge. However all are encouraged to join in or just "observe" if they wish. I feel sure you would find it better than the one eyed god in the corner (TV can be so depressing). We have a lot of laughs and learn a lot and it's a night out and a bit of company. I can assure you that there will be a very warm welcome, so please do consider joining in these groups. You have been missed and I hope to see you soon.

*Love, Jesus*

P.S. You can find further details on these groups in the magazine or pew sheet or just ask!

## True Meaning of the 12 Days of Christmas!

My true love = God

Me, who receives the presents, = every baptized person

1 Partridge in pear tree = Jesus Christ

2 Turtle Doves = the Old and New Testaments

3 French Hens = Faith, Hope and Charity

4 Calling Birds = the four Gospels

5 Gold Rings = the first 5 books of the Old Testament, the 'Pentateuch'

6 Geese-a-laying = the six days of creation

7 Swans-a-swimming = the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the seven sacraments

8 Maids-a-milking = the eight Beatitudes

9 Ladies Dancing = the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit

10 Lords-a-leaping = the Ten Commandments

11 Pipers Piping = the eleven faithful apostles

12 Drummers Drumming = the 12 points of doctrine in the Apostle's Creed



## ROTAS FOR ST MUNGO'S

### Sunday Dec 9th

Reader/Intercessions	Carol Meacham
Sidesperson	Ian Marshall
Music	Phil O'Ryan

### Sunday Dec 16th

Reader/Intercessions	Anne Bardsley
Sidesperson	Ian Marshall
Music	Andrew Baxter

### Sunday Dec 23rd

Reader/Intercessions	Phil O'Ryan
Sidesperson	Ian Marshall
Music	Carol Meacham

### Christmas Eve Dec 24th 8pm

Reader/Intercessions	Pat Brooks
Sidesperson	Ian Marshall
Music	Andrew Baxter

### Sunday Dec 30th

Reader/Intercessions	Clergy
Sidesperson	Ian Marshall
Music	Phil O'Ryan

### Sunday Jan 6th

Reader/Intercessions	Carol Meacham
Sidesperson	Ian Marshall
Music	Andrew Baxter

### Sunday Jan 13th

Reader/Intercessions	Anne Bardsley
Sidesperson	Ian Marshall
Music	Carol/Phil

### Sunday Jan 20th

Reader/Intercessions	Pat Brooks
Sidesperson	Ian Marshall
Music	Andrew Baxter

### Sunday Jan 27th

Reader/Intercessions	Lewis Kennedy
Sidesperson	Ian Marshall
Music	Carol/Phil

### Sunday Feb 3rd

Reader/Intercessions	Clergy
Sidesperson	Ian Marshall
Music	TBA

### CLEANING

18 <sup>th</sup> Dec/ 15 <sup>th</sup> Jan:	Jean
24 <sup>th</sup> Dec/ 22 <sup>nd</sup> Jan:	Finella
1 <sup>st</sup> Jan / 29 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Iona and Mary
8th Jan/ 5 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Margaret

## ROTAS FOR ST AUGUSTINE'S

### Sunday Dec 9th

Readers	Margaret Hardie & Barbara Barnes
Intercessions	Fran Walker
Chalice	Kirsten Wiggins & David Rowatt
Sidespersons	David Ansell & Margaret Swan

### Sunday Dec 16<sup>th</sup>

Joint Service with the URC

### Sunday Dec 23rd

Readers	Evelyn O'Neill & David Ansell
Intercessions	Margaret Hardie
Chalice	Kirsten Wiggins & David Rowatt
Sidespersons	Margaret Swan & David Ansell

### Christmas Eve Dec 24<sup>th</sup>

Readers	Janette Barnes & Linda Macaulay
Sidespersons	Roberta Mailley & Chrissie Ashman

### Sunday Dec 30<sup>th</sup>

Readers	Maggie Wallace & Sharon Rowatt
Intercessions	Evelyn O'Neill
Chalice	Margaret Hardie & Kirsten Wiggins
Sidespersons	Lorraine McCullough & Barbara Barnes

### Sunday Jan 6<sup>th</sup> 2019

Readers	Kirsten Wiggins & Roddy Dyer
Intercessions	Linda Macaulay
Chalice	Maggie Wallace & Janette Barnes
Sidespersons	Linda Jenkinson & David Ansell

### Sunday Jan 13<sup>th</sup>

Readers	Barbara Barnes & Margaret Hardie
Intercessions	Sharon Rowatt
Chalice	Fran Walker & David Rowatt
Sidespersons	Roberta Mailley & Chrissie Ashman

### Sunday Jan 20<sup>th</sup>

Readers	Ghislaine Kennedy & Morag O'Neill
Intercessions	Margaret Wallace
Chalice	Margaret Hardie & Barbara Barnes
Sidespersons	Margaret Swan & Roddy Dyer

### Sunday Jan 27<sup>th</sup>

Readers	Fran Walker & David Rowatt
Intercessions	Dot Russell
Chalice	Sharon Rowatt & Maggie Wallace
Sidespersons	Cathy Hoatson & Barbara Barnes

### Sunday Feb 3rd

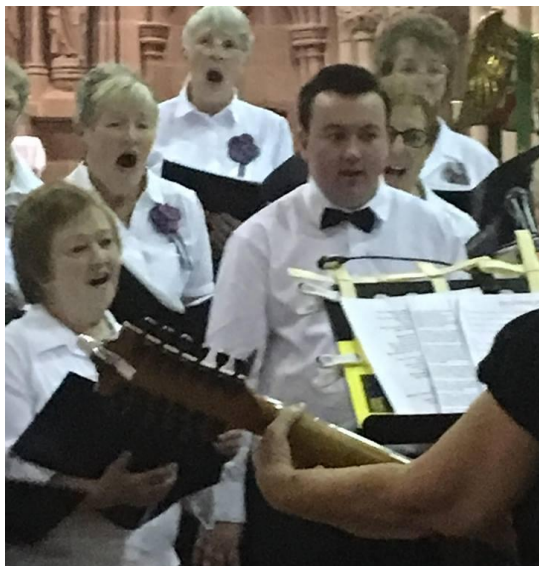
Readers	Sharon Rowatt & Dot Russell
Intercessions	David Rowatt
Chalice	Fran Walker & Janette Barnes
Sidespersons	Maggie Wallace & Lorraine McC

### Flowers:

Dec 23 <sup>rd</sup>	After the service: Maggie W & Moira McG
Dec 29 <sup>th</sup>	Maggie Wallace
Jan 5 <sup>th</sup>	Margaret Hardie
Jan 12 <sup>th</sup>	Linda Macaulay
Jan 19 <sup>th</sup>	Barbara Barnes
Jan 26 <sup>th</sup>	Fran Walker
Feb 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Maggie Wallace

## *If Music be the Food of Love.... Play On!*

Our thanks go to Ghislaine who organised two concerts with the All Sorts Choir and guests; first one raised £700 for the homeless children of Rwanda, and the second raised £300 for St Augustine's. The choir has a new member in David who loves the music! Well done, Ghislaine!



"There is nothing in the world so much like prayer as music is."

~ William Shakespeare

the Lord is my  
**STRENGTH**  
and my  
**SONG**