



THE ANCHOR

The magazine of Kiltarlity and Kirkhill Church

CHRISTMAS

2021



Living in the love of Jesus in the rural Highlands

www.kiltarlityandkirkhill.org.uk

SC: 003866; 014918



Anchor Christmas Contribution

If you have never read through the book of Isaiah, I strongly recommend that you do at some point, and at some point soon, because there are so many references to the arrival of Jesus. The more familiar you are with Isaiah the more your Advent preparations will be enriched. All of the prophets offer something amazing but for me Isaiah stands out. I have always enjoyed the Old Testament and used to get teased a wee bit during my theological studies for it. I was occasionally referred to as "Rabbi" for my interest of the Hebrew elements of our faith, including taking a semester of Hebrew instead of a full year of Greek in my third year of study. I am not sure it was meant to be complimentary but that is how I took it. I continue to have a love for the rich text of the OT in which I find it easy to see the love of God at work on our behalf.

Isaiah is one of the better-known prophets and books of the Bible which speak of the coming Messiah. Many are familiar with the suffering servant portion of the book found in chapter 52, which outlines what Jesus would go through on his way to the cross. I would like to draw your attention to chapter 51 verses 1...¹ *Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness and who seek the Lord, and also verse 5-6...*⁵ *My righteousness draws near speedily, my salvation is on the way, and my arm will bring justice to the nations. The islands will look to me and wait in the hope for my arm...and lastly the end of verse* ⁶ *But my salvation will last forever my righteousness will never fail.*

These passages and chapters are written for the nation of Israel, in order to bring hope but also to affirm that the Lord knows of their situation and that help is on the way. The gist of chapter 51 is that salvation is coming. Chapters 52 and 53 give the reader an early indication of what is to take place in order to secure that salvation on Calvary. The servant, the arm of the Lord, the one who saves, is of course Jesus, Joseph's boy. The Christmas story has only ever been a story of salvation and rescue. An elaborate rescue mission to save people, nations and all creation from sin and the separation it causes between us and our Heavenly Father. Thousands of years before Mary and Joseph held wee Jesus, the plan had been announced. The promised arrival of a means of salvation and restoration.

Christmas is for most, a very special time, filled with all the best we can offer one another. We smile, we sing, we give, we make time, we try to be that little bit better, we gather together. Though things are still not as they once were and will no doubt continue to look and be a bit different again this year, we will each likely try to hold fast to some tradition or another to ensure some familiarity. Each year I ask people to respond to the gift of Jesus. For I believe the Christmas story demands a response. Mary responded to the angel. Joseph responded to the dream. The shepherds had their response as did the magi from afar. So, I think it is only fair to ask what your response to the Father's plan of salvation will be? Isaiah 51.1 hints at what is perhaps the best thing we could do...pursue righteousness and seek the Lord.

It is maybe not part of your regular Christmas routine, in the midst of the hustle and bustle, but it is perhaps the best response we could give to such an elaborate plan of salvation! Take time to seek Him and what it is He asks of you...and then listen and obey.

So, as we get stuck into the joy of the season, the days of Advent and the countdown to Christmas I very much pray that, in the midst of all the wonderful noise of the season, you are able to enjoy the hope, peace, joy and love that was ushered to Earth to seek and to save what was lost. May your Christmas be full of earthly and heavenly encounters! So, from the Wardlaw Manse household to yours, we wish the fullness of the Christmas season to be upon you that you may know the full measure of His joy, peace, love and salvation.

Happy Christmas

Rev Drew Kuzma

Jokes.....

Sad to say, Christmas jokes will also appear in this issue. Here's a couple to start off with!

What do angry mice send to each other at Christmas? - Cross Mouse cards.

What's the most popular Christmas wine? - I don't like brussels sprouts.

Christmas Traditions

In this issue of the Anchor, we have asked for little stories of family Christmas traditions. Here is mine to start off with.

In my family, we always gave our children a new book to take to bed on Christmas Eve. Obviously, there was an ulterior motive - getting four children in bed on that date is never easy - but they loved it and the tradition has now passed down to our grandchildren.

Sheila Moir

The FIRST CHRISTMAS

It never snows at Christmas in that dry and dusty land
Instead of freezing blizzards there are palms and drifting
sands

And years ago a stable and a most unusual star
And three wise men who followed it, by camel, not by car

*

While sleepy on the quiet hills a shepherd gave a cry
He'd seen a crowd of angels in the silent starlit sky
In the stable, ox and ass stood very still and calm
And gazed upon the baby safe and snug in Mary's arms

*

And Joseph, lost in shadows, face lit by an oil lamp's glow
Stood wondering that first Christmas Day
Two thousand years ago.

Marian Swinger

A Helping Hand

Sometimes the road ahead seems tough. Perhaps you've been struggling with ill health; perhaps it's money that troubles you or maybe you are just simply fed up of hearing about Covid restrictions. Whatever it is that causes you strife, there's always something you can do about it. Firstly, we can pray. Knowing that God is listening and has a plan has always helped me. Secondly, we can help others. Nothing much beats the look of gratitude on someone's face when you have done something worthwhile for someone else. And nothing pleases God more! Remember John 15: "This is my commandment: love each other just as I have loved you." Or Hebrews 13:16 "Don't forget to do good and share what you have because God is pleased with these kinds of sacrifices."

There are so many exciting ways to help in our church community. Perhaps you know someone locally who you can help secretly or on the quiet? Or perhaps you are a talented artist / seamstress / singer and can help with youth projects? There's always a need for people willing to serve teas and coffees after church or at the Tuesday coffee mornings at Kirkhill! Working at the computer on a Sunday may seem onerous but is actually quite easy once you get the hang of it! Whatever your talent or calling, we can use them to help one another to grow the kingdom in our community. As it says in 1 Peter 4:10 "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."



Do remember to volunteer for putting flowers in the churches.
As we meet in alternate buildings, it is a nice idea to give the church flowers to someone who would really appreciate them.



The First Gift of Christmas

The first Christmas gift ever given
Wasn't bought in a mart or a shop
And it wasn't encased in gay wrappings
With a bright ribbon bow on the top

*

The first Gift of Christmas was given
In a manger lowly and bare
And a blanket was the lone wrapping
Of this gift so priceless and fair

*

God gave the first Gift of Christmas
A most holy and wonderful one
When He looked down in mercy
And gave us the Gift of His Son

John Gilbert

The editors thought that we needed a piece on a really lovely event which happened earlier this year.

Cathy's Wedding



7am on Saturday 1st May 2021. Hens and horses fed and dogs have been out before the sleet sets in. Stump back to the house in my wellies. Quick look round to check all is in order before heading inside. Sam, one of the horses, has decided to celebrate his 25th birthday by having a roll in a muddy puddle. He has snapped the chest straps on his rug and tied his back legs together. He is standing half naked in the icy wind, the sleet now pouring down, waiting to be rescued. I turn myself round and head back out to retrieve a dry rug for him from the stable. Not the perfect start to my wedding day.

Two hours later the mud has been removed from under my finger nails, and the first make-up I have worn in over year is being carefully applied. Our wonderful neighbour, who has isolated for two weeks in order to be able to act as our photographer, is snapping away, capturing the moments as we get ourselves ready.

All phones are on charge as they will play a vital role later, and my bridesmaids, unable to be present in person due to the pandemic, are keeping me sane via zoom while my wonderful mother steps from the role of wedding caterer to that of hairdresser extraordinaire to transform me from my usual dishevelled self. My sister, who is my maid of honour, is getting a little nervous; it shows as she is adding more and more pins to her dress, to prevent any accidental slippage. The sleet has changed to a freezing rain.

Mum puts the final touches to the table, checks the food, and sends up a quick prayer that the Aga will behave and not either cremate or fail to cook the wedding breakfast. And then we are off. Laura and I being driven by my soon to be father-in-law in his pride and joy - a 1931 Buick; my soon to be step-mother-in-law nipping on ahead to deliver buttonholes to the boys waiting in the church; my mother tailing the Buick carefully, in case it should decide to be uncooperative after its dousing of sleet.

But as we pull up at the church, I am washed with a feeling of calm. The heavy clouds part overhead and the sun breaks through, lighting up the church. And I know all is well. All the things I have been worrying about - whether the videos that we have pre-recorded to be played in to the service will work; will the zoom streaming let us down; what if the microphones crackle; the rings might going missing; and I will definitely trip over my dress - none of these things are important. And I know this because I am suddenly intensely aware that He is with us, and we are in His hands. The things that truly matter, our love for and commitment

to each other, within His love are present and that is all we really need. I can hear the music change as Rev Scott Burton smiles encouragingly at me, and I am able to smile back.

The church is absolutely full to bursting. Not just because of the strength of feeling radiating from Nicholas. Not just because of the seven other people inside, all of whom have isolated to protect my family from the virus, or because of the 300 or so people who have joined us on zoom from around the world, celebrating with us despite the physical distance that the pandemic had dictated. Or because of the sunshine streaming through the high windows. The church is full to bursting with love. Love from those nine people physically present. Love from the friends and family on zoom. And most importantly, His love. Surrounding us. Warming us. Our vows do not echo in a near empty church despite the shake in our voices; our readings, hymns and music (all pre-recorded) do not sound hollow. They are enveloped in a blanket of love, and sound to a church filled to capacity.

The sun holds as we filter outside. Black clouds roll in the distance as we take some photographs, but we are still bathed in sunshine. I grasp Nicholas' hand as we climb into his father's Buick for the short trip up the hill and home, and know I am the luckiest person alive. And for those of are wondering, Mum's prayer was answered. The Aga had behaved, and our wedding breakfast was cooked to perfection!

Of course, our wedding day could not have happened as it did without the help and support of so many people. The friends and family who were bold enough to record themselves singing hymns,

and send them for mixing into a virtual congregation. The many people involved in the mixing of the various videos. David Garvie for operating the zoom to perfection, complete with 3 camera angles supplied by the various mobile phones of those attending. Elizabeth for having the church so clean, and all those others who co-ordinated our access to the church, and for it be left empty to quarantine to make it safe for us to use. My mother, my sister and our neighbour for putting in so much effort in so many ways, and so many others who contributed in so many different ways to make our day run so smoothly. All I can say is a massive, heartfelt, thank you. And again, thank you.



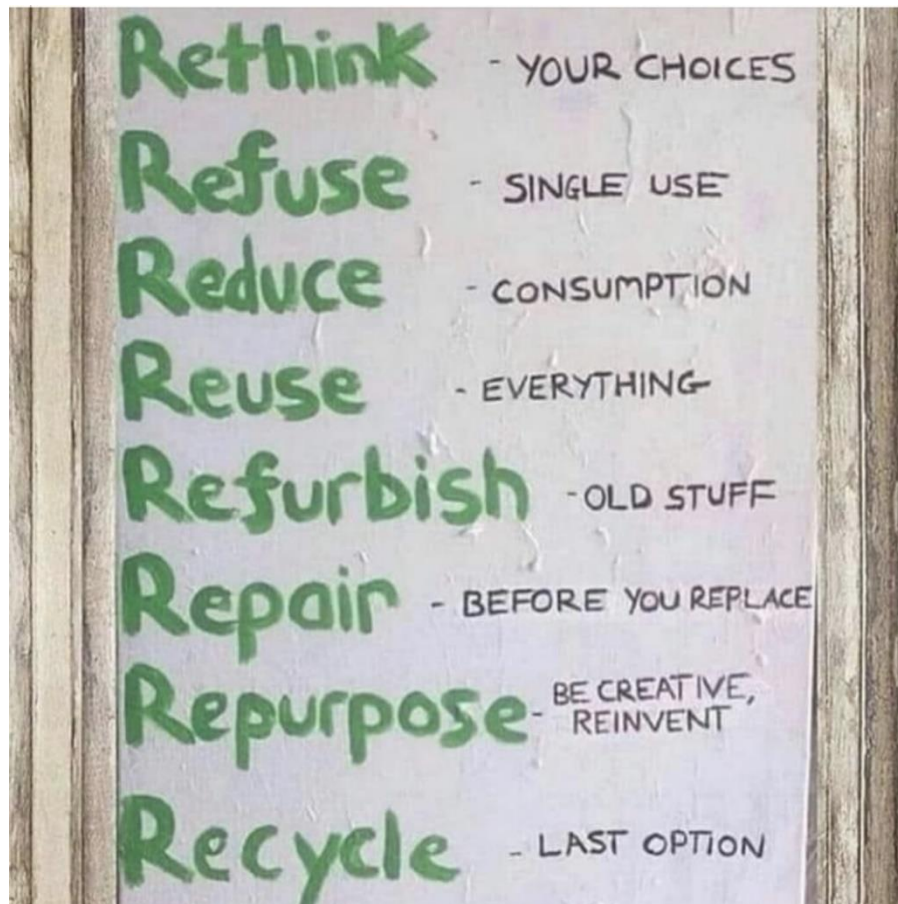
Cathy

North Pole vs Lapland

Every Canadian is brought up to believe that Santa comes from the North Pole rather than Lapland. We know this is his correct address because Canada Post tells us that they deliver letters to Santa whose address is Santa Claus, North Pole, H0H 0H0, Canada (HO HO HO) :) (The North Pole is not in Canada but the magnetic North Pole is, so let's say it counts).

Drew

From our eco warrior - the 8 R's!



What happened to the man who stole an advent calendar? - He got 24 days.....

Another tradition -

When I was a child, in our house on the run up to Christmas, there were no decorations, no Christmas tree, nothing. My brother and I went to bed on Christmas Eve to wake up on Christmas morning to find the house festooned with decorations and piles of presents waiting for us to open. Our parents must have been exhausted!

Lana

Looking Forward: Burns Supper and Social Evening.

To help make the dark winter nights a bit more bearable, I have been asked by the Kirk Session to arrange a Burns Supper and Social Evening on Saturday 29 January 2022 in Kiltarlity Community Hall starting at 7pm. There will be an address to the Haggis (Cockburn's of course)! We have some interesting speakers lined up to entertain and some of the Inver Ross musicians from Dingwall will help to get your toes tapping! Tickets go on sale from Friday 7th January 2022 and cost £10 each and should be purchased in advance from Margo MacLennan by phoning 01463 741 312. We look forward to celebrating our National Bard, Robert Burns with you and your friends and family!



Margo MacLennan

Peace on earth will come to stay
When we live Christmas every day

Helen Steiner Rice

Christmas Quiz - all about toys, games and children's TV

- 1 Who was the teddy bear named after?
- 2 What is the rough translation of the toy name, Lego?
- 3 In 'The Woodentops', who came to help Mummy Woodentop?
- 4 What 1980's doll comes with an adoption certificate?
- 5 What is the most expensive property in UK Monopoly?
- 6 And in the USA version?
- 7 In 'Watch with Mother' in the 50's, what programme was on Wednesdays?
- 8 What are the colours on a Rubik's cube?
- 9 What range of toys has the same name as a breed of dog?
- 10 What British company produced a huge range of puppets from the 1940's?
- 11 What game was the little girl playing on the famous BBC test card?
- 12 What are the murder weapons in Cluedo? - 6 points
- 13 And the name of the victim?
- 14 What distinguishes a Steiff teddy bear?
- 15 What are the names and colours of the Teletubbies?
- 16 What toy required a vegetable to play with it?
- 17 Who was 'The doll you love to dress'?
- 18 In what decade did the Hula Hoop become a craze?
- 19 What game is played on a star shaped board?
- 20 Which film star's sister presented 'Muffin the Mule'?



Answers to Quiz.....

- 1 Theodore Roosevelt.
- 2 It comes from Leg godt - play well.
- 3 Mrs Scrubbit.
- 4 Cabbage Patch Kid.
- 5 Mayfair.
- 6 Boardwalk.
- 7 The Flowerpot Men.
- 8 White, red, blue, orange, green and yellow.
- 9 Corgi.
- 10 Pelham.
- 11 Noughts and Crosses.
- 12 Candlestick, dagger, lead pipe, revolver, rope, wrench.
- 13 Dr Black.
- 14 The button in his ear.
- 15 Tinky-winky - purple, Laa-laa - yellow, Dipsy - green, Po - red.
- 16 Mr Potato Head.
- 17 Cindy.
- 18 1950's.
- 19 Chinese Chequers.
20. Annette Mills.

How did Mary and Joseph know Jesus was 7lbs 6oz when he was born? - They had a weigh in the manger

More Memories

When I was growing up, Christmas Eve was a day of cleaning the house thoroughly - getting ready for Christmas day. That and a clootie dumpling with the sixpenny bits in it! In the olden days in Lewis, Christmas wasn't really celebrated at that time, but it was in our family!

Gena

What do you call an old snowman? - Water

Make a Snowflake!

You will need:

- 6 sheets of white A4 paper
- Scissors
- sticky tape / stapler
- small piece of ribbon to stick it up with!

First make the paper square by folding it into a triangle, corner to corner and cutting off the excess.

Fold the triangle in half again.

Cut three parallel slits roughly 1cm apart but be careful to stop before the end. Make sure you cut from the folded edge!



Take the centre pieces and fold to the middle, fixing with a staple or tape.



Turn it over and do the next set and secure it and repeat further 5 times so you now have 6 sections.

Join them with a staple or tape at the middle and bottom to make a cluster.

Now you have made a snowflake!

What's the most popular Christmas wine? - I don't like brussels sprouts

Saying goodbye to a lovely lady

Mary Skene, a faithful member of Kirkhill church, died peacefully at home on the seventh of November, surrounded by her loving family. Mary fought her illness for eleven years with fortitude, bravery and great courage. In all those years I never once heard her complain or grumble. When people speak of Mary, they often mention her lovely smile, her warm friendliness, her interest in others and her love of fun.

Mary was devoted to her family, and spoke of them with such pride and love. They adored her and cared for her so well. Dave, her husband, was devoted to her and nothing was any trouble to him to help her and make life easier for her.

At her funeral, which was our ministers first with us, it was so interesting to hear of all the things she had achieved and in the PowerPoint prior to the service we saw some beautiful photographs, depicting Mary's life.

Mary was buried in Croy churchyard which has a beautiful backdrop of hills and the piper played a moving lament as Mary was laid to rest. It was a real highland funeral and had all been arranged with Mary's wishes, even to requesting that people wear bright clothes and not black. The last time I visited Mary she asked me to read Psalm 46 to her. We spoke of Heaven where there was no pain, suffering, but joy beyond our comprehension. Our thoughts and prayers are with, Dave, Jackie, Lorraine and David and the grandchildren and her great grandchild. Yes, Mary was a truly remarkable lady.

Avril

Another Canadian tradition

Christmas Tree Hunting

The tree hunt is a family day out with axe, saw and rope. For \$5 folks are able to select three trees under 10 feet from certain county woodlands. It often involves one's spouse locating the best tree possible which is usually well off the road in the deepest of snow. When the tree selector is content, the tree hunter then ventures waist deep through the inhospitable Canadian winter to cut the thing down. The tree hunter nearly dies several times getting said perfect tree back to the truck only to have it fall out on the highway half the way home because they were too tired to tie it down. When all arrive home, they realise that they cannot tell the difference between a foot and a metre and they haul the tree back outside to make it the height required for their home. If the marriage survives up to this point, they will be able to enjoy thawing out with hot chocolate until the following day when they will look forward to the discord that awaits as they seek to decorate the blooming thing. Ah good times! ;)

GOOD NEWS, GOOD NEWS

Elizabeth and Andrew Fraser would love to share the wonderful news of the safe arrival of their new grandson, Malachi, on 27th September 2021. We, readers of this issue of our church newsletter, all wish Malachi's Mum Mairi and Dad James our sincere congratulations, this extended to the whole family and wish you all much joy and happiness now and for the future.



Mama Mia - The Nativity!

Such a simple concept born from a love of the musical, a friend of mine took some of the best songs from ABBA and changed the words and the 'Nativity Musical' became reality! She organised it at church that year in Lhanbryde near Elgin and it went down a storm! Everyone loved it! Sadly, a few years later my friend moved to Edinburgh and obviously took the words and music with her. Her husband is a minister, and so they performed it in their own parish; the following year a few more people performed it in their's and so it grew. But people forgot about ABBA, forgot about the musical, until now when ABBA decided to reunite and release their first album in decades!

So, this year it's the turn of Kiltarlity and Kirkhill Church of Scotland's chance to sing-along! There has been so much support for this project right from the outset, so many willing to step up and sing along to these wonderful songs. Of course, there have been a few teething problems... For example, where can you get square bales these days? How many Marys can there be and do you need that many Josephs? Where will we get enough angel wings from? But all these problems can and will be overcome! PTA's from the two primary schools will be there after the two performances selling teas and coffees for school funds and there will be a collection at the door for Tearfund - helping the world's poorest people overcome the effects of climate change. We do hope you can join us for what we know will be a great fun evening for all the family!

Angie

Kirkhill Coffee Morning

It was so good to see folks back on Tuesday, 30th November at our first coffee morning since COVID, we have missed the craic and fellowship.

On Tuesday, 14th December, the young Mums are organising the coffee morning, with proceeds going to Highland Hospice - we wish them well.

We will return again after the festive break on the 18th January 2022.

We wish everyone a happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.



Please join me in giving thanks for the volunteer leaders who have stuck out a difficult year. Even though regulations were unpredictable, leaders found ways to be a consistent presence in the lives of Kirkhill & Kiltarlity young people. This helped build quality relationships between leaders and young people. And it ultimately set the stage for leaders to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year,

Richard



Decorating the tree at Kiltarlity



Cuttting out snowflakes.....



.....and hanging them up.



Admiring the tree at Kirkhill!



Aren't our churches lovely!



How do snowmen get around? - They ride an icicle

What's the best Christmas present in the world? - A broken drum... you just can't beat it

Recollections

Christmas in my childhood home, during the war years and thereafter began with decorating the house, not with lavish tinsel but with home-made coloured paper chains, and a real Christmas tree bedecked with similar home-made decorations and a few fairy lights, always with a star atop. On the eve of the big day mother spent a goodly few hours plucking the turkey, sitting on a wooden stool by the old back door. Bed time for us children was early. Father's kilt stockings were laid on the beds, and lo and behold, in the morning they were full Every year with an orange, a few wrapped sweets, and always a note book and pencil. On the top was always a toy, dearly loved for the months and sometimes years to come. Neither my sister nor I were allowed in the sitting room till after a hearty breakfast of porridge, till after the tidying up was complete and the fire was lit. We were scrubbed clean too and dressed in Sunday best and then and only then allowed to "see" what awaited us under the tree, truly a family occasion to be enjoyed and shared by all. Happy memories.

Ellenor

New noticeboards

Kirkhill has updated its noticeboard outside the church and Kiltarlity's one is in hand. We have heard that there will be a changeable slot on each to show where the next service will be. No excuses for turning up at the wrong church.....



Christmas Word Search

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



BELLS CANDLES CANDY CANES CAROLS

DECORATIONS EGGNOG FAMILY FRIENDS

FRUITCAKE GIFTS HOLLY LIGHTS

MISTLETOE ORNAMENTS POINSETTIA

SINGING SKATES SLEIGH SNOWFLAKES

SNOWMAN SONGS TREE WREATH

**KILTARLITY AND KIRKHILL
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND**

COME AND JOIN US

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE.

FRIDAY 24th DECEMBER

AT 11.30 PM

IN

KIRKHILL CHURCH.

Zoom Meeting. ID 305 951 545

