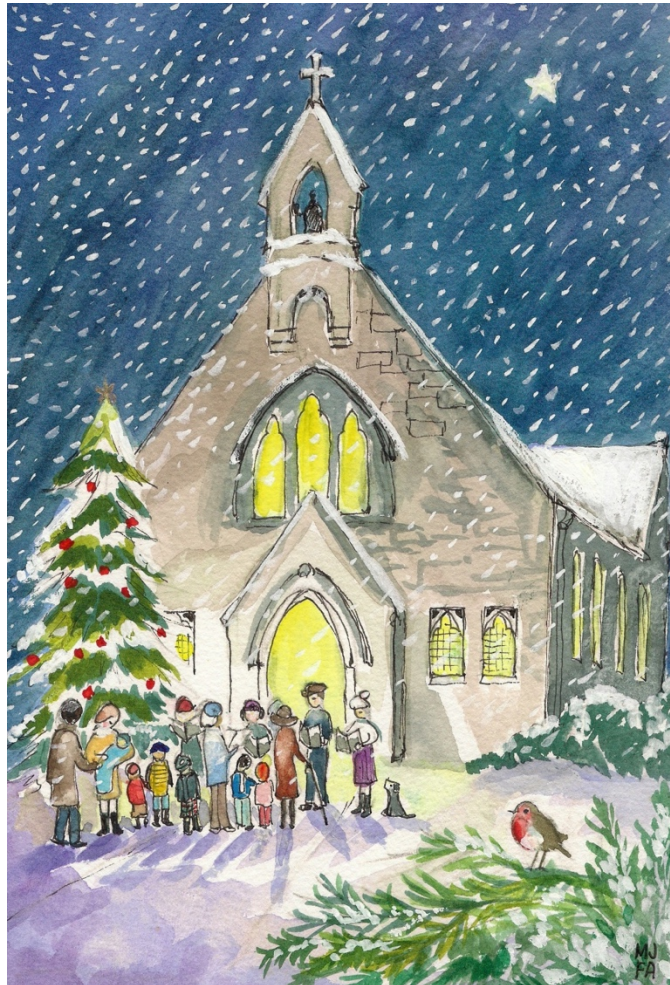


# Ferintosh

## Parish Church



# Ferintosh Focus

Church Newsletter

**December 2018**

Serving the communities of Canon Bridge & Maryburgh

[www.ferintoshparishchurch.org.uk](http://www.ferintoshparishchurch.org.uk)

Find us on Facebook – Ferintosh Parish Church



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As always, we welcome any comments, questions or suggestions about the newsletter. Submissions are now invited for the next edition of the Focus - these can be made to members of the editorial team, or sent by email to [strathdrynie@gmail.com](mailto:strathdrynie@gmail.com)

A full-colour copy of this newsletter is also available online at [ferintoshparishchurch.org.uk](http://ferintoshparishchurch.org.uk)

*"Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."*

*Matthew 2:2*



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It's amazing when all the right things come together. The poem featured on page 17 was meant to go in our last edition in September, but was left out as, at 22 pages, it was a enough bumper edition! Then Stephen sent over his Bible Study, which references the very passage that the poem paraphrases and the whole thing came together – it could even be said that the “stars aligned”!

Maybe you feel like, at Christmas, it all hinges on things coming together perfectly? The presents bought and wrapped, with the right gifts for everyone but still a penny to spare at the end. The family gathered together, full of well-cooked food and with a bed to retire to at night. Even in our churches, where we want each mince pie warmed enough but not too much, decoration placed to balance a toppling tree and song sung not too quietly, not too loudly.

As our shops, media and minds fill of visions of a perfect Christmas we are reminded that the Nativity story tells us of a time which, although it seemed to be a spiralling disaster, was all part of God's plan. I'm sure that Mary; who discovered she was pregnant, had to travel miles for a census and then couldn't find somewhere to stay; didn't think all the right things were coming together! Yet through the chaos, God was putting into place His plan – to save humanity from our sins so that we can rejoice in Jesus' birth for Christmases to come. Remember to rejoice in God's gift of grace this Christmas season, when things do come together and when, for whatever reason, they are challenging and hard.

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**We have a Church Facebook Page – which will bring you updates from life in our congregation. Find us by searching for Ferintosh Parish Church.**

*“Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”*

*Matthew 2:2*



# Minister's Message

At some point in December we might hear children or grandchildren ask us, "When are my presents going under the tree?" Notice, they don't say, "when are the presents going under the tree?" They don't say - "will there be presents under the tree?" – but instead they say with utter confidence, **"when are MY presents going under the tree!"** There is a total confidence and assurance that their presents will be under the tree in time for Christmas morning! No doubts whatsoever!

In the Bible and in the Book of Isaiah ch9 we read some of the most powerful words concerning the promise of the coming Messiah. We remember that Isaiah wrote more than 700 years before Christ's birth – and yet notice he doesn't write in the future tense but in the present tense... **'For to us a child IS born, to us a son IS given.'** Isaiah had complete confidence that the Messiah would come to save, just as if it had already happened in his day even 700 years before Christ's birth.



And we can have tremendous confidence (no doubts whatsoever) in this same Jesus to come to us; for us; to save us! For us this Advent/Christmas season, 2000 years on from Christ's birth; the Messiah has certainly come, and He certainly saves and certainly rescues us from our sins!

This most certain gift is for all who call on the Name of the Lord in repentance and faith. It's a guaranteed gift, it is the best gift, it's completely free and we don't have to wait for the 25<sup>th</sup> of December to receive Christ to be our Lord and Saviour. The Bible tells us that today is the day of salvation. Today can be the day that you come to know that Christ has come to you; for you; to save you!

Notice how Isaiah refers to Christ (ch9:6) – **'Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace'**

The names of the past statesmen, of Greece and Rome and the world have all come and gone. The names of the past scientists, philosophers, and theologians have all come and gone; **but the name of Jesus abounds more and more.** Though time has spread 2000 years between the people of this generation and the scene of Christ's birth & crucifixion, yet He still lives. Herod could not destroy Him, and the grave could not hold Him. Jesus stands forth upon the highest pinnacle of heavenly glory, proclaimed of God, acknowledged by angels, adored by saints, as the living, personal Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

So, what is in a name at this Christmas season? What's in His Name? Oh, so much! The greatest revelation of our Infinite God comes through His Name, the Name of Jesus!! *Because remember this is the powerful & beautiful name that charms our fears and bids our sorrows cease.* It's the name that is *"music in the sinner's ears, brings life and health and peace."*

May God bless & keep us over this Christmas Season and as we enter into the New Year,

Your Minister and friend,  
Stephen

*"Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."*

Matthew 2:2



# Christmas

A SAVIOR IS BORN



## Christmas Services at Ferintosh Parish Church

<b>16<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>11am - Nativity Service</b> <b>6.30pm – Evening Service</b>
<b>23<sup>rd</sup> December</b>	<b>11am - Morning Service</b> <b>6.30pm – Lessons and Carols</b>
<b>24<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>11.30pm Watchnight Service</b>
<b>25<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>11am - Christmas Morning Family Service</b>
<b>30<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>11am – Morning Service</b>
<b>6<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>11am – Morning Service</b> <b>6.30pm – Communion Service</b>

*“Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”*

*Matthew 2:2*



## Guild Updates

**The Guild** year is now in full swing. We meet the first Monday of the month and, now the winter is upon us, we are having afternoon meetings which begin at 2pm.

In November, Mrs Kathryn Dempsie came along to demonstrate craft and for us to participate. A couple of members went along to Rosskeen Guild to hear about the Guild Project in Pune in India presented by Stella Reynolds - heart-rending!

Guild Week is only just over. It was a great joy to see Rev Macdonald wearing his Guild tie at the start of the week. Good to know support is there for this wonderful movement! There was also a small display of Guild work in the vestibule of the Church.

A few of us managed to attend the Afternoon Tea which St Clements Guild had organised at the end of Guild Week. What a lovely afternoon of music, fun, laughter and scrumptious food!

We are now looking forward to our Guild Christmas Lunch to be held in the Cottage Bar.

Keep an eye on the Order of Service for the programme for 2019. Why not think about giving the Guild a try? Remember we are all-inclusive!



*"Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."*

Matthew 2:2



## Local Outreach - Church Groups

The **Pastoral Care Team** continues to provide a service to our community. This should not be confined to church-goers but in the main these are the folk who make use of it.

We can provide transport to appointments both local and further for example to Raigmore Hospital; we can make a home visit if you need one; we can visit care homes in the area.

Your district elder can be a point of contact and, in the Order of Service each week, the coordinator's details are provided. Please allow time for arrangements to be made by giving us plenty of notice.

Your prayers are most certainly a big help to us and sustains all involved as they try to carry out this work in the Lord's name.

.....

The **Ladies Bible Study** group meets for approximately an hour each Wednesday afternoon at 1.30pm.

We have recently completed the series of studies looking at the Armour of God which comes from Paul's letter to the Ephesians but is still so relevant today.

For Advent we are embarking on a series of four studies on the carol "Angels in the realms of glory." If you'd like to join us, even if it is just for a one off, you'd get a really warm welcome from the ladies who attend.

We are all on a journey along the Christian path and are learning from God's word and from each other.

.....



*"Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."*

Matthew 2:2




## Local Outreach - Charities

A very warm thank you letter has been received from **Highland Foodbank** organisers for all your contributions over the past months. (More than 16.96kgs of food)

“Your support and generosity is greatly appreciated by all at Blythwood and particularly by those who are referred to our Foodbanks.

People like Mike and Amy. Mike had a good job and Amy was a stay-at-home mum, bringing up their two children. They had a nice home and were fairly comfortable, although not well off. Mike became sick and after a while knew he wouldn't be able to return to work any time soon, particularly to the manual kind of job he had done for years, it was the only trade he knew. It wasn't long before any savings were drained and sick pay became lower than Mike's salary. The day Mike and Amy came to Foodbank they were very low, for the first time they weren't able to provide for themselves or their children... they could only describe their situation like being in a “dark pit”. Amy had managed to get a job in a local care home, and was awaiting her first pay.”

**Thank you goes to all for their part in helping people like Mike and Amy, and thousands more who are helped by Foodbanks each year.**




Please help local people in crisis by donating items from the list below.

Thank you!

- \* Milk (UHT or powdered)
- \* Sugar (500g)
- \* Long Life Fruit Juice
- \* Pasta Sauces
- \* Cereals
- \* Rice Pudding (Tinned)
- \* Tinned Potato
- \* Rice
- \* Tinned Fish
- \* Corned Beef
- \* Tinned Ham
- \* Tinned Mince/Stew
- \* Tinned Fruit
- \* Jam
- \* Biscuits or snack bars

Part of the work



Scottish Charity Number 021848

Did you know that Inverness has its own team of **Street Pastors**? These are trained volunteers from churches across the Highlands who care about the vulnerable in their community. They patrol in teams of men and women, usually from 10 p.m. to 4 a.m. on a Friday and Saturday night, to care for, listen to and help people who are out on the streets.



5 new Street Pastors and one Prayer Pastor were commissioned to serve in Inverness in November. Please remember their work in your prayers, especially during the busy Christmas Season which sees more people visiting the town and colder temperatures affecting those who are street homeless.

*“This person was asking information about where they could get help with alcohol problem. Time was taken to talk through various options and telephone numbers were given out.”*

*“Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”*

Matthew 2:2



## National Outreach - CrossReach

**CrossReach** is the social care arm of the Church of Scotland. It provides help to the most vulnerable in our society and has some of the best experts in care in the country.

Whilst the bulk of its funding is provided from sources outwith the Church, congregations and organisations are responsible for some of its work.

One of the Guild Projects for the next three years is one called Join Up the Dots which aims to combat loneliness and social isolation across all age barriers to help people's mental and physical wellbeing.

The Moderator, Rt Rev Susan Brown, celebrated in Oversteps, the CrossReach Care Home in Dornoch, at their 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. She too was celebrating her own significant birthday and asked for donations to CrossReach instead of birthday presents to her.

Babies, mums and dads, refugees, prisoners, addicts, mentally ill and mentally vulnerable as well as the elderly are helped by the expertise CrossReach staff have gained over one hundred years of caring.



Are you looking for something different as a gift for a friend or a relative this Christmas? Then we may just have the answer!

Care Shares are inspiring examples of just how far a gift can go in supporting the work of CrossReach. Exactly how far is your choice. Please note that all money raised by the sale of Care Shares will be used where it is most needed including for the types of support highlighted in the examples shown.

For each of these imaginative gifts you purchase, we will send you a gift card to send or give to your chosen recipient. And as our 'thank you' to you for choosing to share the care of CrossReach in this way, we will also send you a special 'Care Sharer' lapel badge which we invite you to wear with pride.

**£5 worth of Care Shares** could buy a healthy snack for up to 6 children attending CrossReach's Visitors' Centres at HMP Perth or HMYOI Polmont. **£20 worth of Care Shares** could fuel a coach on a mystery tour for residents of one of CrossReach's care homes.

*"Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."*

*Matthew 2:2*



## International Outreach

### Emergency Relief and Reconstruction in the Republic of Cameroon



I would like to thank most sincerely all those who gave so generously to raise a total of almost £400, which has been sent to Mission 21 in Switzerland, who are responsible for this work. The money raised is already being put to use, initially to provide food and shelter for those who have fled the civil unrest, within Cameroon and to neighbouring countries. Unfortunately, the political situation has not yet stabilised, with the result that the reconstruction phase cannot yet begin.



I have been able to contact all of the friends I wrote about in the last Ferintosh Focus. “Anna” and her family have been given a piece of land by a relative on which they are growing vegetables to sell, which will at least allow the family to survive until the situation improves and they can try to rebuild their lives.

“Mark” recently e-mailed me from the USA with photos of his wedding to his fiancée and of their son Shalom, already almost one year old. He plans to start a course in project management in January, which will allow him to stay in the States and also to work part time. He is however missing Cameroon and concerned for his relatives who are still there.

“Blessed” managed to get a passport and spent a few weeks in Equatorial Guinea, but found the government there was not well disposed towards refugees from Cameroon, and is now back in Kumba, where he lives. Unfortunately, while he was away, his house was broken into and most of his possessions, including the equipment he uses for his business, stolen. He is trying to get back on his feet.

Please remember the people of Cameroon in your prayers.

*Janet Winchester*

*“Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”*

*Matthew 2:2*



## Journey of an OLM (Part Three)

In the fifties and sixties, the only opportunity for going to university was when you left school. Now with lifelong learning people are graduating from university in their older age. And that is good. Universities are where new things are learnt from study and from discussing with other students. As one who didn't take the opportunity to go to university after leaving school I find study most stimulating. But of course you don't have to go to university to discuss ideas about the Bible and at the ladies Bible study we hold a lot of discussion.

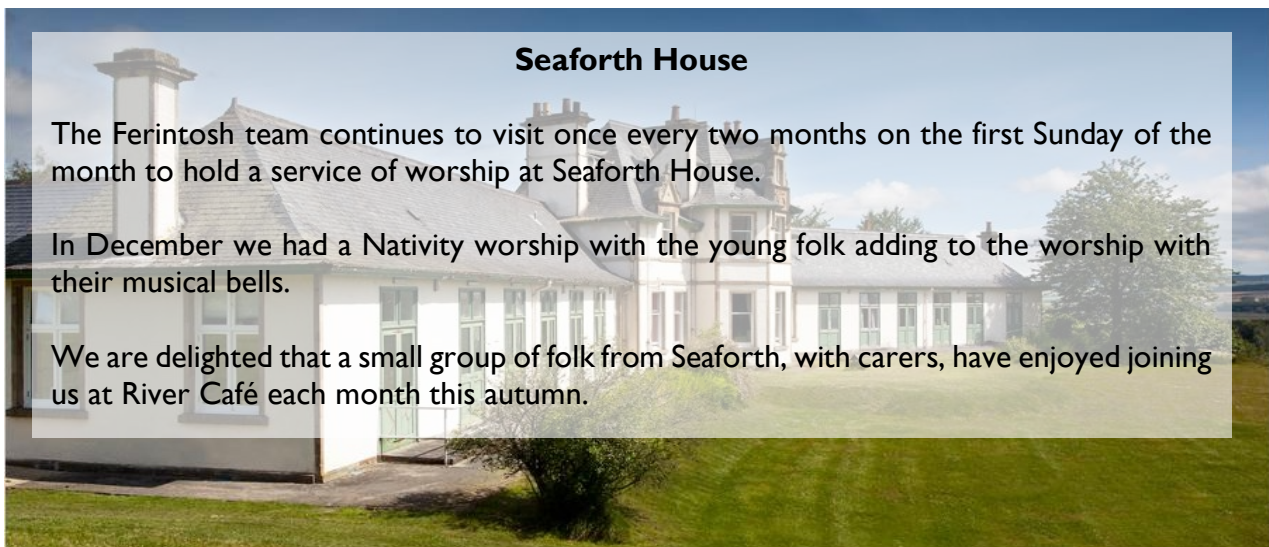


But in the fifties and sixties a lot of us felt that general education finished when we left school. Similarly, when we left Sunday School and Bible Class we felt that our Christian education had been completed. I felt especially virtuous about that because at school the only prizes I had been given were for 'General Excellence' (whatever that was!), but at Girls Brigade. I sometimes got 100 percent for Bible Exams. So I mean what else was there to know? I see now how that made for a very closed and resistant mind to further learning and a belief that Christianity was only about knowledge of God as I had no idea that I was supposed to actually know and experience Him.

During my probation training for OLM I have led a service at Wyvis House, St Clements School and continue to lead, with the team, services at Seaforth, alongside my Prospects involvement. In those ministries I am realising that as cognitive awareness diminishes, spiritual awareness and relationship with God need not and indeed closeness to God may grow. Knowing God does not depend on passing Bible exams (though Bible reading is important) but on being meek enough to know our weakness, frailty and sin while seeking God through the saving love and friendship of Jesus Christ. This Advent may we ponder this thought from a carol: 'Where meek souls will receive him still the Dear Christ enters in'

With best Christmas greetings to you all,

Irene



### Seaforth House

The Ferintosh team continues to visit once every two months on the first Sunday of the month to hold a service of worship at Seaforth House.

In December we had a Nativity worship with the young folk adding to the worship with their musical bells.

We are delighted that a small group of folk from Seaforth, with carers, have enjoyed joining us at River Café each month this autumn.

*"Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."*

*Matthew 2:2*



## Conference Report – Pastoral Care Conference 2018 Vine Conference Centre, Dunfermline.

This year's meetings were concerned with the theme "Nurturing Pastoral Care Together."

Two scripture passages led the way - Luke 10: 33-37 concerning the Good Samaritan; Matthew 25: 37-40 about feeding the hungry and thirsty and clothing the stranger.

During the day there were six presentations of which you could attend three and I chose

1. Still Waters Run Deep: Thinking Differently about Dementia delivered by DVD by Professor John Swinton, Chair of Divinity and Religious Studies at Aberdeen University
2. Perceptions of Reality: Stigma & Mental Wellbeing given by Rev Dr Cameron Langlands, Head of Spiritual and Pastoral Care, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust
3. Loss: From Misconceptions to Making a Difference communicated by Rev Tom Gordon, Former Chaplain, Marie Curie Hospice Edinburgh

Professor Swinton led us through our fears and offered a perspective that dementia is as much a social, psychological and spiritual experience as it is a neurological one. "We will re-think dementia in the light of God's memory and offer a counter-story to the negative stories that are told about dementia".

Cameron Langlands was a parish minister in the Church of Scotland and had been involved in chaplaincy for over 20 years. He allowed us to look at stigma and the affect it has on our mental wellbeing. "Stigma may be all around us but that doesn't make it right."

Supporting those who are bereaved is an important and increasingly necessary component of pastoral care. However, before we jump in with two feet, we need to clarify both what the needs of bereaved people actually are and what we, as carers, might be equipped to deliver.

Only by "mapping the territory" can we give attention to models of support, training required to deliver the Church's pastoral care effectively and to the highest standard. This was the message of Tom Gordon.

As you can see, the calibre of speakers was of the highest quality and people who knew their subjects intimately. It was a privilege to have attended this conference organised by Church of Scotland Mission and Discipleship Council. There is a book published called "Pastoral Care" produced by the Learn team of the Church.

As an added bonus, I was able to spend the day with Pam Yuill who is Pastoral Care Representative for her church in Peebles.



*Janette Steele*

*"Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."*

*Matthew 2:2*



## Bible Study

### Matthew 2:1-12

#### **v2, where is the one who has been born King of the Jews?**

We have here in this account a double presentation of a star. The first star we read of is this star from the east that these Wise Men, or kings, or magi, had followed to find the King of the Jews. But the second and most important presentation of a star is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

The book of Revelation describes Jesus, as the 'bright and morning star.' **The star from the east is announcing the birth of the 'bright morning star.'**

There are many beautiful stars in the heavens, but this star was more beautiful than every other star **because this star announced the birth of Christ**. It was a star that the Wise Men had never seen before. Notice what the men did when they saw the star...they got up and followed the star that went before them.



What a star this was:

#### **1) It was a magnificent star**

God made many stars and named them every one, but this star was magnificent because **it was bringing a message that would never be brought again. It was announcing a birth that could never be repeated and it was announcing a history that would never be re-written... that Christ had come among us.**

What a star this was among the millions of stars... **even today scientists are still discovering new stars, but they will never find a star to compare with the star that announced the coming of the Saviour.**

**It was Christ's star**... but this star was eclipsed when Christ came into the world in a manger. It was eclipsed when the wise men met the real star, the eternal star, the star that never grows old!

#### **2) The star was manifested**

This star was not hiding, it wasn't in a corner; but it was in full view for all to see.

***In Numbers 24:17, Balaam's 4<sup>th</sup> oracle, he said: 'there shall come a star out of Jacob.' In Isaiah 60:3, 'nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.'***

This star would point these Wise Men to the Lord Jesus and would announce his coming to them. **Friends, God is not silent or hidden away. He is active in leading us to seek the way to Christ who is the bright and morning star.**

*"Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."*

*Matthew 2:2*



3) This star had a **message**: *'Christ the King of the Jews is born.'*

We're not told about the colour, shape or size of the star. Why? Because it's not important. **Christ's star didn't shine for itself, it shone for Christ! It pointed to Jesus and shone so that others could find Jesus!** We don't read that when the Wise Men found Jesus they looked up again to find the star. No! **In verse 11 we see that they bowed down to worship him!**

**Instead of looking at creation they found the Creator! They never set up "stars in the skies ministries" when they saw the star, they turned instead and worshiped the Lord!**

That's what we are to do! Christians are to let their light shine for Christ, not so that people will be drawn to us, but so that they will be drawn to the Light of the World.

What a wonder for these Wise Men as they were led by a star to find Christ. These Kings were taken from their palaces - or this star pulled them from their palaces - so that they might seek Christ.

God still places stars in our lives today. Not fancy ones in the sky, but just everyday, ordinary stars called Christians. And just as Christ's star led these Wise Men to Jesus, that's what Christians and the Church do too. As that star was eclipsed by Christ we should also just be sign posts leading to Jesus.

Notice the gifts the wise men brought:

**Gold** – they recognised Jesus as King. When kings from other countries meet today, there is a mutual respect and gifts might be shared. However, one king would never bow down before the other. Here these kings bring gold and they bow down. In their worship they are proclaiming that this child born in Bethlehem is the King of all Kings.

**Frankincense** – this was used by the priest in worship. Here, these kings bring an offering of worship not only to the King of Kings but also to their Great High Priest.

**Myrrh** – this was used to embalm the dead. These kings recognised that this new born child Jesus was born to die for our sins and was the only King who could save them from their sins.



This star was **magnificent** because it led people to Christ  
This star was also **manifested** because it was brighter than all other stars  
This star had a **message** - and what a message it proclaimed

As these wise men/kings came to worship Christ – let's all follow their example and worship Christ alone this Christmas season.

*"Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."*

*Matthew 2:2*



## Children & Young People

Since schools returned in August, we have been working in a new way: **Breakfast Club** followed by participation in the first half of the service, then about half an hour's activity in the hall during term time, and Church followed by games (**Holiday Club**) during school holidays. Children of all ages are encouraged to participate, though the creche is also available for the youngest. The older youngsters are encouraged to act as helpers, and we still hope to formalise this so that they may work towards a Saltire Award if they wish. We have a loyal group of about 16 young people, with others joining in when they can, including some visitors from other places who come along when they happen to be on holiday here. 8 adults are regularly involved in these activities, with another 8 available to help in the crèche.

From August to October Rev Macdonald spoke to the young people about the "I am" sayings of Jesus, and afterwards we followed this up with a variety of activities: games, bread-making, crafts and a compass trail around Conon. Since we came back after the October holidays we have been very busy with Connor's dedication, Remembrance Day, and preparations for the Christmas coffee morning and a nativity themed service on 16<sup>th</sup> December. We have also collected items for Blythswood's Christmas gift boxes and some young people joined the group taking the service at Seaforth House on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> December.



The **crèche** has been thoroughly cleaned, many of the older well used toys have been replaced through a very generous donation and the furniture has been repainted. Many thanks to all who helped with this in any way. We are looking at ways of integrating the crèche more into the activities for children and young people, and already those of nursery age join in the general activities with gusto. There is always a need for a "safe haven" though, if things get too much for the youngest, and we are very grateful to the ladies who stand ready to look after them each Sunday. We are hopeful that in the near future we can to reduce the regularity of this commitment, as recently each person has been on the rota one Sunday in three.

*"Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."*

Matthew 2:2



## Conference Report - Bereavement

**NHS Highland Chaplaincy** ran a Day for reflection and connection around the subject of **Bereavement**.

This was an extremely useful day, a mixture of psychology, theology and practicalities.

We heard about the “Before I Go Method” as illustrated. This programme has been devised by Jane Rogers, Forbes, to help people especially family members to talk about end of life issues e.g. Advanced Directives (Living Will)

We learned about the job of the Bereavement Officer at Raigmore Hospital, about the role of the Registrar at Highland Council. It was good to know about “Tell Us Once” which is a service which the registrar provides to inform other agencies about a death e.g. DWP, Driving Licence authority etc.

Another practical idea is Café 42 which is a drop-in facility at the Mackenzie Centre, Inverness. This is open on 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month between 12 and 2pm for those who need to talk about their bereavement.

A clinical psychologist gave an insight into work done to help those who seem to get stuck in one aspect of grief and cannot move forward.

The importance of silence and just being there was also a topic dealt with during the day.

You might have thought this was quite mournful but instead it was uplifting to know the facts and the philosophies underpinning them.

Such a great day of fellowship too.

Janette Steele

**8 Components of a Good End of Life Plan**

Before I Go Solutions®  
creating good end-of-life plans

© Before I Go Solutions

<b>LEGALS</b> Are your will and powers of attorney up to date?	<b>LAST DAYS</b> Do you know where you want to die, and have you done anything about it?
<b>HOUSEHOLD</b> How organised are your finances and household?	<b>FUNERAL</b> Do you know what you can have instead of a funeral?
<b>DIGITAL LIFE</b> Would you still have an online presence after you died?	<b>LIVING LEGACY</b> Do you know how you wish to be remembered?
<b>SHARED</b> Who knows what you want towards the end of your life?	<b>IN WRITING</b> Where are your documents located?

How well prepared are you? Take the free quiz at [www.beforeigosolutions.com](http://www.beforeigosolutions.com)

*“Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”*

Matthew 2:2



## The Pride of Moab and the Plan of God

### Numbers 22- 24 Paraphrased

Balak was the King of Moab; he was a frightened man  
He knew the Israelites could come and wipe out all his clan.  
Balak knew the multitudes of Israel would fight  
Against the peoples of his land with God's help and God's might.

So Balak sent for Balaam for he was sore afraid.  
He told Balaam he'd pay for him to come and be his aid  
Balak hoped that Balaam the Israelites would curse,  
And Balaam being greedy knew that this would fill his purse.

But God told Balaam not to go: My people I will bless,  
A curse on them is not My plan' so God the LORD did stress.  
So God the LORD did speak again and sent him to the King  
'But only speak my words' said God; 'and keep on listening'.

But Balaam he told Balak he would speak the LORD's command.  
He knew that his divining gift came from the LORD's good hand.

So Balaam rode his donkey, along the road went he.  
But God was really angry and stopped him on his way.  
The donkey saw the Angel of the LORD right in the road.  
With fear he stopped abruptly shedding Balaam and his load.  
Balaam cursed the donkey and wanted him to kill.  
The donkey told his master that he was faithful still.  
For God had made the donkey speak, and then he spoke some more  
The donkey said that never had he disobeyed before.  
Balaam he was angry for three times this took place.

Then Balaam clearly saw the LORD and fell down on his face.

Balaam was repentant; then God said 'go your way  
But tell the King of Moab only what I'd have you say'

So Balaam met with Balak and spoke only words from God.

Balak he was furious and called Balaam a fraud.

'I asked you here to curse these folk and what did you then do?

You have only blessed them- so no money then for you.

Balaam said to Balak 'I must take care to do  
What only God has given me and not listen to you.

So even with the altars built and sacrifices made,  
The message from the LORD was one which made Balak afraid.

Israel would prosper in health and strength and land.

At last Balak could see it and began to understand  
That Israel was favoured, for God was with them all.  
And curses could not harm them as blessings on them fall.

For God is God and does not change; He is not like a man.

He was their God among them; that always was His plan

So Balaam gave his final say – no curse for Israel.

But Balak said if you don't curse then **don't bless them so well!**

But Balaam he did prophesy – From Israel, he confessed,

A Star would come from Israel; the whole World He would bless.

For God had planned our Saviour, Jesus Son of God  
Who came to save us from our sins and who would be our LORD.

For Moab is the pride of man which always leads to fall

**But Jesus is the Saviour who came to call us all.**

*"Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."*

*Matthew 2:2*



## Social Calendar

**RIVER CAFE:** This is held in the Church Hall on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month from 2 - 3.30pm and gives the chance to meet up with friends, while enjoying some tea/coffee and home bakes. Whether you have never dropped in before or are a "regular attendee", we look forward to welcoming you there. Over recent weeks we have welcomed groups from the Seaforth Centre who enjoyed meeting everyone. Our numbers are gradually increasing (34 at the November Cafe) so if you could help provide some home baking on an occasional basis, this would be most welcome.

**FORTHCOMING DATES:** *Wednesdays 19<sup>th</sup> January, 13<sup>th</sup> February, 13<sup>th</sup> March, 10<sup>th</sup> April.*  
*We look forward to welcoming you there.*

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**SOUP LUNCHES:** These are held in the Church Hall on the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month throughout the Autumn/Winter and are enjoyed by all who attend. We meet at 12noon for some delicious soup, tea and biscuits and share in a time of fellowship together. Why not join us for the last 2 lunches of this session which will be held on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> February and 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019? We look forward to seeing you there.

**FORTHCOMING DATES:** *1<sup>st</sup> February, 1<sup>st</sup> March*

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**BEETLE DRIVE:** We plan to hold another Beetle Drive in the Church Hall on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2019 starting at 6.30pm and lasting until approx 9pm. Cost is £1 for Adults and 50p per Child to cover the cost of prizes and light refreshments. This is always a fun (and competitive) event. We look forward to seeing you there.

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**SUNDAY TEAS:** It is encouraging to have so many people come together for tea/coffee following both Sunday Services. Many thanks go to everyone who kindly provides and serves the tea and biscuits etc. If you would be willing to help with this on an occasional basis, please add your name to the list in the hall, as once again your help would be gratefully appreciated. Perhaps you and a friend could do this together!



**Thank you to everyone who contributes in any way to the social activities of the church, as without your help and support, they could not take place. It is encouraging to hear of the enjoyment people have when they meet together as that is part of our church life. If you feel you would like to become more involved with these activities, please get in touch.**

*Janet Murray, Social Convenor*

*"Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."*

*Matthew 2:2*



## Book Review

### In This Light - Thoughts for Christmas by Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, and Friends



This book is a collection of thoughtful meditations. The Archbishop leads contributions from celebrities (e.g. Alan Titchmarsh MBE and Miranda Hart), business leaders (e.g. Matt Brittin, President EMEA Business and Operations for Google), athletes (e.g. Lieutenant Pete Reed OBE), politicians (e.g. The Rt Hon. Sadiq Khan and John F. Kerry) and others. Some you might know but others you might not know but their stories you will love to read. They offer their thoughts and insights as a time of reflection at this season of Advent.

In a world that often seems in turmoil, these personal essays invite us to remember and rejoice in the true, timeless spirit of Christmas.

This would be a good addition to a Christmas Stocking!

*Janette Steele*



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

A Dingwall and District U3A is to start in Dingwall in January. The U3A is a nationwide organisation for retired and semi retired people. Central to the U3A are our interest groups where, if so wished, members can join together to develop an interest they share, or to pursue a new interest they would like to develop. We will also have a guest speaker at our monthly general meetings. The social contact with other members is so enjoyable, and new friends can be made over refreshments in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere.

If you would like learn more, do come along to our open meeting on Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> January at the Baptist Church, Tulloch Street, Dingwall at 2pm.

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*Matthew 2:2*



**Ferintosh Parish Church** meets at 11am and 6.30pm each Sunday.

Our friendly and welcoming congregation is made up of those from Conon Bridge, Maryburgh and the surrounding area. A breakfast club meets at 10.20am. Crèche (for those of pre-school age), Sunday Club and FYF meet during the morning service. Tea and coffee are served in the Church Hall at the close of worship.

You are invited to join us and we pray that you will experience a real sense of God's blessing during your time with us.



## Church Flowers



## Church Welcome

<b>January</b>	<b>Organiser – Mrs M Wilson</b>
7 <sup>th</sup>	Mrs S Chalmers
13 <sup>th</sup>	Mrs J McCulloch
20 <sup>th</sup>	Mrs M Wilson
27 <sup>th</sup>	Mrs C Allison
<b>February</b>	<b>Organiser – Mrs J Cameron</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Mrs K Campbell
10 <sup>th</sup>	Mrs J Steele
17 <sup>th</sup>	Mrs MacKinnon
24 <sup>th</sup>	Mrs E Munro
<b>March</b>	<b>Organiser – Mrs P Chata</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Mrs S MacKenzie
10 <sup>th</sup>	Mrs P Chata
17 <sup>th</sup>	Mrs C Parry
24 <sup>th</sup>	Mrs I Thomson
31 <sup>st</sup>	Mrs P Gillanders

	<b>Welcome</b>	<b>Count</b>
<b>January</b>	Janet Murray John Smith	Janet Murray John Smith
<b>February</b>	Tom MacGregor Anne MacKay	Tom MacGregor Anne MacKay Janette Steele
<b>March</b>	Isabel MacKenzie Mary Eagleson	Isabel MacKenzie Mary Eagleson Connie Parry

## Church Register

<b>Dedication</b>	4 November 2018	Connor Miller
<b>Wedding</b>	13 October 2018	William and Sara Mackenzie
<b>Funeral</b>	24 October 2018	Ann Munro

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