

# Achterarder Parish Church Newsletter

Saturday 28th December 2024

Registered Charities SC001688

## MUSINGS FROM THE MANSE (DECEMBER 2024)

This Christmas I'm so grateful to have been part of the worship and celebrations at APC. It's been a real privilege to welcome so many visitors to our church. We never take for granted that the school's Infant Nativity happens in church, with a full audience of parents. More unusually, we also host two Christmas services for the secondary school, welcoming about 450 teenagers who never come to church. This year's services were particularly well received. I knew that when I went into a shop next day and was accosted (in the nicest possible way) by a teenager I don't know. She said "That was a really good service yesterday", told me what she liked about it, and concluded, "We should do that kind of thing more often!" I resisted the temptation to tell her we do it every Sunday (we don't, or not that kind of service) but the positive impact on a generation of totally unchurched young people left a very warm feeling – a seed to grow in future.

This year for the first time we also hosted the school's annual musical concert. (It's been at Gleneagles, but they decided to go upmarket this year). Another full event, and I had the unusual experience of being escorted to my allocated seat in my own church by a respectful pupil. Someone entering the church said, "I've never been in here before – this is beautiful." Others also remarked over coffee that it was their first time in the Church Centre. Thanks to Peter, who was in church that day sound checking the rehearsals and performance from 8am-9.30pm, I'd like to modestly claim that we rivalled Gleneagles for hospitality, and I hope they come back next year.

Other Christmas services were well attended and much enjoyed, from a lovely Nativity led by Michelle, a celebratory Christmas Day service led by Alan and Christingles for the Crib Service with Sandra. Singing "Silent Night" with a church full of lit Christingles as our only light was magical! Yet my personal favourite remains the Watchnight Service. I love the total randomness of it – you never know who will turn up. We opened the doors and 160 people came through, at least 100 of whom I had never seen in my life before. We had visitors from Dubai, Madrid, Alabama and Blackford. People visiting family, people on holiday, locals who never come any other time but who feel the twitch on the thread at Watchnight. One young woman arrived very early and said, "I always come to this – and I lost my mum this year – I just need to sit....". People in full dress kilt and people in reindeer headdresses. This year I was halfway through the service when 4 men in tuxedos and a woman in a silver evening dress entered at the back. The only free seats were in the front row, so they came on down. Later they explained apologetically that they had ordered a taxi to Our Lady's for midnight mass. Finding the church empty, the driver suggested us! A motley gathering of the faithful, the curious, the casual, the tourist.....a bit like Bethlehem. And at that service, we always go again to the manger, to experience the wonder again. It's the service that gets to the heart of it.



So my own heart is a little bit full. Some of these people we'll see again, some we won't. We pray that we're a link in a chain or a little spark of light that, like the baby's birth, might come to fulfilment years later. We plant the seeds, God waters them, and God's word never returns to him empty. We just keep looking for ways to make Jesus known in our community – and may be surprised that it's a blessing to us too!

Enjoy the rest of Christmas.

Lynn

Below is a letter received by the Minister in December – what a testimony to our Kirk Café, our Midweek service and everyone involved in them!

“Dear Rev Dr Lynn,

My wife and I had the most pleasurable experience at APC yesterday afternoon.

We had been in Perthshire for a short midweek break before the Christmas busyness starts. Yesterday morning we’d been for a drive in the countryside and were doing some shopping in Auchterarder. We needed a light lunch and remembered the Kirk Café sign we had seen when driving up the main street the previous day. So we walked down the street and ventured in.

Perfect. Tasty bowl of soup and lovely slice of lemon drizzle. We were made very welcome and exchanged a few pleasantries with one of your members. We asked casually how APC is getting on with the Presbytery plan (our church is in the thick of it!)

That was all fine, then a gentleman came over as we were having our coffee and mentioned, “Since you are church folk, might you like to come to our midweek service 2-2.30pm? We said yes.

What a lovely 30-40 minutes. Alan your minister in training was excellent and led a lovely and very appropriate reflection. Other worshippers came to talk to us and we felt oh so welcome. It was a highlight of our short holiday.

With blessing and thanks to you, your colleagues and your congregation,

*(signed)”*



### Wednesday Worship @ Auchterarder Parish Church

Each week we have a mid-week worship service on Wednesdays from 2-2.30pm. These will be in the comfort of the Church Centre and there will be a chance to have a time of fellowship afterwards over a cup of tea.

There will be singing, a time for prayer, Bible reading and a short reflection.

**There is no need to let anyone know you are coming. Just come along and you will be made most welcome.**

**Please note Wednesday Worship will start again on Wednesday 8th January 2025.**

### Worship at Auchterarder Parish Church in January and February. 2025

As we did last year, we are moving Sunday worship into the Community Church Centre during the months of January and February. This is to help reduce heating costs over the coldest two months of the year. So, Sunday 29 December, 2024 will be the last service held in the sanctuary until Sunday 02 March 2025.



The Kirk Café is open!! We have had an excellent few weeks since the opening and many of you have come to the centre to enjoy some coffee and cake. The menu changes weekly, so there will always be new soups, scones and cakes for you all to try. Please tell your friends and keep coming. Gillian, Michelle and the volunteers would love to see you and have a chat.

**Please note the Kirk Café is closed for Christmas and will reopen on Tuesday 7th January 2025.**



### Messy Church



December's Messy Church celebrated 'A Birthday Party for Jesus', to herald the start of advent. There was a lot of excitement as the children were invited to choose a nativity costume as they arrived; everyone had a part in the play (we even had a sheep dog!) and we had a fabulous time telling the nativity story. This was followed by some traditional party games like pass the parcel and no party would be complete without some party food, including birthday cake.

The next Messy Church will be SUNDAY 12th JANUARY where we will be showing a family film. We will be serving popcorn, hot chocolate and other snacks. The perfect relaxing way to start the New Year.



We are trying a new start time of 4pm next year so please come along between 4 - 5.30pm.

Thank you to all who have helped in any way to run our Messy Church afternoons, and a special 'thank you' to all those who come along and join in!

Messy Church Team

### Update from the Guild



In spite of the many debilitating bugs going the rounds there was a good number of members present at our Christmas Party on 5th December when we were entertained by John Boyd and his Ukulele Band. Santa also paid us a visit.

Our next meeting, A Hoolie at the Guild, will be held on **16th January at 2.30 pm**. Come along and enjoy a warming plate of stovies.

A big thank you to Alison and Jackie for organising the very successful outing to Pitlochry Theatre to see a most enjoyable production of Sound of Music followed by a meal at Taste of Perthshire.

Apart from those of our members who serve on the Perth and Kinross Guilds Together Committee only one member of our Guild was able to be present at the Advent of Light, Colours of Christmas event in the Perth North Church. Perth and Kinross Guilds Together passed on their best wishes for Renee's steady recovery at the start of a very thought provoking service devised by Marjorie Paton.

Wishing everyone a Happy Christmas and every blessing in the coming year from the Guild.

### Whose we are and whom we serve.

Thank you

I have received a thank you from John Robertson (96 in January) thanking everyone who took the time to write and send him Christmas Cards, he said they are very much appreciated and he's overwhelmed that he has not been forgotten by so many. God has been good to him.





Happy Birthday to Jenny White who was 100 on Friday 6th December, probably our oldest member in the congregation.



The King's Deputy Lieutenant on the left and Councillor Perth & Kinross on the right.



### Craft Group

A huge thank you to everyone who knitted angels, helped hang them up and generally supported this venture. Thank you to all the businesses who were happy to have them hanging outside. 800 angels were hung round Auchterarder and disappeared that day, We also gave angels to the 3 care homes and to St Margarets Hospital. From all the comments made the angels brought happiness, joy and love from the 4 churches in Auchterarder.



Our next project is quite different and comes from Janet Macdonald who has been approached by PKC to knit animals, birds, flowers, trees – indeed anything to do with nature to celebrate National Meadows Day on the first Saturday in July. A tableau of wool, crochet (and even embroidery if there is an interest) will be made and will go on a Travelling Roadshow around libraries in Perth & Kinross. Awareness-raising leaflets on bumblebees, wildflowers and biodiversity in general will be available at each library. The official launch will be at the start of July, after which it will visit various libraries. An exciting and different project

Our first meeting will be on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January to start this project off.  
Our yearly lunch will be held at Café Kisa on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> Feb.

Marjorie and Janet



### **APC Walking Group**

The walking group commences its 2025 walking programme on the 25 January with a circular walk from Birnam to Rohallion Loch via Stair Bridge led by Joyce Gavine.

The other 2025 walk programme dates for your diary are on 29th March, 31st May, 26th July, 27th September and 29th November. Venues and leaders for these walks have still to be decided but look out for details nearer the time on social media and notices in the church.



### Interested in Mission?

At APC we're very keen to engage with our community and find ways of expressing the Christian faith for people outside of church. Glasgow University is running a short course for 10 weeks called Listening in Mission which helps churches to do that. Lynn has done the course before and found it excellent, and this spring Alan and other people are planning to do it too, to helpfully inform our mission strategy. See the link below for more info – and if you can't do the course but want to join our mission team, speak to Lynn or Susie!

<https://www.trinitycollegeglasgow.co.uk/listening-in-mission>

### APC Community Garden – Dec Update – Christmas Veg Share

**Communal Garden** Our brussels sprouts and leeks were a great success and we distributed two dozen leeks and half a dozen brussel sprout stalks after the Christmas services last Sunday, **both at APC and St Kessog's**. We really hope that they graced the table of many families over the festive season. Eating local and organic, saving food miles 😊



A big thank you for the donation of a garden shredder following last month's appeal. It is much appreciated and we look forward to putting it to work.

Its becoming clear that our vegetable growing enterprise could do with some more ground, more space means more veg' to share. If you have a space in your garden, no matter how big or small, please get in touch if you would be willing to allow us to grow some vegetables there.

Look forward to hearing from you.

Derek Johnston

[communitygarden@auchterarderparish.org](mailto:communitygarden@auchterarderparish.org)

**Eat local, save food miles. Eat fresh, improve your health.**

### Men's Shed

LOADED SANTA CELEBRATES with MENS SHED

Chairman Tim Hickey started the proceedings by welcoming a record number of Mens Shed members to a Christmas lunch at Auchterarder Golf Club on Tuesday 10th December. After a very enjoyable meal, the members were entertained with a novel quiz followed by live music with members singing along.

Santa made an entrance, loaded with his helper for the day and distributed gifts to everyone. Trustee Andy Bruce thanked chef Mandeep, the Golf Club and all those who helped to make this a memorable get together.



If you would like to come along to Auchterarder Mens Shed, we meet every Tuesday and Thursday 2-4pm in Auchterarder Parish Church Community Centre. After a Festive break, we return to normal meetings on Tuesday 7th January.

Please do think of joining us for a cup of tea and a chat.

Contact John Boyd 07767 876489 or email [auchterardershed@gmail.com](mailto:auchterardershed@gmail.com)

## APC Kidsteam



## Kidsteam

The photo on the right shows the Kidsteam thoroughly enjoyed their trip to the pantomime at Perth Theatre last week.

And did we all catch lots of sweets by sitting right at the front? Oh yes we did!



Two days later, the children treated the congregation to a wonderful nativity play. We hope these photos make you smile!



During January and February, Kidsteam will meet in the Garden Room every Sunday morning, after the children's hymn.

A happy, healthy and peaceful new year to you all!

Your Kidsteam Team xx

[Yvonneelder@outlook.com](mailto:Yvonneelder@outlook.com)



## DNA Groups at APC – starting late January

### What's a DNA group?

Churches changing and closing all around us makes us think: what is church, really? What are the essential ingredients without which we cannot be church? It's a bit like human DNA, the basic template in every human cell. Pared down to essentials, church is **Discipleship – Nurture – Action**.

**Discipleship:** following Jesus, prayer and Bible reading to form a Christian lifestyle.

**Nurture:** doing that in caring relationships with other people on the journey

**Action:** focusing outwards, seeking opportunities to serve God in mission and social action.

We've run DNA groups 3 times before in APC. People meet in small cells of 3, once a week for a short time (about 45 minutes). Feedback has been really positive so we're doing it again, starting late January.

### What will the groups do?

A simple leaflet outlines the shape of each group's meeting.

**Nurture** (coffee and chat) - about 15 mins

**Discipleship** - Bible reading and discussion – 15 mins

**Action** – Supporting a mission or social action project, and praying together (10-15 mins)

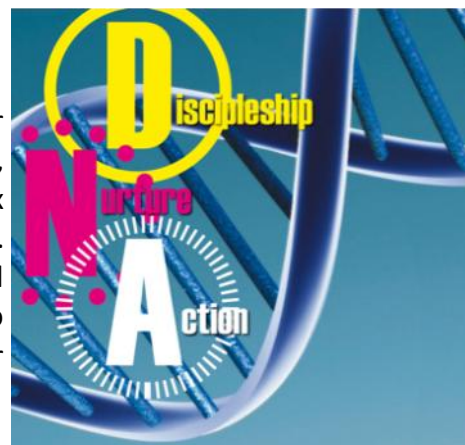
The Bible readings will be the same as the sermons those weeks, but people who don't come to church can easily take part.

### How do they meet?

DNA groups are totally flexible. You can meet any time and any place – over breakfast, at a kitchen table, around another activity that you're doing together anyway. It helps if it's a place where you can pray together. You don't even have to meet at the same time every week – but you should be committed to meet together weekly for 5 weeks. Short and easy for busy people!

### How do groups form?

Stretch out your two arms to whoever is nearest you: friends or neighbours, Guild or choir members, elder's districts, Messy Church, whoever – and ask if they'd like to be your DNA group? Single sex groups work best, and more than 3-4 people becomes a "meeting". Alternatively, if you want to be in a group you can let us know and we will make or find one for you. Exact dates are still TBC but plan to take the plunge – and invite a friend! For more info contact Lynn, or Margaret Ross [magsross1711@gmail.com](mailto:magsross1711@gmail.com)



## **Festive Coffee morning**

A huge thank you to all who baked, served, made decorations, helped with the young people and came and drank coffee, enjoyed wonderful baking – a fun filled, busy and happy day for everyone. The final total is not yet available but it looks to be well into 4 figures.

Marjorie

## **APC Coffee Mornings** (the last Saturday of the month)

### **Future Dates**

Saturday 25th January

**10.00 until 12noon**



## Sound and Vision team need your help

The SAV team are looking for new members. If you have a heart for worship and would like to serve in this vital ministry, we encourage you to pray about getting involved and then come and speak to us. Any prior sound or computer experience would be an advantage but is not essential as we offer training as required.



Please speak to Peter Stokoe at the sound desk after any Sunday service or email: [pmstokoe@gmail.com](mailto:pmstokoe@gmail.com).

## Church Minibus service

Our minibus is available on Sunday mornings for transport to church. If you would like to use this service, please contact us on 01764 660152, leaving your name and contact details.

We would also benefit from a few extra drivers for the bus rota. If you have a driving license with a D1 on it we would welcome you to the team.



Many thanks with kindest regards

Daryl and Mandy

## From the editor ...

I do hope you enjoy the newsletters which are currently being produced on the last Saturday of the month. The next edition of the newsletter will be Saturday 1st February 2025.



If you have any interesting stories, celebrations, photos, up and coming events etc you would like me to publish then please send to me, whenever you have them, and I will keep for the next edition.

**If you are reading this newsletter as a paper copy and would like to help save the planet and keep the costs down in printing the newsletter then please send me your email address to [sylvia.elsmere@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sylvia.elsmere@hotmail.co.uk) and the next edition will be emailed to you.**

## Auchterarder Parish Church

The easy way to make a donation

If you scan the QR code with your mobile phone it will take you to the following page where you can make a donation



## Blue Door Foodbank



Opening Hours

Tuesday 10.00 am - 1.00 pm

Friday 10.00 am - 1.00 pm

Auchterarder Parish Church

24 High Street, Auchterarder

For any further information, please contact us on: [info@bluedoorfoodbank.org](mailto:info@bluedoorfoodbank.org) or 01764 660965

**Blue Door Foodbank** is always very grateful for food donations which can be dropped off at the local Co-op.

## Auchterarder Parish Church

E: [admin@auchterarderparish.org](mailto:admin@auchterarderparish.org)

Website - [www.auchterarderparish.org](http://www.auchterarderparish.org)

Tel: 07467 793061 or 01764 660152

To speak to a Minister telephone:

Rev Dr Lynn McChlery: 01764 662399

Alan McKay - [alan.mckay@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:alan.mckay@churchofscotland.org.uk)

## Social Media Reminders

Remember, you can always keep in touch online with APC and all its goings on in a variety of ways!



The website address is: [auchterarderparish.org](http://auchterarderparish.org)



APC twitter link is: @apcchat



Messy Church twitter link is: @ApcMessy

Our Facebook pages is: @auchterarderparish