



## The Link

The Magazine of Haggs Parish Church



Winter 2016

Dear Friends

Christmas ranks high among my favourite times of year – regardless of the colder weather and the ever-lengthening hours of darkness. Already the Christmas decorations are going up and trees are sparkling in shops, houses and gardens – and even in churches - as people prepare to overcome the darkness of winter with the light of Christmas.

The light of Christmas has of course much more significance than the festivities and artificial lights all around us. I can't help but think there is something very significant in the fact that in this part of the world, we celebrate the coming of the Light of the World within a couple of days of the longest night of the year.

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, He entered a world that, just like ours, was characterised by intense spiritual darkness. He came into a world that knew much about war and the suffering that brings – the nation of Israel themselves had been conquered by the Roman army as they swept across much of the then known world, and the people day in and day out were reminded of their subjugated state as Roman soldiers strutted around them, as the Roman governor overruled Jewish laws at will, putting a puppet king on the throne of Israel, and harsh taxes were levied to help fill the coffers in Rome. Darkness prevailed in the minds and hearts of the people, and they longed for the day when their expected Messiah would arrive and set them free.

And arrive He did – just not in the way they expected. Far from being a war hardened general who'd deal with the Roman insurgents quickly and effectively, their Messiah came in the form of a helpless baby born into the most miserable and

squalid of circumstances – a filthy stable with all its stench of the animals which were its normal inhabitants.

But the light of Christ could not be hidden, for an angel choir announced his arrival to startled shepherds; wise men from a far off land – possibly Iraq – were alerted to the new arrival by the appearance of a hitherto unknown star, and so to the poor and unschooled, to the rich and celebrated graduates of their day, the Light of Christ was made known – the Light that is for all people everywhere from that day to this.

The Light of Christ can still not be hidden when we His people are faithful to His command to be Light, that is to reflect Christ's own light, in our dark and suffering world today. Ours is the responsibility, and yes the privilege and the joy, of shining for Jesus in our world. As the old children's hymn put it –

“Jesus bids us shine with a pure clear light  
Like a little candle burning in the night  
In this world is darkness, so let us shine  
You in your small corner, and I in mine.”

I trust and pray that each one of us may be faithful in making the Light of Christ known to those around us as daily we serve Him and others.

My husband joins me in wishing each one of you and all whom you love a blessed, a happy and a light filled Christmas and New Year.

Every blessing to you all

***Sandra Mathers***

Locum

### **Church Diary:**

December 2016:

**7<sup>th</sup> Dec.** at 2 p.m. Songs and Carols at Bankview Nursing Home.

**11<sup>th</sup> Dec.** Gift Service at Haggs Church (Gifts (preferably for children) will go to Social Work Dept. in Denny)

**21<sup>st</sup> Dec.** Christmas Service at 11 a.m. in Bankview Nursing Home.

**24<sup>th</sup> Dec.** Watch night Service at 11.30 p.m. in Haggs Church  
(10.30p.m. Mince Pies in McLean Hall)

**25<sup>th</sup> Dec.** Christmas Day Service at Denny Old at 11.00 a.m.

### **UNICEF JAR of Grace appeal.**

Whenever or wherever disaster strikes UNICEF responds rapidly to deliver life-saving food, water and medicine so children in danger get the help they need. Right now, 59 million children face conflict, natural disasters and other complex emergencies in 50 countries across the world. Children are hardest hit – losing lives, families, homes and schools.

So during Advent this year we are asking you again to please put some change into a jar each day when thinking of the plight of these children. These jars will be collected at the end of December and the contents sent to support the work of UNICEF.

Sue Storrar



## *Christmas Greetings*



Wishing everyone health and happiness for 2017 from Isabel Shearer.

Seasons Greetings from Ernie and Moira Martin.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from Betty Crosbie.

Wishing everyone a very merry Christmas, good health and happiness in the New Year from Gwen Hamilton and Family with much love.

Maisie Mortimer is wishing everyone Peace and Joy this Christmas.

Murray and Jean wish everyone health and happiness this Christmas and throughout next year.

Merry Christmas and a Happy and Peaceful New Year from Fiona Schuit

Nan and Allan Young wish everybody a very Merry Christmas and good New Year.

I wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and Peaceful New Year  
Elma Findlay.



A very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful and Happy New Year from Elizabeth And Jack Dunn.

Evelyn Goble wishes everyone a Merry Christmas and good New Year.

Archie & Marion Campbell wish all our friends at Hags a Merry Christmas and a Healthy, Peaceful 2017 (Marion thanks you for all the cards and good wishes I received for my recent Birthday)

## **Crossreach**

Thank You to everyone who supported Crossreach, the Church of Scotland Charity, by buying cards, calendars and care shares again this year. We sold over £500 worth!

Maisie Mortimer

## **Sunday Club.**

For our younger readers a mixed up Christmas –  
Dpeshehers  
Slenag  
Atans

Tasfic  
Rngema  
Lwnsolba

Hope you managed to unscramble these words.  
Have a fabulous Christmas and see you all back after New Year when our theme will be New Beginnings.

Moira Martin

### **The Boys Brigade**

The Anchor Boys have been meeting at Bankier Primary on a Tuesday evening from 6.30pm to 7.45pm, five boys are in the section and they enjoy themselves doing the games, craftwork and Bible stories. The boys went to Zoo Lab along with the Junior Section, attended the opening service, Remembrance and will be at the gift service. Christmas outing still to be arranged. If you know of any boys in P1, P2 or P3 tell them about us.

The Junior Section meet at Bankier Primary on a Friday evening this session from 6 30pm to 8pm. Eighteen boys are in the section. Friday activities are opening service, maze marching, games, craftwork, tumbling. We have taken part in two Battalion competitions, Alan Douglas competition which the boys came in first, Spiritual came in eighth out of thirteen. After Christmas we have more competitions, Fives and swimming. The boys attended opening service, Remembrance and Gift service.

Three members of the staff Katy Young, Sharon Fenney have completed their youth training, Katy did a first aid course, and Grant Kirkwood has completed the first stage of KGVI course at Carronvale.

We wish everyone a Merry Christmas. Ernie Firth, Captain

### **Company Section**

The company section has between 3 or 4 boys attending each week. Due to the low numbers we have been limited by the competitions we can enter. However, we have continued with our badge work which has included financial planning, mock

job interviews, including drill.

We will be having a Christmas outing to airspace in East Kilbride.

In the new year we will continue with our badge work and thinking about parents night.

Thanks to the boys and parents for supporting us.

Thanks also to our officers John Fenney, Sharon Fenney, Grant Kirkwood and Alan Laird. Alan Hobbs



### The light of Advent

The flickering light of Advent is a faint and vulnerable thing, but somehow refuses to allow the overwhelming blackness to snuff it out totally. (Ron Ferguson)

### CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.

Longing for truth, we turn to you.

Make us your own, your holy people,  
light for the world to see

*Christ, be our light!*

*Shine in our hearts,*

*Shine through the darkness.*

*Christ, be our light!*

*Shine in your church  
Gathered today.*

### **Carpet Bowls**

The bowling is still enjoyed by those who attend on a Wednesday afternoon at 12.30 in the Church Hall. If you would like to join us just come along one Wednesday. Our Christmas Lunch is on 14<sup>th</sup> December in the Bridge Inn at Bonnybridge. Happy Christmas and best wishes for 2017 from the Bowlers.

Elma Findlay

### **Fellowship Time**

Throughout this year we have once again enjoyed a cup of tea or coffee after the service. This time of fellowship has become an important part of our Sunday morning and we would like to thank everyone who has made it possible.

We will be continuing in 2017 and any help you can give to ensure that we are able to meet and enjoy a few minutes together will be much appreciated.

Elizabeth Dunn

### **Marriages**

“Whom God has joined together..”

Nov. 26<sup>th</sup>: Georgie Thomson to Colin Meek

### **Deaths**

*‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord’*

September: Yvonne McNeil

October: Harry Gill

December: Mr. Rose  
Hannah Clark



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