

***Parish of West Linton  
(StAndrew's)***



***December - 2017***

***January - 2018***

Dear Friends,

John's gospel has no Christmas story as such, no angels, no stable, no wise men. But it does say that when Christ came, light flooded into the world and the darkness has never managed to put that light out.

It seems entirely appropriate that when news of the first Christmas was announced to the world as in Luke's version of the story, the dark night sky was flooded with light and with the sound of angels singing. Darkness was dispelled in a very dramatic way.

If ever we are lying awake at night worrying about something, the darkness is always more intense, and the problems even greater than they seem when daylight comes. It is now 12 months since I was asked to come and serve in your three parishes. And if there have been some nights when I have lain awake and worried, how much more difficult it must have been for all of you as the months of uncertainty have dragged on. For all of us it has been a potent reminder that even in the best of societies, different forces can be at work and that people can be hurt and good work impeded and set back, often when we least expect it. But when we look at the Christmas story once more, we see that this precious child was not born in a comfortable home, lying on silken cushions with an adoring world at his feet.

This vital birth took place in a borrowed stable far from home because of a Roman decree to a conquered people. His birth occasioned the slaughter of many innocent babies, and he and his family immediately became refugees fleeing for their lives from a jealous king. Never was light more wanted or needed.

I cannot know exactly what lies ahead for you all, but I trust that it is within God's plan that there is a positive and vibrant future for the parishes as you seek to worship and carry out your ministries. It has been a privilege to work with you and I have enjoyed being 'back in harness'. I know that with Nancy's continuing work, and under the guidance of Dr Finlay Macdonald, the way ahead will be clearer.

Kirk joins me in wishing you every blessing, this Christmas and always.

Rachel

## **Zomba Connection.**

Some of you may have read the article published in the Peebleshire end of October on the Thondwe Community Forum. This forum grew out of the Twinning between our Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles with Zomba Presbytery, Malawi. We in St Andrews were Twinned with Masalema parish but have only had intermittent contact with them. However, we do currently continue to assist our Presbytery in supporting the training and studies of two student nurse/ midwives. Godfrey Matias has almost completed his three-year course and will sit final exams in January. We understand he has been an exemplary student. Limbikani Powolokeri began studies this year and also appears to be doing well. Male midwives are not common in U.K. but very much the norm in parts of Africa. The sponsorship of the two students is the current of many projects undertaken (who can forget the filling of the shipping container!!).

This Twinning will have been in progress for ten years in 2018 and despite distance many friendships have been formed to celebrate this the World Mission Committee of Presbytery is planning on bringing young people from Zomba to the Church of Scotland's Youth Assembly next year. Stay tuned for more information on this in the months to come.

Thanks. Helen

## **Answers to last month's two quiz questions.**

A1) The pillar is called Paul's pillar and it is said to be the pillar to which Paul was tied when he received 39 lashes for preaching Christianity in Cyprus in AD45.

Q2) According to the Cypriot Orthodox Church, the first Bishop of Cyprus was Barnabas, Paul's colleague and travelling companion.



**The next sessions of Messy Church are on:**

**Sunday 10 December – Christmas session**

**Sunday 4 February**

**Sunday 4 March**

**They are from 4-6pm in the New Church Hall at West Linton.**

All children from babies to P7 are most welcome to come and join in the fun!

After a game to start the children will do a range of craft activities, then have a song and a story and finish off with a meal together. All children **MUST** be accompanied by an adult.

For more information contact Jean Howat (01968 660677)

[howatjean@gmail.com](mailto:howatjean@gmail.com)

### **New Interim Moderator for Our Linkage**

The Very Rev Dr Finlay Macdonald will take over as Interim Moderator from 1st January 2018. Finlay was Principal Clerk

We extend a very warm welcome to Dr Macdonald and look forward to having him as Interim Moderator.

We also say a very big thank you to Rachel for all her guidance and hard work over the past year.



**Blue Christmas Service** 7pm Sunday 10th December St Andrew's Parish Church, West Linton.

Christmas can be a painful time for some. It may be the first Christmas without a loved family member who has recently died; it may be a time that has always been difficult.

The constant message on the radio and television, in shops and churches, about the happiness of the season, about getting together with family and friends, reminds many people of what they have lost or have never had. The anguish of broken relationships, the insecurity of unemployment, the weariness of ill health, the pain of isolation - all these can make us feel very alone in the midst of the celebrating and spending. We need the space and time to acknowledge our sadness and concern; we need to know that we are not alone.

Our spirits sink, as the days grow shorter. We feel the darkness growing deeper around us. We need encouragement to live the days ahead of us. For these reasons, the Linkage church offers a special "Blue Christmas" service in St Andrew's Parish Church, West Linton on Sunday 10th December at 7pm.

Come out, and join with us in sharing and hearing prayers, scripture, and music that acknowledge that God's presence is for those who mourn, for those who struggle - and that God's Word comes to shine light into our darkness. Everyone, regardless of church background (or lack of it) is welcome.

The short service will be followed by a brief time for light refreshments and fellowship.

## **Christmas Memorial Tree**

From Sunday 10th December, as well as our usual decorated Christmas tree there will be a second, memorial Christmas tree in the church. If you want to remember a loved one this Christmas season, please feel free to write their name or a message on one of the stars provided and hang it up on the tree.

## **National Day of Prayer 25<sup>th</sup> November**

The General Assembly this year called the Church to prayer and asked churches to set aside time on Saturday 25 November to pray for The Church of Scotland.

The prayer group set up the church and provided suggestions for prayer over several topics using material provided by '121' and other local material.

Prayer is not something that comes easily to any of us and there were only a few folks who turned up on the day. Nevertheless, it was a worthwhile effort to help promote prayer within the congregation.

The prayer group meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 9.15am in the Old Church Hall and will welcome anyone who wishes to join them for half an hour of prayer.

Colin

# ★ Christmas Services at ★ St Andrew's West Linton



★  
*"For unto us a  
child is born"* ★

★ Sunday 3 December - Boys Brigade Service at 11.15am

★ Sunday 10 December - Advent Gift Service at 11.15am

Blue Christmas Service at 7:00pm

Sunday 17 December - Morning Service at 11.15am

Carol service (jointly with Carlops & Newlands) at 7:00pm

Sunday 24 December - Nativity Service at 11.15am

Watchnight Service at 11.30pm

Christmas Day - Christmas Morning Family Service at 11.15am

Sunday 31 December - Morning Service at 11:15am

Everybody Welcome!

*If you look for me at Christmas  
You won't need a special star –  
I am no longer just in Bethlehem,  
I am right there where you are.  
You may not be aware of Me  
Amidst celebrations –  
You'll have to look beyond stars,  
And the stores,  
And all the decorations.  
If you take a moment  
From the list of things to do  
And listen to your heart, you'll find,  
I'm waiting there for you.  
You're the one I want to be with,  
You're the reason that I came,  
And you'll find Me in the stillness  
As I am whispering your name.  
Love,  
Jesus*



For  
Unto  
us a  
CHILD  
is born  
Unto us a Son  
is given, and the  
Government shall be  
Upon His shoulders,  
and His Name shall be called,  
Wonderful, Counselor,  
Mighty God, Everlasting Father,  
Prince of Peace!

Isaiah 9:6



|                                    | <b>West Linton</b>  | <b>Carlops</b>  | <b>Newlands</b>                                   |
|------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Dec 3<br>1 <sup>st</sup><br>Advent | Nancy Norman<br>BB Service  | Mary McElroy<br>4pm advert<br>Garden<br>6pm Communion<br>Rachel Dobie | Nancy Norman                                      |
| Dec 10                             | Gift service<br>Nancy Norman<br><br>7pm Blue Christmas<br>Pamela Strachan | Gift Service<br>Nancy Norman  | Gift Service<br>Rachel Dobie                      |
| Dec 17                             | Nancy Norman<br><br>7pm Joint Carol<br>Service                            | Sheena<br>Livingstone   | Nancy Norman                                      |
| Dec 24                             | Nancy Norman<br>Nativity<br><br>11.30pm<br>Watchnight Service             | Lessons & Carols<br>Patsy Campbell<br><br>7pm Carols                  | Nativity<br><br>11.30 pm<br>Watchnight<br>Service |
| Dec 25                             | 11.15 am<br>Nancy Norman<br>Family Service                                | No service  | No service  |
| Dec 31                             | Nancy Norman  | Nancy Norman  | Murray<br>Campbell                                |

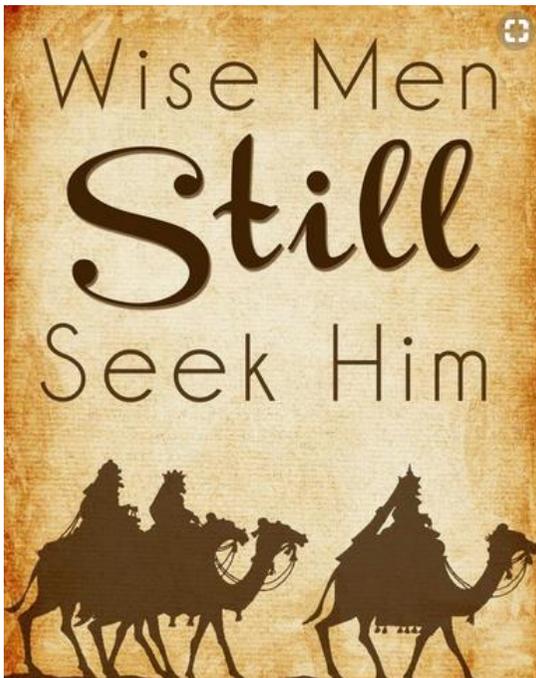
## Gift service for children in the Borders

This year's Gift Service will be held on Sunday 10th December. There are children across the Borders region that will not receive any presents for Christmas, therefore donations of new toys and books would be greatly appreciated.

These donations will then be given to the Salvation Army for distribution to children in the Borders. Your gifts will make a huge difference to children who otherwise would have nothing to open on Christmas Day. Please do not wrap your gift.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Marianne Jack  
660862



|                          | December   | January  | February  |
|--------------------------|--|--|---|
| Door Duty                | Marion Moore<br>Stephen Walley £<br>Margaret Ramsay  | Ann Lyon<br>Neil Calvert £<br>Marianne Jack  | Mary Turnbull £<br>Steven Whalley<br>Marion Moore   |
| Readings<br>&<br>Welcome | 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 10 <sup>th</sup> Daryll Green<br>17 <sup>th</sup> & 24 <sup>th</sup> Tony<br>Hoskins | 7 <sup>th</sup> & 14 <sup>th</sup> Mary<br>Turnbull<br>21 & 28 David<br>Campbell   | 4 <sup>th</sup> & 11 <sup>th</sup><br>Sheila Black<br>18 <sup>th</sup> 25 <sup>th</sup><br>Daryll Green |
| Flower<br>Arranger       | Flower Team  | Lillian Slater   | Ann Lyon  |
| Flower<br>Donations      | Lesley Johnstone<br>Anna Gibson<br><br>Flowers in memory of<br>Sybil McMurdo<br><br>Flower Fund        | Flowers in<br>memory of Mrs L.<br>Forsyth<br><br>Flowers in<br>memory of Sybil<br>McMurdo<br><br>Christine Leith<br>Lillian Slater | Helen Dry<br>Marion Moore<br><br>Flowers in<br>memory of Ina<br>Russell<br><br>Joy Houps                |
| Driver 1                 | Robert Higgins<br>660 629  | Colin Herd<br>661 785  | Neil Calvert<br>660 807   |
| Driver 2                 | Pat Graham<br>01721 752205   | Helen Bruce<br>661 603   | Pat Graham<br>01721 752205  |

The deadline for the next magazine is Sunday 28th January. The February magazine will be available on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> February.

Please Note! New Magazine Editor – Colin Herd. Thanks Colin.

Copy to Colin & Ruth Herd <herd.carradale@btinternet.com>