

St Peter's Scottish Episcopal Church Galashiels

Scottish Charity SC006210

Useful Numbers and e-mail addresses

Interim Pastor

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Vestry Chairman

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Treasurer

Mike Reynolds: 01896 757114 templestowe@talk21.com

People's Warden

Nancy Muir: 01896 758017 as.muir@btinternet.com

Organist

Nancy Muir: 01896 758017 as.muir@btinternet.com

Sunday Squad

Rhona McCleman: 01896 751484

Hall Bookings

Elizabeth Watret: 0175023207 mob 07780 009355 elizabeth.watret@gmail.com

Verger

Phil Todd: 07787 729639

Facebook page - St Peters Sunday Squad Church web site www.stpetersgala.co.uk

Services

Sunday mornings

10.30am Sung Eucharist followed by tea/coffee

1st Sunday of the month

9.30am Sunday Squad

6.30pm Choral Evensong @ Holy Trinity, Melrose

2nd Sunday of the month

6.00pm Healing/anointing service

3rd Sunday of the month

8.30am, April - October Communion service,

9.45am Family breakfast

10.30am Family Eucharist

2nd Monday of the month

11.00am Communion service at Oakwood Park

3rd Monday of the month April - October CPR card delivery

3rd Tuesday April to September

3.00pm Afternoon Tea Service

3rd Wednesday of the month April - October CPR collection

4th Tuesday of the month during school terms

5.30 - 7.00pm Messy Church

Thursdays

10.00am Holy Communion service takes place in the hall

Last Friday of the month

5.00pm Choir practice

St. Peter's Church Magazine



December 2017

£1 Recommended donation per issue

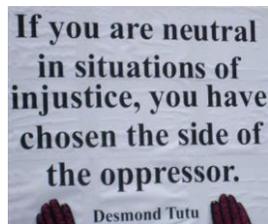
Prayer Trees.

Did you know there are 2 forms of prayer tree in the church? In addition to the one that is printed in the service sheets and the magazine there is a wooden tree at the back of church. Recently this one seems to be unused or maybe unnoticed with all the other stuff on the rear shelf. We would like anyone who comes into the church for whatever reason to feel that they can ask for prayers. With this in mind we have decided to place the wooden tree on the top of the shelf beside the front door when this is not being used for services. Hopefully this will make it more visible. Any request left on the tree will be given to whoever is taking the intercessions at Sunday services for inclusion in the prayers that day.



I wonder if you would check the names on this list. Many of them have been here for a very long time. While some of them are relating to long term and ongoing situations some may just have been added with no thought about how long they needed to be included.

In the future, unless Monica is asked specifically, names will be added for one month. Names and situations given to Muriel or Rhona for Emergency prayer are just for emergencies.



Members of ACAT (Action by Christians Against Torture) will be asking you to send cards to organisations and individual human rights defenders who need support as they have been and continue to be targeted by powerful people and regimes who feel threatened by exposure of their actions.

Please join us in sending a message of hope to someone who needs to know they have not been forgotten.



Messy Church and the Sunday Squad children have chosen "School is Cool" as their Christingle project this year. The charity Embrace the Middle East supports the education of Syrian children in refugee camps



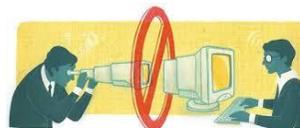
SCAMMERS - They are at it again!!

Twice this week my computer has been SHOUTING at me. It says that my internet has been hacked and I must IMMEDIATELY phone their 0800 number. It is quite unnerving and would be easy to panic and start dialling. DON'T. These scammers want to hack into your telephone and you could find yourself with bills for hundreds of pounds (yes £100's). They might also want your security information and passwords. As I immediately switched off my laptop and disconnected the router I don't know precisely what happens next.

There was another hacking scam mentioned on Border News too. This lady had more than £100,000 taken from her bank account while she was listening to the criminal. What really caught her was the fact that the person said that he could see that she was contacting "his colleague" in the bank as she was dialling the number on her phone to check that it was her bank that was making the call. It wasn't. The hacker had managed to gain access to her laptop and via the built in camera he could see everything that she and her husband were doing. He could see them pick up the phone and dial the bank and he could hear what they were saying. He was



watching them and had also hacked into her online banking and was able to read the transactions and statements and was referring to them which convinced her that this really was her bank. Unless YOU initiate the call to your bank via a recognised number on one of your statements NEVER assume a caller is genuine – hang up. Then call your bank and tell them what has happened and also call the police. Unless you actually want to use the camera on your laptop disable it in the settings and also cover the lens with a bit of card taped to the machine. It is not enough just to switch



it off because these folk are clever enough and crafty enough to switch it on remotely and you don't know that has happened but they can see and hear everything that you are doing within range of the computer.

If you use Skype or whatsapp make sure you switch off the camera and cover the lens when you are finished.

Any time you think you have been scammed do report this to your bank – if money or account details have been taken – and **Action Fraud**, the National Fraud & Cyber Reporting Centre on **0300 123 2040**. For advice and information about all known frauds operating in the UK check their website– www.actionfraud.police.uk

An Introduction to Christian Meditation



**St Cuthbert's Episcopal
Church, Hawick**

**Saturday 9th December
9.30am – 1.00pm**

Be Still

**Be aware of the divine
mystery**

Receive the gifts of God



For further details and to reserve a place
Contact Jim Griffin on 01450 372827
Or jimjgriffin@hotmail.com



Using our church and hall

Do you know what you need to do if you want to use the church or hall for a party, fund raiser, meeting , wedding/rehearsal?

First you phone or e-mail Liz Watret to find out if it is available and then book the date and time.

Job Done!!!

Well no, not really. You need to talk to Phil to go through the arrangements especially if it is for a special service – funeral or wedding/rehearsal when seating arrangements are required. So nearer the time, you need to get in touch with him to let him know when you need access to set up, especially if you need to decorate for a wedding or a party. Do you have a key? How long will you need the heating set for?

Please remember you should leave the place as you found it so you need to wipe tables, put things away and sweep floors. Cleaning equipment is in the cupboard opposite the church door. Make sure you switch the heating and the lights off and lock the door as you leave.

Thank you – I am sure you will find things easier if you make sure Phil knows when you are going to be there and what you need. His number is 07787 729639.

Report of the condition of the fabric of Church & Rectory

After a thorough independent professional assessment/survey of both the church and rectory buildings the urgent repairs requiring to be done within 12 months are as follows:-

Rectory:

The repairs to the roof (have been completed).

The gutters (have been cleaned)

The CH boiler and gas fires are awaiting servicing

The electrical appliances need PAT testing ~ awaiting quotation

Installation of mains connected smoke alarms ~ awaiting quotation

Installation of heat & carbon monoxide detectors ~ awaiting quotation

Lagging of header tank

Church:

Clean gutters etc. ~ roofer has been instructed to go ahead

Floor board movement (entrance to hall) fixed

Test electrical system & PAT test appliances ~ awaiting quotation

Replace duck boards and clean roof central valley ~ will instruct roofer, in the spring.

The cost of the work is estimated at

Rectory £ 1,200

Church £10,500

Total inc VAT £15,660

In addition to this you may have noticed that the outside lights have been replaced. We now have bright LED lights on from dusk to dawn at the front of the building and above the side door. There are also motion sensitive lights at the back and Parsonage Road side. It is nice to see St Peter's lit up at night as well as making it more secure.



CHANGES TO CHILDREN'S SERVICES

As Rhona says it was good for all the families with small children to be able to talk about it all face to face. If there is no squad then Pam, Mac and Zennor wouldn't be able to attend due to Mac's learning disabilities she finds the main service too much and

messy church too late in the day. With that in mind we feel on balance it better to have a 'super squad' once a month that we all contribute to rather than trying to string along week by week with not many of us.

So that is the plan ..

1st Sunday of the month - Super Squad @9.30

One person allocated to bring bread and everyone else brings a wee activity/game/joke/story/(or nothing if you've not the time or the inclination!) based on the theme to share. The idea is that no one person will have all of the work to do and we will benefit from each other's creativity/take on things, etc

As it's a once a month super version it may be that it ends up lasting slightly longer than an hour.

Squad is entirely inclusive and we are proud of that and want that to continue. It is very important to all of us that everyone from Hame to Mac can be safe and have fun.

3rd Sunday of month - Family Service @ 10.30

Family service taken by Joanna . Not sure what the form of this will be but if we want to get something out of it we have to attend and speak up about how it should be done!

With this in mind, for a trial period until Easter, readings at the Family service will be taken from the International Children's Bible and the liturgy for the Eucharist from My Holy Communion Scottish liturgy 1982. As Joanna says the children are not the future, they are the present, and we really do need to engage with them even if we find the services a wee bit out of our own comfort zone.

4th Tuesday of month - Messy Church @5.30pm

Here is a Christmas poem which also invites us to do something.

I found it in Embrace the Middle East's Bethlehem Carols Unpacked

The census were occupied
When God first breathed and tears he cried;
And for a world that's still in danger
Won't you be his living manger – this Christmas?

A frightened girl, a worried spouse
Left on the streets, no room, no house;
And for a world that's still unsure,
Won't you be his human stall – this Christmas?

Night-shift workers, angel-driven,
See the join of earth and heaven;
And for a world so full of woes,
Won't you be his swaddling clothes – this Christmas?

Far-travelled gold was a gift for him
Who came as our sacrifice for sin;
And for a world, so rich but poor,
Won't you be his bed of straw – this Christmas?

Hillside choirs sang out is chorus;
To sing again, they're waiting for us;
So, for a world that's tired and worn
Won't you be the place where he's born – this Christmas?



If you are still looking for gifts do think about giving something that will benefit those in need rather than just adding to the "stuff" that most of us accumulate.



EMBRACE
the Middle East

The Embrace the Middle East and Traidcraft catalogues at the back of church both have some of these as do many other charities that you can find online.



CAROLS were first sung in Europe thousands of years ago. But these were not CHRISTMAS carols. They were pagan songs, sung at the winter solstice celebrations as people danced round stone circles.

The word @carol@ means dance or song of praise and joy. Originally carols were sung during all four seasons but only the traditional singing of them at Christmas has really survived, although I can think of hymns we sing at Easter and Harvest for example.

Early Christians took over the pagan solstice celebrations and gave many of them a Christian theme.

There are records of Christmas Carols being sung at a Christmas service in Rome in 129 AD. Another was written for the Greek Orthodox Church by Comos of Jerusalem in 760 AD.

Soon after the idea caught on and many new Christmas Carols appeared. The only snag was that they were written in Latin, a language ordinary people did not understand. The Christmas Carol 'O come all ye faithful' is still sometimes sung in Latin. 'Adeste Fideles'. I wonder if you remember singing the Latin version at school, I did.

Prior to the Reformation of 1560 Christmas (then called Yule) was celebrated in similar fashion to the rest of Europe.

Christmas was banned in Scotland around that date and remained so for a number of years. However John Knox did feel that the celebration of Hogmanay could be allowed, it being a festival to celebrate 'new life'.

The Victorians did much to revive the Christmas tradition and then in 1958 Christmas Day actually became a Bank Holiday in Scotland, as did Boxing Day in 1974.

Singing carols and songs is a wonderful way of remembering words.

Remembering the Christmas story.

If you have a hymn book at home (or borrow one!) it makes fascinating reading when looking at the dates and origins of the Carols.

Christmas is often a time of sentiment. We send Christmas Cards to friends, maybe the only contact we have during the year. We think about them. Our minds perhaps think back on those we have known and loved who have passed over. We may remember them singing the carols we sing still. There is a timelessness about Christmas Carols.

Above all Christmas Carols bring us right back to the beginning. Right back to God's gift. Right back to the birth of Jesus, His son. I'm sure you will have your favourite carols, as I do.

I remember there being quite a clamouring of 'what shall we sing' when as a child we went carol singing round the houses. Someone had donated to the church an old 'bath chair'. You may remember them. Great oversized wheelchairs which could take the largest person in a recumbent position. Well it was also large enough to take a relatively small American Harmonium! A

chair for the organist too! We unloaded all this at the various stops we made. Foot pedals worked the bellows and the sound came forth! Memories.

We are blessed with the choice of many carols.

'Child in the manger, infant of Mary' was written by Mary McDonald (1789-1872) whose memorial stands on the roadside 2 miles east of Bunessan on the way to Iona. It is where she and her crofter husband worked and lived. It is said that as she sat at her spinning wheel she would sing hymns in her native Gaelic to pass the time. She was a lifelong devoted Baptist. The tune 'Bunessan' is a lovely old Gaelic melody. The alluring words paint a beautiful, yet simple, picture of our Lord.

Another favourite of mine is 'O little town of Bethlehem' written by Philip Brooks, a famous American preacher who eventually became Bishop of Massachusetts. He was known for his splendid rhetoric, intellectual force and spiritual insight.

I love 'Away in a manger' written anonymously and printed in 'Little Children's Book' in Philadelphia in 1885. A Lutheran publication. This gave rise to the story that Luther wrote it for his children as it became known as 'Luther's Cradle Hymn' but there is no evidence that this was the case. All that aside, the words are meaningful and comforting to adults too! The last verse 'I ask you to stay, close by me forever and love me I pray'. Profound simplicity! The tune was probably introduced during the Moody and Sankey revivals by William Kirkpatrick along with 'Will you anchor hold'.

Sir John Betjeman, Poet Laureate 1972 – 1984 said in one of his radio talks in 1976 'One of the nicest things about hymns is that we all sing one another's! Protestants sing hymns which are familiar to Roman Catholics, Methodists and Anglicans.' Of course there are many more denominations with whom we share the same hymns. How true this is, and even more so with Christmas Carols. The Christmas story is brought to the ears of many who perhaps don't believe at all! This brings to my mind a hymn not so much sung now, but has appeared in 273 hymnals in the past. 'We've a story to tell to the nations, that shall turn their hearts to the right, the story of truth and mercy, the story of peace and light. (repeat) for the Darkness shall turn to dawning and the dawning to noonday bright; and Christ's great kingdom shall come on earth, the kingdom of love and light.' Written and set to music by H Ernest Nichol in 1896. A Yorkshireman who wrote 130 hymns. This is the story told through our Christmas Carols. We must keep on singing them for all to hear!

Behind every carol lies a story. Not just a story reminding us of the Nativity, the very reason for signing carols, but a story of the author and composer whose faith and diligence resulted in giving us the words and music we so love today.

Thanks be to God.

John Roberts

