

Yester Bolton & Saltoun



Parish Newsletter December 2018

Dear friends,

The nights are fair drawing in... as they say, and indeed, we're nearly in December, and Advent time already. Time to start thinking about our New Year resolutions! Too soon, you think? But then again, the year of the church doesn't start on 1 January, but with Advent. I've always rather liked that – starting off the church year with a time of waiting, full of hope and expectations.

We look forward to the sparkling lights, the warm fires, to Christmas trees and good food and time with the family and our loved ones – and perhaps even to a special present or two. All of these can be part of the Christmas celebrations – in whatever shape or form we like to celebrate.

In the church, Advent has another significance, too: yes, waiting for Christmas, but not only to the celebrations around the tree, but for the message of hope that is renewed for us, each year anew. We believe that so many years ago, God showed his endless love for the world by coming into the world himself as a little vulnerable baby, by living a human life – by getting to know the way we live, the joys and the pains. This baby grew up to be a man who teaches us how we can live well together: teaches us so much about kindness and respect and selfless and inclusive love.

This is what we celebrate each year at Christmas, when we gather around the manger, and retell the old stories from Nazareth and Bethlehem. No matter if you believe they are true, we all can learn so much from the Gospels. Their message of love, their vision of a world in which justice and peace are not a far-off dream, the hope they offer: they can inspire us, give us strength and encouragement, especially when the world around us seems dark and sometimes unfriendly and unjust, when we are worried and afraid.

Advent is that time when we remember that the message of love is still true for us today. We hope you will join us for some or all of our Advent services and Christmas celebrations, and celebrate this love with us. So, how about those New Year resolutions...?

All the best,

Anikó

Evening Services

We hold quiet and reflective evening services every six to eight weeks.

In September, we focussed on the theme of Peace, and took small pictures of Dali's peace dove home with us, as a reminder of the peace God offers us. In November, we reflected on the story of St Martin, and of shining a light in dark times. Our next evening service is the Blue Christmas service on 16 December at 4pm in Yester Church, for all who have lost a loved one – recently or longer ago – and miss them especially at Christmas time. Future evening services will be held on 13 February and again in Holy Week.



Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland

On 16 December at 4pm Anikó will be leading the Blue Christmas service at 4pm. This is a time dedicated to recognising and acknowledging that Christmas can be an incredibly difficult time for those who are living with bereavement and loss in all its guises. We hope that by its very nature the outreach and fellowship of the church supports those in our communities, but there are those who mourn privately and deeply and have little family, or community support to help them manage their grief.

This is where the charity 'Cruse' can step in; its aim is to seek to help people understand their grief and to cope with their loss. Cruse was established by a group of widows in the 50s, the name coming from the story of the widow who cared for Elijah. During a time of great famine, her 'cruse' (a jar or jug of oil) never ran out, the comparison being to the compassion and care offered to the bereaved. Despite its biblical name Cruse is a multi-faith organisation, open and accessible to all.

Each year in Scotland there are around 56,000 deaths, leaving around 200,000 bereaved people. It is estimated that around 20-30% will require third party intervention to travel through their grief. Help can come in a manner of forms, telephone support, drop in groups or face to face counselling for adults, children and young people. There are currently 265 qualified volunteers working across Scotland. Cruse has recently developed computer mediated counselling for 'digital natives', those living remotely, or people who for various reasons, such as deafness, who cannot directly access other forms of help. Cruse is here for anyone who may need a little support at the hardest of times.

To find out more the website is www.crusescotland.org.uk

Be a peacemaker for Christmas Aid

At Christmas time, we celebrate the birth of Jesus, given to bring hope, love, peace and justice to a broken world. We get the chance to spend time with our loved ones celebrating the Prince of Peace, but for millions of people this Christmas, peace seems like an impossible dream. Violence and conflict remain the norm for many across the globe, from South Sudan to Colombia. In 2016, more countries experienced violent conflict than at any time in nearly 30 years. If current trends persist, by 2030 more than half of the world's poorest people will be living in countries affected by high levels of violence.

But while peace is broken every day, it is also built every day through the tireless work of peacemakers. This Christmas, Christian Aid is calling for you to stand together with peacemakers around the world who are working tirelessly to bring hope to seemingly hopeless situations. You can be a peacemaker with your donation to Christmas Aid – an appeal to raise vital funds for Christian Aid's work. You can make a donation by visiting caid.org.uk/christmas-appeal or calling 0845 700 0300.



Messy Church

We had a great afternoon at Messy Church in September, thinking about the theme of friendship, and were delighted to welcome 36 children of all ages with mums, dads and grandparents. We admired the huge creative talent displayed by the children at all the craft stations. Later, we played collaborative group games, where all ages could join in, before hearing some stories of friendship from the Bible, which showed us that friendship can have many different shapes or forms. The shared meal at the end of the afternoon to some degree resembled the feeding of the 5,000 - and as in that story, there was enough to go around all the children.

The next Messy Church will take place on 20 January - keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for more details.

Dates for your diary

Knitting at Humble Winter Market, Saturday 24 November

The Knot Knits is the knitting group that meets on a Wednesday at 7.30 in The Session Rooms East Saltoun. We have been very busy and have produced a wide variety of knitted articles, hot water bottle covers, tea cosies, children's wear, hats, Christmas decorations and many more novelty items. We are having a table at Humble Winter Market on Saturday 24th November 10am til 3pm, all proceeds going to Church Funds.

Please come along and support us!

Soup lunch on 25 November

The village hall in East Saltoun needs our help! Plans for the replacement are with East Lothian Council and we await planning approval. ELC have committed £400,000 to the project, but the end cost is likely to be at least £100,000 more than this. Other funding bodies will be approached, but meanwhile we need to be fund-raising locally, especially amongst Hall users and supporters to make up the difference!

As a regular Fletcher Hall user, Yester Bolton & Saltoun Church social committee are holding a "soup lunch" in The Fletcher Hall on Sunday 25th November from 12:30pm.

All are welcome and soup lunch is provided for a donation towards the Fletcher Hall appeal. There will also be a sales table!



Carol singing around the Christmas Tree outside Yester Kirk, 16 December

This annual community event, in aid of 'Versus Arthritis' (a newly named charity after the merging of 'Arthritis Research UK' and 'Arthritis Care') will take place on Sunday, 16 December at 6.30pm at the Christmas Tree in front of Yester Church. All are welcome to the carol singing, where (warm) refreshments will also be provided. And who knows – Father Christmas might find his way there, too...

A few words of thanks...

Church Flowers

We would like to thank everyone who has provided flowers for the church over the last year. They have been enjoyed during the service and greatly appreciated by those who received them after the service. If you would like to put your name down to supply the flowers, the new list will be on the table from November.

Sylvia Anderson and Jean Peat.

Blythswood Care Shoebox Collection

This year, with help from Humble, we delivered thirty-seven packed shoeboxes to the Blythswood collection point, and they will be in Eastern Europe in time for Christmas. Many thanks to everyone who took the time to fill a box and managed the nightmare task of wrapping it!

Alison Mill Irving

East Lothian Foodbank

Thank you very much for your very generous donations to our autumn collection for the East Lothian Foodbank. We were able to donate 101.2kg (223lbs). A great thank you also to Elizabeth Hunter, who has coordinated our collections and been the link person to the Foodbank for the past couple of years. She has recently handed over this task to Arthur McLeod, to whom we are also very grateful for continuing this important work.

Anikó Schütz Bradwell



Stamp Appeal

With Christmas not far off, it's worth reminding everyone that we collect used stamps which are sent on to charities who can recycle them to help funding of world Christian mission. There are collection tins available near all of the church doors, so please save the stamps from your Christmas cards (and indeed all of your other mail!) and drop them off when convenient.

Drop in for a coffee!

Everyone is welcome at the coffee mornings from 10.30am-12.00noon in Yester Church on the 2nd Wednesday of each month and Saltoun Session Rooms on the 4th Tuesday.

Coffee Morning Dates

Yester 12 Dec

Yester 9 Jan

Yester 13 Feb

Saltoun 22 Jan

Saltoun 26 Feb

Parish Register

Baptism 19 August 2018 Finn Maximilian Bradwell,
son of Anikó Schütz Bradwell and David Bradwell

Deaths 12 September 2018 Sir William Kerr Fraser, Gifford
25 September 2018 Helen Mack, Melrose (formerly Gifford)

Minister	Anikó Schütz Bradwell	01620 811193	ASchuetzBradwell@churchofscotland.org.uk
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Gift Aid Treasurer (Yester)	Wendy Ferguson	01620 811069	wendyferguson.wf@gmail.com
Gift Aid Treasurer (Bolton and Saltoun)	Paul Sales	01620 811260	paulsales457@btinternet.com
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Deadline for next newsletter: Monday 11 February 2019

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The Church of Scotland