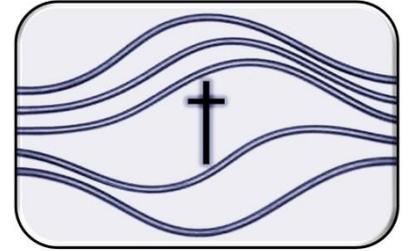




# Wick St Fergus Church of Scotland



**December 2016**

Welcome to the December issue of Wick St Fergus newsletter. Christmas is coming and we will have entered the season of Advent by the time this sits in your hands. I hope that you are getting excited about this festive season. As I looked over the various Bible readings for this most important season of the year, many memories came back to me, especially from my time working on the streets of Germany and of Glasgow. The reading that is uppermost in my mind is also one of the oldest hymns in the Church, and it comes from St Luke's Gospel, chapter one and verses forty-six to fifty-five. It is Mary's song or as it is sometimes called The Magnificat. In it Mary accepts her commission from God to be the bear of Christ and she sings this tremendous song of hope for the needy and also a word of warning for those who like to think that they are mighty in this world, the folk Robert Burns would have called the "unco guid."

But to my story. Please forgive me if you have heard it before. I was a committee member of a charity called Loaves and Fishes and we worked with the homeless, addict and 'working girl' populations of that part of the city, bounded by the Kingston Bridge in the west, Glasgow Central Railway station in the east, Sauchieall Street in the north, and the River Clyde in the south. Each year we held a street Christmas party for our friends on the street (and they were genuinely friends for we treated them with respect and not as objects of charity). I went to where our care van parked up a bit early and there was already close to 200 street residents there awaiting help. Across from where we were standing was a posh travel agents and the office folks were having a party with lots of alcohol and what my old Gran would say "shenanigans." Some of the party goers came to the window opposite my friends and I and began to point their fingers mockingly at us, and we could see them mouthing their vulgar and nasty comments. One of my homeless friends, who is now with the Lord, said to me, "I wish I was there with them." His friend, Tam, turned to us and said, "I wish they were out here with us." That is what Mary was singing about in her song. That is why Mary is such a special person from the Bible for homeless people. That is why St John wrote in chapter one of his Gospel, ".....and the Word was made flesh and lived among us and we saw his glory.....full of grace and truth."

Mary sang about God in Christ coming out to where we were, out to the cold and dark places of the world. He came out to where we were and he came in the form of a servant. He came to those who recognised their need and didn't berate him. Instead we learn from St Matthew's Gospel in chapter 25 that he called all who recognised their need of him his sisters and brothers. We see the King of the ages coming among us as a homeless refugee, fleeing the death squads of a mad ruler. As I thought about this, the words of Canadian songwriter Bruce Cockburn came to me and he wrote in his classic song called "Cry of a Tiny Babe:" 'There are others who know about this miracle birth, the humblest of people catch a glimpse of their worth, for it isn't to the palace that the Christ child comes, but to shepherds and street people, hookers and bums.'

So please consider how you can make a difference this Christmas. Put aside a tin each day and at the end of Christmas donate the tins to Caithness foodbank. Speak up for those who need the help of others to speak up for them, like the Wick and Thurso Youth Clubs who have just had their funding decimated with no one to speak in their defense. Speak up on behalf of groups like Caithness and Sutherland Woman's Aid or Caithness Samaritans. Be a friend to the friendless. Get involved in Mary's great work of seeing the powerful brought low because of their agenda of discrimination towards those already disadvantaged because of the colour of their skin or their religion or ethnic origin or sexuality. If you want to know more about how you can make a difference this Christmas come and see us some Sunday. You know where we are.

A couple of wee housekeeping matters. The next issue will obviously be the January issue. It will be a wee bit shorter than normal and because of holidays some bits of news will be missing because the January issue must go to the printers much earlier than usual. As always, funerals etc. missed will be picked up in February.

**Revd John Nugent BD(Honours).**

## Church Register

**DEATHS:** *We are sorry to report the passing of the following people:*

12<sup>th</sup> October – Mrs I Beattie  
 31<sup>st</sup> October – Mrs Kupusarovic  
 5<sup>th</sup> November – Mrs Annie “Nan” Newlands  
 15<sup>th</sup> November – Mr William Harper Mackay  
 26<sup>th</sup> November – Ian Jappy  
 28<sup>th</sup> November – Donald “Donnie” Farquahar

## Diary

Wednesdays      Choir  
 1<sup>st</sup> - 7pm            Stewardship  
 8<sup>th</sup> – 7pm            Session  
 10<sup>th</sup> – 10.30        Christmas Tree Festival  
 15<sup>th</sup> - 7.30pm       Wick Choral Concert  
 24<sup>th</sup> - 6.30pm       Family Service  
 24<sup>th</sup> - 11.30pm      Watchnight service  
 25<sup>th</sup> - 11.30am      half hour service  
 1<sup>st</sup> Jan - 11.30am   half hour service

## Flowers for Sunday

DATE	DONOR	ARRANGER
4 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Mrs M Farrell, Reiss	Mrs Harper
11 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Mrs Janet MacDonald, Shore Lane	T.B.C.
18 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Mrs Pamela McAdie, Girnigoe St	Mrs Steven
25 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Mrs Gunn, Netherby, Northcote St,	Mrs Anderson
8 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Mrs Roberston, 11 MacLeod Road	Mrs Harper
15 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Mrs M Robertson, Miller Ave	Mrs Johnson

## Church Duty Rota

Date	BUS	STAIRS	DOOR	DOOR	USHER
4 <sup>th</sup> Dec	I Banks	M Duffy	H Gray	R Mappin	J Cormack
11 <sup>th</sup> Dec	J MacIannan	A Duffy	J Coghill	J Houston	E Henderson
18 <sup>th</sup> Dec	B Campbell	G Macdonald	J Mackay	M Foubister	M Thomson
25 <sup>th</sup> Dec	W Robertson	G Ramsay	A Rosie	G Watt	A Sinclair
1 <sup>st</sup> Jan	J Cormack	R Mappin	I Banks	H Gray	M Duffy
8 <sup>th</sup> Jan	E Henderson	J Houston	J MacIannan	J Coghill	A Duffy

## Sermon information from the Minister

DATE	READING 1	READING 2	SUBJECT	DAY OF CHURCH CALENDAR
4 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Isaiah 11:1-10	Romans 15:4-13	The Coming Kingdom and its Constitution	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent
11 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Isaiah 35:1-10	Matthew 11:2-11	Unlikely Servants Of The Coming King	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent
18 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Psalms 80:1-8	Luke 1:26-38	The Blessing of Anticipation	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent
25 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Isaiah 9:2-7	Luke 2:15-20	We Welcome The Christ-Child	Christmas Morning
1 <sup>st</sup> Jan '17	Psalms 8	Acts 3:1-10	The Blessing Of The Sanctuary	New Year's Day



## **Guild**

### **7th November**

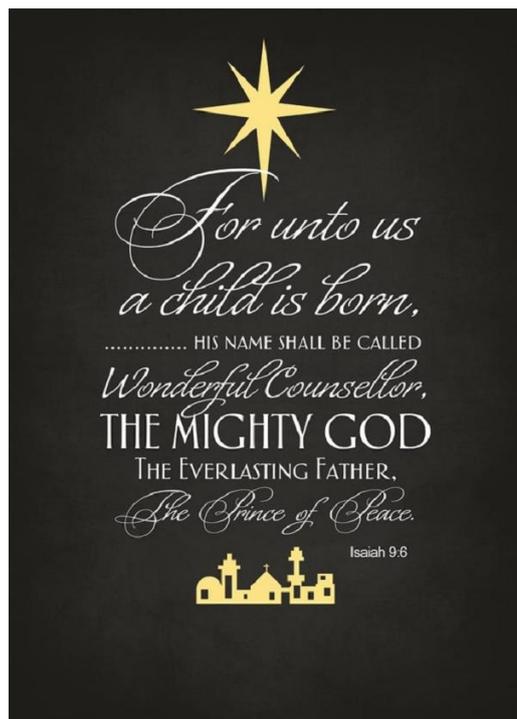
Janet McDonald led the last meeting of the session, opening with a hymn and a drama illustrating the Guild theme *Go in Joy*. Before the members turned to the business of the allocation of their funds, Janet gave them an update on the situation in Haiti, which has recently suffered devastation from a hurricane and they listened to another drama about the project dealing with the eradication of Female Genital Mutilation. Janet, who is also Guild Project Co-ordinator for Caithness, gave details of all six Projects and showed a DVD on Street Pastors before it was decided to donate to Care for the Family- Let's Stick Together (£150), Street Pastors (£150) and make a further donation of £100 to the Project in Haiti, which they supported last year. £400 has also been given to the church. Before the final hymn the Guild "thespians" took centre stage again and performed another small drama on the theme of *Go in Joy*. At the close of the meeting there was a welcome cup of tea, followed by a very successful Bring and Buy sale. The Guild will start their new session in the Spring.

### **Guild Week Rally 19th November.**

Guild members from all over the county gathered in St. Peter's and St. Andrew's church Thurso for a Guild Week Rally. The meeting was led by Mrs Janet McDonald and the guest speaker, our own member, Mrs Pat Weir had the gathering enthralled by her readings, performed in her own inimitable way, from David Kossof's *The Witness*. A time of fellowship was enjoyed over a cup of tea in the church hall, when news and views were exchanged and friendships renewed. A good way to spend a Saturday afternoon in the service of the Guild.

### **Guild Projects 2015 - 2018. Donations received up to 31/08/16**

Ascension Trust - Street Pastors.....	£56,391.03
Care for the Family - Let's Stick Together (Scotland).....	£41,410.99
Christian Aid - Caring for Mother Earth in Bolivia .....	£29,489.94
Feed the Minds - FGM in Kenya.....	£56,114.37
Mission International - Haiti Project.....	£32,756.97
Prospects - All Friends Together (Scotland).....	<u>£31,867.87</u>
	£248,031.17



### **Give these gifts this Christmas:**

- To your enemy . . . . .forgiveness,
- To your opponent . . . . . tolerance.
- To a friend . . . . . your heart,
- To a customer . . . . . service.
- To all men . . . . . charity,
- To every child . . . . . a good example.
- To yourself . . . . . respect.





## Festive Service Information

24<sup>th</sup> December - 6.30pm – family service

24<sup>th</sup> December - 11.30pm – watchnight service

25<sup>th</sup> December - 11.30am: ½ hour service - readings/carols.

1<sup>st</sup> January '17 – 11.30am: ½ hour service - hymns/ readings

It would be great to see as many of you as possible worshipping with us to celebrate the coming of the Christ-child, even on Christmas morning and also on January 1<sup>st</sup> before we all commence festivities.

## As A Baby, Jesus Came

As a baby, Jesus came, From His home above

He left His throne, and who He was, To teach us how to love

As a baby, Jesus came, Wrapped in swaddling cloth;

Willingly took on humanity, Though He was one with God

As a baby, Jesus came, To one day grow to be

The saviour of the human race, People like you and me

As a baby, Jesus came, As God's eternal light

That will never be extinguished, But forever shine out bright

As a baby, Jesus came, The hope of eternal life,

Reconciling us back to God, Giving meaning to our lives

As a man, Jesus died, His blood poured out for all,

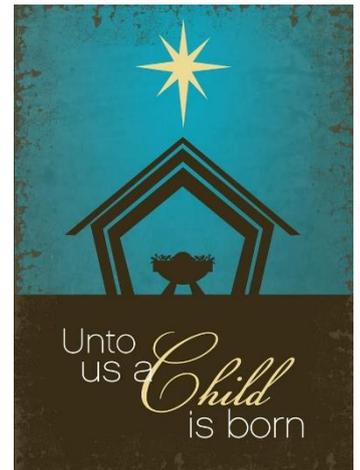
Cleansing and forgiving us, For to this, He was called

We thank Him that He came a babe, And grew to be a man

And for His sacrificial love, His nailed scarred feet and hands

Through it all we can live on, With Jesus Christ our Lord

The babe that came that first Christmas, Is what we thank Him for. © By M.S.Lowndes



***May this Christmas end the present year on a cheerful note and make way for a fresh and bright New Year filled with God's blessing. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!***

**Website:** Find us at [www.wickstferguschurch.org.uk](http://www.wickstferguschurch.org.uk)

***Please can all items for February's newsletter be with Michelle by Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January – Thank you***

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