

Annan United Reformed Church

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December 2018 Newsletter



The
United
Reformed
Church



Guarantees
a **better deal**
for Third World
Producers



DECEMBER 2018 WORSHIP AT ANNAN URC

Sunday 2nd December: Communion Service - Mrs Margaret Jones

Prayer Leader: H Higton

Bible Readings: R Richardson
J Pool

Sunday 9th December: Morning Service - Mrs Nan Maxwell

Prayer Leader: J Murray

Bible Readings: F Glass
H Higton

Sunday 16th December: Morning Service - Mrs Lesley Richmond

Prayer Leader: H McNairn

Bible Readings: J Murray
E Woodman

Sunday 23rd December: Christmas Gift Service - Rev Haydn Higton

Prayer Leader: D Maxwell

Bible Readings: N Maxwell
M Kerr

Sunday 30th December: Lessons and Carols - Worship Group

Prayer Leader: H Higton

Bible Readings: H McNairn
R Richardson

Note to Prayer Leaders and Readers: visiting Service Leaders have the option to choose their own theme and readings, and may wish to lead prayers themselves.

Such information will be given to you as soon as possible.

THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

“Why do you love Christmas so?”

I asked some youngsters at their play
and they told me, faces alight with glee

“Because of the presents, the sparkling tree,
the parties, the big iced cake for tea,
with crackers, on Christmas Day.”



“What does Christmas mean to you?”

I asked their mother. She gave a sigh:

“It’s all hard work and worry for me,
just cooking and shopping incessantly;
the children expect so much, you see.
It gets harder as years go by.”

Then I asked my neighbour ... the dear old chap
was feeding the sparrows as snowflakes fell
on his grizzled beard and ancient cap,
but his voice rang out, like a friendly bell:
“Why, it’s the gladdest time of year,
when the Blessed Babe was born, m’dear,
a time for loving, and giving and cheer”,
said Ned who knew full well.



And all the world was shining white
as I went indoors, with heart so light,
for Ned had uttered – he was so right –
the words I had longed to hear.

Church Gardener

WHAT WILL YOU GIVE?

The church family continues to give generously, both in terms of time and resources. However, Christmas is a good time to ponder what we are doing – what we are giving and whether we could improve and make both time and giving more effective.

In the past year, donations of food for Kate's Kitchen have exceeded expectations – one large shopping bag each week was the average providing food parcels for distribution. Shoeboxes have been filled for giving to youngsters at Christmas – this year our church donated 57 boxes, plus £182-00 towards the cost of transporting the boxes. Well done on both fronts!

On Sunday 23rd December you are warmly invited to join us at 10:30 for our Christmas Gift Service. This will be an opportunity to bring a financial donation, and if it is put in one of the envelopes which will be in the church vestibule in December this will be collected at the Gift Service. The charity being supported is "Soul Soup" – a Dumfries and surrounding areas charity supporting young folk (12-25 years) who have mental health problems. For more information, see www.soulsoup.co.uk.

Let our church family be known not only for hospitality but also for continuing generosity.

Haydn Higton



WHAT CAN I GIVE HIM,

poor as I am?
if I were a shepherd,
I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise man,
I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him –
give my heart.

Christina Rosetti
In the bleak mid-winter

FRIDAY FELLOWSHIP

As we go to press, our members are looking forward to the meeting on Friday 30th November, when a representative from Ruthwell Savings Bank will speak to us.

The Christmas meeting will be held on Friday 14th December at the Anglers at 1pm for a meal (a varied selection of food will be on offer). It is hoped as many of our members as possible will attend.

Marion Kerr



THE SHORTEST DAY **FRIDAY 21ST DECEMBER 2018**

It's cold and dark, and on the pane
I see the glint of falling rain;
Inside the flue the north wind roars
And makes me glad I'm safe indoors.
In comfy chair, I sit so snug
With fire in grate and cat on rug
With cup of tea, and biscuit too,
There's nothing else I need to do
But listen by the firelight's glow
To carols on the radio,
And gaze upon my Christmas tree
That twinkles bright for all to see.
For though the summer's far away
I still enjoy the shortest day.

Church Gardener





DIGNITY
EQUALITY
JUSTICE

Everyone is equal in the sight of God. Yet we live in a world where poverty and inequality persist. Poverty is an outrage against humanity. It robs people of their dignity and hope, their freedom and power over their own lives.

For over 70 years, Christian Aid has been standing with the poor, the marginalised and those left behind. Of all faiths and none. Working in times of crisis and beyond to help people regain their dignity, find equality and gain justice.

There is nothing like seeing our work on the ground – as I recently had the privilege of doing when visiting a number of our country programmes in Malawi, Kenya and Zimbabwe, and meeting Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh – to bring home the truth of these words.

It was humbling to hear the gratitude of young girls in Malawi, who have been enabled to return to school after giving birth, to avoid child marriage and stay in education. It was inspiring to hear of young people whose hopes, dreams and aspirations were being restored thanks to the support of our orphans and vulnerable children programme in Kenya.

Seeing such transformative work was a reminder to me of why Christian Aid exists. Our vision is clear: we are committed to dignity, equality and justice for all. These are not just words but lead to real and lasting change in the lives of those who need it most.

We at Christian Aid are so grateful for your support because we know that to be truly effective, those of us who believe poverty is an outrage need to come together. It will take commitment, boldness and strong belief, but our voices and actions are stronger together. Thank you for caring as deeply as we do.

The stories in this [*Christian Aid Magazine*] issue are about putting our values into practice, about working to create a world where everyone has fulness of life. So, leaders, politicians, businesses, churches, communities and individuals, let us continue to stand together against poverty.

You and me. One global community. With energy, with hope.

Amanda Khozi Mukwashi
(from editorial of Christian Aid Magazine)

STORIES FOR CHANGE NOVEMBER 2018 - BANGLADESH

Many of you will remember Commitment for Life talking about this issue many years ago. Unkhoam Bome is what used to be called a traditional birthing attendant. 25 years ago, she received training from the Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh. This was an eleven-day training session with a refresher course a few years later. She has safely delivered over 300 babies since that initial training.

Unkhoam lives in the Gethshimani para in Bandarban which is a remote part of Bangladesh. There is little emergency health support, so she is greatly admired by the community for her fully trained child delivery skills.

Having heard that CCDB were again offering training she decided to update her knowledge and skills. This time she spent 10 days learning all about the new ways of providing support and advice to pregnant mothers. Her hygiene practices have been tightened by wearing gloves, a face mask and a head cap. She keeps in contact with the mother for up to a week after the birth offering support and help where needed. She can confidently spot complications because of her experience and will organise for a mother to be taken to the nearest hospital or clinic if she is concerned. This has happened on many occasions and her quick assessment of the situation has saved many mothers and babies. Unkhoam is satisfied with the work she is doing in the community to ensure the safe delivery of a healthy child to a healthy mother.

From Linda Mead, Commitment for Life



Born in a stable
A long way away -
A little tiny baby
In a bed of hay.

His mother was Mary
And the angels did sing:
“Glory to God”
For the birth of a King.



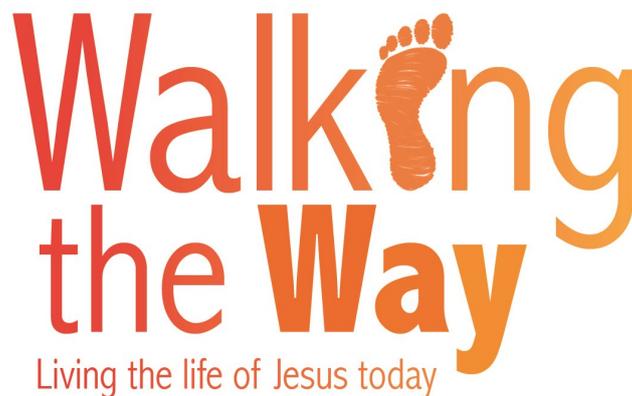
The baby's name is Jesus,
He is the Son of God,
He came to teach us how to live –
Our Saviour and our Lord.

THINK ON THESE THINGS

Figures from the United Nations tell us that the world produces enough food to feed everyone, yet one in nine people go hungry. About 80 per cent of the world's extreme poor live in rural areas. Most of them depend on agriculture.

Hunger kills more people every year than malaria, tuberculosis and Aids combined. One third of the food produced worldwide is lost or wasted, at a cost of almost £2 trillion a year.

from CARE prayer diary



HOW CAN WE HELP?

Half a million older people go at least five days a week without seeing or speaking to anyone. This can be as bad for someone's health as smoking fifteen cigarettes a day, worse than obesity and could increase risk of death by 29 per cent.

The Office of National Statistics found almost a tenth of people aged 16 to 24 (the highest proportion of any age group) were always or often lonely. This is three times higher than for those age 65 or over!

from CARE prayer diary



DECEMBER 2018 DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sun 2nd	Communion Service and Sunday Seekers - 10:30 am
Mon 3rd	Floral Art Group - 7:00 pm in hall
Tue 4th	Knit & Natter - 10:00 am in hall, and every Tuesday
Tue 4th	All Ability Games - 2:00 pm in hall, and every Tuesday
Thu 6th	Girls' Brigade - 6:00 pm in hall, and every Thursday in term time
Fri 7th	ACT Fridays in Faith - 7:00 pm in The HUB, Ednam Street
Sun 9th	Morning Service and Sunday Seekers - 10:30 am
Wed 12th	Arts & Crafts Group by SHAP - 2:00 pm
Thu 13th	Christmas Lunches - 11:30 am to 1:30 pm
Fri 14th	Friday Fellowship Christmas Meal - 1:00 pm at The Anglers
Sun 16th	Morning Worship and Sunday Seekers - 10:30 am
Sun 23rd	Christmas Gift Service - 10:30 am
Sun 23rd	Deadline for January Newsletter items to reach Ruth Mitchell, please, including your group meeting diary dates
Tue 25th	Happy Christmas! Wishing Joy in your hearts and Peace in your lives
Sun 30th	Lessons and Carols - Epiphany - 10:30 am

A REMINDER TO GROUPS:

We are a Fairtrade Church.



We have committed to:

Use Fairtrade tea and coffee for all meetings for which we have responsibility

Move forward on using other Fairtrade products (such as sugar, biscuits, fruit)

Promote Fairtrade during Fairtrade Fortnight – and through other activities whenever possible