



Christmas Past - But Still With Us!

What a wonderful Christmas season we enjoyed! The Church looked its best thanks to the beautiful arrangements prepared by our Flower Club and the various events and services were enjoyed by healthy congregations.

We began with the Tearfund Christmas Concert, featuring Steph McLeod, Alan McKinlay, David Lyon and Yvonne Lyon. This was an evening of beautifully-prepared music - some new compositions but mainly new interpretations of classic Christmas carols. The playing and singing was of the very highest standard and many of us were caused to listen to the words of the story as if for the first time. On top of that, all the money raised went to support Tearfund's work aimed at tackling child trafficking - a worthy cause if ever there was one.



Sunday 21st December was a hectic day. The morning service saw a very full church enjoying Christmas carols and all that's best about the Nativity story. The Sunday Club party took place that afternoon and then the evening service as usual.



But Christmas Eve was extra special. There was something wonderful in the simplicity of this year's Nativity Play and the packed church took it in as never before. So too, the musical presentations and the Christingle procession. The weather had turned for the worse by the time of the Watchnight Service but even so, a good congregation gathered to welcome the midnight hour and the coming of Christ. (Continued with more pictures on back page.)



Moderator Visit

What a treat we have in store with the upcoming visit of John Chalmers, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland! As a friend of St. Andrew's Church and a former visitor to us following the injuries suffered by his son J.J. in

Afghanistan, Rev Chalmers was only too pleased to accept our invitation to come back to Arbroath and share worship with us.

He will preach at our 11am service on Sunday 1st March and, given that it will be our Communion Sunday, will celebrate the sacrament.

Keep the date free and, why not think about inviting a friend to this special service?

STOP PRESS

Elsewhere in Quest, you'll read about the devastating flooding that has brought tragedy to large parts of Malawi.

By way of a little bit of good news, we have just heard that the most recent container - which left Arbroath in November - has safely

arrived in Malawi.

The goods - many of which will now be of much greater significance - have been distributed to where the needs are greatest. This is made all the easier because we partner with Aquaid which has experienced staff right there, able to make decisions based on fast-changing circumstances.



CHURCH OFFICE : 431135

ADMINISTRATOR

Linda Hunter

Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri : 9 -12noon

MINISTER

Rev Dr W Martin Fair, BA, BD

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Rev Stuart Irvin, BD

SESSION CLERK

Jane Miller : 875235

TREASURER

Susan Godsall : 430862

FREEWILL ENVELOPES

Iain Robertson : 877519

CHURCH OFFICER

Janis Clark : 878594

PASTORAL CARE

Kim Marr : 430505

YOUTH WORK TEAM

Adele Ramsay : 07403 193 875

Sheila Dunphy : 873218

HAVILAH PROJECT

LEADER

Tracey McLeod : 434088

HAVILAH ADMINISTRATOR

Karen Reaney : 434088

ORGANIST

Jane Miller : 875235

FABRIC CONVENOR

Ray Reaney : 07803 235418

SUNDAY CLUB

Elaine Fair : 873238

SAFEGUARDING

Eleanor Mands : 01382 477318

FLOWER CONVENOR

Margaret McIntosh : 876993

PRAYER PROMOTERS

Judy Spink : 872395

Anne Matthew : 876008

SUPPLIES CO-ORDINATOR

Isobel Prouse : 876236

BOOKINGS / ROLLKEEPER

Linda Hunter : 431135

MAGAZINE EDITOR/CDs

Ken Miller : 875235

ST ANDREW'S ARBROATH

Parish Records

December 2014 - January 2015

Baptisms - Esther Napier, daughter of Fergus and Kirsty

Blessings - None

Weddings - None

Funerals - Ed Anderson, Beryl Kennedy

IMPORTANT DATES

MARCH EDITION

Handwritten articles should be handed in to the office by the first date and not to the Editor.

Word Processed files, as attachments, can be sent directly to the Editor by the second date.

Please avoid embedding articles in an email as these then need additional formatting work.

Friday 13th February (Written/preferably typed)

Tuesday 17th February (Word-Processed file)

Malawi Fundraising

Saturday 7th February - Quiz night
7pm - £10 per team of 4. There will also be a parting collection for the flood appeal.

Sunday 8th February - Lunch
After service - soup and pudding lunch
No tickets - donations to flood appeal.

Saturday 18th April - Dinner Dance
Meadowbank inn, Arbroath, with the players of Arbroath football club.

The April date will be used for rebuild projects which will of course be ongoing. The February dates will be aimed more at emergency use and cholera prevention.

Please note we still recycle old mobiles, foreign coins and ink cartridges. We are now also able to recycle toner cartridges.

Also has anyone any holdalls or cases that they no longer use or need? Please let us know if you are willing to donate them to Malawi.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

Organisations will alert members when groups resume after holidays or when changes to venues are made.

SUNDAY

10.15 am – Gathering for prayer.

10.30 am – Choir practice.

11.00 am – Morning service (with short communion on the third Sunday of each month. Tea/coffee after. Creche – up to age 3. Infants – ages 3 to 5. Juniors – ages 8 and 9. Seniors – ages 10 and 11
Sunday Club – Elaine Fair (873238). Teen Scene – S1 to S2

7.30 to 9.00 pm – Youth Group

9.00 pm – Senior Youth Group

Monday to Friday - 11.00 am – Havilah : Drop-in Centre – Community Spirit (434088)

MONDAY

2.00 pm – Dorothy Dobson Over 50s Exercise Class

6.00 pm – Rainbow Guides – L Hadden (875379)

7.30 pm – St Andrew's Guild : Fortnightly – Shona Kemp (878526)

7.30 pm – Flower Club : Fortnightly – M McIntosh (876993)

TUESDAY

9.30 am – 3.00 pm - Mum and Me - K Marr (430505)

WEDNESDAY

10.30 am – Midweek Meeting Point – M Fair (873238)

6.15 pm – Brownies – Rosie Hill (07977 790528)

7.30 pm – Guides - Rosie Hill (07977 790528)

7.30 pm – Women's Group – first Wednesdays – Elaine Fair (873238)

THURSDAY

10.00 am – Parent and Toddler Group – L Clark (437758)

2.00 pm – Friends Club : first Thursdays – N Watson – B Gerrard, secretary (434821)

6.00 pm – Anchor Boys – S Jamieson (431942)

6.00 pm – BB Junior Section – W Ewart (876114)

7.30 pm – BB Company Section – M Clark (437758)

FRIDAY

9.30 am – Coffee morning

Intimations, changes of address, hall bookings etc., please contact the Church office, Monday to Friday, 9 am to noon and for 15 minutes after Sunday Service, telephone 431135.

Martin Fair

February 2015

Dear friends,

There's a lady who lives in Glasgow who is struggling with cancer. She's been told to avoid infection at all costs and so being around crowds is, for her, ruled out, which is difficult when you've been part of church all your life and when being in church is where you really want to be!

So isn't it great to know that this particular lady is now part of our church - via the live streaming every Sunday morning! Yes, she heard about the service that we're offering and decided to try it out. From there she decided that she would join every week. She may be a hundred miles away and watching us through her laptop screen but she is very much part of our congregation. And we're delighted to know that she's joining us every Sunday.

And what about Sandy Bowie who's been joining us on Sunday mornings from the far-flung corners of the world where his work takes him to? Now Sandy can stay part of things while he's away. And what about the person who was feeling ill last Sunday morning - too ill to come to church? Previously that person would have missed out but last week was able to join us online. And what about the student who is studying down in England and who misses a church that she feels she can be part of? Yes, she is joining us too by way of the Internet.

And what about the hundreds of others who we know for a fact have watched our services? Some we know of but mostly these are people we have no idea of at all. But they've found their way to our website - over a thousand in the last month and from there, lots of them have gone to the services, whether live or by catch-up.

I have a real sense that we are on to something with the use of this 21st century technology - using it for mission and outreach and pastoral care. We've put our toe into the water and I for one am thoroughly excited about where that first tentative step is going to take us. How might God use this vehicle for the extension of his Kingdom?

I want to say a huge 'thank you' to the project team which has overseen this installation. They've put in hours of work beyond counting and have brought with them bucketfuls of expertise and experience - making it all available to the church. Now we're up and running. We've still got plenty to learn and there are still glitches and teething issues that we need to resolve. Our tech team and operators will grow in confidence and skill as the months go by. But the overall message is a resounding chorus of 'Well done!'

Have you begun to think about how you might use this service - in an outreach sense? Is there someone you know who doesn't presently come to church - maybe someone who fell away or someone who's never been or seems unlikely ever to step into the building? Why not start looking for opportunities through which you might say to someone, 'Did you know you can check out my church online?' Perhaps you could just show them the 'Watching Us Online' article on the back page of this issue of Quest - or give them a copy (we have plenty to spare). Yes, it is that easy to be an Evangelist!

With love,

Martin and Elaine

martin.fair@sky.com

It's an election year!

'It's an election year' is the statement that will probably end up being bandied about for the next 5 months in our press. It will most likely be tagged on to articles with a question or opinion about how this will affect our politicians and parties this year in the run up to May 6th.

Well what, as Christians, are we to make of it? Perhaps the expectation is that we avoid talking about it! When I was a locum prior to starting at St Andrew's I was invited to a Burns Supper and I was seated next to the local councillor. I made light of the fact that religion and politics were topics that were normally off limits and here they were sitting us next to one another. We did manage to find something to talk about though...the weather!

Is it taboo? Is it something we shouldn't bring up? I hope in my heart of hearts that it is not something we remain quiet on out of politeness for cultural expectations.

A biblical example of how we might engage is pointed out to us in 1 Timothy 2:1-2 where our prayers for all people are to include 'kings and all those in authority'. What is

the best way to do this though? More often than not if we are praying for someone or about a situation we try and inform ourselves as much as possible so that we can be focused in our prayers. Should we not be doing the same as we pray for our leaders? We ought to do our research, ask questions and engage with other people.

J. John, suggesting ways we can be involved in politics, starts with this suggestion; "Most of my discussions with Christians regarding politics are based on their ignorant prejudicial opinions and not on facts! We need to be better informed and understand what's critical and what's true."

Perhaps as we approach the general election we could make use of the phrase that our journalists keep in their top pocket. 'It's an election year' so I am going to make sure I find time to pray for my leaders. 'It's an election year' so I will look at what issues most affect the poor and the marginalised. 'It's an election year' so I am going to engage with my friends and neighbours about the things that matter most to them. 'It's an election year' so...

Your Friend and Associate, Stuart Irvin

Ask Theophilus

Question :

Is God the Father of every human being?

Theophilus answers :

Because God is the Creator, it is true to say that every single human being is a 'child of God' inasmuch as everyone has been made by God. That is probably what Paul means when he says, 'For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named...' (Eph. 3:14). One possible translation of 'from whom every family... is named' is 'Father of all fatherhoods'; the AV has, his [God's] 'whole family'. Both can mean 'all created human beings'.

But there is another very clear and specific sense in which God's 'fatherhood' is used in the Bible. God is Fa-

ther of all those into whom the Holy Spirit has breathed new life. Without that new life, we are by nature dead to God, even though we may believe in a God. For some people, it's like hearing someone moving about in another room, but the door into that room is locked, and they don't know who it is. C.S. Lewis calls it 'hearing footsteps in the hall'. The presence of some Other Being is heard and even felt, e.g. in nature, but not known.

Peter writes to believers saying that the Spirit has impregnated the seed of the divine nature into their hearts: 'You have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable seed (Greek sperma)' (1 Peter 1:23; see also 2:1-3, 10). In other words, his readers who once did not know God, have now been 'fathered' by very God.

So God's 'fatherhood' can refer to what we call 'general grace'—that God as our Creator; but more importantly, to 'saving grace'—that God as our Redeemer.

Guild

Our first Guild Meeting this year was on Monday 5th January when we were pleased to welcome Cedric and Catriona DeVoil who gave us a very interesting and informative talk on alternative medicine. Catriona basically said that what we eat throughout our lives, from very early stages, plays an important part in how our bodies age. She likened our body to a machine and putting the right fuel into it. They touched on acupuncture and how natural plant extracts can produce alternatives. Cedric, being a retired doctor, said that mainstream medicines can often run side by side with alternatives although Catriona said that she was not a frequent visitor to doctors' surgeries.

On Monday 19th January we welcomed Irene Hoar who gave a talk on "Flying for Life". It was great meeting up with members at our last meeting, hearing how they had spent Christmas. And especially after our first meeting of the year with the DeVoils, many of us are trying to improve our life styles – as we do every year!

Reminder: It is nearing the time of year when we collect and count the money in the Church Boxes. So could I ask you to dust them down if they have been tucked away in a cupboard. The old saying "it's the pennies that make

the pounds comes to mind, but it is also true that pound coins and fifty pences are easier to count. The Guild has been traditionally distributing and counting the boxes for years. Last year we were pleased to report that the total collected was £1,035 which went towards the Church of Scotland's Ministries and Mission Work. We will start collecting these boxes in at the end of February/beginning of March. Those of you who have boxes please ensure that they are in by then. They can be given to guild members or handed into the church office.

February Dates: Monday, 2nd February. We are having a Topic Night – How to share

Monday, 16th February. We are having our own Havilah giving us a talk on the work they do within the local community.

We are looking forward to this session with our usual enthusiasm and commitment, always hoping to welcome new members to our vibrant Guild. We have a varied syllabus and are working hard raising funds for the Church of Scotland Projects we are supporting this year. Our Guild Meetings are a time of Fun and Fellowship, always remembering our Guild Motto.

Whose we are and whom we serve.

The Seven Churches Tour

Having led several trips to the Holy Land, Martin, our minister, is proposing a trip to Turkey during October 2015, this to be a pilgrimage around the 'Seven Churches of the Revelation.'

Brochures are available from the Church Office or can be emailed upon request. These give exact details of the trip, including costs, dates and itinerary.

Essentially this is a trip which, beginning in Istanbul and

finishing in ancient Ephesus, will take in the stunning architectural remains of these seven ancient sites whilst at the same time giving participants opportunity to fully reflect on the life of the early church as it came to life in these cities. The book of Acts, Paul's letters and Revelation will all be relevant.

For the trip to take place, a minimum party of sixteen is required. Those who would like to go should speak to Martin and place a deposit with the tour company, McCabe's. This, of course, will be returned if the trip does not come to pass.

Forty Days With Jesus

Sometimes, there's such a build up to Easter that the weeks afterwards can seem a bit flat. To counteract that, this year you are invited to join a programme entitled 'Forty Days With Jesus'. This is an excellent little book which is broken into forty parts each of which focuses on the forty

days after the resurrection - and the life-changing encounters that Jesus had with a series of key biblical characters.

Here, then, is an excellent resource to help you journey through the period from Easter to Pentecost. The book costs £6. Orders must be placed at the church office by Sunday 22nd March.

Malawi Update

By now you will have heard the terrible news of the flooding which has swept across Malawi and Mozambique primarily. As I'm sure you are aware people in these regions are simply too poor to cope with this extensive damage to homes, infrastructure and crops. The BBC recently estimated that 170 Malawians had been killed in the floods but I fear that this is a massive underestimate. It also is unrepresentative of the great effect that this will have on people's ability to feed their families next year, never mind the country's ability to conduct business, education and healthcare.

Our centre at Thyolo seems to have been worst affected with a child under our care - 9 year old Halflet Thomas - being killed when the roof of his house fell on him as he waited for his friends to walk to school. We were able to help the family with the costs of the funeral by providing a coffin and food for the family. Unfortunately this cannot make up for the loss of a family member. Furthermore, at least 5 families from one village alone within our catchment area have been made homeless and Kiri our administrator has yet to find out the full extent of the damage. She plans to visit each village in turn in the coming days.

We will keep you updated as we know more but please keep this very worrying situation in your prayers as our centres are going to struggle to cope with the vast need in terms of food relief, never mind rebuild projects in the coming year.

Just a quick update on the Malawi flood crisis: As I am sure you are aware things have gone from bad to worse in Malawi with continued flooding making more people homeless and bereaving more families. The concern now is around a potential cyclone on its way towards the devastated landscape of Malawi, and more worryingly the outbreak of cholera among the rural villages. As I am sure you can imagine the floods have contaminated wells, silted up pipes and generally ruined water supplies. This has caused problems not just in the villages but also in the hospitals. Queen Elizabeth Central hospital which is the main hospital in Malawi, which is the hospital in which I usually volunteer

and our children use, has had no water for more than a week. I cannot bear to think of the hospital-acquired infections in a hospital with no water.

Clearly the situation is dire. Many more of our children have been made homeless, though thankfully our prayers have at least kept their precious lives safe. The big issue now is preventing cholera. We are trying to organise water purification strategies and also implement as much hygiene as possible to prevent this. Thankfully, the container which was sent out from Scotland contains both water purification tablets and rehydration salts among many other items.

Although rich and poor have been affected alike by the water and sanitation issues, it is primarily the poorly built houses which have fallen down. This is a trend we have noticed for a long time in Malawi, and over the past few years we have chosen to build fewer houses and build them to a higher quality in order that the houses will both last the changing weather and also help prevent disease, injury and illness. The World Health Organisation has attributed poor accommodation as an important factor in poor health. Therefore, rather than quickly rebuild poor quality houses we are initiating a more costly but more appropriate house building programme. This will start with our children and if possible extend into the local community. We have come to believe that a job worth doing is worth doing right so please understand why we are organising continued flood appeal fundraisers even into April!

Your support both prayerfully and at the fundraisers is greatly appreciated and I want to thank all those who have kindly pledged their support. Kiri, our administrator in Malawi wanted me to convey her appreciation and remind you all of how grateful they all are of all your generous assistance.

Mark 4:24 'with the measure you use it will be measured to you - even more'.

May God bless you all abundantly for your support.

Best wishes

Becky

Holiday Club - Polar Explorers

From 6-10th April, the first week of the school holidays, we'll be running our 24th Easter Holiday Club - called Polar Explorers! Already planning is well underway and, below, you'll find a list of the various resources that we need to assemble for the craft element of the programme.

We're really hoping that this is going to be the best club ever and our aim is to sell out the club with 100 children in attendance. All the children who come will have a whale of a time AND that they'll learn about Jesus AND they'll get the sense that being around church can be great fun!

Watch over the next couple of months as plans unfold and look for ways in which you can support this effort. With our plans being more ambitious than ever, we're going to need a bigger team than ever before! So, if you're a veteran of holiday clubs past, come on board again. And if you've never been involved before, this is the perfect opportunity to begin your holiday club career. **Please let the minister know if you'd like to be on the team.**

We would be grateful if you could please start collecting:

- Wool - any colour Double Knitting
- Fabric/material scraps
- Maps (e.g. old AA maps)
- Kitchen roll tubes
- Shoe boxes
- Ribbons from ladies' tops/jumpers

Nearer the time you will have the opportunity to buy, or donate money for us to buy, from the following list: (Specific details will be available at that time and please **wait until then.**)

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|----------------|
| White lining paper | Glue/glue spreaders | Felt/feathers |
| Staplers | White card/coloured card | Coloured beads |
| Googly eyes | Coloured tape | String |
| Coloured pens/pencils | Scissors | Garden sticks |
| Tissue paper | Paper bowls | Split pins |
| Wooden clothes-line pegs (spring type) | Coloured paper | |
| Paint/paint brushes | Outline letters | |

Clerk's Corner

Please read the following minute in advance of attending our Annual Stated Meeting after the service on Sunday 15th March.

Presentation of the Accounts for 2013:

The accounts for 2013 were scrutinised by the Finance and Administration Core Group, examined and approved by an external auditor and finally approved by the Kirk Session. Scott Anderson, leader of the Finance and Administration Core Group presented the detail of the figures for 2013 with the figures for earlier years presented alongside these. These were in a shortened form and the full version was made available for those who wished to have a copy. Beginning with the figures for the Big Picture, the Statement of Financial Activities for 2013 covering all incoming and expended resources showed the surplus for 2013 to be £22,000, a significant increase over the planned outturn. Comparative figures for both payments (salaries, fuel, Ministry and Mission etc.) and receipts (offerings, donations, Gift Aid) were shown and explained. No specific recommendations were made regarding the allocation of the surplus, but it would be put to good use for whatever projects arise during the year. It was noted that a sum of £87,000 is required from St Andrew's Church as our Mission and Aid contribution to the central church.

Scott indicated that for 2014, no specific budget figures have been identified as it is considered appropriate that what we need

financially will be based on the vision for St Andrew's.

Brief analysis of the results of the Stewardship Programme which resulted in a pledged increase of 29% was presented in tabular form. While this is considered to be very good, it is noted that the bulk of the giving comes from one third of the congregation. Encouragement was given for more people to use the Gift Aid Scheme.

The Moderator thanked Scott for his clear presentation of the figures, and the Finance and Administration Core Group for their work in overseeing the financial aspects of St Andrew's. The Treasurer, Susan Godsall, was warmly thanked for her considerable commitment to the complexities of her ever-increasing role.

Moderator's Comments: The Moderator said that he began his ministry with energy, vigour and enthusiasm while using his knowledge effectively. As the years increase he feels that he still has that energy and enthusiasm and the wisdom gathered becomes even more effective. The coming years will be potentially the most productive with the range of ministry growing to make our work in the world more effective.

Thanks: The Deputy Session Clerk, Joan Hainsworth conveyed warmest thanks of the Kirk Session and congregation to Martin for his inspired teaching throughout the year and made special mention of the current study of The Holy Spirit. She wished every blessing on Martin and his family and on that of our Associate Minister, Stuart Irvin and his family.

Bags of Change

It's great to see the drastic drop in plastic carrier bag use following the recent introduction of the 5p per bag charge. ASDA and Morrisons have both reported a reduction of 80-90% in the number of single-use bags taken by shoppers, as people bring their own bags or swap to buying the re-usable Bags for Life bags offered by all the major supermarkets. What is not so great is that it took a stick, rather than a carrot, to get people to change their ways and become more environmentally responsible.

As Christians, can we 'go the second mile' with our bags, and offer people around us a carrot rather than a stick? How about getting into the habit of carrying a lightweight, foldaway bag whenever you go out? Not only for the unexpected purchases you may make, but also for being able to pick up bits of rubbish that you come across – particularly if you're in a beauty spot which is marred by litter.

If the idea of picking up other people's waste doesn't appeal to you, turn to Matthew 5:41, where Jesus says, "And if one of the occupation troops forces you to carry his pack one mile, carry it two miles." Now consider what one commentator has said about this verse:

"Roman soldiers could conscript any Jew to carry their gear for one mile. So during that first mile, the oppressed

person is defined by the relationship of conqueror to the conquered. But what if the Jew then offers to carry the Roman soldier's gear for a second mile? This is not stupidity but strategy. The Jew has redefined the situation. If during the first mile he was a slave, during the second mile he carried the burden as the Roman soldier's equal. Might this lead to some change in the attitude and/or behaviour of the Roman? It is at least possible." (from *The Hidden Gospel of Matthew: Annotated & Explained*, edited by Ron Miller 2004)

If people see us getting out our bag and picking up litter, what might they think? What might they do? They might think twice before dropping their next piece of litter. They might join in with us – I know this can happen, because it's happened to me on more than one occasion. Could we follow our Jesus and be a light in the world, in this small way?

LOOKING AHEAD

FEBRUARY

Sunday 1

9.30 am - Traditional Service
11 am - Worship Service;
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 8

11 am - Worship Service
4 pm - SWEATY CHURCH
6.30 pm - Evening Worship;
with guest preacher,
Rev Marc Bircham

Sunday 15

11 am - Worship Service; with
Sacrament of Baptism.
Main service followed by
short Communion.
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 22

11 am - Worship Service
4 pm - MESSY CHURCH
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

MARCH

Sunday 1

(Note - NO Traditional Service)
11 am - Holy Communion
Service with guest, Rev John
Chalmers, Moderator of the
General Assembly of C of S.
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 8

11 am - Worship Service
4 pm - SWEATY CHURCH
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 15

11 am - Worship Service;
Service followed by
Annual Stated Meeting
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 22

11 am - Worship Service
4 pm - MESSY CHURCH
6.30 pm - Evening Worship

Sunday 29

11 am - Palm Sunday Service

N.B. As well as the services above there is the following:

**A 40 minute service every
Wednesday morning
at 10.30 am.**

Fairtrade turns 20

2015 is a celebration year for the Fairtrade movement. Over the past 20 years, Fairtrade has paved the way for fairer and ethical trading to the point where than 1.4 million farmers and workers around the world benefit from the international Fairtrade system.

The UK has one of the most powerful networks of Fairtrade campaigners in the world, including our own church and our Arbroath Fairtrade Action Group. Groups like ours are vital for raising awareness about Fairtrade values in our communities and driving positive change for smallholder farmers, and their families, in developing countries.

While we rejoice in the achievements of the past 20 years, we know there is still a long way to go until trade works for all the poorest farmers in the global south. 70% of the world's food is produced by 500 million smallholder farmers, yet many of them remain trapped in chronic poverty while shoppers like us enjoy the fruits of their labour. In 2015, we want to see more individuals and businesses buying and selling Fairtrade products in the UK. The more that people choose Fairtrade, the more farmers and workers will be empowered to improve their lives through the better terms of trade it offers.

Here are three ways you can make a Fairtrade difference this year:

- Review your regular shopping list and find at least 1 more item where you could swap to using a Fairtrade brand from now on.
- Plan to buy a Fairtrade item for at least 2 of the gifts that you give to others during this year.
- Ask at least 3 people or organisations to consider using a Fairtrade product – family, friends, neighbours, work-mates, the manager of a coffee shop or restaurant you eat at, a community group you are involved with, etc.

There are over 4,500 Fairtrade products to choose from, both in the shops and online, including: coffee, tea, herbal teas, chocolate, cocoa, sugar, fresh and dried fruit, juices, smoothies, biscuits, cakes & snacks, honey, jams & preserves, chutney & sauces, rice, quinoa, herbs & spices, seeds, nuts & nut oil, wines, beers, rum, confectionary, muesli, cereal bars, yoghurt, ice-cream, flowers, sports balls, cotton products including clothing, homeware, toys, cotton wool, olive oil, gold, silver and platinum.

All through 2015, look for the Fairtrade Mark and choose products that change lives - every Fairtrade choice counts for farmers and workers, as well as their families and communities.

A summary of what St Andrew's Church collects and recycles

What?	Why?	Where?
Ink cartridges, mobile phones, foreign money	Donations are sold to raise money for Malawi	Cupboard in the small hall
Children's clothes, soft toys, back packs – all in good condition	Will be sent in the container to Malawi	To Sheila Dunphy
Christian books	To be recycled and sold to raise money for Malawi	Cupboard in small hall or to stall on day of sale
Used stamps and postcards	Donations are forwarded to various charities to raise money	Cupboard in the small hall
Unwanted gifts of toiletries or samples from hotels etc	Donations are bagged and given to the Women's Refuge	Cupboard in the small hall
Tins of food, long-life milk, packets of cereal, tea, coffee etc	Donations given to the Food Parcel Project	Box at bottom of stairs
Maths instruments	To be forwarded to Malawi in the container	Cupboard in the small hall
Soap – toilet or washing soap	To be forwarded in the container to Malawi	Cupboard in the small hall

BUY - RECYCLE OR AN ALTERNATE RE-USE?

2014 has seen a huge escalation in online shopping, especially in the lead-up to Christmas. In fact, Britain has become a world leader in this trend - along with the ever-growing 'click and collect' facility designed to make shopping easier. But there is also an ever-increasing by-product arising from this new-style shopping - cardboard boxes and cartons. And thank goodness for our recycling facilities! We all must be more than grateful that effective disposal of all this growing mountain of packaging has been made simple and effective by our local council.

But hang on a minute! There is a possible way to re-use some of our smaller cardboard boxes. Because the majority of products are designed with modular packaging in mind, it is easy to fit a different product into a box designed for an entirely different use like soap bars.

So here's the idea. Fill a box with toilet soaps or

'household soap' (a neat Morrisons own-brand two-bar pack is available for the princely sum of 65 pence) then seal and label the box when filled. The boxes can be handed in to a member of the Service Core Group or to Sheila Dunphy - or collected by one of the team if needed. The boxes can then be neatly stored ready to go out on the next shipment to Malawi later in the year.

In a country where there is a ratio of only one doctor to every 50,000 people, everyday soap can provide the first line of defence against some of the life-threatening diseases as well as helping in basic hygiene.

Right now, one of our Christian charities, working on the front-line in tackling the deadly Ebola virus in West Africa, has put money to buy cartons of soap for essential hand-washing right at the top of its current fund-raising appeal. Just think, a bar of soap costing only thirty-two pence could be a potential life-saver!

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The Christmas Day service was better attended than in recent years and there was a real sense of joy and warmth of fellowship for all. Christmas jerseys were to the fore once again, and the children enjoyed showing their presents to all around. Even the traditional 'keepie upie' competition was different with Ufuk Atalay (Leonie's husband) taking part, and Calumn Fair the outstanding winner.



The 'Strictly Come Dancing' panel of Doris Bowie, Tim Mineard and Linda Hunter, with compere Michael Marr-Forsyth!

New this year by way of our festivities was a Hogmanay Party for all ages - and what a success it was! Around 140 people were in attendance - everyone from tiny babies to some of our most senior members. It was a fun night with something for everyone and many commented that it was exactly what New Year celebrations should be like! A huge 'thank you' to those who put in the hard work to make it happen.

Here's to Christmas 2015!!

Christmas Offering 2014

This year, the Kirk Session nominated the Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team and Tearfund to be the recipients of the Christmas Offering. We had cause to be grateful for the work of the mountain rescue team volunteers when in July of last year, they brought Stuart and Michael safely down from the north face of Ben Nevis following their getting into difficulties. And Tearfund is one of the agencies hard at work in Sierra Leone, combatting the Ebola epidemic and supporting the worst-affected communities.

The great news is that upwards of £1,100 was gifted over the Christmas season and this sum will be split evenly between the two groups.

A big 'thank you' to everyone who contributed to the total.



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Have you tried watching our live services, or our catch-up service? Here is how to do it. First of all go to our Website - www.arbroathstandrews.org.uk

You can type that in the bar at the top of your web browser, or do a Google search. Then, either go to the Media menu (second from the right - see below) and choose from there or, in the list of 'Latest News', click on 'Live Streaming/Service Playback' and you will then see links in an article. Note that, if you are watching catch-up on an iPad, then you might have to click on the YouTube icon at the bottom right corner, rather than the 'play' symbol in the centre. Happy viewing!

