



# St. Anne's

The Scottish Episcopal & Methodist Church in Dunbar

## A letter from the Rector

**Dear friends,**

Advent marks the start of a new Church year, and every year we begin the year in a season of anticipation and waiting.

This has been a year of hard knocks. Many plans have been cancelled and hopes dashed in the



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process. Yet we wait and hope for a better future. Waiting and hoping is also what God's people were doing in the time leading up to Jesus' birth. They had been promised a Messiah ... but when would he come, and where?

In the end, when it happened, it wasn't very obvious to many people at first. A star played a part in getting the word out to those who were far away. And they had to trust and hope until they saw Jesus for themselves.

A couple of people have got close to asking me if we will be cancelling Christmas this year. The answer is a very clear "no". The coming of Christmas *can't* be cancelled. It's a day when we remember something real and inimitable that *has happened* - that God, who created the heavens and the earth, loves us so much that he "became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighbourhood" (John 1:4, *The Message*) in the person of Jesus. The reality of the love of God, and what it means for us, continues to be real every single day. It cannot be overcome. There is hope for the future. Christmas is never cancelled.

Of course, this Christmas will be different to "normal". We won't be able to keep some traditions we may love. For me it's singing *O Come, O Come Emmanuel* by candle-light on Advent Sunday, and *O Come All Ye Faithful* on Christmas morning, but it will be different for each of us. Yet having a different Christmas does not mean it has to be less meaningful or less joyful. A number of pieces in this issue reflect on unusual experiences of Christmas which have nevertheless been rich and wonderful! Whether it's Miriam enjoying making sustainable Christmas wrapping, or Mike and his broly, or John in Papua New Guinea... these experiences are reminders that whatever happens, Christmas is always on. We might recall that the first Christmas wasn't very "normal" for Joseph and Mary, either!



Miriam making unique Christmas wrapping

people to the infant Jesus. Those who followed the star chose to trust and to hope in something bigger than themselves, and they were not disappointed. This Advent, as we accept that things are different, may we also choose to “follow the star” in our own lives, asking God to show us the way to go, and trusting that if we follow, we’ll encounter the Light of the World and the hope Jesus brings.

**With love,**

*Diana*

During December there will be lots of stars around Dunbar ... on churches, in shops and who knows where else. Perhaps you might keep an eye out for them. A star played a significant part in the Christmas story, guiding





# CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Sunday 20th December	4pm	Christingle for all ages	Zoom
Christmas Eve	10.30am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
	6pm	Crib Service	Zoom
	11.30pm	A Quiet Christmas	Zoom
Christmas Day	10am	Christmas Celebration	Zoom
Sunday 27th December	12.30	Said Eucharist	in Church
			(Note no Zoom service)

*Given COVID restrictions, service arrangements are subject to change. For full up to date details and joining links for each service please see [www.stannesdunbar.org.uk](http://www.stannesdunbar.org.uk), the Lifeline Newsletter or our Facebook page, @StAnnesDunbar.*

## On your bike!



***What would it take to make you want to cycle instead of drive?***

Many Dunbar residents love it, and we know cycling is good exercise and much better for the environment than driving, but getting

out of the car and onto the bike may take some planning. Perhaps some of the ideas below could help:

### ***Not sure your bike is roadworthy and safe?***

There are various ways to get your old bike serviced, and right now if you need help with the cost the government-backed 'Scotland Cycle Repair Scheme' (<https://www.cyclinguk.org/ScotCycleRepair>) will pay up to £50 towards servicing. Dunbar providers include Tom Corfield (07817 245 666; [www.thebikegod.com](http://www.thebikegod.com); who comes to your home with his mobile bike service) and Belhaven Bikes (01368 860300; [info@belhavenbikes.co.uk](mailto:info@belhavenbikes.co.uk); who offer a collection service if needed).

### ***Haven't got a bike and not sure if you want one?***

How about a trial? Various bikes including e-bikes can be hired from Belhaven Bikes, or a friend might be able to lend you one.

### ***Need to get further than you can cycle?***

Might the bus help? You can now take bikes on all Eve's buses and on Borders Buses 253 Berwick upon Tweed-Edinburgh service on a

first-come-first-served basis. Buy tickets via the app (see [www.bordersbuses.co.uk](http://www.bordersbuses.co.uk)) for a bargain £2.53 single from Dunbar to Edinburgh (but check current covid-19 travel restrictions first).

### ***Nowhere to park your bike safely?***

St Anne's Vestry is working in partnership with Sparewheels and Cycling Scotland to try to get bike racks installed at St Anne's, and there are hopes of more cycle racks in the High Street soon too. There are already new bike racks in John Muir Country Park at both Belhaven Bay and East Links Car Park.

### ***Don't feel safe with cars around?***

This is a tricky problem, helped by wearing high-visibility clothing and having good bike lights, and there are some very quiet back roads and cycle routes in Dunbar. Members of Sustaining Dunbar can also get free confidence-boosting cycle training.

There is safety in numbers - perhaps you could find others to cycle with. The fewer cars there are on the road, the safer it is for cyclists: what if we could make Dunbar a haven for cyclists?



### ***Have young children?***

Starting kids on their cycling journey is easy nowadays thanks to balance bikes – they can start as young as 18 months and progress quickly onto pedals without the need for stabilisers. To go longer distances that little legs can't manage, there are a huge range of

bike seats and trailers available – with a hammock attachment your little one can ride in a trailer from only a few weeks old.

If you're now feeling inspired you might also like to check out Dunbar Cycling Group on Facebook or at [www.dunbarcycling.org.uk](http://www.dunbarcycling.org.uk). When restrictions allow, they organise sociable bike rides, run bike maintenance classes, and support everyone to get more enjoyment out of cycling

***Diana Greene***



## **Christmas Garden**

I thought it would be nice this year to have some festive decoration around the church for people to enjoy when they walk by.

I was thinking of Christmas shapes that could be hung from the trees, for example Angels, Stars, Holly, Bells, Shepherds, Sheep, Wise men, Crowns, to name a few.

It would be wonderful if any of you could make some of these festive symbols for me to hang.

***Thank you! Gill Harley - 01620 860 500***



# A Christmas Prayer

**Anne Harvey writes:**

The stories of Robert Louis Stevenson were great favourites in my childhood, as they were for many of us. So I enjoyed finding the island of Fidra on a walk to Yellowcraig from Dirleton. Such was my joy at seeing the inspiration for *Treasure Island* that we have named our new puppy Fidra!

Finally unpacking our boxes of books in mid-November I found my copies of all the old favourites and wondered if there were any of Stevenson's works which I had missed. Googling to answer that question, I found this:

## **A Christmas Prayer**

*by Robert Louis Stevenson*

Loving Father,  
Help us remember the birth of Jesus,  
that we may share in the song of the angels,  
the gladness of the shepherds,  
and worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate  
and open the door of love all over the world.  
Let kindness come with every gift  
and good desires with every greeting.  
Deliver us from evil by the blessing  
which Christ brings,  
and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning  
make us happy to be thy children,  
and Christmas evening bring us to our beds  
with grateful thoughts,  
forgiving and forgiven,  
for Jesus' sake.

Amen.

## Test your age!

The following test was developed as a mental age assessment by the School of Psychiatry at Harvard University.

Take your time and see if you can read each line aloud without a mistake. The average person over 50 years of age cannot do it.

1. This is this cat.
2. This is is cat.
3. This is how cat.
4. This is to cat.
5. This is keep cat.
6. This is an cat.
7. This is old cat.
8. This is person cat.
9. This is busy cat.
10. This is for cat.
11. This is forty cat.
12. This is seconds cat.

Now go back and read the third word in each line from the top down!



## **Your Christmas Memories - from Edinburgh to Papua New Guinea via the Middle East!**

***Rosemary and I lived in Kuwait for four years from 2003 until 2007 when I was posted there by my company, Total ...***

Total maintained a small representative team with the aim of assisting to build a long term partnering relationship with the Kuwait Petroleum Company. I worked in the Kuwait Oil Company offices at Ahmadi some 30 miles to the south of Kuwait City where we lived. Ahmadi was a small town which had been built by BP around the main office in the early days of the oil industry before it had been nationalised.

We came home at Christmas 2004 but in 2005 we stayed in Kuwait and our family travelled out to join us. Christmas Day was a normal



working day for me but there was a relaxed atmosphere in the office and no comments made as some people disappeared early.

We had a family tradition of swimming on Christmas Day when we lived in Aberdeen and the pool was open, a throwback to the times when Christmas was a normal working day in Scotland. Though the family had swam in the morning I decided to have a quick swim in our complex pool before our meal together. It was raining by then, a not unknown occurrence in winter in Kuwait, but that didn't stop me - I just evidently needed an umbrella!

**Mike Ling**

### ***As I stepped out of Edinburgh Waverley Station, suddenly it was Christmas!***

On December 23rd 2005 I boarded a train in Wakefield with a feeling of dismay. It was jam packed! My face must have said it all, because a young student, standing in the doorway pointed out that to my right was the first class carriage. "There are always seats there," he said. I entered said carriage where, sure enough, there were several available seats. I asked if I could upgrade my ticket. "Yes fine, I'll come round later and sort it," said the train manager. That was the last I saw of him until until he left the train at Newcastle, no doubt glad to have finished his shift. The new train manager shrugged when I said I needed to upgrade my ticket: "Hey it's Christmas," seemed to be his take on the situation.

This was no ordinary Christmas visit. I was a widow of four weeks, incredibly raw and probably still in shock. The normal Christmas preparations had passed me by. Seeing the lights and hearing Christmas carols in our local shops just intensified my feelings of dislocation and loss. My daughter had persuaded me to join her and her boyfriend in Edinburgh for the festive period. At least I wouldn't be bombarded with memories of Christmas Past there. As I travelled, I hoped I was making the right decision.

As I stepped out of the station and saw the beautiful city lit up, I knew it would be ok. And so it proved to be. Reading the diary I kept at the time, I note that the deep pain was still there and I needed lots of ‘time-out’ with my tears BUT, alongside the sorrow, new positive memories were being forged: drinking hot Gluhwein, while watching skaters on the ice rink in Princes Street Gardens; shopping for a smart winter coat in Jenners; lunch at Henderson’s; a Christmas Day walk at Cramond; warm hospitality and a beach walk in North Berwick and the caring attention of my daughter and her partner throughout my time there.



Christmas 2005 could have been the worst Christmas of my life and I can't deny the sadness I felt. But, that magical moment of stepping out of Waverley and seeing Edinburgh all lit up is what I remember most. I knew at that moment that happiness was still a possibility.

It was a Christmas without my normal visits to church but God was surely with me all the way in the kindness of family and strangers.

***Liz Gordon***

## ***It was our second Christmas as volunteers in Papua New Guinea***

Tired after running HIV/AIDS workshops in remote coastal communities, we were ready for a rest. An isolated fiord-like area further along the coast sounded appealing and, on impulse, we caught the weekly six-seater flight there, flying in low over the spectacular inlets and an ultramarine sea dotted with coral atolls.

From those witnessing the unexpected arrival of two dimdins, we learned there was a village guest house nearby and, within the hour, Mackenzie, our host, arrived to collect us in his outrigger-canoe. Our home for the next five nights was a small, bush-material bungalow perched on a cliff-top, with extensive sea views and a small sandy beach below. It had a nearby 'shower' (wash-bucket and mug) and a pit toilet. No furnishings, but two thin mattresses arrived to go on the bamboo floor under our mosquito-nets.

Their first guests for four months, our host family welcomed us warmly—our £3 a night full-board was a God-send for them. The community had experienced a lengthy drought that destroyed food-garden crops and a shrunken, tainted water supply causing much sickness and diarrhoea. We were well cared for though, albeit with an unrelieved thrice-daily menu of sweet potato, scones and fish, lubricated with frequent black tea in two nearly-matching china cups.

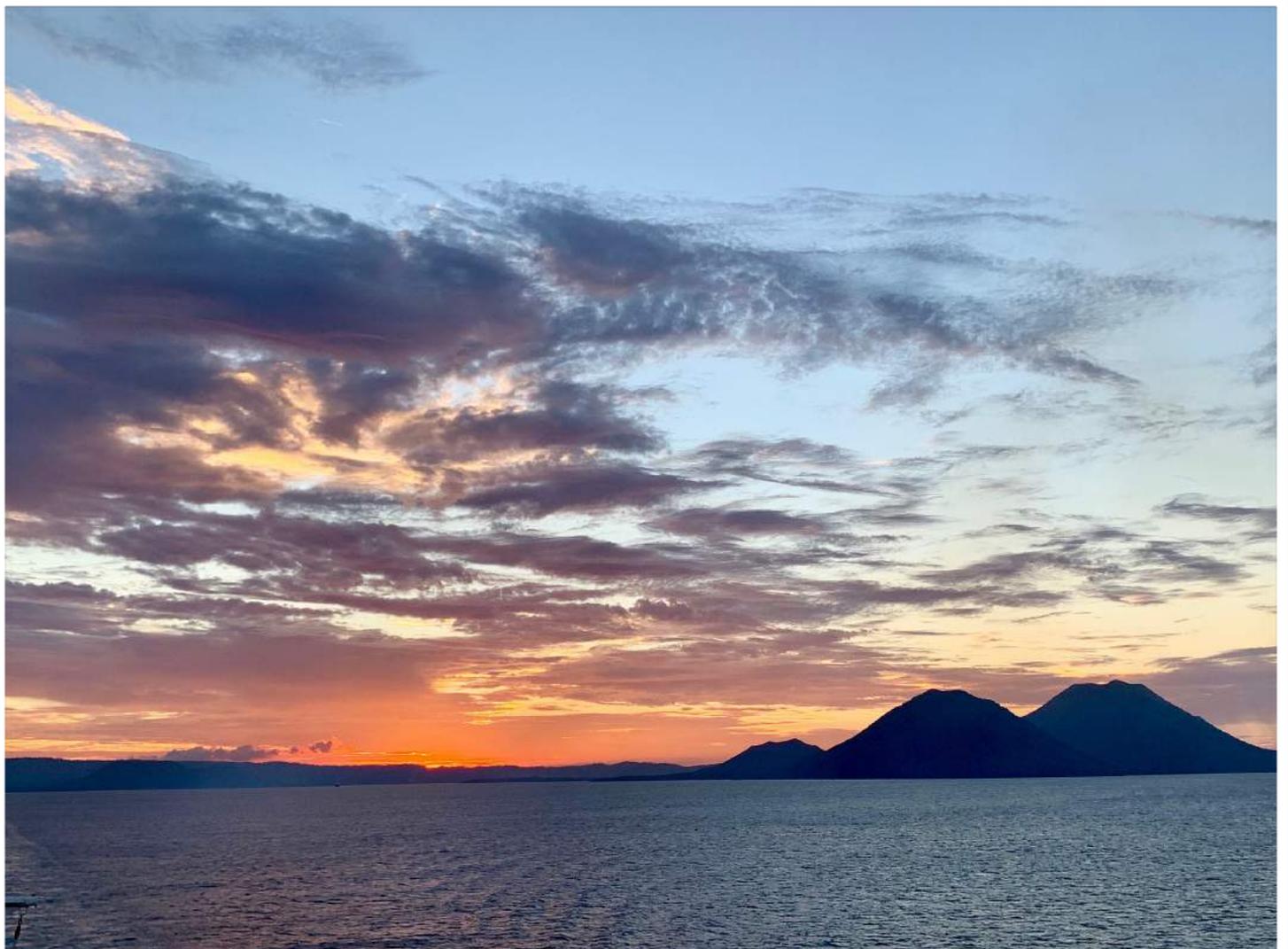
The days were as relaxed as we had hoped: reading on the wee veranda; snorkelling over the coral and rainbow-hued fish; and walking locally. Our hosts kept us secure through two disturbing instances of wife-beating and, on Christmas Eve, local youths noisily high on either drugs or local hooch.

Christmas morn we were taken two miles through the bush to the nearest church, really a simple shelter with an empty gas-cylinder bell tolling a welcome. The service was a glorious fusion of singing, drumming and dancing with the Anglican liturgy. We enjoyed the

usual tsunami of children swarming to the altar to be blessed, before the more orderly Eucharistic administration for over 200 adults.

On our final full day, Mackenzie took us on a canoe excursion up a stunning fiord, with steep cliffs, waterfalls and lush forests—and salt-water crocs, poisonous water-snakes and stout lines of baited shark-hooks. His commentary about these was rather at variance with our first-day advice that swimming was safe! However, we did return to our Highlands base refreshed and recharged from a memorable Christmas break.

***John & Della Rea***



# Christmas quiz

***For answers, see David Mumford!***

1. When Joseph found out that Mary was pregnant, they were:
  - A. Engaged
  - B. Dating
  - C. Married
2. Why did Mary and Joseph travel across the country?
  - A. They were visiting relatives
  - B. They were told to by King Harold
  - C. They were told to by Caesar Augustus
3. How did Mary travel across the country?
  - A. By donkey
  - B. By foot
  - C. The Bible doesn't say
4. Where was Jesus born?
  - A. Nazareth
  - B. Bethlehem
  - C. Jerusalem



5. The Angels told the Shepherds who were looking after the flocks:
- A. "Be very afraid"
  - B. "Go to Nazareth and see the baby who has been born"
  - C. "Glory to God in the highest and on Earth peace, good will to all people"
6. Jesus was born in:
- A. An inn
  - B. The Bible doesn't say
  - C. A stable
7. Who visited Jesus immediately after his birth?
- A. The Wise Men
  - B. The Shepherds and Wise Men
  - C. The Shepherds
8. How many Wise Men visited Jesus?
- A. Three
  - B. The Bible doesn't say
  - C. Twelve



## Virgin Mary's musings

Joseph, how much further?

I ache all over, I'm tired, I'm thirsty and BIG

My tummy's so big, I can't see my feet.

O husband of mine -

Am I a foolish woman to believe in angels?

Do you think I imagined it all?

The facts of that day are so fuzzy

but there's no doubting it -

I am pregnant.

Total mystery, how?

But I truly believe my baby's special

- the Son of God, that's what I think the Angel Gabriel said.

Joseph, are you listening to me?

You always seem so preoccupied.

Just where are we going to stay?

Where's this baby going to be born?

I've put my complete trust in God -

and in you dearest husband

- I hope you'll know what to do.

Cousin Elizabeth says I should relax, some chance!

Too late now for regrets.

Don't mind if I doze off, do you Joseph.

Not easy to sleep on a donkey, mind.

Wake me up when Bethlehem's in sight, I'm so tired ...

**Sharon Morgan**

# How to cook a turkey

**Ingredients: 1 turkey, 1 bottle of whisky**

## **Method:**

1. Go buy a turkey
2. Take a drink of whisky
3. Put the turkey in the oven
4. Take another 2 drinks of whisky
5. Set the degree at 200 ovens
6. Take 3 more whiskies of drink
7. Turn oven the on
8. Take 4 whiskies of drinks
9. Turk the Bastey
10. Whisky another bottle of get
11. Stick a turkey in the thermometer
12. Glass yourself a pour of whisky
13. Bake the whisky for 4 hours
14. Take the oven out of the turkey
15. Floor the turkey up off the pick
16. Turk the carvey
17. Get yourself another scottle of botch
18. Tet the sable and pour yourself a glass of turkey
19. Bless the saying, pass and eat out!

**Anon. Submitted by  
Anne Harvey**



# Rotas

## December 6th - Zoom

Reading: M Cockburn  
Intercessions: J Fleming

### Church

Reading: S Ritchie  
Intercessions: L Gordon

## December 13th - Zoom

Reading: C Kavanagh  
Intercessions: J Mumford

### Church

Reading: S Morgan  
Intercessions: S Morgan

## December 20th - Zoom

Reading: R Ling  
Intercessions: G Wilson

### Church

Reading: S Ritchie  
Intercessions: L Gordon

## Christmas Eve - Midnight

Reading: J Fleming

## Christmas Day - Zoom

Reading: M Cockburn  
Intercessions: L Gordon

## December 27th - Church only

Reading: S Ritchie  
Intercessions: S Morgan

## January 3rd - Zoom

Reading: M Cockburn  
Intercessions: J Fleming

### Church

Reading: L Gordon  
Intercessions: L Gordon

## January 10th - Zoom

Reading: B Dale  
Intercessions: D Mumford

### Church

Reading: S Morgan  
Intercessions: S Morgan

## January 17th - Zoom

Reading: R Ling  
Intercessions: G Wilson

### Church

Reading: S Ritchie  
Intercessions: D Mumford

## January 24th - Zoom

Reading: C Kavanagh  
Intercessions: J Fleming

### Church

Reading: S Morgan  
Intercessions: S Morgan

## January 31st - Zoom

Reading: M Cockburn  
Intercessions: D Mumford

### Church

Reading: L Gordon  
Intercessions: L Gordon

## Regular Services

### Sunday

10am: Service of the Word via Zoom  
12.30pm: Spoken Eucharist in Church

### Thursday

10.30am: Morning Prayer, coffee & discussion via Zoom  
9pm: Compline via Zoom

### Friday

7.30am: Early Morning Prayer via Zoom

*The Church building is open for private prayer 10am - 12noon every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. For service details please see Lifeline.*

## Contact Details

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Find us on 

[www.stannedunbar.org.uk](http://www.stannedunbar.org.uk)

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