

# UCB News

December 2016

Come let us  
*Adore*  
Him



*Isaiah 9:6 - For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*

Dear Friends

I don't think anyone wants to take Christ out of Christmas! Well, apart from a tiny handful of doctrinaire people who make headlines when they very occasionally press public bodies or retail giants to do silly things... I don't think I've ever heard someone say "Happy Holidays!" as a way of "Taking Christ Out Of Christmas."

People of other religions in our society don't want to "take Christ out of Christmas." I was for some years chaplain to a primary school with a high proportion of Muslim pupils, along with many Jewish, Sikh and Hindu children. I remember the Nativity Play in which the story of Christmas was told exactly as it always is, in which both Mary and Joseph were Muslim. As always there was a permission slip with the option of the child opting out; not one had.

And I vividly remember standing at the door of the hall, greeting the pupils, and suddenly realizing that I was saying "Happy Christmas!" to these children of so many different religions! I froze, thinking how *insensitive* that was on my part...

Then realizing that what I was getting back from them was a mixture of "Happy Christmas!" and "Happy Eid!" and, from some children, "Happy Christmas, Happy Eid!" because they wanted me to be happy, over my great feast AND theirs! So that's what I shouted back!

Nobody much wants to take Christ out of Christmas. Some people *want us to fear that others do*. These are the people who see "Christianity" as a marker that this is still "our" society. These are people who see the Christian faith in terms of social influence, and even political power. A few years ago, they were on the fringes, but we cannot ignore the fact that today they are,

worryingly, much more powerful, and their hectoring, bullying, xenophobic attitudes are the antithesis of what Christmas is about.

Nobody wants to take Christ out of Christmas.

It's a bigger worry that for many people Christ is barely in Christmas to begin with, but that's nothing to do with "political correctness gone mad." It's to do with commercialization, and the way in which December is the biggest sales opportunity of the year, and our whole economy is geared to getting people to spend, indulge, and spend again. But there are signs that that's changing.

The "Christmas Advert" has become a "thing", hasn't it? And there are small signs in recent years that people have been so turned off by the whole commercialization of Christmas that advertisers are having to take note, offer a "message." People seem to be beginning to want Christmas to ***mean something*** once again.

And that's where we come in. We are the people who have the Gospel of Christmas; the story of God's love made flesh, of God coming among us as one of us, and sharing completely our vulnerability. (The only thing that saved the infant Jesus from Herod was his parents taking flight, running for their lives – and his – and seeking asylum as refugees in Egypt.) Immanu-El. God with us! We have the story of Christ in Christmas. Who else is going to tell it?

***Putting Christ in Christmas is our job!***

***Happy Christmas!!***

***Owain***

## Children and Youth

The children of Lighthouse are starting to get really excited about Christmas and we are currently learning our lines for the Nativity which this year has been written by our very own Lighthouse Superintendent, Anne McGhie. The Nativity service is on the 18<sup>th</sup> December and I can assure you it's not to be missed. We also plan to have a Movie Night for the children where we can watch a film on the AV system with popcorn and snacks, laughter and joy.



I am hugely encouraged by the number of ecumenical events we are now enjoying, and I am pleased to say that the children of UCB are joining children from other island congregations on a Panto trip to the Beacon in Greenock again this year. The Pantomime we are off to see this year is Dick Whittington and his Cat and if it is anything like last year, we are set for a fantastic day away.

The Children and Youth committee have had a fairly busy year this year and I would like to thank everyone involved for their continued help and support. A big thank you also to the Safeguarding Team with whom we continue to work closely and of course, a HUGE thank you to each and every one of you who continue to encourage the children to come to Church and convey the message to them that yes, everyone is welcome!

Look out for the Lighthouse Team's new 'Corporate Wear' which I hope will be here in time for the New Year. Maybe Santa will drop them off for us.....

***Wishing you all the joys and wonders of Christmas. May this festive period fill your life with bright and precious moments and bring you lots of sweet and pleasant surprises.***

With best wishes,

Craig Laird

## Monday Discussion Group



A small group of people have been meeting every Monday evening to informally discuss different aspects of our faith. None of us know all the answers but we are open to exploring what God wants to say to us through the pages of the Bible. We share our views and opinions in a supportive atmosphere and listen to what others are saying.

Since September we have been following a series of studies called Proverbs and Parables and this has provoked much discussion. Typically, we read identified passages from both a parable and selections from Proverbs and then base our discussion on answers to prescribed questions. There aren't always right or wrong answers and we often end up with a variety of responses to a question which reflect our personal faith experience. Importantly, we respect other points of view even although we may not always agree! There have been times when people have commented about a useful insight to their understanding of the Bible which influences new understanding for them.

We plan to take a break from the current studies so that we can undertake some Advent studies, during this season of expectation and light. Our Advent study starts on **Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November at 7:30pm** when we start the evening in the usual way with a cup of tea.

Why not come and sample the discussion for yourself (without commitment)? You will be made very welcome and naturally we would be delighted if you chose to come back the following week but if you feel that the group is not for you then that is okay.

If you would like to talk to someone about the group, please feel free to contact the Minister or Morag and Douglas Allan.

## JAR OF GRACE APPEAL FOR 2016

We have just witnessed how generous the people of Britain are when it comes to helping children. The amount raised for the BBC's Children in Need Appeal is testament to that. However we don't need to look as far afield as that to see generosity. It's right here in our own church and every year we demonstrate that generosity when we donate to UNICEF's Jar of Grace Appeal. The Isle of Bute may not boast great wealth but what it does have is a desire to help those less fortunate than ourselves and nowhere is that more obvious than in the amount of money we send to UNICEF each year. We originally started the Appeal in St Brendan's church in 1993, then becoming The United Church of Bute at the end of 1999. In those 22 years we have raised the magnificent and incredible amount of just over £19,000. By my calculations, if we continue to give as generously this year as we have done in the past, our total donation to UNICEF should top the £20,000 mark. What an achievement, but certainly not a time to rest on our laurels. Last year we raised £1171.55, this year we want to do better than that, so please dig deep and give as generously as you always have done. Here is a reminder of how our money can be used by UNICEF.

£16 could buy a vaccine cold box to keep life-saving vaccines effective.

£44 could provide two malnourished children with food for a week.

£100 could buy water kits for 10 families, giving them access to safe water.

*Almighty God,*

*Thank you for giving us the opportunity to protect those children*

*around the world who are put at risk during tragic emergencies. We pray for those children who are yet to be reached. Help us to put them first as we strive to eliminate barriers in order to reach them. Bless the donation we are about to give, that it might be multiplied and help change the lives of children across the world.*

*In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord,  
Amen.*

We will collect the jars as usual on **SUNDAY 18<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER** so there is still time for us to make a difference to the lives of children who live in constant fear and danger.

Hopefully as many of you as possible will stay behind to help count the money from the jars. There will be tea, coffee and some very welcome Christmas baking provided by Janette.

### **Please Give Generously**

Edith Forrester  
Co-ordinator  
UNICEF  
Tel : 505352

## **Can we borrow your Nativity Set for a few hours?**

At the Coffee Morning on Saturday 10th December we would like to mount a display of Nativity Sets in the Sanctuary. All kinds would be welcome - old, new, pristine, scruffy with love, quirky with children's additions or adaptations, home made, from far away places, or with an interesting history.

**Please contact Isabel Sharp 500343**

# Christmas Serv

Sat 3rd December : Lighthouse Panto Outing

Monday 5th December : Messy Church with Christmas Theme

Thurs 8th December : Evening Guild Christmas Lunch 12 noon

Sat 10th December : Coffee, Cake and Nativity Scenes 10-12 am

Sun 11th December : Choir sing Cantata 5.30 pm

Mon 12th December : Afternoon Guild Christmas Lunch 1.00 pm

Tues 13th December : School Nativity play at Port Service

Tues 13th December : Bute Concert Band 7.30 pm

Wed 14th December : Carols at Kingarth 2.30 pm

**Sunday 18th December at 11.00 am**

**Family Morning Service**

**Lighthouse Nativity Play**

**Yorkhill Parcels**

**Jars of Grace**





# ices and Events

Sun 18th December : Carols at Straad 2.30 pm

**Saturday 24th December at 6.30 pm**  
**Early Family Service at Trinity**

**Saturday 24th December at 11.30 pm**  
**(preceded by carols and mince pies)**

**Sunday 25th December at 11.00 am**  
**Short Family Service**

**Sunday 1st January 2017 at 11.00 am**  
**Communion Service**



## ***Parish Register***

### **Baptisms**

Fern Emma Bower Ward	Hamilton, New Zealand	16.10.16
Keir Geoffrey Bower Ward	Hamilton, New Zealand	16.10.16
Amelia Veronica Fulcher	Rothsay	23.10.16

*"May the Lord Bless You and Keep You."*

### **New member by Resolution of the Kirk Session**

Ms Wendy Wilkie	3 Shore Road, Port Bannatyne	6.11.16
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*"We warmly welcome you to our membership and fellowship and hope you may find many opportunities for friendship and service within the United Church of Bute."*

### **Deaths**

Mrs Chrissie Linden	Maple Cottage, Creek Drive, PB	29.08.16
Mr Colin Brooks	21 Roslin Crescent, Rothsay	14.09.16
Miss Janet Fullerton	33 Rothsay Court, Rothsay	12.06.16
Dr Joyce Ritchie	Springbank, Kilchattan Bay	26.06.16
Mr William Pearson	6 Auchnacloch Road, Rothsay	29.10.16
Mrs Dorothy Robertson	4 Grand Marine Court, Rothsay	11.16

*"I am the Resurrection and the Life."*

### **Removed by Certificate of Transference**

Mr Raymond Deans	60 Ardmory Road, Ardbeg	1.10.16
Mrs Dorothea Deans	60 Ardmory Road, Ardbeg	1.10.16

*"We wish you well in your new congregation."*

### **Changes of Address**

Mrs Susan Fisher    57 Castle St, P/Bannatyne    to    Meadows Cottage,  
High St  
Mrs Margaret Simpson    Mid Colmac Cottage, North Bute    to    Merino Court,  
Greenock  
Mr Robert Wood    29 Craigmore Rd, Rothesay    to    Timber Cottages,  
Mountstuart  
Mrs Jessie Murdoch    27A Argyle St, Rothesay    to    Cheshire Grange,  
Lymm

*“ Our best wishes go with you to your new homes. “*

### **Elder Resignation**

Mrs Helen Maitland    Glenellen, Glebelands, Rothesay    7.09.16

*"We wish you well in your retirement from the Kirk Session and thank  
you for the many years of service you have given to your church."*

*“The light of the Christmas star to you.*

*The warmth of home and hearth to you.*

*The cheer and goodwill of friends to you.*

*The hope of a child-like heart to you.*

*The joy of a thousand angels to you.*

*The love of the Son and God's peace to you.”*

**An Irish Blessing**

## NOTES FROM THE KIRK SESSION

The Kirk Session continues to meet every two months, with additional meetings taking place in between times to deal with matters which require more immediate attention. It is also constituted for Communion, and, sadly, at the funeral of an Elder.

Since September, the Kirk Session has had two “full” meetings, and has convened on four further occasions. At these meetings, a wide range of topics covering the entire activities of the congregation is dealt with, in addition to receiving reports from the various committees which now function to support the congregation and Kirk Session in their work.

I have included below a selection of the business dealt with at the most recent meetings. This is by no means exhaustive, but hopefully shows the breadth of issues routinely dealt with.

- Christmas services – similar to previous years, with the addition of Communion on New Year’s Day.
- Appointment of Elders – the Kirk Session has resolved to appoint up to 8 members of the congregation to be ordained/admitted, four of whom will be nominated by the Kirk Session, and four by the congregation. Look out for details of the congregational election process in due course.
- Retirement of Elder – Mrs Helen Maitland has retired from the Kirk Session after long and dedicated service. Helen was one of the first two lady Elders ordained in the High Kirk of Rothesay, and leaves the active Eldership with the grateful thanks and best wishes of all members of the congregation.
- Death of Elder – the Kirk Session convened on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2016 for the funeral of William (Bill) Pearson. Bill had been ordained in St. Brendan’s

Church, and continued to attend church regularly when his health allowed. Sympathy is extended to Drew and the family in their sad loss.

- Property – Phase One of the programme of repair works at the Church and Manse has been completed successfully, and funding options for Phase Two, which is principally focussed on stonework repairs at the Manse, and replacement of the harling on the south and east sides of the Church, are being explored. This is a significant project, and further information will be forthcoming as the initial scoping exercise is completed.

Thanks also to the Evening Guild for generously funding the redecoration of the main hall in the Centre, a new fridge, and replacement of the runner in the gallery. The second fridge was kindly provided by the Strollers and Striders.

- Boys' Brigade – options for continuing the valuable work of the 1<sup>st</sup> Port Bannatyne Coy, Boys' Brigade are being actively pursued.

As we look forward to 2017 with all the challenges and opportunities it will doubtless hold for us, it's good to pause and thank everyone who has contributed in any way to the work of UCB over the past year. The Church is not, of course, only bricks and mortar (important though that is), it's all about the people. We are indeed fortunate in having so many faithful, talented and supportive people who quietly work week by week ensuring that UCB's mission to the people of Bute and the wider world is fulfilled.

With every good wish for a joyous Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

**James**

**Session Clerk**

**thank you   thank you   thank you**

The members of the Afternoon  
Guild were delighted to raise £250 at  
their recent Coffee Afternoon.

**thank you   thank you   thank you**

£1,000 was raised by the  
Fundraising Committee at the Harvest  
Lunch on Sunday 30th October.

**thank you   thank you   thank you**

The members of the Evening  
Guild thank all who supported their recent  
Mini Market where £770 was raised.

## The Christmas Card List

I have a list of folks I know, all written in a book,  
And every year when Christmas comes I go and take a look  
And that is when I realise that these names are indeed a part  
Not of the book they're written in, but of my very heart.  
For each name stands for someone who has crossed my path sometime  
And in that meeting they've become that rhythm in every rhyme.  
And while this sounds fantastic for me to make this claim  
I really feel that I'm composed of each remembered name,  
And while you may not be aware of any special link  
Just meeting you has changed my life a lot more than you think.

For once I've met somebody the years cannot erase  
The memory of a pleasant word, or of a friendly face,  
So never think my Christmas cards are just a mere routine  
Of names upon a Christmas list forgotten in between.  
For when I send a Christmas card that is addressed to you  
It's because you are on the list of folks that I'm indebted to.

For I am but the total of the many folks I've met  
And you happen to be one of those I prefer not to forget.  
And whether I have known you for many years or only just a few  
In some way you have had a part of sharing things I do  
And every year when Christmas comes I realise anew  
The best gift life can offer is meeting folks like you.

And may the spirit of Christmas that forever more endures  
Leave its richest blessing in the hearts of you and yours.

Contributed





The birth of  
Nairne Somerville  
to parents Dale and Jamie

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## **Coffee and Cake**

**Saturday 10th December**

**10 - 12**

**United Church of Bute Centre**

**Tickets £4**



The United Church of Bute

Townhead, High Street

Rothesay

PA209JH

Scottish Charity No SC030563

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