“He gives twice who gives promptly”
“For see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord.” (Luke 2:10-11)

There is a lot of bad news “out there” at the moment, so in this season of good will, I thought I would share with you some good news! It is good news about how our congregation’s ministry is shaping faith and through it, how others are coming to find their lives transformed by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

He walked into mid-week worship unsure of his welcome. He hadn’t been to church for so long he couldn’t remember the last time. He’d heard about how some churches point fingers at those who are members but don’t attend, so he’d had to pluck up a lot of courage. At the end of the worship he told another worshipper that he was so glad he had come. “Everyone was so incredibly friendly. Someone said, ‘Welcome back, it’s so good to see you again,’ while others came over and introduced themselves. By the end of the evening I felt as if I was among friends. It was a good feeling, one I hadn’t felt in a long time. You see since my wife died, I’d become a bit isolated. I hadn’t really wanted to go out. That evening gave me some confidence back and restored my faith.”

“Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” (Matthew 25:40)

She won’t talk about her family. Her mum and dad always are arguing. Sometimes she goes up to her room and cries. Other times she says she tries to find excuses for not going home after school, just to stay out of the house. Her parents tell her there’s no money, so she can’t join in some of the activities she would love to do, like her friends can. She said she’s afraid – afraid of what might happen at home, afraid for herself. “The youth group is great. I can go there and everyone accepts me. I don’t need money to go. The leaders talk to me like a grown-up – my parents just put me down. We do fun things and I can forget about home for a while. And the adults listen to me. I can talk to them. It’s a safe place.”

Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.” (Matthew 19:14)

The diagnosis is uncertain as it always is when living with cancer and yet she has so far defied all the odds. We chat regularly, about this and that. She always updates me on her health but then she likes for us to chat about ordinary things. She says it brings a sense of normality to life. So we talk about what’s going on in the church, in my life and in her family. We laugh and, yes, sometimes we cry. Always the visit ends with prayer, bringing before God whatever her immediate concerns are. Mostly I pray, but sometimes she says a prayer too. And always just as I’m about to leave she says something like, “Thank you. After we have prayed together I feel so much stronger. It’s like God is with me, giving me strength. I really need that feeling. I really need my faith. Thank you.”

“‘Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,’ which means ‘God is with us.’”

Emmanuel. God is with us. Let us all give thanks to God this Christmas!

Talking of which, Len and I wish all of you a very happy one!

Grace and peace,

Valerie
The Tuesday Coffee Morning will close for the Christmas break on Tuesday 6th December and recommence on Tuesday 10th January 2012.

May we wish all our loyal supporters a peaceful and joyous Christmas season and look forward to seeing you when we return.

The children from the Abbey Playgroup will be singing on 6th December so why not come along and support them. The usual mince pies etc will be served.

A very warm welcome is extended to all members of the Congregation to come along on Tuesday mornings in the “New Year” and join in the friendly fellowship, meeting other members and their friends, having a chat and enjoying a nice “cuppie”.

There is a home baking stall with lots of “goodies” and a book stall.

We are looking forward to seeing all of you again on the 10th January.

The Coffee Ladies

ORGANISATIONAL REPORTS

The GUILD:

The Guild Session is well underway and yet again we have a super Syllabus. Our Opening Concert by Layla Brown and friends was enjoyed by all. The following week Sally Atkinson gave us a talk and showed us slides about her cycling trip across the land of the Thunder Dragon, which we again thoroughly enjoyed. Unfortunately I had to cancel the next two meetings as there was no heating due to the boilers being replaced. Luckily for us, Margaret Tooth, from Blythwood Care, rescheduled her visit to us and gave an excellent talk along with slides when we met on 1st November.

Guild Week this year was on 20th-27th November and we had our Dedication Service on Sunday 20th Nov. Our Coffee Morning took place on Saturday, 26th November from 10.00 –12.00 noon. Thank you for your support. We raise funds for many projects and our own church.

We are looking forward to our CHRISTMAS Meal in the Meadowbank Inn on Tuesday 13th December 6.30 for 7.00.pm. (I will be on time this year, I promise! On 15th, November, we had a Demonstration of Devilish Party Plan Desserts, a Talk by the Salvation Army, and a Musical Evening for St Andrew’s Night. Into December we are having a visit from Alison’s Linen Shop.

In January, 2012 we are looking forward to a demonstration of Country Dancing; a talk from our very own Ian Gray; a visit from Abbey Fruits and a visit from Helen McDiarmid.

We have two invites from other Guilds as follows:- Carnoustie Church Guild on Wednesday 30 November when there will be a talk on the work of the Participate Group using Art to encourage young people with Learning Difficulties. West Kirk invites us on Monday, 23rd January for a Musical Evening with Southesk Strings.

Anyone wishing to go to either of these please let me know.

EILEEN, Convenor
BOOK GROUP
The next meeting dates are:
- December – no meeting
- 22nd January – Pastworld: a mystery of the near future by Ian Beck (Angus Book Award title).
- 19th February – P.G. Wodehouse—“Code of the Boosters”
Copies are available to borrow through any Angus library or online at www.library.angus.gov.uk

Our group is open to everyone and if you are interested in joining us, we meet in the session room at 9.45am so feel free to come along. It doesn’t matter if you don’t manage to finish the book either! For more information, phone Vicky Fraser on 01674 672327.

KIDS CLUBS:
On the first Saturday of every month we will be running a Kids Club for primary school age children. The club will begin at 10am and finish at 12 noon. Children can participate in drama, art and crafts, music, games, bible stores etc. There will also be a ‘theme’ for each Saturday. The cost will be £1 per child and snacks are included. The dates for next year are – 4th February, 3rd March and 7th April. If you are interested or know of any P1-P7 children who would like to come along please phone the church office, 877068 or complete the following slip and hand it in to the office.

Child’s name.............................................Tel. No. ..........
Email address ................................. Date of Birth ............
School and Class .......................... .................................
Emergency contact name and Telephone Number -
........................................................................................................

YOUTH NEWS:
We (the youth group) have had a very busy autumn, balancing our activities between service (filling a mass of shoe boxes with gifts for Blythswood’s Christmas Shoe Box Appeal; participating in the September beach clean), learning (thinking about how to say “no” to doing drugs was made real when we heard the life-story of someone just like us who was unable to say “no” and whose drug use, dealing, imprisonment and then conversion to Christianity was a powerful testimony), recreation (kayaking at Monikie Country Park) and spirituality (participating in a special Remembrance Day worship while on retreat). We also squeezed in a visit to Arbroath Fire Station!

However, without a doubt for those able to go, the retreat in Dalguise during the weekend 11th-13th November was the highlight. 20 youth and adults participated, which meant a lively group and not much sleep! The theme for the weekend was “friendship.” We considered the things that make for healthy, strong friendships and thought about our circle of friends and whether or not we show these qualities. Then we thought about the things that are harmful to friendships and considered verses from the Bible about not judging others and the Golden Rule of only doing to others as you would want them to do to you. We also looked at stereotypes, put-downs and forgiveness. Hopefully now we are all set to be better friends and, when tempted to do or say something that might hurt a friendship, will have enough self-awareness to stop.

On the Saturday afternoon, as a break from all the brain-work of thinking about friendships, we went to the outdoor centre at Dalguise and had a great afternoon on Jacob’s ladder (three fearless youth made it all the way to the top – about 30 feet up – the rest had more sense and went as high as they felt comfortable!!!) and orienteering.

Over the autumn we have picked up quite a number of youth, which is great! It would be great to have even more, so please, if you know of any youth of secondary age, encourage them to come along and give the group a try.

*   *   *
BLYTHSWOOD SHOEBOX APPEAL:

164 filled boxes and a cheque for £50 were handed to Blythswood on 8th November. These will be delivered to families in Eastern Europe prior to Christmas. Many thanks to everyone who donated gifts and to those who graciously helped to pack the boxes.

FAIRTRADE 2012:

This year we are asking everyone to take a step for Fairtrade.

It can be a simple step, like swapping your tea to Fairtrade, or a bigger step, like asking everyone in your family or group or friends or neighbours to do it too. You’ll be joining thousands of others all over the U.K. when you take a step for Fairtrade. Make it as inventive, daring, funny or messy as you like. Every step counts for millions of farmers, workers and their communities in developing countries who urgently need a better deal from trade.

‘Take a Step in 2012’ begins in Fairtrade Fortnight from 27th February - 11th March, 2012

THE MISSION GROUP

2nd ARBROATH COY. GIRLS BRIGADE:

Where does the time go? Here we are getting ready for Christmas with the first part of our Badgework completed!

On Dec. 8th we are having a Snowman Drive. We start at 7.00p.m. and entry is 50p. Everyone is welcome to come along and join in the fun.

On 15th Dec. we are having a Film Night and then will be on holiday until the 4th January, 2012.

All the members of the Girls Brigade wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a Pleasant New Year.

Valerie Bothwell, Lieutenant

Pledge Campaign and Gift Day

The Stewardship Group would like to thank all those members who supported our Gift Day and who gave so generously. Any member who could not attend the Gift Day and would still like to support us can hand in their gifts to the church office.

We would also like to thank all members who have returned their Pledge Campaign forms as this gives us an indication of our possible income for 2012.

Anyone who has misplaced their form can receive another form from the church office. If you have forgotten to return your form there is still time to do this as forms will be gratefully received after the cut off date.

Thanking you again for your continued support in our efforts in supporting our Church.

The Stewardship Group
SPECIAL SERVICES FOR ADVENT

Sunday, 27th November, 11.00a.m.
First Sunday in Advent
An Elder-led Service

Wednesday, 30th November, 7.00 p.m.
Midweek worship in the Small Hall.

Sunday, 4th December, 11.00a.m.
Second Sunday in Advent

Wednesday, 7th December
Midweek worship in the Small Hall

Sunday, 11th December, 11.00a.m.
Third Sunday in Advent
Including special music from the Singing Group

Wednesday, 14th December, 7.00 p.m.
Midweek worship in the Small Hall
Including an informal celebration of the Lord’s Supper
(a common cup and loaf will be used)

Sunday, 18th December, 11.00a.m.
Fourth Sunday in Advent
Led by the children of our Sunday School

Wednesday, 21st December, 7.00 p.m.
Midweek worship in the Small Hall
Followed by the opportunity to walk a short, Advent Labyrinth

Please make a special effort to come to these special Services which help us to prepare for Jesus’ birth.
We particularly encourage you to consider coming to Midweek worship for the four weeks of Advent, even if you do not normally do so.
Please also invite your family, friends and neighbours!

SPECIAL SERVICES FOR CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW YEAR

Saturday, 24th December, 6.30p.m.
CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY SERVICE
An informal worship of music, readings and a special Christmas story for all ages.

Saturday, 24th December, 11.15p.m.
CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE
A Watchnight Service of Lessons and Carols in the atmospheric candlelit church

Sunday, 25th December, 10.30a.m.
CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE FOR ALL AGES
A short, service giving thanks for the birth of Jesus, including an informal celebration of the Lord’s Supper (a common cup and loaf will be used) around the Communion table
Followed by mulled wine and mince pies – and we promise you’ll be home in time for your Christmas turkey!

Sunday, 1st January, 11.00a.m.
A special Service to welcome the New Year

Sunday, 8th January, 11.00a.m.
Epiphany Sunday.
Come and receive your star gift!

Do invite a neighbour, friend or family member who would not normally come to church.
Christmas Services are a wonderful opportunity for outreach!
GIFT DAY THANK YOU!

On behalf of the Kirk Session of the Old & Abbey Church I would like to thank all of you who supported our Gift Day soup and sandwich lunch on 19th November.

Not only was it a wonderful, friendly occasion but your generosity in returning your Gift Day offering is greatly appreciated. To those who were unable to attend but who still returned a Gift Day offering, we also say thank you.

We do not yet have the total, but will announce it in church once we do.

I give thanks to God for your faithfulness and for the ministry that your offerings will enable in Christ’s name.

Valerie

Service of Quiet and Reflection
Sunday, 18th December
2.00p.m.

This service is for those who would like to take some quiet time amid the busyness of this season; to take some time to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas; or to take some time to remember those who are no longer present with us.

People come for different reasons - and all who come are warmly welcomed.

Followed by refreshments in the Gallery

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light”

During the sermon one Sunday the children present were asked to fill in an activity sheet about the Ten Commandments while Valerie preached on them. As part of the Activity Sheet the children were asked to write their own modern ten Commandments. Below is Freya Muir’s version which we think you will all enjoy reading. If we all followed Freya’s Commandments our lives and the world would be a better place.

Well done Freya!!

1. Be kind to animals
2. Don’t hurt people’s Feelings
3. Don’t want what somebody else has.
4. Don’t take what you have for granted.
5. Listen to people when they talk.
6. Do what you are told.
7. Try and come to Church every Sunday
8. Try to cheer people up when they are sad.
9. Think of everybody - not just yourself.
10. Always say kind things.
ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS

As in previous years our Advent and Christmas offerings will be split between two organisations, one overseas and one Scottish.

Women’s Aid

Domestic abuse, as one aspect of violence against women, is a major social issue and knows no boundaries. Domestic abuse is about coercive control and can include destructive criticism and verbal abuse, physical abuse, pressure tactics (e.g. withholding – or threatening to withhold – money), taking the children away, lying to family/friends – all of which are part of the control the abuser exerts. Women’s Aid seeks to provide shelter for abused women and to educate all of us about the rampant nature of this issue and how it can be prevented.

Domestic abuse is a major problem right here in Arbroath, affecting women from all walks of life, including the church. We can help those affected by supporting Women’s Aid and their vital work.

See Women’s Stories of Abuse

The Vine Trust

We are looking to continue our support of the Scottish-based Vine Trust whose work with street boys in Peru is transforming hundreds of boys’ lives. Previously we have helped to partially fund the building of a dormitory in Kusi, high up in the Andean mountains - a new home for the boys and place of safety and refuge well away from the horror of life on the streets of Lima.

See Carlitos’ Story

Aim: To raise £2,500

You can use the Advent Calendar (available first Sunday in Advent, 27th November) or just make a donation.

Offerings will be taken for the above two organisations at all Christmas services

GREENHOUSE SPACE NEEDED:

The Eco-Group is planning a plant sale in April/May of next year and we need some help with greenhouse space. We still have many packets of Sutton seeds and a plant sale is one way we can make good use of this gift of the seeds.

If you have a greenhouse and can help us with this project we would be delighted to hear from you.

Please contact the church office or any member of the Eco-Group - Jean Glass, Margaret Tulleth, Fay Forge, Alex Robertson, Susan Bowie or Len Gregory.

Thanks a bunch!!

Eco-Awareness Group

ARBROATH ART SOCIETY:

As of October 7th, the Art Society has made its home in the Old and Abbey Church Hall. Our meetings are held on the first Friday of the month with a break in the summer and in January. At these meetings, guests give demonstrations of different art techniques and media or deliver illustrated talks on some aspect of art history. Time is also allowed for members to socialise and enjoy a cup of tea before they head home. In addition, we hold three indoor and one outdoor art workshop per session when members have practical advice and guidance from a guest tutor. We pay regular visits to the Pittenweem Arts Festival and have, in recent years, added the Pot Fest and the McManus Galleries to our list of things to do. Most members paint but it is not an essential qualification for membership. Our main aim is to encourage interest, participation and enjoyment of art in our community. With that in mind, we extend a warm welcome to anyone in the congregation to come to any of our meetings either as an occasional guest or as a prospective member. We are looking forward to meeting in our new venue and will post information about our meetings and activities on the notice board.

Annette Thomson, Secretary, Tel. 875022
Women's Stories of Abuse from the Out of the Shadows Report

Within six weeks, the shine was off. He wouldn't get out of bed, never did any cooking or cleaning. I had to make a cup of tea, run his bath, wash his back and make breakfast before he would dress and drive us both into town. He got very angry one day because I wouldn't agree with him in a discussion. He was enraged and slammed my head off the bannister. I was totally stunned and shocked. Things then went from bad to worse.

I felt like a trapped animal. He forbade me to leave the house, and took over the housekeeping money, so I had literally nothing in my pocket. And we only had one car. We lived in the country, so to get away from there was very difficult. You needed a car, or transport, or money, and I had none of these things.

He constantly put me down, made a fool of me – saying I was no good, and how could my parents love me. I found that very hard. I no longer became a person. I lost my personality because I was so constricted, so fearful. I was very afraid, and ruled by panic attacks. I just lost myself, really.

I felt like I was nothing – literally NO THING. I lost all my self-esteem. I kept being told I was useless, I was hopeless, I couldn't do anything right.

I felt like I was nothing – literally NO THING. I lost all my self-esteem. I kept being told I was useless, I was hopeless, I couldn’t do anything right.

Living in an abusive relationship was like being sealed up in a stone-cold tomb - the dark, airless, fearful, suffocation of a living death

It was like a hostage situation - trapped, physically and emotionally. One didn't ever know what would happen from day to day, or even from hour to hour. And to live with that level of terror and anticipation of damage and pain and fear, while trying to protect three small children, is obviously an impossible task. I don't know why I thought I could sustain it, but there was a desperation to try.

The silence which surrounds such abuse MUST be broken!

Carlitos' Story from The Vine Trust

A few months ago, as I showed one of our visiting teams through the Lima boys' centre, I noticed Carlitos standing by the glass door that leads on to the football pitch. He had found a spot in the shade, up against the wall, where he had moved into position and was quietly waiting. His hands stretched into his trouser pockets and his eyes were riveted ahead. His worn sneakers turned in at an angle.

As I toured my friends around, we were followed by the usual curious, wondering cluster of children. The add-a-smile friendships developed quickly, the slapping hand games and digital snapshots. It was one of those all-too-short moments that would long be remembered.

As our visit ended as we inched sideways through the glass door, Carlitos pushed off the wall into the sun. His eyes were shiny and they stirred with excitement. His hair was spruced back with hair wax and a perfect parting. His face hid years of torture and the scars of physical abuse behind an innocent smile.

He pulled his hands from his pockets as the first visitors approached, and then the next and the next, until he had given away his last candy cane wristband. Every guest that afternoon left with a skinny piece of red and white wool, woven into a loop - and given for nothing in return.

That's the part that made me cry; Carlitos, tossed into the streets by a desperately poor mother, his small body used in exchange for a plate of food; cold winter nights huddling for warmth with friends like puppies - making it just barely to the next day; little boy stricken by pneumonia, stretched beneath a packing box and the eaves of an old city building; persecuted by police and despised by humans, Carlitos came to us in search of acceptance, food and a safe place to sleep.

Smiling and patting visitors on the back. Like a vision in a world where giving is strictly dependant on receiving, Carlitos reached 32 times into his pocket. In a small way, his only way, Carlos gave back to complete strangers who had been used by God to change his life.

* * *
Ladyloan Primary School Christmas Service
Old & Abbey Church
Tuesday, 20\textsuperscript{th} December at 2.00p.m.

All members and friends are warmly invited to join with the children of Ladyloan for this special Christmas Service, planned by the P1 – P3 classes.

Let’s support the school where Valerie is Chaplain and encourage the children!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Ash Wednesday, 22\textsuperscript{nd} February 2012

Please join us for a special Midweek worship marking the beginning of LENT

(Yes, Lent!! Remember this is a December, January and February magazine!!)

Ready for Winter?

The Scottish Government has launched its Ready for Winter campaign and is inviting organisations, businesses and churches to help advertise it. So here we go?

**Are you ready for winter (home)?**

In case the weather turns nasty, everyone should make a plan for their home and collect a few everyday things:

- Emergency phone numbers
- A torch and spare batteries
- A radio and spare batteries
- Three days worth of bottled water and food that won’t go off.

**Are you ready for winter (car)?**

Here are some everyday things you could put in your car now, in case the weather turns nasty:

- A shovel
- A torch with spare batteries
- Warm clothes, boots and a blanket
- Food and a warm drink

**This winter, spare a thought for your neighbours.**

Think now about any neighbours or family members who may need a hand if severe winter strikes. Here are a few things you could do to help:

- Lend a hand with grocery shopping
- Or, clear away ice or snow
- Have the phone numbers handy of anyone you think might appreciate your help.

Doing a few small things now, could save a lot of trouble later.

Find out more at [www.readyscotland.org](http://www.readyscotland.org)
FLOWER DONORS for 2012:

Jan. 1 CHRISTMAS  Jul 1 Bobby BRIDGES
  DECORATIONS  8 Mrs D WOOD
  8 Mrs M RIDDLE  15 Mrs J GLASS and
     Mrs M TULLETH
  22 Mrs C SMITH  22 Mrs A NICOL
  29 Mrs I CLARK  29 Mrs M GARDENER

Feb. 5 Mrs M CARSWELL  Aug. 5 Mrs I LIDDLE
  12 Mrs S FERGUSON  12 Mrs S MARR
  19 Mrs O McNEILL  19 Mrs J McKAY
  26 Mrs M MIDDLETON  26 Mrs B ALLEN

Mar. 4 Mrs R MENMUIR  Sept. 2 Mrs M FULTON
  11 Mrs J GLASS and  9 Mrs M REID
      Mrs M TULLETH  16 Mrs F ROBERTSON
  18 Miss E MacKENZIE  23 Mrs S TASKER
  25 Mrs H WALLACE  30 Mrs I MILLER

Apr. 1 Mrs J SHEPHERD  Oct. 7 Mrs B LOWSON
  8 Mrs M McKinney  14 Mrs M CARGILL
  15 Mrs I SANDS  21 Bobby BRIDGES
  22 Mrs F FORGE  28 Mrs C. WHYTE
  29 Mrs M. A. WELSH

May  6 Mrs M WHITTON  Nov. 4 Mrs J KING
  13 Mrs O FULTON  11 Mrs E WYLLIE
  20 Mrs N HUTTON  18 Mrs E McDONALD
  27 Mrs N MUNRO  25 Mrs J MILNE

June 3 Mrs N GRANT  Dec. 2 Mrs M McKinney
  10 Mrs J SHEPHERD  9 Mrs M PROUD-FOOT
  17 Mrs M LORIMER  16 CHRISTMAS
  24 Mrs A WAKEFIELD  23 DECORATIONS

FUNERALS:
Sheila Bowick, 12, Spink Street, Arbroath Died: 11/09/11
Maureen Dawson, 62, Nolt Loan Road, Arbroath Died: 03/10/11
Jean Kinnear, 30, Glenisla Drive, Arbroath Died: 15/10/11
Jan Paterson, 44, Linton Road, Arbroath Died: 23/10/11
Gordon Sands, 24 Warddykes Road, Arbroath Died: 28/10/11
Max Smyth, 32, Beechwood Road, Arbroath Died: 11/11/11
+ 3 parish funerals

BAPTISMS:
25 September – Callum Taylor Mackenzie, son of Scott and Lynn Mackenzie.
13 November – Piper Jo Alis-Rose Robertson, daughter of Wilson and Alison.
20 November – Arran Arthur Roy, son of Stuart and Lynn Roy

WEDDING:
8 October – Rick Moore and Jackie McMillan

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Brenda ALLAN</td>
<td>Dec 3</td>
<td>Elinor McKENZIE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Alice SMITH</td>
<td>Dec 10</td>
<td>Christmas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Eileen ROBERTSON</td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
<td>Decorations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Norma SPENCE</td>
<td>Dec 24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FLOWER DISTRIBUTORS for 2012**

**Minister:**
Rev Dr. Valerie L. ALLEN, 51 Cliffburn Road, Arbroath, DD11 5BA Tel. 872196

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