

Yester Bolton & Saltoun



Parish Newsletter December 2019

Dear friends,

Ah, Advent's beginning... with crisp, cold days, clear starry night skies, and all the anticipation of the season. We begin looking forward to Christmas: perhaps you have started on making or buying present, writing Christmas cards, decorating the house, and preparing a Christmas cake or biscuits... The sparkly lights and carols playing can help to get us into a festive mood, filled with hope and joyful anticipation. Despite the warmth of candlelight and a winter fire, this season can also be difficult at times, when – in all the joyful atmosphere – we might be missing someone we've lost, or mourn a broken-down friendship or relationship, or just generally feel a bit isolated. Amidst our busy Advent programme with services and events, we will again be offering a Blue Christmas service, to give a space to acknowledge that this season isn't always easy.

This Advent season takes place in a rather unpredictable context, too: with a General Election coming up, concerns about Brexit, about climate change, and many worrying news from across the country and elsewhere – there is much to be worried about. Nevertheless, even amidst the concerns that we share, there are beautiful rays of light and hope: the many people of all ages who stand up and speak up for justice, and for the rights of all to be respected; the children and young people – not least in our primary schools here – who educate themselves and us about what we can do to help our beautiful earth in the midst of global warming; the many voices calling for an end of violence, and suggest ways of reaching those who feel disenfranchised. In the midst of so much discord, and a widely-spread rhetoric of us and them, let's remember that in all that we face, we are stronger together: that even if we don't agree on everything, there's usually a way to find common ground: and that, if we celebrate our beautiful variety and concentrate on what unites us, rather than on what divides us, we can usually find better ways forward for everyone.

Advent is a time of preparation: preparing ourselves to celebrate once more God's presence in the world, God's love for the world: offered to us so that we may share it. I hope that all of you will find a warm hearth this Advent season, and the open arms and hearts of friends around you. We hope that you can join us for any or all of our Advent and Christmas event, and, as ever, if you would like a chat over a cuppa, or if you have any requests and suggestions for our parish life, please get in touch.

Anikó

Faith exploration

If you would like to explore the Christian faith, and some of the topics we discuss on Sunday mornings, or if you have a feeling of belonging to our church community but are not a formal member, or if you have been a church member for a long time and would like to think afresh about our beliefs and how they shape the way we live, then you might be interested in a faith exploration course which we will offer over the winter. If you'd be interested in participating, please contact Anikó.

Opportunities to join in

If you would like to take a more active role in our church life, eg. through reading the lessons, occasionally leading prayers or joining the Worship Team, or joining the coffee or flower rotas, please get in touch. We are also still urgently looking for an editor for our website and facebook page (which would take appr. 30 mins per week, and training can be provided).

Christmas is coming . . .

Advent Social

The members of the social team invite you to celebrate Advent with mulled wine and mince pies after the service on 8 December in Gifford Village Hall. As a fundraiser for the church, there will be a raffle which will be drawn in advance of this event. Prizes include £50 M & S vouchers, Tisan jewellery, a Harris Tweed handbag, and goods and many Christmas bottles. Tickets are available from members of the congregation. Many thanks for your support and hope to see you on Sunday 8 December.

Blue Christmas

As in previous years, we are again holding a Blue Christmas service this Advent, this time on Sunday, 15 December, at 4pm in Humble Church. Advent and Christmas can be a difficult and sad time when we have experienced loss and grief. This service aims to offer a space for remembering, a space to be, accompanied by quiet music and candlelight. All are warmly invited.

Carols around the Christmas Tree

... will once more take place in Gifford, outside the church, on Sunday, 15 December, at 6.30pm, in aid of Arthritis Research. Come and enjoy the lovely carols, have a mug of mulled wine, and see if Father Christmas will make it to Gifford once more this December!

Weekly news

Between our three-monthly newsletters, you can receive regular news and information through signing up to our weekly news email (simply contact Anikó), and through our website and facebook page. If you would like to listen to sound recordings of our services, these are available on the worship page of our website, and on CD (on request).

The Reverends John and Mary Wilson

(Yester, Bolton and Saltoun and Humble 1985 - 1998)

June Marshall

Mary's funeral took place in Blair Atholl on Friday 18th October in the church where they were married and in the community to which they retired in 2004. Representatives of our two parishes attended, joined by many from the Wilsons' other charges. Mary's book "Don't Wave, Shout!" was on view. As the back cover describes, "it is the story of Mary's family and John's family and how the two came together. A story of four generations and their adventures from the high seas to the jungles of India and the African highlands".

Authored by Mary and published by Alimay, her daughter, it can be ordered online from www.lulu.com
Cost £15 PLUS shipping cost £6.99.

Lights on!

Alastair Wyllie

As many of you will know, we have been accustomed to seeing Saltoun Church and its steeple floodlit over the Christmas period for many years. As the steeple is the highest-situated in East Lothian, it should be visible from quite a distance away when fully floodlit.

Unfortunately, we have had a few problems more recently with faulty lights on the tower roof, mainly due to wear and tear and ingress of water in a very exposed situation. This has necessitated replacement of the present system at roof level with four new LED floodlights, waterproof joint boxes and maintenance-free connectors. Access to the roof is also extremely difficult, requiring external ladders.

We are however delighted to report that the work has now been completed in time for Advent and we are extremely grateful to Humble, East and West Saltoun and Bolton Community Council for paying the full cost of the repairs (£1,320), in addition to the annual grant which they contribute every year to help with the cost of electricity consumed. We plan to have the church and steeple floodlit in the evenings from St Andrew's Day until the end of January. We hope you enjoy the sight as you travel homewards on the dark evenings.

Refugee Holidays

After an invitation by Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees, the Kirk Sessions of our linked parish agreed to support a pilot programme for New Scots Holidays. We have therefore very recently welcomed Obaida, Hala and Marwan, who are from Syria and now live in Inverurie, for a long weekend in our parish. They were welcomed for meals and activities by members of the congregations, and we shared a wonderful community meal. Over the weekend, new insights were gained and new friendships forged. We are very grateful to Humble Hub for providing their accommodation in Keith View, and to everyone who has supported the programme.

Holiday Club

We had such a great time at the Holiday Club during the summer that we've decided to offer another one next summer. This will run from 27 to 29 July 2020, for children of primary school age (including those starting P1 after the summer). Save the dates!

Session Clerk's office

At the Kirk Session meeting at the end of November, Alastair Wyllie retired from his post as Session Clerk, after serving for nine years as Session Clerk firstly of Bolton and Saltoun Church, and since 2015 as Clerk to the united Kirk Session of Yester, Bolton and Saltoun. He has fulfilled this role with dedication and a huge commitment to the life of the church. His attention to detail, and vast knowledge of church law and procedure have served us very well in this time, and we are very grateful for all the hard work and faithfulness that Alastair has shown as Session Clerk.

John Macfarlane has succeeded Alastair in the role, and taken his oath at the same Session meeting, supported by two deputies, Wendy Fergusson and Paul Sales.

In order to get to know them a bit better, we have asked them some questions:

1. Please tell us a bit more about yourself. / 2. What excites you about being part of the church? / 3. Which three items would you take with you on a desert island?



Paul:

1. Retired after many years in Retail and Manufacturing, mainly in the baking industry, and finishing with 16 years in several roles working for the Salvation Army. Patricia and I moved to Bolton 10 years ago, and our eldest daughter and family now live a few doors away. Our younger daughter and our son and partners all live in Edinburgh.
2. Church is the one of the opportunities to work out our faith in the local community alongside like minded believers and use gifts that God has given us.
3. On a desert island I would like to take a machete or large bladed knife, a mirror or reflective glass and an initial supply of drinking water. Hopefully, Long John Silver won't be around.



John:

1. Retired lawyer: live at Barley Mill near West Saltoun with wife Ray and two barking dogs, Muffin (labradoodle) and Rosie (Briard): one daughter, Amanda, now living and working in London.
2. The feeling of being part of a local and also national and worldwide body of faith and believers past and present.
3. (Assuming Bible provided as per Desert Island Discs): a good Bible commentary to help understand fully; complete Pepys Diary (I think nine volumes); a violin and a "Teach Yourself To Play The Violin (Success Guaranteed)" course to go with it!



Wendy:

1. Work at McInroy & Wood, a personal investment management firm based in Haddington. I am an accountant by profession. Originally from Aberdeen, I moved to Edinburgh in 1991 and then to East Lothian in 2006. I live at Longnewton, just outside Gifford, with husband Kenny and daughter Honor and our black lab Willow and 3 cats.
 2. I enjoy being part of a community of like minded people.
- If stranded on a desert island, my 3 items would be a coffee pot (am hoping coffee beans available on the island), a hammock and a satellite phone.

We are stamp collecting!

With Christmas not far off, it's worth reminding everyone that we collect used stamps which are sent on to charities who can recycle them to help funding of world Christian mission. There are collection tins available near all of the church doors, so please save the stamps from your Christmas cards (and indeed all of your other mail!) and drop them off when convenient.

Coffee Mornings

Twice a month (on the second Wednesday and the fourth Tuesday) we have drop-in Coffee Mornings in East Saltoun and Yester: an opportunity for a chat over a cup of tea and coffee.

Coffee Morning Dates

Yester 11 Dec
Yester 8 Jan
Saltoun 28 Jan
Yester 12 Feb
Saltoun 25 Feb

Our Church Family

Baptisms	27 October 2019	Emily Lara Tait, daughter of Susan and Ian Tait, Redshill
	24 November 2019	Mhairi Kate Elliot Douglas, daughter of Catriona and Andrew Douglas, Edinburgh
	1 December 2019	Rose Alice Bailey, daughter of Sophie and Douglas Bailey, Edinburgh
Marriages	25 October 2019	Emma Pate and John Hogg, Longyester
Deaths	8 September 2019	Peter Radband, Gifford
	6 November 2019	Rae Dodds, Ardrishaig (formerly Cauldshiel)

Minister	Anikó Schütz Bradwell	01620 811193	ASchuetzBradwell@churchofscotland.org.uk
Session Clerk	John Macfarlane	01875 341311	jmacfarlane9@btinternet.com
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Depute Session Clerk	Paul Sales	01620 811260	paulsales457@btinternet.com
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Gift Aid Treasurer (Yester)	Wendy Ferguson	01620 811069	wendyferguson.wf@gmail.com
Gift Aid Treasurer (Bolton and Saltoun)	Paul Sales	01620 811260	paulsales457@btinternet.com
Fabric Convener	Bill Swan	01875 340477	billandmoragswan@yahoo.co.uk
Deputy Fabric Convener	Ian Jameson	07803 893970	dianjameson@aol.com
Sunday Club (Yester)	Jackie McCreery	01620 810131	jackie@yesterfarmdairies.co.uk
	Wendy Ferguson	01620 811069	wendyferguson.wf@gmail.com
Sunday Club (Bolton and Saltoun)	Jenny Riddell	07905 135975	keith.mains@hotmail.co.uk
	Ian Jameson	07803 893970	dianjameson@aol.com
Flower rota (Yester)	Sylvia Anderson	01620 810678	jimsylvia@scoraig.net
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Deadline for next newsletter: Wednesday 12 February 2020

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The Church of Scotland