



## **ALLANDER EVANGELICAL CHURCH**

### **FELLOWSHIP NEWSLETTER**

*Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2023*

#### **CHRISTMAS SPECIAL**

This is one of two special editions of the Newsletter marking the end of a wonderful year at Allander and recounting what God has done among us and the needs and challenges we still face. The next one – looking ahead – will appear on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024, DV.

#### **NOTICE BOARD**

The following arrangements apply over the Christmas and New Year period.

- Services will take place each Sunday at 10 30 and 6 30 pm. Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December will be an All-Age Christmas Service and the evening will take the form of Carols by Candlelight. No Communion.
- On Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December we will have a worship service with communion in the morning and at 11 15 pm, a Watchnight service with communion.
- Other activities will start up again in January with: Toddlers on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup>, Cafe and Hashtag on the 10<sup>th</sup>, Bible Study on the 11<sup>th</sup> and the normal prayer times on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.
- The Faith Mission Rally and Rejuvenate will take place on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 6<sup>th</sup>.

There is so much to thank God for as we look back on this year as things have returned to 'normal' after the Covid restrictions and their effect.

#### **EVENTS**

- ❖ We hosted a very special series of Holy Week preaching services at Allander for the Milngavie Churches. Dr Sandy Roger brought the Easter story alive with his sermons on The Cross through the eyes of Peter.
- ❖ Few who were there will forget the impact of the Artless Theatre Company's dramatization of the experience of the persecuted Christian based on the life of Petr Jasek who was imprisoned in Sudan by ISIS.
- ❖ June saw yet another Holiday Club following up a good series of weekly meetings in #One2Seven and the parallel Youth Challenge with Simon and Hannah.
- ❖ Social events took the form of a cruise on Loch Lomond and a Supper Evening in October.
- ❖ A special visit from Vio and the family (Robi, Casi and young Sara) from Romania who blessed us with their commitment and enthusiasm.
- ❖ Inga's home visit during which time we were able to get to know her, learn more about the work and be more committed.

- ❖ Setting up a Sunday School during the morning service. Carol Macleod and her team of helpers have ensured its effective operation despite the wide range of ages.
- ❖ And the provision of a Crèche for the very young staffed by more volunteers allowing parents (and grandparents) to focus on the service without the natural distractions.
- ❖ Rejuvenate and what it has meant to young folk from Allander and other churches. Provides fellowship. Thanks to all who have helped
- ❖ Privilege of participation by way of support for various outreaches like Hope for Glasgow, Street Connect, Faith Mission and Child Evangelism Fellowship.



## PEOPLE

- ❖ Quite a number of additional folks have entered Care Homes this year along with those who have been there for some time, like George Cowan, Anna Gardiner, Jack Harvey, Joyce Kyle, Margaret Stewart
- ❖ Others are increasingly becoming confined to their homes due to infirmity or old age and so are unable to come out to the meetings, like Margaret Craig, Jean Donnelly, Margaret Russell, Agnes Wilson
- ❖ Yet others are enduring long-term medical and situational challenges with fortitude: Janice Allan, Ian Baird, Terry and Joan Gallagher, Elisabeth Gemmell, Jean Malkin, Peter Stephenson, David and Morag Wilson.
- ❖ And some - still incredibly active and industrious - reaching significant age thresholds during the year: Margaret Craig (90), Nessie Duffus (90) and Isabel Nicol (80). And, at the other end, Molly Snodgrass (1 month)
- ❖ Following her time at home with us, Inga is back in Oaxaca but without Sue who is receiving treatment in South Dakota. The work is going on apace but Inga is encountering a number of health issues.
- ❖ All those who help in different ways with all the practical involvement in the many church activities, such as catering, cleaning, maintenance, faithful visiting, responsibility for meetings, flowers, and music, - and so much more.
- ❖ Jing and all her enterprising work with Chinese children conducting Sunday schools over the Internet.
- ❖ The young people attending our services and being so helpful.
- ❖ Sadly, those still feeling the effects of family bereavements.



## FEATURES

The year has seen some special features which enhance the work of the church and improve our fellowship. Some of these have been:

- ❖ The setting up of a church lending library at the back of the church with a range of books available for borrowing at any time.
- ❖ The availability of suitable literature laid out at the back of the church. These include missionary magazines and reports, useful booklets for use in witnessing and supporting, a range of notices and publicity material advertising what is happening at Allander.
- ❖ The opening up of the church premises during the Milngavie Street Party in the summer and the Lights Switch-On before Christmas.
- ❖ Continuing practical support for Mission Agencies and individuals through the Mission of the Month contributions.
- ❖ Practical help for Romania by packing goods to be taken out by lorry several times a year; donating supplies for The Space project in Govanhill, filling shoe boxes for Blythswood Care projects in Eastern Europe.
- ❖ Opportunities to lead services in local schools and care Homes.
- ❖ Welcoming a number of visitors to our services. Some of whom, like Samantha, felt a divine urge to come to church
- ❖ A welcome feature of the year has been the visible (and audio!) presence of children and young people. The church has responded to this by making special provision through the setting up of a Crèche.
- ❖ Full House at Toddlers each week: and #One2Seven and Youth Challenge run by Simon Snodgrass, his wife Hannah and their team every Wednesday evening.
- ❖ Good fellowship with neighbouring churches, especially with Maryhill Evangelical.
- ❖ The re-start of the Ladies' Meeting. Now meeting once a month.
- ❖ The generosity of the congregation in regular giving ensuring that the work is both solvent and increasing.



Yet,

- ❖ *Despite these many encouraging features there is disappointment that attendance – and participation – at our Prayer meetings has declined. Nor is there much evidence of public witness through baptism or commitment to church membership.*



AND, WHAT OF OUR FOCUS FOR CHRISTMAS

Encouraged by all this it is essential to remember the purpose of it all and what we are really celebrating.



For God so loved the world that He **gave** His only begotten Son (Jesus) that whoever **believes** in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

God expressed His love toward fallen humanity in Jesus

Jesus entered our world

Died to forgive our sins

Rose again to empower us for a new life

In response,

He is to be:



*"Yet, to those who received him and believed on his name he gave the right to be called children of God." John 1: 12*

