

## CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS



There are events in our lives that seem to be markers, times when things change and don't go back to what they were. These most recent years seem to have had no shortage of such events. The invasion of Ukraine has

led to us thinking again about what was called 'The Cold War', something we thought was easing, and now we wonder if peace in Europe was a phase for a few decades rather than a settled position. The conflict in Palestine has been even more tragic, and at best we can only pray for peace and wisdom for all parties.

The nature of war and powers that seem to confront our nation may change, but there always seems to be fear. As we approach Christmas, I always used to think that the festive season had not properly started until I heard on the radio the strains of 'And so this is Christmas, and what have you done?' I recall reading that when John Lennon wrote this he added the refrain 'war is over' because as he said 'there always seems to be a war going on somewhere'. It is indeed hard to think of many festive periods when there has not been a conflict somewhere in the world.

At the same time though we remember the birth of the Christ Child, our Saviour. We remember because in it God kept the promise foretold through the prophets. God showed us that he loved us and broke into our world in the understated way that we remember through nativity plays in so many churches, yet it was just as had been prophesied. In the midst of terror threats, we stop and recall God's way and that it is a different way. In Hebrews 5 we read this verse: 'The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?'

This Christmastide we have a number of special services across our three hubs and hope that we can all celebrate the good news that Christmas brings, and also take time out to remember those we have lost in our 'Time to remember' event. My prayer is that all Montrose folk have a blessed Christmas and that in the year to come we can hold on to the promise from God that he never leaves us nor forsakes us.

**With every blessing, Derek**

## What's in the magazine?

P 2. Christmas Thoughts –Derek Peat

P 3 Refurbishment of Steeple rooms  
Aileen Scott

P.4. Closure of Ferryden Church  
Refurbishment of the Hall- Alan Fraser

P.5. Vivid Vision – Michelle McAdoo

P.6. Youth activities – Claire, Meg, Aileen

P.7. Communications – Douglas Craig

P.8. "And for me, it's time to go." Ian Gray

## BINNIE and AMBER

I'm sure everyone in Trinity by now knows Binnie and her guide dog Amber. One of the highlights of the recent church Curry Night was watching Amber, 'off duty' rolling on her back on the floor being stroked and fussed over by all the young children there.

Well, sadly a routine small op to remove a lump has revealed a malignant growth, which automatically means that Amber will be removed from her active role and after a few days, from Binnie herself, to then be



placed with a local approved Guide Dog Boarder, until her future can be decided.

**Di Millar**

## LOOKING BACK AND MOVING FORWARD

### STEEPLE ROOMS REFURBISHED.

When we suddenly and tragically lost our good friend Willie Sinclair last year, it was decided that it would be a fitting tribute to him to revamp the old Session Room at the Steeple Hub and rename it the '**Sinclair Room**'. At the same time, it was recognised that an upgrade to the Vestry would make it a much more comfortable and welcoming space for our new Ministry Team to work from.



### STEEPLE VESTRY

The old rooms have served us well for the last 50 years, but with new Health & Safety regulations to consider in the Vestry, and a desire to create a multi-purpose cosy space that Willie would have approved of, we started with new lighting, and a heating system that can be set remotely, then followed up with new colour schemes. Carpet tiles have been replaced with new hard-wearing carpets, and a mix of comfortable and office style furniture sourced for both rooms. Soft furnishings have been added to create a homely feel thanks to some generous donations.

Going forward, the hope is that our ministers and youth worker will use the Vestry as a base, getting the church doors open more often and letting the people of Montrose know that Montrose Trinity is an active, welcoming place.

Let's hope there are kettles in both rooms?

The Sinclair Room has been furnished to be an informal, multi-purpose space that can be used practically for Sunday School, Sunday business, and small meetings, but also a cosy space where families preparing for funerals or those wanting to speak to the ministers can feel relaxed and comfortable.

And its nice welcoming soft sofas are always there for hard working church volunteers to sink into – we think Willie would approve!



Even if you're not in the habit of going into either room, please pop in on a Sunday or any time you see the church door ajar – all are welcome here any day of the week.

**Aileen Scott**

### WHAT ELSE DO WE NEED FOR OUR CHURCH OFFICE?

Outstanding issues for the Vestry as a functioning office will be the acquisition of a new economical printer/ scanner. There is also the need for shelving/ and or bookcases suitable to accommodate box files.

Serendipitously, Aileen has rediscovered that the church already has a WiFi line installed. At over ten years old it is rather slow by current standards, but it will get us online.

The signal is however, not great around the rest of the church, particularly to the tech desk in the back right corner. This will require some head scratching and purchase of aerial splitters and boosters. Whatever they are?

### WANTED

A small team of volunteer administrators to share a rota managing the running of the church office?

### ALSO

**Philos Cafe** are looking for new volunteers – **Wednesdays 1.00pm– 3.00pm**  
Philos cafe and other Parish Outreach activities will feature in the New Year Issue of our magazine.

## A NEW CHAPTER IN THE LIFE OF TRINITY CHURCH@FERRYDEN



### Part 1

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fishermen. To read more of the history, go to the website under "About us", or just click this **QR code**.



### Part 2 New start – new Hub

**Be reassured, however, that although the church building will be sold off, that is definitely NOT the end of the church in Ferryden.**

Adopting the Church's vision of 'well equipped spaces in the right places' the church family will simply be relocating to the Hall.

You will probably be aware that extensive planning for the conversion of the hall into a multi-use Hub has been carried out.



The hope is that, as well as being the new worship centre, the Hub will provide a facility which the community will be happy to use and will be a focus for the whole area. The planning has passed significant stages and it is hoped that the final go-ahead will be given very soon.



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### So, how do you go about moving out and selling off a church?

It's certainly not just a case of posting a **FOR SALE** sign and hiring night club bouncers to manage the crowds of enthusiastic viewers. There are many items which are important to church members, to the local community and to church history and what happens to them will have to be considered carefully and sensitively. Fortunately, we had a visit in June from the **Scotland's Churches Trust** who inventoried all the contents of the church and advised on how to dispose of items of historical interest, including several War Memorials within the church premises. As part of the preparation of the Hall to become the interim Worship Hub, various minor physical alterations, including the entrance door, and changing the orientation of the hall are already under way, with "Toasty Audio" poised to remove the tech gear from the church and re-install it in the hall.

**Alan Fraser**

Materials bought include some **THIRTY litres of paint!**

**Can you see where this is going?**

**ALL** members of Montrose Trinity are invited to rinse out your rollers and brushes and come along to help transform a currently drab hall to one fit for our 'new' church.

**We'll let you know when we're ready to decorate.**

## VIVID VISION—LISTENING TO OUR CHURCH FAMILY

In September we held a 'Vivid Vision' session with over 50 members attending, where Very Rev Dr Martin Fair facilitated reflections on where we are as a church today and what we hope for the future. The responses revealed both honest concerns and deep faith in God's renewing power. The responses were all analysed and some main themes emerged.

Many expressed sadness at our **declining and ageing membership**, and the need to **reconnect with young families and children**.



There was also a clear desire to rebuild a stronger link between **church and community**, ensuring our worship and witness remain relevant and rooted in everyday life.

Participants voiced frustration with bureaucracy and slow change, longing instead for greater local **freedom, joy, and shared purpose**. Yet through every challenge ran a hopeful thread: a belief that the **Holy Spirit is at work**, stirring revival and calling us to renewed mission.

The vision for Montrose Trinity is becoming clearer — a **welcoming, outward-looking church** that serves its community, embraces **unity** across our three hubs, and invites all generations to worship and grow together. Focus on 'Growing Young' movement, flexible worship spaces, and renewed personal commitment to **prayer and discipleship** were seen as keys to moving forward. At a follow up evening was arranged for early November. The next step will be to get to know one another more deeply in January as we explore our shared values.

**Renewal begins with each of us** — praying, serving, and stepping out in faith as we journey together toward a vibrant, Spirit-filled future.

The Vivid Vision video is available on the Church of Scotland website here:

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/departments/faith-action-programme-committees-and-departments/faith-action-programme/vivid-vision>

The **report and presentation** will both be available on request, and in the church buildings, as well as on our website to anyone who is interested in finding out more and joining in with the vision for the future of Montrose Trinity as we follow the way of Christ.

A follow-up meeting was held on Monday 11 November, when the findings were summarised, and considered over further, animated discussion.

Again, hopes were raised over reaching young families and children with our new church formats.

These issues will certainly be carefully considered at our next, and subsequent Kirk Session meetings, as well as within the teams themselves.

**Rev Michelle McAdoo**

## THE INVISIBLE CHILDREN?

One of greatest concerns of the church, highlighted in the discussions both at the Vivid Vision meeting in September, and in the follow up "Results Session" on Monday 10 November, is the 'apparent' absence of children and their parents from "Church".



Unlike in the film "**Monsters Inc**" we are anxious to see children back among us.

HOWEVER, in our current society, children have much busier weekends with sports club and other activities, often on Sunday mornings. Parents are now unpaid taxi drivers.

We do need to look at different formats, different venues and different times in order to recover the younger generations, though there are green shoots— as shown overleaf.

**Is it time to consider alternative Church formats, such as Cafe Church and intergenerational Church?**

## INVISIBLE CHILDREN?

No! Although there may be fewer children in church on Sundays, compared with Sunday Schools when most of us were growing up, they're active in our church halls, our hills and both Primary and Secondary schools.

## MYPlace

Our youth and family worker Claire Van Geete has a lot of exciting activities planned in schools over the next few months. There are to be a number of Christmas workshops taking place in the local primary schools and plans to restart the popular Bible Alive sessions in the New Year.

Claire also runs a Scripture Union group at Montrose Academy each Tuesday and would value your prayerful support for this.

## 10:10 at COMPASS



On the 19<sup>th</sup> of September 15 members of the 26 strong 10:10 Youth Club with six intrepid leaders headed off by minibus to the Compass Christian Centre for an activity weekend.

Compass is the longest standing Christian outdoor centre in Scotland and offers a wealth of activities in the breathtaking landscapes of Glenshee.



For the young people this was their first visit and they were very excited at an adventure weekend.

We certainly had an action-packed stay with activities including the Skytrail, zip wire, archery, climbing wall,

kayaking and tomahawk throwing!



Everyone enthusiastically launched themselves into these new experiences and it was a joy to see both young and old gaining in confidence as we took on new challenges.

We even have the bruises to prove it!

We enjoyed two 'Bible Times' over the weekend, firstly we concluded our TFL (thought for life) theme on the life of Joseph. We then piloted our Youth Alpha course ahead of the course proper in October.

We arrived back in Ferryden on Sunday teatime exhausted but thankful to God for a happy and memorable weekend where both faith and friendships were strengthened and grew.

Thanks to all who supported our trip in prayer.

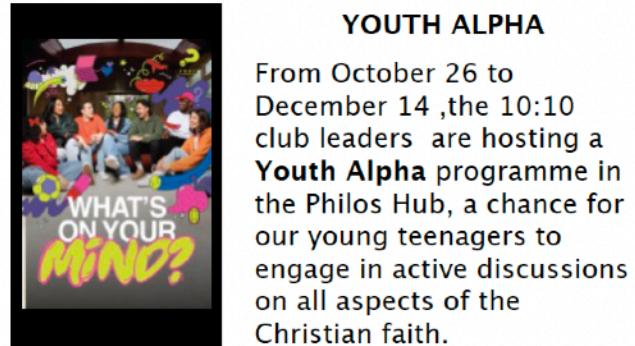
**Meg Cowan**

## SUMMER HOLIDAY CLUBS

This summer Church teams on both sides of the river, hosted very 'full-on' programmes of fun activities for 150 school children, in the Steeple and Ferryden halls.

It was great fun for all with games, crafts, songs, terrible jokes and interactive Bible times.

## YOUTH ALPHA



From October 26 to December 14, the 10:10 club leaders are hosting a **Youth Alpha** programme in the Philos Hub, a chance for our young teenagers to engage in active discussions on all aspects of the Christian faith.



This is church for families who want to enjoy faith and fellowship in a fun and relaxed way.

**In the Steeple Hall**  
**Sundays 4.00 -5.30**

## HIGH STREET NATIVITY STALL

On 16 November, 2025, on the day of the lighting of the Montrose Christmas Tree, among all the other stalls, Montrose Trinity was represented by a Nativity Scene where children could have their pictures taken, as well as receiving a gift bag including a Bible message, and some sweet goodies.

An estimated 100 children visited the stable, and experienced something of the eternal Christmas message.



## COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

### QUESTIONS?

**“ I never know when the services start? ”**

**“ I went to the church at the usual time....and it was closed ”**

**“ I didn’t know that there was a Curry Night, otherwise I would have come? ”**

**IS THIS A PROBLEM YOU SUFFER FROM?**

**NO ONE TELLS YOU WHAT IS HAPPENING, AND WHERE?**

### ANSWERS?

Come along to Sunday Service, when all activities are displayed on the screen before the service..

Pick up a copy of the monthly calendar of activities across Montrose Trinity . This is produced by Chris Brown of Ferryden, copied to the two other hubs, and handed out at all three Sunday services.

### **WEL, I DON’T USUALLY COME TO CHURCH.**

In that case, you have several options.

Church has changed. Give us another chance. Come along and see the differences for yourself.

Check the noticeboards **outside** your church. They will be displaying a copy of Chris’s form.

OR

Watch the Sunday Service, live-streamed from Ferryden Church, led by our ministers, and viewable on **Montrose Trinity YouTube channel**.

**I don’t know how to get YouTube?**

#### **Do you have a Smart TV?**

If not sure, ask your grandchild or another available youngster for help.

If you can already watch BBCiPlayer, STV Player etc, I think you have a Smart TV.

Do you have a SmartPhone, iPad or similar tablet, Laptop or desk top computer?

If so, you are probably able to access YouTube, or better still, log onto our digital platforms.

**[www.montrose-trinity.co.uk](http://www.montrose-trinity.co.uk)**

**Facebook – Montrose Trinity**

**Montrose Trinity Instagram Account**

If you wish to plunge further into the church’s activities, then why not sign up for the

**WhatsApp – Trinity Church Prayer Net  
and**

**WhatsApp – Trinity @Ferryden Chat**

Michelle is currently working on a **Trinity –wide WhatsApp Group**.

**S**

TRINIY@Ferryden Chat blog posted this picture on the morning of 15 November – in Montrose High Street, with volunteers from all three Hubs manning the Nativity Stall.



### **OUR COMMS TEAM**

Originally consisting of ‘old timers’, Edith, David and Douglas, it was augmented by Fiona, Louise, and now with a fresh intake, we number nine, drawn from across the Hubs.

Our new team members are

**Chris Brown** News and events

**Pamela Strachan** Events Diary

**Ken Linton** ‘Data Policing’. Get it?

**Hannah Barnet** Facebook, Instagram and who knows, maybe even TikTok?

Additionally,

**Jamie Livingston** –co-opted as our QR guru. QR codes are everywhere now, and are a very quick way to access information and open web sites

It’s a real asset, and only Jamie has the QR code generator. (Like a Bond villain with a secret weapon? Just no Persian cat!)

### **COSTS**

A big concern for us is that our printing costs are high, with about £1000 for 800 copies each of three issues in 2025.

We are keen to encourage members to sign up to receive speedy notification of events, changes in services, and also email delivery of the magazine by email, as is common now.

**All we would require from you is your email address or a mobile phone number and we could start right away.**

In fact, enclosed with this magazine is a form for completion with these basic details, and well as a Data statement produced by our Data Protection officer. **ONLY** church business will be shared with you, and will **NEVER** be forwarded on to any Third Parties.

**Douglas Craig (Comms Convenor)**

## AND FOR ME, IT'S TIME TO GO.

It seems a long time ago now, but time passes so quickly....too quickly; It was 1997 when I began my three year Readership studies with The Scottish Churches Open College....which included two six month placements....one at a rural charge, Glamis with Andrew Greave, the other in a town church, St Andrews, Arbroath, with Martin Fair.

On completion, at the turn of the century, I was "Set Apart" as a Church of Scotland Reader in The Old Kirk....Martin Fair preached and Lawrence Whitley, the then of

Angus Presbytery conducted the formal proceedings.

I had been for many years, very involved in the Old Kirk as an Elder, but now found myself very busy in other churches leading worship and fulfilling Locum duties where and when required.

But I always felt something was missing from my ministry, which was highlighted during my year as moderator of Angus Presbytery....Under Church Law I was not permitted to conduct Communion....that required an ordained minister, so I had to vacate the moderators seat during the Presbytery Communion Service.

However, in 2011 things began to change....the Church opened the door for Readers to be ordained as OLMs....Ordained Local Ministers....After a further year of study with Aberdeen University I awaited my ordination date. It arrived by E-Mail....27<sup>th</sup> August 2013....

I immediately gave Celia a shout....she came running...I commented that the date was familiar for some reason....then, after recovering from a dead arm, Celia reminded me that the 27<sup>th</sup> of August was our anniversary date. **OOPS!**

And so I was ordained as an OLM in Edzell Church on my Pearl Wedding Anniversary. Jane Blackley preached that day, she spoke of the "Call of God" saying we are all called and asked ministers to remove their clerical ....



### IAN'S "CV" FOR TRINITY "MINISTRY TEAM in WEBSITE IN 2024

I am a Gable-ender, born and raised in Montrose. My dad was my inspiration in life who encouraged me to attend church in my early teens. We were members of the Knox's United Free Church in Montrose where my dad served as the Beadle. In my late teens he handed that role over to me and I became the youngest Beadle in the history of the UF Church. Many years later I joined the Old Kirk and my then Minister, the late Laurence Whitley encouraged me to look into Readership within the Church.

I served, for three seasons, as Chaplain to Montrose Football Club, a team I have supported virtually all of my life ever since my Dad took me to Links Park in my pram.

I am married to Celia and have two children....Jamie, in Montrose and Caroline, in Bearsden, and two Grandchildren, Andress and Bonnie.

Team ministry is new to me, and I'm sure, to all of us, but I can't wait for it all to come together. What we bring is a variety of talents and skills and a calling to serve God in this community. What a privilege....what an opportunity....

Let's make "The Church Great Again." "What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?"  
Romans 8:31

Thank you Ian for being here for us, through thick and thin.

**Now, you can get back to the footie  
reading your books?**





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### **MESSY CHURCH**

**Messy Church** is church for families who want to enjoy Faith and fellowship in a fun and relaxed way.

Sundays – Steeple Hall  
16.00 – 17.30