

The NET

The congregational newsletter of
Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church, St Andrews



6th November 2020

A letter from the Rectory

It's interesting to watch the public worry over whether or not Christmas will be 'cancelled' this year. It reflects, I suppose, the extent to which 'the reason for the season' has slipped into the hinterland of public consciousness that anyone could suppose that 'Christmas' as such *could* be cancelled! What people are mostly concerned about, of course, is that the annual, publicly sanctioned opportunity for enthusiastic family get-togethers (typically much over-rated in my experience), re-kindling sentimental memories of childhood, consumer spending on an otherwise inexcusable scale, and indulgence in Bacchanalian excess might be missed. Apart from the curious desire of some to end a bibulous Christmas Eve pub-crawl with the tradition of turning up to 'Midnight Mass', relatively few, I suspect, are actually concerned to safeguard the Christian festival itself, or reckon with its meaning and implications for us as we all (no doubt gladly) prepare to see the back of 2020, hoping against hope that 2021 may hold better things in store.

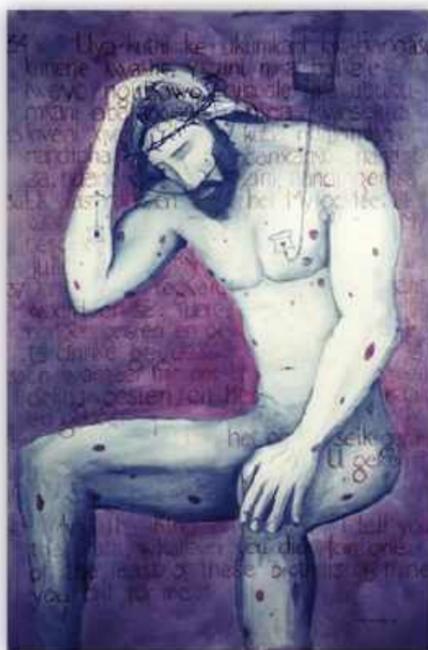
No, Christmas as such will not, because it cannot, be cancelled, no matter how little turkey, tinsel and watching the Queen on TV may be permitted or possible. Unlike the Grinch, the pandemic cannot steal Christmas,



because in reality Christmas is not a public party but a marker in time, taking

its reference from the unrepeatable point at which God entered human history as one of his own creatures in order to save us from ourselves and open the gates of glory. The footprints of that decisive coming among us remain and will not be erased, and its anniversary will come around year in and year out, whether anyone notices or not. So, if Christmas can survive the widespread ignorance and indifference to this anniversary that tends to accompany its enthusiastic high-jacking by a world looking for an excuse for a good time (and never more so than this year), it can certainly survive the virus!

Having said that, though, the continuing uncertainties surrounding the pandemic and its resurgences here and there means that even for Christians, Christmas this year is indeed bound to be *different*. It may be different precisely because the context of COVID-19 grants our celebration of it a heightened or a



distinctive meaning, forcing us to ask what the story of a God who himself comes and, in the familiar words of the prophet Isaiah, 'bears our infirmities and carries our diseases' (Isa. 53:4) rather

than isolating himself from the risk of contracting them, might mean for us in the thick of it all. Given that we are likely still to be bound by government prohibitions of one sort or another, the way in which we celebrate it together is certainly going to have to be different. I have not yet resolved quite what we shall be doing, but the glories of the annual Christmas Carol Service, the Young Church Christmas Presentation, the Christingle Service, the aforementioned First Communion of Christmas late on Christmas Eve and the Christmas morning family eucharist are not, for one reason or another, going to translate well into the currently permitted small gatherings of masked attendees. We shall need to be more creative than that in order to celebrate well and to do so *together!*

It may be that part of a creative response to this challenge will involve the use of Zoom, holding services online rather than in the building, and allowing everyone to participate in our joint worship from the comfort of their living rooms. It was interesting, recently, to note just how well-attended our All Souls Service on Zoom was (48, which is more or less double what we would ordinarily expect). And services of Morning Prayer, Midday Prayer and Compline on Zoom continue to exceed any attendance of such services in the church building, enabling folk who otherwise could or would not be able to join in to do so.

It has, of course, been a joy for the past three months to be able to open our church building again on Sunday mornings for those who are able to attend, and to share the eucharist together. I have been very aware, though, that the number of our



congregation who cannot or choose not to join us in person because of health-related concerns is significant, and that our use of YouTube as a platform for livestreaming has not managed to sustain the sense of being 'present' and taking part for those who share in our worship online. It is, to borrow a telling phrase from one person in this situation, a bit like being a 'fly on the wall' rather than actually being involved.

I know that lots of people have felt this, and that the shift from our weekly Zoomed service has rather been to the detriment of folk who are not attending in person. Since the pandemic is clearly not going away any time soon, we need to address this. So, in the coming weeks we shall be shifting back from YouTube to Zoom on Sunday mornings, enabling those watching the livestream to see

others also doing so, and, courtesy of a very large TV screen recently installed in the church building (don't worry, despite its considerable size it is on a stand which moves effortlessly as needed!) to be seen and heard at appropriate points by those in the church building! This will mean, for instance, that readings, or intercessions, or sermons, or whatever will be able to be done on a Sunday by those at home, as they were each week during lockdown.

It will be a bit trial and error in the first instance. And we shall need to have some protocols in place, for instance, about muting and unmuting so as to avoid the inadvertent sharing with the whole congregation of potentially distracting or embarrassing comments or noises of other sorts (coffee slurped, doorbells ringing, etc.). But, despite the

various challenges of Zoom, and the slightly less polished nature of the product, I am certain that this will help those sharing in our worship from home to feel that they are actually involved, and not merely observing something from which they are effectively excluded. To make this work without overloading anyone with responsibility for the technology, we shall need to establish a small team of folk able and willing to assist with pressing buttons, plugging things into other things, and knowing what to do in the event of pending digital disaster! If you might be willing to receive some basic training and join a rota to assist with this (or if you know someone who might be willing...), please speak to myself or Josh, or send an email to Karen in the church office (office.stasstas@gmail.com).

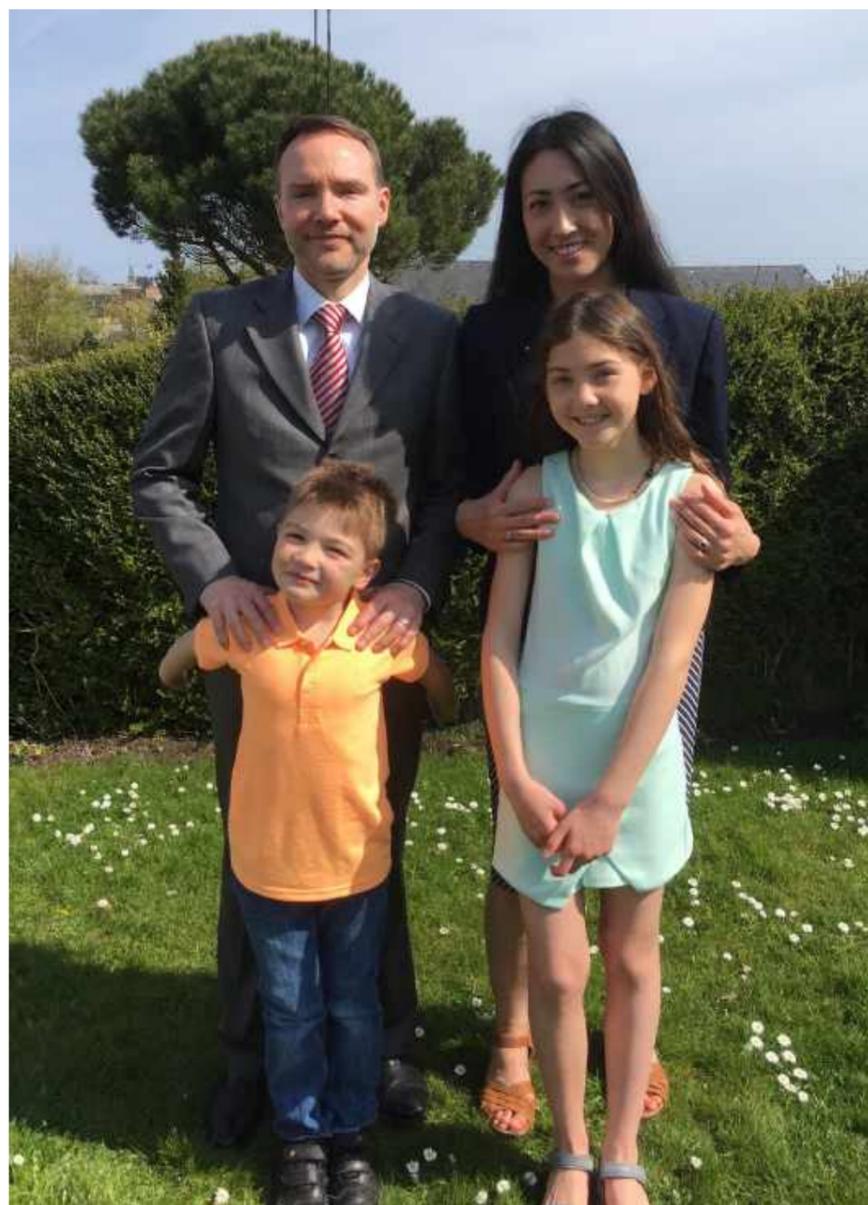
~ Trevor

Time to say farewell

The Morleys are returning to New York

Dear church family,

The Morley family have come to the end of our wonderful 4 years in this church home. The very first Sunday after we arrived in August 2016, we came here and felt so welcomed that we never went anywhere else. You all have been a caring and warm community that we will miss so much. It has been a pleasure to be involved in various activities: welcoming people at the door, serving in the sacristy (Jake), teaching Sunday School, serving coffee and tea, working in the church office (Letizia), house group and more. The children's ministry has nurtured Vivi and Wylan so well and helped them grow in faith. We have made many friends of all ages whom we treasure and are very sad to leave. Some special memories include 'Stir Up Sunday' with Rosemary, Advent, Christingle Service (and helping to make the Christingles under Jenny's tutelage), Mothering Sunday, Harvest Sunday lunch, Palm Sunday procession, Easter service and egg hunt, congregational lunches at the homes of Eric & Clare and John & Liz (and John's delicious salmon!), getting free cooking apples every year, the Nativity (complete with wayward sheep), walking the Tay Bridge for Christian Aid, witnessing many baptisms, Pancake Day at the Rectory...so many lovely experiences flood into my mind all at once. Where we lived before coming to Scotland, we had no church anything like Saint Andrew's St Andrews. This is a special place and we are forever grateful for our time here. Being a part of this church has been one of the highlights of our entire stay in this town. In September Jake got a teaching



job on Long Island, New York and has been there since the first week of October. The children and I are here through the end of November, our last Sunday being the 29th. I hope to say a proper goodbye to as many of you as I can. Please know that you are all dearly appreciated and that we send our warmest regards as we go back to the US.

With love and gratitude,

~ Letizia for the family

Sharing what we have been given

Congregational Outreach Group report November 2020

Six years ago, the Vestry agreed that Saint Andrew's would henceforth donate a proportion of its income each year to organisations we wish to support as part of our commitment to outreach. The congregation's Outreach Group (The Rector, Catherine Meikle, Alan Werritty and Dorothea Cargill Thompson) has oversight of this expenditure. It reports to the Vestry.

As reported at the last AGM, following recommendations from the Outreach Group, the Vestry approved funding for 2019/20 as follows:

CMS (Andrew and Andrea Young)	£1,500	international
Direct Link (Kenya)	£1,500	international
Bethany Christian Trust	£ 500	national + local (Scotland)
Christian Aid	£ 500	international
Pilgrim Care (Cath Carter – parish nurse)	£ 500	local
SECMA South Sudan and Kenya	£1,000	international
Scottish Episcopal Church Community Fund	£ 500	national (Scotland)
Kingdom 2000	£ 500	local
Rector's discretionary fund	£1,000	
Total	£ 7,500	

The Outreach Group will meet soon to consider a new set of donations both locally in St Andrews and further afield. If you have an organisation that you would like to be considered for support during the financial year 2020/21 please provide appropriate details (the name of the organisation, its contact details and a brief statement as to why you are making the recommendation). We are committed to long-term continuing support for our CMS Partners (Andrew and Andrea Young in Nepal) and for Direct Link (in Kenya) and are eager to continue our support for two local charities (the Bethany Christian Trust and Pilgrim Care); but we are also eager to refresh the list of other organisations noted above.

Please send your suggestions to a.werritty@dundee.ac.uk by Monday 30 November.

~ Alan Werritty

From Scarborough (in the foothills of the Himalaya)

An update from our CMS Mission Partners



Andrew and Andrea Young's role is to provide pastoral support for staff of the United Mission to Nepal in Kathmandu, Tansen and Okhaldhunga in Nepal. Ordinarily they would be found in the foothills of the Himalaya, but having returned home to the UK to enjoy a period of furlough, they find themselves instead on the edge of the Yorkshire Moors, trapped by the ban on international travel and other Covid-related restrictions. Their return ticket to Nepal is on hold, and they will not now be able to return to their base there until 2021.

They write: 'Many people told us that they had found their lockdown experience beneficial. We wish that we could say the same, but in all honesty our first few months of adjustment of living in the UK was difficult. Isolating from family and not being able to visit our new grandchild was like many people's experiences. Added to this, however, is a great sense of loss from

our community in Nepal'.

Thanks to technology, though, their work continues and, due to the virus, is all the more important. 'The stress of the pandemic has affected Nepali colleagues in similar ways to many people worldwide. Working from home, managing children's education, worries about finances and fears of redundancy are common anxieties among many. ... UMN leadership was aware of the extra stress that the pandemic is having on our staff and in response to this we have set up a staff support group, much like a pastoral care group. ... This is a new work within UMN and one for which we would value your prayers.

'In our last letter we asked for prayers to find ways of communicating with colleagues in Kathmandu. We have seen answers to this prayer in many ways. Our new normal has consisted of connecting with our expat colleagues online and we have become seasoned Zoomers. This has included continuing "craft and chat" on Monday evenings, individually guided retreats, leading worship and Bible study. We can't say that this way of pastoral care doesn't challenge us, but we are thankful that we can meet face to face through the wonders of technology, although two-dimensional!'

Fair trade in a time of pandemic

Although we are no longer able to sell Traidcraft items after services, I still continue to order and sell them on request and would like to encourage people to order to support this worthwhile cause. Purchasing fair trade goods supports so many people, both in the initial purchase, and by the money we are then able to put back to good causes. I have copies of the 2020 Autumn/Winter catalogue if anyone would like one. Both the website (traidcraftshop.co.uk) and the catalogue have a wealth of information about the products for sale, and the producers and how their lives are improved by being part of fair trade. Please do get in touch if you would like me to order ... chocolate...dried apricots...gifts...cards...coffee...cleaning materials...the list is endless! There will soon be an offering of Christmas cards, both Traidcraft and from Roselind Evans – watch this space!

~ Jenny Evetts



e: mtpleasant@hotmail.co.uk
t: 01334 850356 or 07946099465



Diabolic correspondence

Affectionate advice from a senior to a junior devil...

My dear WORMWOOD,

I wonder you should ask me whether it is essential to keep the patient in ignorance of your own existence. That question, at least for the present phase of the struggle, has been answered for us by the High Command. Our policy, for the moment, is to conceal ourselves.

Of course this has not always been so. We are really faced with a cruel dilemma. When the humans disbelieve in our existence we lose all the pleasing results of direct terrorism and we make no magicians. On the other hand, when they believe in us, we cannot make them materialists and sceptics.

At least, not yet. I have great hopes that we shall learn in due time how to emotionalise and mythologise their science to such an extent that what is, in effect, a belief in us, (though not under that name) will creep in which the human mind remains closed to belief in the Enemy. The "life force", the worship of sex, and some aspects of Psychoanalysis may here prove useful.

If once we can produce our perfect work--the Materialist Magician, the man, not using, but veritably worshipping, what he vaguely calls "Forces" while denying the existence of "spirits" -- then the end of the war will be in sight.

But in the meantime we must obey our orders. I do not think you will have much difficulty in keeping the patient



in the dark. The fact that "devils" are predominantly comic figures in the modern imagination will help you. If any faint suspicion of your existence begins to arise in his mind, suggest to him a picture of something in red tights, and persuade him that since he cannot believe in that (it is an old textbook method of confusing them) he therefore cannot believe in you...

*Your affectionate uncle
SCREWTAPE*

Editorial note: This letter, together with numerous others, was discovered by the Oxford academic C. S. Lewis who refused to say how they came into his possession, but subsequently published an edited selection of them called *The Screwtape Letters*.

