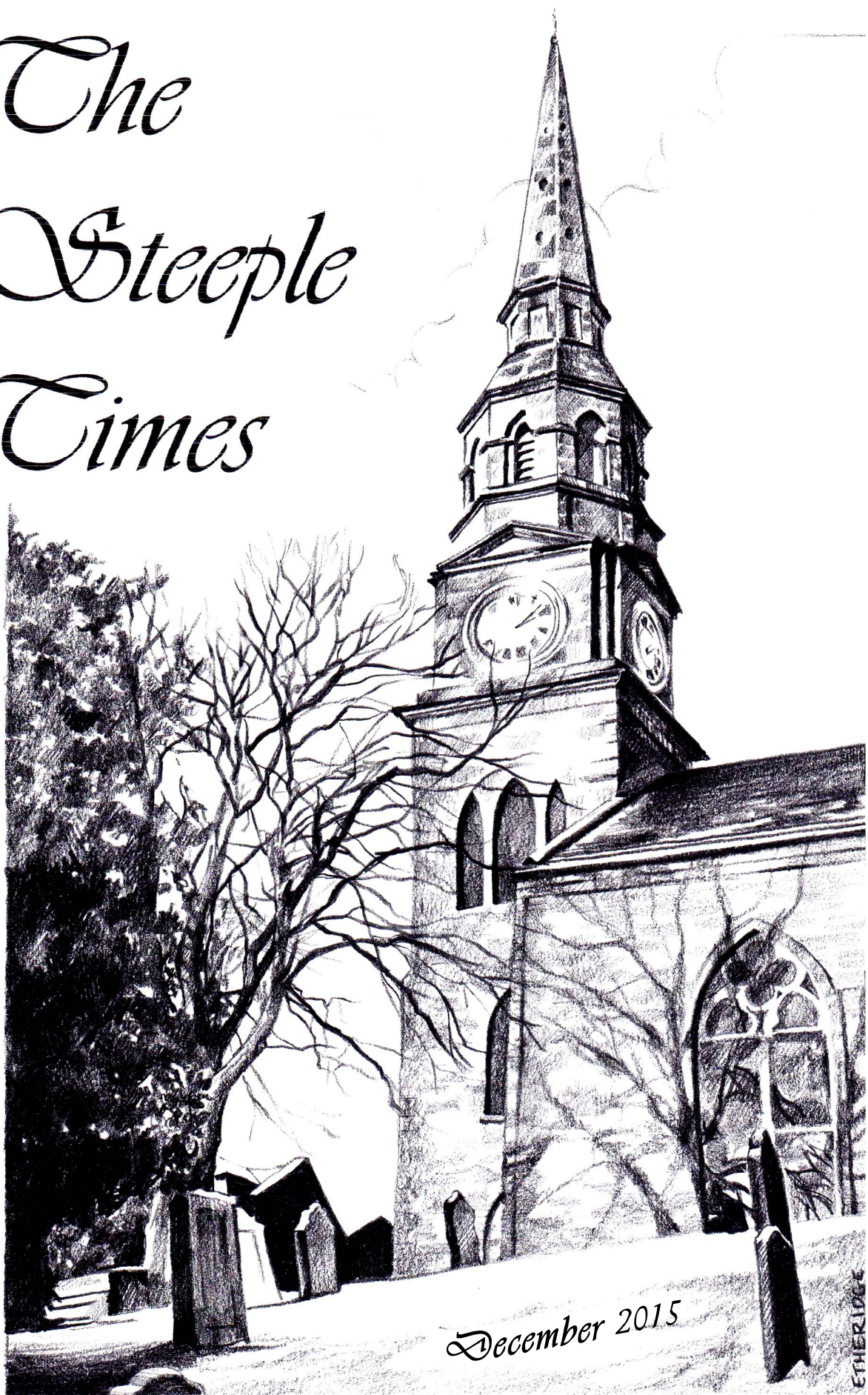


The Steeple Times



December 2015

ETHERIDGE

Services of Public Worship:

Every Sunday at 11. a.m.

A short service is also held on the first Sunday of each month at 9.30 a.m. and on Wednesdays at 12.10 p.m.

Minister:

The Rev. Barbara Ann Sweetin B.D.

The Manse

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Scottish Charity No.: SC004921

FROM THE MANSE

December 2015

My dear friends

Once again it is that time! Time for another letter for the Steeple Times! I know that time passes quickly but this letter is the one thing that seems to appear far more than 6 times a year! Since the last edition it has been a very busy time for me personally. There was the trip to Zuglo in Hungary, then I had a week off which I spent in London with the girls in my family, a two day conference in Coatbridge for World Mission, I hosted a guest 'Bishal' from Nepal, four members of the Russian Choir plus two weekends of family and friends visiting and then everything else I do, and I know that I am not alone. I know of the many activities that quite a number of our members are involved in both inside the church community and also in the Forfar wider community as well as coping with the pressures of family life and work life also. In this time of Advent as we approach Christmas we are told to prepare, to stop and reflect and less of the rushing about but although we hear this message and know that is exactly what we should be doing the outside world takes over and its back to card writing, shopping, wrapping, eating, drinking, partying and the list goes on and on and on. And after the rush of Christmas parties, visiting, eating and drinking too much, we then sit down to think about our New Year resolutions which are very rarely followed through.

What I would like you to do if you can spare a few moments is to read and re-read the following bible passage from Mark 12:28-31. ²⁸ One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" ²⁹ "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.' ³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' ³¹ The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

I believe the members and friends of East and Old Parish Church follow these commands that Jesus have given us. Over this last year we have been frantically raising funds for our renovation project which we hope will be starting in late March 2016. Some of the fund raising ideas have really caught your imaginations and you have given money and attended events while other events have been attended but could have done quite a bit better. But it is not just about ourselves is it? It is about our neighbours and we have responded to that too and I want to take this opportunity to say thank you very much indeed for all you do. The clothing and food for the refugees, the money for Doctors without Borders, all the bag loads of food at Harvest, the money in the Salvation Army envelopes, the huge donation to the earthquake appeal for Nepal, money for Poppy Scotland and Erskine Hospital, the Leprosy Mission, Free to Live (FACT Charity for 2015/2016), Cancer Research and the many other charities we have given smaller donations to. Our Guild and BB have responded to my challenge to 'Build a House in Nepal' and are actively raising funds for this also. East and Old will be tackling this challenge early in the New Year also.

Whenever we do extra collections of money, food or clothing the responsibility lands on a few people; Mabel Martin and the counting teams and Bill and I rene Duthie being some of the few and we thank them very much indeed. So once again I would like to say thank you very much for all you contribute from the smallest donations to the biggest donations - they all count and I know some people feel they give a lot to the church but think about what you have given already? Has it stopped you going out, buying food, paying your bills? Do you still have some money left at the end of the week or the month? Then you haven't really missed that donation from your pocket and think of the impact that it has made on other people's lives. Thank you God for our overabundance, thank you God for the opportunity to help and share with others, thank you God for bringing Jesus into our lives and showing us 'the way, the truth and the life.'

I wish you and your families a very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.
Your minister, your friend, your neighbour

Barbara Ann

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

DONATED GOODS AND RETIRING OFFERING FOR REFUGEE CRISIS

In response to the refugee crisis affecting Europe at the moment East and Old in conjunction with some other local charities put out an appeal for donated goods such as toiletries, blankets, bottled water and cereal bars to name a few and respond East and Old did. A fantastic amount of goods were brought in over 2 to 3 weeks and they were all picked up and sent off to Dunkirk in France and also Hungary.

We also held a retiring offering for two Sunday's and raised a magnificent amount of £437 which was sent to 'Doctors Without Borders.' East and Old members and friends responded with the love, care and concern that Jesus asks us to and we did so very willingly.

Thank you to everyone who contributed in any way to this effort and thank you to Margaret Robertson for getting us in touch with the charity and Irene and Bill Duthie for sorting out the goods and loading them onto the transport. We ask that you keep all refugees in your prayers especially with winter approaching.

MUSIC CAFÉ AND WORLD ALZHEIMER'S DAY

21ST SEPTEMBER

Our Music Café under the guidance of Pat Brodlie and Maureen Black is going very well indeed. The music is selected and played beautifully by Margaret Anderson each week with Bruce Simpson helping and covering for holidays. Thank you to all the helpers for their continued support and to all the carers who bring along tea, coffee and biscuits to help with our supplies.

Our 200th meeting took place on World Alzheimer's Day and the church was very busy with guests and most of the helpers came along too. Our World Alzheimer's Day cake went down a treat and was enjoyed by everyone. Bob Kidd took a photograph of the cake being cut and the Dispatch printed the photograph along with a piece about World Alzheimer's Day.

MURDER MYSTERY NIGHT

Ian Robertson wrote a murder mystery play and gave it to the Forfar Amateur Dramatics to take a look at and the Murder Mystery Evening was born. The Robertson's along with their neighbours who are members and a few friends who are members got together to produce a fantastic evening. Tina and Martin Mowbray, Fiona Clacher and her friend Janice Cowan, Yvonne Nicoll and others.



The Forfar Amateur Dramatics performed wonderfully and at the interval we were given a lovely supper and drinks. Needless to say at the end we had to guess who the murderer was and only 2 tables got the right answer, however a steward's enquiry was needed because the murderer was so obvious most of the other teams thought it was too obvious and went for someone else. We think they protest too much – sounds more like sour grapes!!! Well done everyone for a great adventure and different way to raise funds.

HARVEST THANKSGIVING



Our annual Harvest Thanksgiving is always the last Sunday in September and once again East and Old members and friends did not disappoint.

The groceries arrived in bag loads and were all transported to the Salvation Army the following week who were very grateful indeed for the supplies.

Thank you to our flower ladies for the wonderful Harvest Display that they put on also.

NEW ELDERS

On the same day as the Harvest Thanksgiving we ordained three new elders; Lexi Smart, Doug Findlay and Johnny Forbes and welcomed them into our Kirk Session as our newest members. We are very grateful to Lexi, Doug and Johnny for answering this calling to serve as Elders in east and Old and we ask God's blessing on them in this new role. If they are your elder please make them feel comfortable when they come to call.

KIRK SESSION

Did you know that as well as serving on the Kirk Session and attending Kirk Session meetings each elder has a district to visit and stay in touch with, each elder has to deliver the Steeple Times in their area or ask someone to help them out with this task and they also serve on one or two committee's also? We are so fortunate to have such loyal elders in our Kirk who are happy to serve and work in the Lord's name.

SESSION CLERK

As you know Bob Kidd will be stepping down as Session Clerk after the service on the 31st January 2016. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Bob not only for his role as Session Clerk for many years but also as depute session clerk for many years. Bob is leaving this position to make way for new blood but he has left this post with the blessing of all the elders and members for a job very well done! Bob will still be around in the position of elder and has agreed to carry on with a few other bits and pieces because there was no way that our minister was going to let him off that easily.

As a thank you to Bob for all of his hard work over the years for East and Old we would like to present Bob with a gift from the church however under OSCR rules we are not allowed to buy a thank you gift from existing funds so we are asking that over the next few weeks if you would like to contribute towards a gift for Bob that you put some money in an envelope marked 'Mabel – Session Clerk' and hand it to Barbara Ann, any elders or place it in the offering plate on a Sunday morning. If it is only marked Mabel she will put in the offering, if it is marked Bob then he will get the envelope, if it is marked gift then once again Mabel will keep it in the church funds – so watch out folks! We hope to present the gift at our special 225 service on 31st January 2016.

BB DEDICATION SERVICE AND KIERAN DEAR

On the same day as the Harvest Thanksgiving our Boys' Brigade Company were in church for their re-dedication service.



It was so good to see the boys and leaders in the church and taking part during the service.

During the morning worship one of the older boys Kieran Dear spoke about an opportunity he has been given to go to Guyana for a gap year and teach Mathematics and English to students there. Kieran is not taking anyone else's job as these jobs are difficult to fill in these regions.

The big BUT – is that Kieran needs to raise just over £6000 to do this.

The Kirk Session were delighted to hand over a cheque for £500 to Kieran to help him on his way and hope to help later also.

You the members of East and Old have already helped out by attending Kieran's coffee morning and buying tickets for it. Watch out for additional information to see how we can help Kieran reach his goal.

This is a wonderful opportunity not only for Kieran and the children he is going to teach but also for our BB Company and our church because Kieran will be educating us throughout his time there with blogs and messages and will give us more information on his return.

AN EVENING WITH ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

If you missed this evening then you missed something really special! A wonderful night was had by all who attended this event and everyone was educated with a variety of stories about RLS life. The stories, poems, singing and music were first class with actor Michael McKenzie, singer Professor Richard Frewer and pianist John Foster. This event raised over £300 and a big thank you must be said to Ally Leuchars from Forfar removals who moved the piano from the church hall to the church and then back again the next day.

LEPROSY MISSION COFFEE MORNING

All the churches came together to support the Leprosy Mission Coffee Morning on 17th October in East and Old. The baking stall was groaning as was the gift table and Judy from Dundee brought along some Leprosy Mission goods for sale. Each church had a designated area to deal with but thank you to Jean and Ian Brymer (tea and coffee) and Anna Mitchell for the pancakes. A magnificent total of £850 was raised – well done everyone. Thank you Bill Duthie for re-organising chairs, tables etc.



AFTERNOON COMMUNION 18TH OCTOBER



We know that some of our members struggle getting to communion in the morning and not so keen coming out at night so we now have an afternoon communion also either the week before or after the main communion services. This service was well attended with approximately 60 people to which the majority stayed behind to share in a time of fellowship over tea, coffee and cake – it was lovely.

COMMUNION SERVICES ON 25TH OCTOBER

Morning worship was well attended and communion went very smoothly with just one little hiccup during the serving however as Barbara Ann is always saying to the elders just go with the flow, the church has made the sacrament of Holy Communion into a service where everybody is on tender hooks if something goes array! Celebrating communion is a wonderful way and a special way to remember our Lord Jesus Christ and service where everybody should feel comfortable and relaxed.

Our evening communion once again was well attended and usually this service only lasts 45 to 50 minutes but everyone got their full hours' worth. We would like to take this opportunity to say thank to Barbara Ann for giving us the opportunity to share in the act of communion on so many occasions within our church. Barbara Ann also went to 5 different homes after communion Sunday and shared home communion with people there.

If you would like home communion at any time – not only at communion time – then please let Barbara Ann know.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 8TH NOVEMBER

This is such a special day and special service for so many people. The church was once again beautifully decorated and a good attendance by the members. Our wreaths were laid by Maurice McLean and Ian Brymer and the bag pipes played by James Robertson



Our tree of life was split into two distinct colours black and white to show division and separation and then we were asked to come forward and hang our poppies on the tree to show, remembrance, peace and unity.

Busy Hands did a great job with the church decorations of poppies and Knit n'Natter excelled themselves by knitting red poppies and white poppies and selling them with the proceeds going to Poppy Scotland and Erskine Hospital. The retiring offering on Remembrance Sunday also went to these two charities. A little reminder for people that the 'Earl Haig Fund' is now 'Poppy Scotland'. Thank you to Anna Mitchell for organising our poppy boxes for the church and the shop from her contacts at the British Legion.

RUSSIAN CHOIR 17TH NOVEMBER

Once again we were delighted to host the Russian Choir from St Petersburg with their sacred music and folk music. Numbers could have been better but those of us who went along really enjoyed our evening and our interaction with the singers. Thank you to those who hosted our Russian friends for the Monday and Tuesday evening.



BIBLE STUDY

The group continue to meet once a month in the Manse however over the last two months and in the next few months the group are doing a bible study on Gender Based Violence which is proving to be very thought provoking and bringing out a range of emotions. The group have also discovered quite a few new passages in the bible which they did not know existed and have never heard preached or talked about before. Why not read some of the passages the group have been looking at: John 8:1-11, 2 Samuel 13:1-22, Mark 5:21-43.

FAITH DISCUSSION

At our last Faith Discussion evening we were very privileged to hear Bishal's story. Bishal of course was the young gentleman that Barbara Ann and Billy were hosting from Nepal for 4 days who works for the United Mission to Nepal (UMN). Bishal shared his story with everyone and about day to day living as a Christian in Nepal where less than 1% of people are Christian. We now know a number of facts and lots of little bits and pieces about life in Nepal, their culture and the taboos. Thank you to Margaret and Ian Robertson and Paul Wilson for helping out Barbara Ann and Billy on the Tuesday when their diaries were a bit hectic.

'LET US BUILD A HOUSE'

Barbara Ann of course is part of the World Mission Council at 121 in Edinburgh and that is why we are so fortunate to be meeting lots and lots of overseas visitors in the last few years. The World Mission Council have launched the programme 'Let us build a house' in Nepal in which Barbara Ann is playing a big part in and hopes our church will help out too. This is a three year programme with the money being raised during 2015/2016 and then the following year hearing about the houses and communities where they are being built and by the third year seeing how the lives of the families have been affected and what they are doing to build up their new communities.

Barbara Ann has visited the Guild and told them about this project and also the Boys' Brigade and we here in the church will be hearing far more about it soon. How many houses at a cost £500 each can East and Old build?

DATA PROTECTION

Every member on the church roll has been given a data form for completion. This is to fall in line with the Church of Scotland's policy on data protection where you the members must sign the form to say that you are happy with East and Old Church to hold information on you.

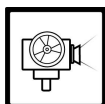


At present we hold all names and addresses of our members, some phone numbers and some emails and you the member will have signed the form to say that is okay. Your names and addresses are kept on file by the minister, session clerk and roll keeper, elders have names and addresses for their districts and occasionally your name and addresses may be given to the flower distributors. For those of you who pay through the banking system for either your offering or the improvement fund our treasurer has a copy of your names and addresses also.

There appeared to be a few people who misunderstood the form that was given out for you to sign thinking that we were asking you to pay more money but that was not the case – we simply need your consent to hold your details on our data base. Thank you to everyone who has replied already!

CHILDREN'S FILM CLUB

The children's film club is the second Saturday of every month in the Session Room and we have our core children who attend this event. However, the numbers have not grown and over the next few weeks we will take the decision whether or not to continue with this club.



The children who have been attending pay £1 and are given juice and snack throughout the 3pm-5pm slot they are there.

FILM SHOW FOR THE OLDIES!

A number of people have been attending the film club on the 3rd Saturday evening of the month which Mary Daun runs and organises which those attending are really enjoying.

Now that the dark nights have arrived the club now runs on the 3rd Saturday afternoon at 2pm in the Session Room. There is no film in December because everyone is super busy but it starts again not on the third Saturday in January but on the 5th Saturday in January – the 30th and the film will be 'The Other Woman'.

BOOK CLUB

The book club continues to meet in member's houses once a month and general consensus is that the last few books have been AWFUL! The Girl on the Train has been number 1 on the best sellers list for ages – why? The book club have no idea why! They gave it between 1 and 4 out of 10 with one member giving it a 7! Odysseus Abroad – should never have been written.



The one glimmer of light was Remarkable Creatures which nearly everyone enjoyed even though they didn't think they would. Let's hope the next selection is better! Even by reading the books that you don't like it does help you understand the genre of the books, the writer's likes and dislikes and even educates in lots of different ways.

The Christmas Night out is on Monday 21st December at the Strathmore Arms at 7pm.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH

DOE for youngsters aged between 14 and 25 is now up and running in the Session Room every Wednesday evening from 6pm to 7pm. The participants are covering a whole range of topics from photography, to cycling, to cake decoration and of course the dreaded expedition work.



Our leaders are teaching the participants basic skills in expedition work and Angus Spence is taking a week off work to go on a five day course to gain his expedition leadership certificate which is not cheap –so thank you Angus!

Karen Liddle has become the co-ordinator for the group ably helped by Angus and Linda Spence, Nicola Wilson, Glenda Robertson, Barbara Ann and Billy Sweetin.

STRATHMORE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Barbara Ann continues to visit the school every two weeks for assembly and also helps out with some class work. The staff are very supportive of the work that Barbara does in the school and as usual our minister just loves being alongside the children. They are always eager to answer questions and come to the front when help is required – they even offer to help tidy up at the end but Barbara Ann says that delays returning to class and that is why so many offer to help! We are looking forward to the school visiting us during the last week of the school term for their annual Christmas service no matter what the weather is like!

HEAVENLY BITES

As you know the children come along to the church on the first Thursday of every month to prepare, cook and serve a lunchtime meal for anyone coming through the doors. Numbers have been a bit low so if you are free on a Thursday at 12.15pm then please come along and support the children – they really do enjoy it and learn some new skills. However, this is one area where the children struggle to tidy up because doing the dishes appears to be a problem sometimes!

A big thank you to all the ladies who help out at Heavenly Bites and work with the children – you are all angels in disguise!!!

CHIMES

You may be unaware that our minister visits Chimes playgroup on the last Wednesday of every month to tell them about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and stories from the bible. The children are so well behaved and respond well to the stories and actions. Barbara Ann said she is very grateful to the staff at Chimes for allowing her to come in and speak to the children and for helping her when they all start talking at once!

Once again Chimes Playgroup will be holding their annual Christmas get together on Friday 18th December in the Church. This allows the children to see a church setting and sing about the baby Jesus in front of our nativity scene.

STEERING GROUP

The steering group has been coming up with innovative ideas in ways to raise more money for the improvements in the church.

We are holding an **IMPROVEMENT COFFEE MORNING** on Saturday 23rd January in the church – watch out for some unusual ideas for ways to spend your money!

We have now applied to 3 trusts in the hope of gaining grants from their governing bodies but it is a long and slow process but well worth it hopefully in the end.

The steering group applied to the Presbytery for a reduction in our Ministry and Mission allowance this year because of the fund raising we have been involved in, the work that is being done in the church to modernise it and our mission outlook to the community of Forfar and we are

delighted to inform you that our Ministry and Mission allocation that we pay to 121 has this year been reduced by £12,500 with the said £12,500 going into the DIF Fund. Do you know of any organisations that give out grants to churches – if so, let us know please!

Presbytery, CARTA and the General Trustees have all agreed to our renovation project which we hope will commence on **MONDAY 28TH MARCH 2016** which is Easter Monday. A lot still depends on finance over the next few months but the General Trustees have offered us a loan if there is any shortfall in our finances. We will be allowed to claim back a certain amount of tax because of the work we are doing and we believe if that money comes through it will pay the loan back to 121.

Just to reassure everyone our finances have been given a thorough examination of what we have and where we plan to get the rest of the money from by the General Trustees. Needless to say there is a lot more information that is available if you are interested in hearing about it but the magazine is not the place for that. So to that end we will hold an evening of preparation for the members of the church in **FEBRUARY/MARCH** for you to come along and find out more about what has been happening, look at the plans again, ask some questions and then find out the next steps in the renovations. If everything goes to plan we will hold our last service in the current format on Easter Sunday and then re-open hopefully in October which is 7 months later.

Morning worship will be held in the church hall as will all our fund raising activities. The choir room, session room and kitchen will be available on most occasions but this will be worked out in conjunction with the architects and builders.

Barbara Ann has contacted St Margaret's and Lowson Memorial to ask for use of their buildings for any church funerals.

ECO-CONGREGATION AWARD

Congratulations to the Green Team and to you our members in helping us gain our second eco-congregation award.



We were assessed last month and awarded our second award. A lot of work has gone into preparing and sending away for this award and a special thanks go to the green team. We were also awarded three highly commended awards for the work with the children of Forfar (Groovy Gryphons, BB, Strathmore Primary), the reduction of our carbon footprint and for the excellent information that is given out in our newsletters by the green team.

There is only one other church in Angus that has gained its second award already – so well done once again.

NICOLA'S GOT IT ALL WRAPPED UP

On Saturday 31st October Nicola Wilson held a coffee afternoon where a demonstration was given of how to wrap those awkward gifts. On sale there were cards, paper and all the extras associated with Christmas and a raffle was held also.

Thank you to Nicola for organising this event and giving us lots of ideas and for the all the people who made the tea, coffee and cakes!



POSH LUNCH AT MARSHALL'S OF MONTROSE

You will be sorry you didn't put your name down for this event – it was fabulous according to those who went along on Friday 6th November. After arriving all the guests were shown into the lounge area for drinks and canopies and then 30 minutes later entered the beautiful and ornate dining room where a 3 course meal followed and then it was tea/coffee, cheese and biscuits and then chocolate mints and fudge before retiring once again into the lounge.

Our group arrived at 12 noon and left at 4pm and had a wonderful time. This venue is totally recommended but you need a party of at least 12 and they are fully booked until March 2016!

LADIES NIGHT OUT



Our venue has changed and so too has our dates! We now meet the first Wednesday of every month in the Old Reid Park Bar for fellowship, a wee drink of whatever and then tea and sandwiches at 9pm. Why not come along and join us ladies – the more the merrier! Our Christmas meal is on Wednesday 16th December at 7pm in the Strathmore Arms and there is a sign-up sheet on the noticeboard as we need exact numbers.

MEN'S NIGHT OUT

The men continue to meet in the Queen Street Bar however this venue may change depending on the sale of the bar.

More men are required and needed so guys come along and join the band of faithful who have quality time together without the women to nag them!

The men have not organised their Christmas meal yet but it should be on Thursday 17th December!

CHARITY AUCTION

At the time of going to print we were just about to hold this event. So look out for more information about what happened in the next edition but we would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all the businesses in Forfar who contributed to this event. We have over 75 items being auctioned all donated by the local businesses towards keeping East and Old alive and ready for the 21st Century – thank you to all who donated.

A MILE OF 10 PENCE PIECES!

**WE'VE NOW COMPLETED 917 YARDS AND RAISED A TOTAL OF
£3347**

Well done! We are getting there, keep them coming

THE DEDICATED IMPROVEMENT FUND

BALANCE PRESENTLY STANDS AT

£95365

225 CELEBRATIONS

Our 225 celebrations are going ahead full steam. By the time you receive this edition of the magazine the 225 quiz sheets will be for sale (thank you to Bob Kidd for making this quiz up) and all elders have a minimum of 10 to sell. Our pin badges will also be on sale which we hope you will wear during December, January and February.

SATURDAY 16TH JANUARY AT 7PM – BLACK TIE DINNER AND ENTERTAINMENT

We are holding this new event to celebrate a long history of our church. Ladies we are anticipating long dresses, cocktail dresses or any dress you have and men we are expecting kilts, tartan trousers, suits and ties. It will be a three course meal with entertainment throughout the evening. More details to follow but put the date in your diary.

MORNING WORSHIP SUNDAY 31 JANUARY 2016

Morning worship will be led by Right Rev Dr Angus Morrison the Moderator of the General Assembly and we will have a number of guests including Rev Graham Norrie, members of our twinned church in Hungary, the provost, local councillors, depute Lord Lieutenant, members of the other churches in Forfar, school representatives and host of others.

Most importantly we want you our members to be there to join in this special service and celebration of over 225 years as the present building.

A two course lunch will follow the service in the Church Halls to which everyone is invited so please come along to the worship service and the lunch or just to the service itself. The church is really about the people not the building so we need you there to celebrate the members of East and Old also.

225 BOOK

After our service in January our outreach group will be putting the 225 book to print and not long after that the book will be available to buy. This is a commemorative book regarding the history of our church over the last 225 years however once again it is not just about the building but also includes the people of the church and the activities we have been involved in during that time also. Our commemorative book will show our faith and belief in God and how we interact with that doing God's mission.

WHAT'S COMING UP & WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

ADVENT BIBLE STUDIES

Every Thursday during Advent there will be an advent bible study in the Manse each Thursday at 7.30pm so please come along and join us. There is one exception on 10th December which will be held in the church.

CHRISTMAS TREE COMPETITION

By the time you read this article the competition will be over but this year we have split the competition into two sections – one for the children and youth and the other for the adults. More and more people are coming along to this event each year either to participate or just to watch and enjoy some carol singing. Look out for the winners in the next edition.

SALVATION ARMY BAND IN LOWSON MEMORIAL—6 DECEMBER

The annual visit from Bellshill Salvation Army Band takes place in Lowson Memorial on Sunday 6th December at 6.30pm. There will be a retiring offering that day in church which will be added to the money raised by the band and the other churches in FACT which will go to the FACT charity this year – Free to Live..

CHURCH CONCERT – 13TH DECEMBER

Note the date of this year's concert as it is a week late due to the Salvation Army Band changing their date. This year's concert participation is by invite only and will last approximately 60/70 minutes. Tickets will be £3 which you can buy from the church/shop or at the door.

NATIVITY SUNDAY

The children and leaders of the Groovy Gryphons work really hard to put on a good performance for our members on Nativity Sunday and their way of telling us the story of Jesus birth takes it right back to its roots for all of to understand more clearly. We are looking forward to seeing what the children have in store for us as they show us a different way to worship God.

NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

This quieter and more reflective service takes place on Nativity Sunday which is 20th December at 4pm. Come along and listen to the story of the promise of the Messiah until his birth interspersed with carols and tea/coffee and mince pies after.

FORFAR'S BIG SING IN ST MARGARET'S

Also on Nativity Sunday in the evening St Margaret's are once again hosting Forfar's Big Sing at 7pm. Come along and join in the carol singing and hear some short reflections followed by refreshments afterwards. All donations will go to Christian Aid.

CHRISTINGLE SERVICE

Our annual Christingle service takes place on Christmas Eve at 6.30pm where we hope we will be joined by members, friends and families. This service is a big tradition in Forfar and especially in East and Old so take the time to come along and get away from all the rushing about of Christmas Eve. What else can Barbara Ann come up with for this service – it is different every year!

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

The numbers at this service are normally between 30 and 40 people but we are sure we can do better. The service only lasts 30/40 minutes and celebrates our Saviours birth. Please bring along one of your gifts to show everyone and that includes the adults!

AFRICAN CHILDREN'S CHOIR

The choir is coming once again to East and Old on Sunday 27th December at 7pm. The last time the children were here our lives were brightened a great deal and shows God's handiwork at its best. Pass the word along to family and friends and come along and be really entertained on this evening. Tickets are £5 and are available from the church or shop. Why not buy your family members a ticket for their stocking filler!

FLOWERS IN THE CHURCH

Nearly every week of the year members of East and Old either hand money over to Marlene Sim to buy and display the flowers which enhance our worship space every Sunday or sometimes people do it themselves.

Thank you so much to everyone for donating the flowers because not only do they enhance our worship space but they bring in another aspect of God's creation to our church every week. Added to this the flowers are then given to members of the church who are unwell, sad, joyful, as a thank you and for many more reasons. Marlene Sim, Irene Duthie and Morag Milne do a fantastic job every week with our flowers and the arrangements they come up with so thank you ladies. Our team of flower ladies also add extra touches to the many, many events that we hold over the year from table decorations to special arrangements for brides and at the front door. Thank you also to Marlene and Fiona Clacher who deliver our flowers and spend some time with our members. It must be great to see someone smile when you hand over the flowers!

AROUND THE GROUPS

EDUCATION REPORT

Distributions of small gifts to the public will once again take place at the Church gate on Saturday mornings, 5, 12 and 19 December from 11 a.m. till noon. Gifts will include tea, coffee, or chocolate powder sachets and miniature red stockings with suitable sweets for children and decorated candles for adults.

Want to participate in suggesting new ideas for the future of the national Church?

A pilot scheme for the Church of Scotland's major survey, "What Counts"... "to understand the size and impact of congregations throughout Scotland", is going ahead and postcards on which to write suitable topics are available at the bookstall in church. The pilot will be followed up with formal suggestions for change being put to the General Assembly in 2016 before a full survey is conducted.

The World Mission Committee in Edinburgh are trying to increase interest in the HIV/Aids project. Members of the Education Committee are exploring the possibility of offering red ribbons to members of the congregation; and a "Souper Sunday" in February.

Probably by the time you receive your magazine World Aids Day on 1st December will have passed, however The Church of Scotland World Mission Committee wish to highlight the latest information on HIV/ AIDS worldwide.

Responding to the challenge of HIV at home and abroad.

HIV continues to be both a cause and consequence not just of ill-health and death, but also of poverty and lack of development around the world. With five people infected with HIV and three dying of AIDS every minute of every day, the need is obvious. People living with HIV throughout the world do not look for our sympathy but our solidarity and practical support. The HIV Programme aims to provide that support around the world through its partnerships with church-related and other faith-based organisations and so to bring hope.

The HIV Programme's aims are to.. Break the silence on HIV/AIDS; Stand together with partner churches; Offer practical support; Speak up for the voiceless; Involve every member of the church;

The Church of Scotland's HIV Programme is currently supporting 29 projects in 16 countries of the world.

ANGUS SOLIDARITY FOR REFUGEES thank us for our donations. We have been able to help people in the camps at Dunkirk, Croatia and the Lebanon. Please continue to bring in donations to the church if you wish.

Over Christmas and throughout the year please bring in your used stamps for the **WORLD MISSION STAMP APPEAL** to support our partner churches as they respond to the HIV pandemic.

CHRISTMAS CARD DELIVERY SERVICE

Got your Christmas Cards ready.

The boxes are out and there is also one now in the Big Kirk Shop

Deliveries will be made on the weekends of 12/13th and 19/20th of December

Price per card is 25p

(my apologies for the error in price in the last magazine when I said 20p. Ed)

KNIT'N NATTER

Many thanks to those who bought a knitted poppy made by the Knit'n natter group. Over £200 was raised from the sales and this will be divided three ways - Poppy Scotland, Erskine Hospital and the Church. If you would like to join our band of merry knitters we meet on a Monday from 1.30pm 'til 3.00pm (with the obligatory cup of tea of course.)

WALKING GROUP

The Group are walking on the following dates.

5 December	To be arranged yet
19 December	East Haven to Arbroath
9 January	Luinan Bay



Meet at The Myre 10am For more details contact Billy Sweetin on 01307 248228 or bjs801@talktalk.net

PARTNER NEWS

In September our friends Lynda and Raj Samuel had a short visit to India for their nephew's wedding and in October two nieces, Asha and Poite visited them from India. In 18 days they travelled from Gatwick to Orkney—visiting all the sights on the way.

The Samuel Chorus held their Christmas Concert this year in Fowlis Easter hall. They are off to Chennai for December and January.

They wish us all a meaningful Christmas and we wish them all the very best for their Christmas visit to India.

THE GUILD



The Guild session, with our current theme "Go in Peace" is well underway. There have been very good attendances and we have a few new members.

There has been a joint meeting of the Guilds from the three Forfar Churches. We met in St Margaret's Church Hall when the speaker was Mr Hugh Henderson who gave a truly inspirational talk about Mission International's work in Haiti.

Guild Members took part in the service for Guild Week and there was another joint meeting in our Church when we welcomed the Spectrum Choir from St Margaret's. Rev. Dougal Edwards was the speaker on 25 November with "Cuba" as his subject.

We are looking forward to our Christmas Celebrations on 9 December with fine food and entertainment.

FRIENDS OF EAST & OLD

M&CO FASHION SHOW 1ST OCTOBER

What a super night at M&Co for the fashion show. A big thank you to the staff at M&Co for their help before and on the evening of the show and huge thank you to our models who glided down the floor looking great. Needless to say it was the children who stole the show on the evening and M&Co made quite a number of sales that evening and also in the weeks that followed. Thank you to Barbara Ann for being the compere that evening with her wit and humour!

RENEWAL NIGHT

Once again our renewal night took place in October and unfortunately the group we had booked had to cancel due to illness but Bill Carr and Alf Birse came to the rescue in the first half and our own 'Accord' played in the second half. A great night of entertainment from both sets and the food was fabulous.

To become a member of 'Friends of East and Old' all you need to do is fill in a 'Friends' form and hand over £10 annually or £150 for life membership. Why not become a 'Friend' of East and Old and join the many others who are?

SHREK

The trip to Edinburgh to see Shrek was good. The journey down was good and then the food and service at the restaurant was excellent. Most people enjoyed the show however Barbara Ann wanted to leave at the interval to go to M&S instead but Billy persuaded her to stay! Needless to say the journey home during rush hour leaving Edinburgh was a little bit slow but overall a great day out.

EVENTS FOR 2016

Can you believe how organised Friends are for 2016!

-
- 20th February – Fish Supper Night with a difference!
-
- 8th March – Bingo Tea in the Legion where Friends help Anna Mitchell with this event.
-
- 27th March – Easter Bonnet Competition in the Church on Easter Sunday morning.
-
- 7th May – Showstopper Night (adapted from the Great British Bake Off).
-
- 6th August – Friends Annual Walk
-
- 27th August – Quiz Night
-
- 29th October – Friends Renewal Night

We have another idea that we are looking at and will hopefully have this organised soon and watch out for the odd coffee morning we will be putting on also.

TWINNING VISIT TO BUDAPEST from Karen Liddle

Early on the 8th October, 18 members of East & Old set off for Budapest, Hungary to visit our twin church in Zuglo Reformed Church in Budapest. After numerous pick-ups all around Forfar we were on our way but after hitting rush-hour traffic, parking in the wrong car park and then a problem with our checked in bags we had to run through the terminal building as our flight was boarding!

We were met at the airport by a small welcome party and took taxis to our hotel before having lunch in the city. After a short sightseeing walk around the city we took over the underground trains and the trams as we travelled en masse to Zuglo for an evening welcome dinner. We were all made very welcome and met by several members of the congregation. A lovely buffet meal was provided for us, made and served by the ladies of the church, it was just like at home with the ladies keeping busy in the kitchen looking after us all.

On Friday we were up early for a sightseeing trip to two nearby towns: Szentendre, a picturesque town on the banks of the Danube with lots of artisan craft shops and then on to Visegrad for a tour of the medieval castle, which was a great insight into Hungarian history. On the way home we carried on the medieval theme with lunch in a medieval themed restaurant, complete with waiting staff in costume, musicians, terracotta crockery and traditional medieval food! Such an unforgettable experience!

In the evening some of the group went for a night tour of the Buda part of the city and saw St Matthias church, the castle and Fisherman's Bastion by night.

On Saturday we were up early again for a trip to another town and another castle! After a morning's sightseeing we headed for a nearby vineyard for a wine-tasting tour and lunch. Lots and lots of goulash and lots and lots of wine! Not being big drinkers, some of our group were not coping so well with so much alcohol and we all needed a rest on the bus journey back.

On Sunday we headed back to Zuglo for morning worship. Thinking it would be quiet on the underground early Sunday morning we were shocked when hundreds of runners for the Budapest marathon all got on at one stop and we were well and truly crushed! Morning worship was lovely and again we were made so welcome. Barbara Ann delivered the sermon, which Mihaly, chair of Budapest Twinning group, elder, church organist and interpreter extraordinaire ably interpreted into Hungarian. During the service our very own Bob Kidd gave a presentation talking about the work of E & O and our mission to do God's work in the community. We were then treated to some beautiful singing by the youth of the church who had come back into the church especially, following their lessons. Afterwards, I presented Mihaly a gift on behalf of East & Old to Zuglo church, an engraved vase with pictures of both churches etched on the glass. Following the service, we all spent the afternoon with host families from the congregation and all returned later full of stories of wonderful food, hospitality and fun from our generous hosts. We were then treated to an evening of traditional Hungarian folk dancing, singing, history, poetry from the congregation, the local primary school and guests. Following this we had more food and drink and then, finally we signed the formal twinning agreement.

This has been the work of 3 years of correspondence and 2 trips to Budapest and 1 reciprocal visit to Forfar so far and is a big step in our twinning journey. Of course, this meant lots of photos had to be taken by lots of people and was not enjoyable for those of us who are camera shy!!

After so much hospitality from all at Zuglo, Monday meant a little respite for most of the congregation, but 3 brave members met us on Monday morning to provide guided tours around the city. We split into 2 groups and then all met up again for lunch and to say a final goodbye to our Zuglo hosts. We took a tour of the Parliament building in the afternoon followed by free time for the rest of the day. This meant lots of coffee stops to get in from the cold! In the evening some of us went to a Folklore show at the theatre, some went to an organ recital in the Basilica and some of us went on the "Budapest eye" big wheel. A fun evening was had by all.

On Tuesday there was only time for couple of hours of free time before we had to take our taxis to the airport ready for the return journey home. A fantastic time was had by all, new friendships forged, twinning links strengthened and renewed enthusiasm for sharing our faith with others. Another successful trip and another great achievement for East & Old in officially becoming a twinned church.

.....and from Barbara Ann

As a minister I am interested in the various aspects of other churches life, their doctrine, their theology, how they interpret the word of God, their beliefs, and how they do church. Our link with Zuglo Church has been very informative and interesting with Janos and Noemi the pastors in Zuglo and myself discussing different parts of the liturgy that we use, hymn selections, the various bible passages that we choose for different events and especially the rules and regulations of our churches.

Another aspect to the twinning is that the Church of Scotland is the national church in Scotland which comes with different laws and traditions which Zuglo Church do not have being a minority church in Hungary. Another aspect I am interested in learning more about from Zuglo is in the area of a gathered church which means a large percentage of the members do not live in the immediate vicinity but travel to the church each week whereas in Forfar that is not the case, we have a few who travel into Forfar but the majority of our members live in Forfar. We in East and Old are gaining so much information on their work with children and youths and in turn

Zuglo are learning so much from us about the community aspect of church. I am delighted that East and Old have now signed the formal twinning agreement and look forward to learning more from our new friends in Christ. The twinning team have done a remarkable job over these last few years and I would like to thank them very much for giving us this opportunity.

CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

DEATHS

Sep	30	George Hill	90 Don Street, Forfar	*
	30	Ian Mackie	24 Jeanfield Road, Forfar	32
Oct	12	Georgina (Ina) McDonald	36 Toll Crescent, Forfar	15
	31	Margaret Miller	26 Toll Crescent, Forfar	15
Nov	5	Isabella Mackie	33 Hannick Terrace, Forfar	28
	10	Anna Robertson	St David's Glamis road Forfar	42
	11	Isabella McLaggan	Windyedge Cottage Forfar	22
	11	Sydney Coad	Finavon Court, Forfar	*
	19	Alistair Leith	Sleepy Valley, Bridgend, Kingsmuir	*
	22	Eric Guthrie	Benholm Nursing Home, Forfar	43

Baptism

Nov	22	Orla Agnes Wiseman
	22	Ella Forbes Fraser
	29	Keira Anne Cameron

WEDDINGS

Oct	3	Craig Copland to Paula Robertson
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MINISTRY OF FLOWERS

Oct	4	Margaret Myles	Nov	8	Irene Duthie
	11	Liz Nicoll		15	Freda McLean
	18	Anna Mitchell		22	H & M Herron
	25	Douglas Thomson		29	Marion Birse
Nov	1	Mrs Todd	Dec		Flower Group

HAVE A COMPUTER? THEN YOU CAN HELP

You can help raise funds for East & Old's Dedicated Improvement Fund by clicking on the links below. It costs nothing but will help our funds.

Do you shop online then click on <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/forfareastoldparish/> then follow the simple steps on how to register then every time you shop online always go here first then shop. The best way is to make this a bookmark or favourite.

Even if you don't shop online you can still raise funds by clicking on <http://forfareastoldparish.easysearch.org.uk/> and use this every time you want to search the web. This uses Bing, Yahoo and Ask.com to search the web. Again the best way is to make this a bookmark or favourite.

For more information click on <http://www.thebigkirk.co.uk/church-information/easyfundraising/> Why not try it. If you need help setting it up please contact Billy Sweetin 01307 248228

**NEED A VENUE FOR CONFERENCES MEETINGS ETC?
THEN LOOK NO FURTHER**

FORFAR EAST & OLD HAS IT ALL .

**MULTI MEDIA FACILITIES WITH PLASMA TELEVISIONS,
SOUND SYSTEM AND WI-FI.**

ENQUIRIES TO :- BILL DUTHIE ON 01307 465895

PARKING AT THE CHURCH



There are two available car spaces beside the east door of the church for members with poor mobility.

Other members can park around the front of the church.



Do you need Transport to Church -The Forfarian bus is available on the first Sunday of each month. Please telephone Liz Nicoll on 462480 or Jean Alexander on 463860.

To all members of the

Steeple Times Team

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for the help and support given during the past year. To those who contribute articles and those who distribute the magazine but especially to Janet and Irene who help print and collate it. Without your hard work and dedication there would be no magazine. I wish you all a very joyous festive season. Ed

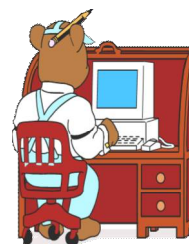
Next Issue of the Steeple Times

The deadline for submission of articles for the **February 2016** issue is

SUNDAY 17 JANUARY 2016

Material can be given/sent to the Editor or e-mail

elma.milne@virgin.net



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	Douglas Thomson	01307 462965
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Organist & Choirmaster	Bruce Simpson	01307 468179
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