

**ST. ANDREWS UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**

**Upper Hanover Street, Sheffield, S3 7RQ**

# **MESSENGER**

Price £1.25

October and November 2023



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## CALENDAR for October and November 2023

Sun	1	Oct	10.45 am	Rev Canon Adrian Alker - Communion
Mon	2	Oct	2.30 pm	Elders meeting
Tues	3	Oct	10-12	Community Choir
Sun	8	Oct	10.45 am	Harvest Service led by the Worship Group
Tues	10	Oct	10-12	Community Choir
Sun	15	Oct	10.45 am	Rev Dr Walter Houston
Tues	17	Oct	10-12	Community Choir
Thurs	19	Oct	10 am	Management Team meeting
Sun	22	Oct	10.45 am	Mr Ian Wileman (Salvation Army)
Tues	24	Oct		NO Community Choir
Sun	29	Oct	10.45 am	Rev Canon Arian Alker
Tues	31	Oct	10-12	Community Choir
Sun	5	Nov	10.45 am	Mrs Jenny Carpenter
Mon	6	Nov	2.30 pm	Elders meeting
Tues	7	Nov	10-12	Community Choir
Sun	12	Nov	10.45 am	Rev Graham Wassell – Remembrance
Tues	14	Nov	10-12	Community Choir
Thurs	16	Nov	10 am	Management Team meeting
Sun	19	Nov	10.45 am	Rev Helena Roulston
Tues	21	Nov	10-12	Community Choir
Sun	26	Nov	10.45 am	Rev Inderjit Bhogal – St Andrew's Day
Tues	28	Nov	10-12	Community Choir
Dec	3	Dec	10.45 am	Rev Dr Walter Houston - Communion

## FLOWERS

We now have a beautiful arrangement of artificial flowers in place for Sunday services but if anyone wishes to provide fresh flowers to commemorate some special date or memorial, please do so, and then write your name on the list on the back of the vestry door.

There is also the opportunity to bring a small fresh bunch to give to the visiting preacher; again, if you do this, please sign in the relevant column on the list.

## SERVICE SHEET

If you have any notices to go in the service sheet, please send them to the person who is preparing them for that month. The rota now is:

Judith Adam: January, May and September

Sheila Cooke: February, June and October

Jean Dickson: March, July and November

Douglas Jones: August, December and April

## COFFEE

Sheila Cooke is keeping the rota for coffee after service on Sundays. Please tell Sheila if you would like to help.

## PRAYERS IN A TIME OF CONFLICT

The URC has deep and strong connections with all people in Israel and Palestine, through various charities and initiatives. The URC's own Commitment for Life programme is part of Christian Aid and supports Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory.

The URC offers this prayer at this troubled time:

O Most High,  
Your people rage over the Land,  
war and terror engulf those who seek to follow You,  
hundreds have died, thousands have been wounded,  
and this is just the beginning.

Jesus, Incarnate Word,  
give strength to those working for peace in the midst of war;  
doctors, nurses, and medics tending the wounded,  
fire fighters and rescue workers pulling people from the ruin of their  
lives,  
regional leaders calling for calm.

Eternal Flame of Love,  
teach us all the ways of peace;  
bring to justice those: who wage war, violence and terror,  
who limit life, steal land, use law to oppress.

Eternal Trinity, show us quickly how to turn away from violence, pursue  
costly justice,  
and live in peace with each other and with the earth.

Amen.

## **EDITOR'S NOTE**

We hope you have enjoyed the summer and have pleasant memories of trips and visits. We apologise for the gap in production of the Messenger, due partly to distractions and partly to a dearth of material. Thank you all for your contributions to this issue. Please remember that this is your magazine and we are pleased to receive content of all kinds – stories, reviews, photos, jokes . . .

## **SERVICES**

St Andrew's congregations have enjoyed a variety of worship and events over the past months, reflected in this issue. On 16 June, after the service, Adrian Alker led a discussion on what we saw as the positive and negative aspects of the church and its activities. There were many positive responses but the obvious negative ones are an older congregation without young people. Although there were local and national reasons for this, he asked what we could do to attract more younger people.

Maybe greater emphasis should be put on the services that we offer. Although we may be comfortable with what we currently have, both as a traditional type of service and with a building hosting many community activities, we would have to offer something different to begin to attract younger people. We should not concentrate on students, what about those from 20-60? Why not those with family links, those who had been married or baptised here?

Perhaps we could consider a different time or format. We love our traditional form of worship – Bible-based, thoughtful sermons, hymns with meaningful words. But throughout society there is a need, an awareness of spiritual matters, and different formats attract different people. (They may come to our more traditional format at some stage later as their faith grows.) For example, a different type of evening service, one with a more contemplative aspect. More use of poetry, pictures, music. Perhaps the service could be themed and well advertised in advance? Social media are good for that; the URC could provide help through their specialized team.

Many churches and people are asking the same questions, in the same situation. Adrian knows us very well and has our best interests in mind. The Elders and Worship Group are considering these suggestions, and would love to hear more of your ideas too. Watch this space!

## LOOKING BACK

On 10 September the Worship Group led a service for **Disability Sunday**. See page 12.

On 17 September we enjoyed a feast of music throughout the service with Steel City Choristers.

**Steel City Choristers** is an independent choir of children and adults singing in the cathedral tradition, with a wide range of voices. They aim to share the joys of choral music with children and audiences across the city, and they sing to a wide range of Sheffield communities. They take children aged 6-18 and give them a free intensive musical education, which also develops essential life skills. Three of the juniors were admitted as full choristers at the beginning of our service and received their surplices.

Steel City Choristers also does much outreach youth work and curriculum-linked workshops in Sheffield schools. Throughout September they offered free lunchtime singing workshops for adults leading to a concert at St Mary's, Bramall Lane.



On **1<sup>st</sup> October** 24 people celebrated Holy Communion with Rev Canon Adrian Alker. **8 October** was our Harvest Service. As usual we collected goods for the S6 Food Bank which operates at the Broomhall Centre every Monday.

We also had two special speakers, about their work for the charity Brave Ministry in Cambodia. Muylen Aung is from Cambodia and Bird Lovegod is a local organiser for the charity, and they met when he went over to that country. Their stories of poverty and need were very moving. Just small sums of money can bring life-changing benefits, such as access to education, tools for work, a hospital operation, electricity supply, or even just a meal, a bed. Their magazine EthicalMuch is full of inspiring stories.

Along with practical kindness they are taking and spreading the word of God, and are well received. Cambodia is basically a Buddhist country but the different faiths seem to coexist without animosity. Buddhism is a feeling rather than a doing faith and the people and the government appreciate the welfare that Muylen and Bird bring. Our collection for them came to £181.



Harvest spread



Bird Lovegod & Muylen Aung

## LOOKING AHEAD

**29 October:** Rev Canon Adrian Alker will include a tribute to our late member Dorothy Adam in the service.

**12 November:** Rev Graham Wassell will lead our Remembrance Service for the first time and trumpeter Gordon Truman will play as usual.

**26 November:** We shall remember St Andrew with members of the Caledonian Society; the Rev Inderjit Bhogal will lead the service.

Following the service, the Society is holding a lunch at the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel. This replaces the President's Evening which used to be held on the last Saturday of November.

**3 December:** Advent Communion will be led by the Rev Dr Walter Houston.

### Carols galore:

**8 December:** Broomhall Community Choir and the adult singers from Steel City Choristers will give a Carol Concert, including local Sheffield carols. All welcome. 7.30 pm. Refreshments.

Free but donations requested for the musical development work the Choristers do.

**17 December:** Our Carol service at the usual time, 10.45 am.

**31 December:** New Year's Eve will be another chance to sing your favourite carols in a Songs of Praise service.

## FAMILY NEWS

**Sad news:** We regret to have to report the death of one of our oldest and longest-serving members, **Mrs Dorothy Adam**. Dorothy was an active member ever since joining the church in 1953; she help run the SASH Lunch Club, volunteered at the Child Contact Centre, attended very regularly, sang in the choir, enjoyed church lunches and outings, Network . . . Dorothy was interested in everyone and was known and respected by all. It has been sad to see her decline in health but she had the devoted care of her daughter Anne. She died on 22 September peacefully in her care home where she had spent the last few weeks. There will be an appreciation in the next issue. As there is some delay in arranging Dorothy's funeral service, the first part of our service on 29 October will be a tribute to her.

Happier news: **Sadie Jones's** granddaughter was married in the summer and the family gathered from around the world. There were nearly 400 guests at the reception. **Lillemor Macdonald** celebrated her birthday with all her sons at home, and enjoys the friendly neighbourliness of her cul-de-sac. **Barbara Macmillan** is off to visit her son and family in the USA, and **Alison Davies** to visit her son and family in Australia.

**Bill Smyllie** is settled in Broomcroft; we enjoy seeing him when he can come to church, and he still sings in the choir. The Cousley sisters, **Alison Moore and Sarah Collins**, trained for and completed a trek up Mont Blanc: congratulations! See page 18.

**Monica Hanna and Ray & Kathleen Smyth** had young family members at the ill-fated scout jamboree in South Korea in August, which was subject to an intense heat wave and tropical storm for which the organisers were quite unprepared. Some 4,000 of the 43,000 scouts attending were from the UK. Our families all got home safely and certainly have a tale to tell.

We have enjoyed the company of several students from Indonesia in recent years; **Billy Aryanto** has been with us since 2016. They have taken a full part in church events and we are happy to see their successes and share their joys.

**Matheus and Indri** had a little boy, Alfie Bestari Sirait, on 24 September; we hope to meet him soon. **Esti Nurdiah** has completed her doctoral dissertation in architecture on the uses of bamboo. Congratulations and best wishes to them all.



Concern about Covid is still relevant; it is still rife, especially in schools, although most of us have now had the latest vaccinations.

The **Dunstan** family have had a bad time recently: first Niall and then Martin suddenly required hospital stays and are still being followed up with tests and medications.

## GREETINGS

It is a pleasure to hear about former members and friends. **Robert Beard** sends his love and good wishes to everyone. He is enjoying his work with NHS 111 and has moved from simply answering calls to following up callers who have been waiting a long time, or neglected, and whose condition may have changed, for better or worse, in the meantime. This often enables some pastoral work.

Robert had another fall off his bike (pushed in a crowd) but did not break anything this time.

**Pat Thomas** is well and enjoys life in Reading near her daughter and family. **Wilma Love** similarly is glad she made the move to near Leamington and is living in what sounds an excellent retirement complex. There are regular activities, coffee every morning, knitting groups, tea parties, weekly bus to the shops, monthly film night. She makes the most of these despite some physical ailments and impaired mobility.

Happy Birthday! Our former member **Isobel Winning** reached her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on 27<sup>th</sup> August. She now lives in a care home near Nottingham to be close to her daughter Rhoda. All her Scottish relatives were able to have a Zoom session with the care home and were able to sing happy birthday to Isobel, which she joined in! Isobel, was one of four sisters from Mull and her older sister Kathy (aged 101 and a half!) still lives close by in Oban.

Isobel and her husband Arroll came to Sheffield when he became Director of Parks for the City. We have fond memories of Isobel at church particularly because every Sunday she stood just inside the door welcoming everyone most warmly and graciously. Raymond Smyth was Isobel's elder and has a fund of stories about her life on Mull, including her acquaintance there with the youngest of the Mitford sisters, Deborah, who became the Duchess of Devonshire. All good wishes to a remarkable lady.

The arrival of Autumn can lead to a slowing down for many people but many activities start up then. The pandemic may have stifled our get-up-and-go but we hope you find the energy to take part in and enjoy the rich range of social, sport and culture on offer. To those members and friends who are at home, we send our greetings and best wishes; we think of you and keep you in our prayers and memories.

And to the young ones – changing schools, preparing for exams, or off to college or new jobs, we send our best wishes, hopes and support.

## PLEASE NOTE

### NEW CONTACTS

David Stec's email is now [<davidstec227@gmail.com>](mailto:davidstec227@gmail.com)

There is a phone at the church but it only takes messages:  
0114 272 6100

### GARDEN TOOLS

We are trying to build up a stock of ordinary household and garden tools for use in the church. If you have any spare, or no longer use, we'd be very pleased to take them off your hands.

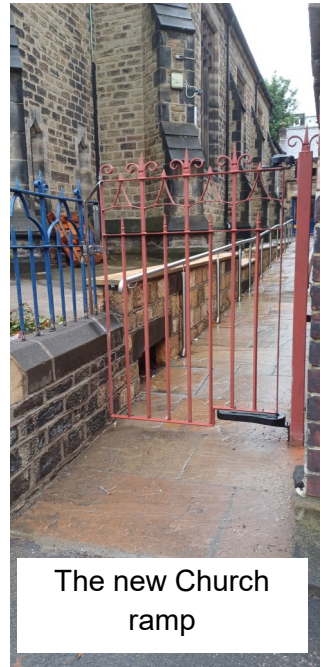
### SHOEBOX APPEAL

This year we are packing boxes for Link to Hope, which will send our boxes to Romania, Moldova, Ukraine and Bulgaria. They can be for any age group, young or old, but should be clearly marked. The deadline for bringing them to church is 5 November. Sheila Dunstan has all the details and leaflets.

### THE ARMED MAN

Sterndale Singers are performing Karl Jenkins' The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace on Sunday 12 November (Remembrance Sunday) at 3 pm at St Marie's Cathedral. This moving modern work was commissioned by the Royal Armouries Museum for the Millennium celebrations and to mark its move from London to Leeds. It is an anti-war piece, based on the Catholic mass and other sources, principally the 15<sup>th</sup> century French folk song 'L'homme arme'.

**REVIEWS:** If you attended any of Off the Shelf events, it will be very interesting to hear about them.



The new Church  
ramp

## SYNOD NEWS

**Yorkshire Synod** was held on Saturday 14 October at Holme URC in Bradford and also online; members could not only watch from home but also speak and vote remotely. Jean Dickson attended as our Synod representative.

Environmental issues are very much in Synod's mind and they urged all delegates attending in person to consider the environmental impact of their journey, and to car share if public transport was not suitable. Also to think about their packed lunch - locally sourced food, recyclable packaging, refillable drinks bottle, etc.

There will be a report on Synod's main points in the next issue.

**The Sheffield Team** have taken up an offer from a professional drama company to present *The Journey of the Magi*, a dramatic and musical presentation of the Christmas story. This will take place at Dore & Totley URC on Sunday 10 December at 4pm.

## LECTIONARY READINGS for October and November 2023

- October 1 Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32; Psalm 25:1-9;  
Philippians 2:1-13;  
Matthew 21:23-32
- October 8 Isaiah 5:1-7; Psalm 80:7-15; Philippians 3:4b-14;  
Matthew 21:33-46
- October 15 Isaiah 25:1-9; Psalm 23; Philippians 4:1-9;  
Matthew 22:1-14
- October 22 Isaiah 45:1-7; Psalm 96:1-9, (10-13);  
1 Thessalonians 1:1-10; Matthew 22:15-22
- October 29 Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18; Psalm 1;  
1 Thessalonians 2: 1-8; Matthew 22: 34-46
- November 5 Micah 3: 5-12; Psalm 43;  
1 Thessalonians 2: 9-13; Matthew 23:1-12
- November 12 Wisdom 6:12-16 **or** Amos 5:18-24; Wisdom 6:17-20 **or**  
Psalm 70; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18;  
Matthew 25: 1-13
- November 19 Zephaniah 1: 7, 12-18; Psalm 90:1-8, (9-11), 12;  
1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11; Matthew 25: 14-30
- November 26 Ezekiel 34: 11-16, 20-24; Psalm 95: 1-7a;  
Ephesians 1: 15-23; Matthew 25: 31-46

## DISABILITY SUNDAY

*The Worship Group prepared and led the service on 10 September. The readings chosen were 2 Samuel 9: 1-13, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 and Mark 2: 1-6.*

### Reflection

Our ramp for disabled access is now in place, and we hope it will enable more people with a disability to come into St Andrew's. But, what exactly is a disability? We are none of us perfect. We each know of deficiencies in ourselves, somewhere in our physical or mental make-up. But the term 'People with disabilities' usually means some visible or otherwise discernible impairment, which makes living difficult for them.

Historically, the lives of people with disabilities have been hard, and compounded by social attitudes. The Old Testament is very harsh: Leviticus 21 says: No one who has a blemish shall draw near (the Temple). The list of blemishes goes on and on: blind, lame, a mutilated face, a broken hand, a hunchback or a dwarf, a blemish in the eyes or an itching disease . . . People with such disabilities were stigmatised and excluded from significant roles in the temple.

The story of David's kindness to Saul's grandson is a contrast, showing that, in special circumstances, they were given a proper place in society.

Ancient Greeks like Plato also thought that a blemish to the body reflected a blemish on the soul. The doctor Hippocrates was unusual in that he thought mental illness was a result of environment and brain impairment, and he opened the first sanatorium for mental illness.

Throughout our history, people with physical deformities and unstable behaviour were excluded and mocked. Physical limitations often left them unable to work and therefore dependent for their living; for mental illnesses they could be confined in institutions. They were put on public display in circuses or freak shows, or gawped at by the public, even in a hospital like Bethlem in London.

People with a disability were safest if they could be cared for and protected within their own families, and of course there are many instances of that, recorded and in literature. Charles Lamb, the late 18<sup>th</sup> century writer, devoted his life to looking after his sister Mary; she suffered episodes of madness, in one of which she stabbed their mother to death; and she would otherwise have been confined. Together they wrote Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare, for children. And there is the delightful case in David Copperfield of Mr Dick, who was cared for with such understanding and compassion by Aunt Betsy Trotwood.

The basic reason for such ill treatment is fear, fear of the unknown. Little was known about what caused illness or disability, and how to treat it effectively. Lack of understanding and feeling helpless to act leads to fear, then hatred, prejudice, blame and exclusion. Some societies, such as the Muslim world in the early Middle Ages, were much more advanced in their scientific understanding and could treat many conditions better than mediaeval Western doctors. But as science and medicine advanced in the West, and understanding grew, attitudes here changed. Social norms of behaviour became less rigid too, so there was less reason for embarrassment and shame and exclusion. Now, medication and physical aids enable people with disabilities to live in the world, accepted, not hidden away, and to use their God-given talents; to attempt things, and to achieve things, hitherto thought impossible.

In sport, think of the Paralympics, Tanni Grey-Thompson, wheelchair basketball, Alfie Hewitt at Wimbledon, the Invictus Games . . .

In art and music, think of the painters with mouth and foot; of pianists who have lost a hand but go on playing; of writers like Christie Brown, born with severe cerebral palsy, who could type only with his left foot. Recently at the Proms, a marvellous performance of a Mozart horn concerto was given by a player who was born with no arms but played with his feet. Beethoven didn't stop composing when he went deaf, and Monet continued to paint, some of his greatest pictures, as his eyesight declined.

Stephen Hawking's body may have let him down but his mind didn't.

And if you've been to the theatre recently, you may have seen deaf or dumb actors on stage, as well as wheelchair users, in roles which are not disabled characters. We've come a long way since 'Ironside' on television.

So, not only did the public's attitudes change but so did those of disabled people themselves. Take that phrase I've just used: They are no longer "disabled people" but 'people with a disability'. They have expectations and aspirations and rights. They have "agency". The law has changed, to make sure that they have a fair chance and are not held back by unnecessary obstacles. Our new ramp is a legal requirement for a public venue.

Now, we may celebrate and marvel at what a person with disabilities can achieve but we are no longer surprised by it. We see and appreciate the diversity of their gifts, and are glad that they can now fulfil their potential. I'm sure each of you, like me, knows someone personally whom we admire for the way they have overcome physical or mental obstacles to achieve what they are capable of, in their lives and careers.

What does our reading today, the story of the man let down through the roof, show us. First, his determination; he was unable to work, he had to beg for a living, he may have lived in pain, but he was going to do what it took to see Jesus, because he knew Jesus would help him.

Second, he had support from his friends, who made a lot of effort, hauling him up to the roof and making a hole and letting him down through it. He must have been an inspiration to them and they responded with their compassion and love. People with disabilities still inspire us, motivate us, through their courage and spirit, to help and improve things for others in need. I don't think Rob Burrow when he was playing rugby, before he got Motor neurone disease, or Jane Tomlinson in her early days as an athlete, ever thought they'd become amazing fund-raisers for their causes, but their example and courage are another kind of gift which spurs others into action.

Nonetheless, despite advances in medicine and society, life is still more difficult for people with a disability. There may be pain; it takes more time to do things, and more effort; they may still be dependent on others' help; they may still find it difficult to earn a living. One in five of the UK population is said to have some form of disability. They are less likely to be in employment, and have less access to education, transport, and suitable housing. They need compassion and support.

So,

Let us be glad of the changes in knowledge and understanding that are making things better.

Let us celebrate the diversity of talents we see around us, and use our gifts to help others.

Let us remember that no one is perfect; we all know our own failings and weaknesses.

Let us give thanks for our blessings and spread blessing to others, as Jesus asks.

And let us seek God's help, as the paralysed man did, to guide us in the right way.

*Elizabeth Draper*

### Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession:

Dear Lord,

You give us so much to enrich our lives.

The beauty of the earth; art; crafts – and the gift of sight.

Birdsong; the first cry of a new born baby; music to move and uplift us - and the gift of hearing.

The scent of flowers and of newly cut grass - and the gift of the sense of smell.

Delicious food and drink – and the gift of the sense of taste.

The joy of walking, running, playing sport, dancing - and the physical strength to participate.

We pray that we never take our senses and physical abilities for granted but that we enjoy them thankfully, while we still possess them.

We pray for people who live with the challenge of a disability, and ask that we may be inspired by what they achieve in their lives – not only people with high public profiles but also people living quiet, ordinary lives – studying, working, raising families. Today we remember and pray for the survivors of the tragic earthquake in Morocco who may now be sustaining life-changing injuries.

We pray for scientists and doctors working to understand the causes of disabilities and to find preventions and cures, and to all professions seeking to find ways of easing the burden of living with a disability. Give them the insights needed to succeed in their work.

We give thanks for all individuals and groups who have helped change attitudes toward disability, and we pray for a time when all people with a disability are able to realise their full potential and are valued for the gifts and abilities which they possess. Help us to be part of achieving that vision.

Your son Jesus showed true acceptance and compassion. Let us conclude our prayers in the words which he taught us.

*Judith Adam*

The hymns we sang (from Rejoice & Sing) were Praise my soul, the King of heaven (104), Lord, I was blind (358), Thou whose almighty word (38), I know that my Redeemer lives (278) and O for a thousand tongues to sing (285).

## **ETHIOPIAN NEW YEAR**

12<sup>th</sup> September

On this day, the Queen of Sheba returned to Ethiopia from a visit to King Solomon and they celebrated her return by gifting her jewels. New Year happens in September because it is reckoned by the Julian calendar, which is approximately seven years and eight months behind the Gregorian calendar.

The yellow daisies we saw St Michael's congregation wearing on their heads or on their clothes symbolize spring and new growth. The new year is celebrated by eating special food, drinking Ethiopian coffee, singing and dancing. Children will get new clothes for the festival.

On the Sunday before Ethiopian New Year, the priest, Kessis (Father ) Wondwosen Belay played the Ethiopian harp . He is a young priest living in London, well known for his service as a church singer with a couple of albums to his name.

Of course, Douglas could not resist trying it out and then researching it. He writes as follows:

The traditional Ethiopian harp or bowl lyre being played by the priest seems to be a smaller variety of the one pictured here. The strings are arranged from left to right, in ascending order of pitch, tuned to a pentatonic scale, not dissimilar to those produced by the black keys on a piano. The last string in the order defies the sequence and drops an octave, sounding a note lower than the first string at the opposite end.

There is no fretboard. The strings are plucked by the fingers of the left hand near the upper end of the instrument. The vibrations are amplified at the lower

end by means of a natural vellum or animal skin, stretched over a round bowl, in a similar way to a banjo.

The earliest harp designs known are featured in ancient cave paintings, and consist of a single string tied to a bent bow of wood which is held in front of the player's mouth by one hand, and plucked with a stick held in the other. By changing the shape of his mouth, the player is able to subtly vary the timbre of the sound in a similar way that a modern jew's harp, or jaw harp, is played. It is thought that these were played by hunters when they weren't using their bows for other purposes!

*Monica Hanna and Douglas Jones*



## ROSE HILL CHURCH

Our research into energy saving measures for St Andrew's led Elizabeth Draper and me to visit Rose Hill URC in central Chesterfield, high above the market place. After 200 years of worship, in this building since 1823, this stone built church has recently had a large programme of refurbishment including the double glazing of their numerous stained glass windows. This is one energy saving measure we are considering for our own church.

The church secretary, Margaret Davies, met us and shared the sad news that the church was about to close and its members redirected to other local churches. She herself had been a lifelong member there and felt this a great personal loss. Although their numbers were holding up, an ageing congregation meant they were unable to fill key roles to maintain the church and its building.

There was a coffee morning in progress and we were able to join other members, who pointed out the impressive innovations there: large sums of money, over £75,000 in total, had been spent on refurbishing the church. The works included a spanking new kitchen with an electric butler's lift to take food down a level, a new meeting room with up to date furniture, a very sophisticated computerized projection system in the main church itself, and ceiling insulation. Unfortunately work on the roof showed up serious problems requiring even further expenditure and synod judged that the roof repairs would cost more than the value of the church, so the building would have to close.

The double glazing of the windows had accounted for some twelve thousand pounds of that total, which seemed quite a reasonable sum to me, considering the large number of windows and the number of opening lights. The windows were not easy to open and ventilation might become a problem during long events. Although examination with a thermal camera had shown significant heat loss through the stone walls and doors, the church had, however, become much cosier in the winter. The church was very handsome both inside and outside and very well maintained. It was really sad to hear of the closure of such an elegant church.

*Monica Hanna*

## MONT BLANC TREK

In January Sarah invited me to join her and some friends on a mini Tour du Mont Blanc. I found myself listing all the reasons I couldn't do it and realised that was the reason I really needed to give it a go. To say I was nervous, when I headed off on September 20th, is an understatement.

We flew to Geneva (Switzerland) and travelled to Chamonix (France) where we stayed in a gorgeous spa hotel looking up at Mont Blanc. Next morning, we were picked up and taken to Italy where the first trek (c.7km) began, with a steep climb, in rain, up into the clouds - my lungs definitely got a shock. The first night was also an introduction into refuges - which are like youth hostels - but sleeping 20 in a room in very close quarters meant I was grateful for having packed ear plugs!

The next few days the weather thankfully cleared, and we walked into Switzerland, where the hikes continued to be challenging ascents and descents, but the views were spectacular. Our guide thought we were a strong group, which meant he took us on less trodden routes with lesser-known views, with the highlight being the last day (day 4). We climbed 1000m in about 1.5 hours, crossed the border into France where it was icy and cold, and after a few hours we were rewarded with the most beautiful undisturbed views of Mont Blanc (picture of Sarah and me).

The final descent felt long but we made good time, meaning we managed a celebratory team drink before the group went their separate ways and we headed back to the spa hotel for a bit of relaxing before heading home. I am very proud of what we achieved, and excited that conversations have started on what adventure we could maybe go on next year!

*Alison Moore*



## THE TELEPHONE BOOK

Have you received your new BT telephone directory ? We are told that this will be the last time it is issued. This is no surprise, as the BT listing has become increasingly irrelevant as more and more people use other networks. But what a long history the phone book has, since 1880. Its vital information is now available in other ways, but over the years it has included more and more helpful public service information too - NHS, government, helplines . . . while being made lighter and easier to read.

Many of us will recall the days when the telephone book was an indispensable aid to communication, and being listed in the weighty tome was important. How else would other people be able to get in touch with you? Long distance calls had to go through the operator, as indeed did local calls in the early days. This was still the case in 1950 in a small town in Angus, when our number was just three digits. The cost of long distance calls could be significant, so you could ask the operator for ADC – Advise Duration and Cost - and they rang you back afterwards with the information.

The red telephone box has become almost redundant too, although even now it could still be vital when other power sources fail. Do you remember Button A and Button B, and the clatter of your coins as you got connected ? and making sure you always had the essential tuppence ?

Calls to abroad were expensive and much rarer, and usually had to be booked with the international operator, especially at special times like Christmas. When BT first introduced subscriber trunk dialling (STD) so that you could get straight through whenever you liked, it was a thrill of modernity! I also felt some pride that BT had got there before the USA, where phoning was much cheaper and more a part of everyday life.

Some language purists were most reluctant to adopt the American term “calling” instead of “phoning” ? “Calls” meant personal visits. People could become quite stropky about Americanisms like this - Feathers could fly!

Now, people Message or text even more than phoning. Not me! I like my landline, which seems more comfortable and more audible than the mobile. But we are going to lose that too in the next couple of years . . Tempus fugit!

*Elizabeth Draper*

## ST ANDREW'S MISSION and VALUES

Our **Mission** is to create an environment where Christians worship and community groups prosper.

Our **Values** are

1 LOVE

We aim to extend the love of God to everyone.

2 FAITH

We act in faith to bring about the Kingdom of God - love, peace, justice.

3 FRIENDLINESS

We offer welcome and friendship to people of all backgrounds.

4 RESPECT

We respect the views and beliefs of all people of goodwill.

5 TOLERANCE

We aim to promote tolerance among people of different backgrounds and lifestyles.

6 CARING

We try to offer appropriate pastoral and practical care to those who come seeking help.

7 SECURITY

We aim to offer a safe and secure environment to those who use our premises.

8 COMMUNITY

We aim to offer a positive and constructive contribution to the wider community and its organisations.

8 RESPONSIBILITY

We aim to act responsibly and to take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

In line with this, our **Aims** could be stated as:

- 1 To create an environment where Christian worship flourishes
- 2 To create a welcoming environment where community groups can meet.

