



The Steeple News

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Dear friends,

As we approach Christmas, one of the things that is being eagerly anticipated is the release of the film, *"The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe"*. This is a much-loved story by C S Lewis that alludes to the story of Jesus, and particularly in this book, His sacrifice. Already there is speculation whether some of the key statements from the book will appear in the film, thus containing something of a Christian message.

In another book in the series, *The Last Battle*, C S Lewis wrote:

"It seems, then" said Tirian, ... "that the Stable seen from within and the Stable seen from without are two different places." "Yes," said Lord Digroy. "Its inside is bigger than its outside." "Yes," said Queen Lucy. "In our world too, a Stable once had something inside that was bigger than our whole world."

Within that small stable was someone that the whole world lived inside. Take a moment to consider what that means to you and me. How can we think that all the trappings of this world might obscure the One who created them? The birth of Jesus turns our world inside-out, and we may be too busy looking inside to embrace what is truly going on. Our Christmas praise can raise us to great heights, and yet we still need God to stoop down to us, come alongside us, and to do so in the most vulnerable manner we can imagine.

Perhaps it is time for us to move from Christmas to Christ.

The spirit of Christmas needs to be superseded by the Spirit of Christ. The spirit of Christmas is annual; the Spirit of Christ is eternal. The spirit of Christmas is sentimental; the Spirit of Christ is supernatural. The spirit of Christmas is a human product; the Spirit of Christ is a divine person. That makes all the difference in the world.

When the Spirit of Christ is found in our hearts, and in our churches, then the significance of this time can be truly known and experienced. When Christ is born in us, indeed when we are born again, the love of God comes and grows in us, and we grow in Him. I believe we are not far from Him, yet sometimes we act in ways and say things that mean our faith may yet be stillborn.

I pray that the Spirit of the living Christ be found in you and me this Christmas time and always. May His Spirit fill our worship and our caring and our love, so that the light of the stable may shine from us who gather there, in wonder and in joy.

Have a blessed Christmas,

Brian.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

The Crèche has been running now for over a year and is proving to be a great success. The children who use the Crèche have lots of fun painting, reading stories and playing with the ever-popular play dough. Julie and Lorna are trying to develop the Crèche and think of ways that they can prepare the older children for Sunday School and deliver God's word to all the children, through stories and prayer.

Julie and Lorna would like to thank everyone who has been involved in the Crèche, especially the Parents and Children without whom there would be no Crèche, and those who help on a regular basis — so a special thanks to Sheila Dick, Elizabeth Conway and Janette Calder. We are looking forward to another busy year and hope that the Crèche continues to grow and we would like to welcome anyone young or old who wants to come and check out the fun for themselves! Best wishes, Lorna and Julie xxx





Sunday 27 November	11.00 am	First Sunday in Advent
30 November	12 Noon	Advent Service in Church Hall
Sunday 4 December	11.00 am	Sacrament of Communion — Rev Brian Webster
Sunday 11 December	11.00 am	Morning Worship — Rev Brian Webster
Sunday 18 December	11.00 am	Christmas Family Service , including Sacrament of Baptism
Sunday 18 December	7.00 pm	Carol Singing around the Village
Christmas Eve	11.30 pm	Christmas Eve Service
Christmas Day	11.00 am	Christmas Day Service
New Year's Day	11.00 am	New Year's Day Service

New Members

We have recently welcomed the following into membership:

Bill and Margaret Bradie	Dowan Place
Hugh and Janet Milne	Ochil Mount, Bannockburn
Inge Samwell	Dalmorglen Park
Lorna Willows	Willow Brae Plean

Deaths

We give thanks to God for the lives and memories of those who have died in recent months:

Cathie Hickie
 Willie McEwen
 David Henderson
 Louie Paton
 Lizzie McLennan
 Len Holmes
 Bertie McEwan

New Elders

Welcome to our new Elders: Bill Hodgson, Jim Davidson, Graeme Fotheringham, Margaret Gibson, Lorna Willows. We look forward to the ideas they will bring to the session and for God's blessing on them as we continue to ask for God's guidance and blessing on the work of the Session.

Baptisms

We rejoice in the recent baptisms of:

Olivia Fletcher
 Donald Hammell
 Boyd Ferrol
 Joseph Pridden
 Jessica Lawson
 James Cairney
 Ethan Cameron
 Lorna Willows
 Blair Watson

Central Scotland Police Concert Party

We enjoyed an absolutely first class evening of wonderful music—and capped it all with a great buffet! Thank you to Ann Jeffrey who suggested the Band, and to Elaine Smith who facilitated the Concert. The Bruce Group Elders would like to thank all those who contributed baking, knitting, time and donations. The real benefit will be felt by the Mission in Zambia who will receive more than £1000. These donations came from the Concert and the retiring offering at Bertie McEwan's funeral. Our thanks, thoughts and prayers are with his family.

Thank you

Mrs Ann Holmes would like to thank you for your prayers, cards, gifts and practical help received during her husband Len's illness

Thanks to those who attended the Church service in celebration of his life, and to those who paid their last respects at the internment at Portobello Cemetery Edinburgh. Your support was very much appreciated.

The collection taken for Strathcarron Hospice amounted to £1,021 which was passed on to them. Thank You for your generosity. God bless you.

Coffee and Crafts

The recent Coffee and Crafts morning was very successful, with around £1000 being raised for the Church funds. Many thanks to everyone who gave of their time and talents and to everyone who came along on a cold morning.

Christmas Party

The Christmas Party will be held on **7th December in the Church Hall from 2-4 pm**. Donation tickets, priced £2 are available.

Coffee Morning

The monthly Coffee Morning is on **8th December 10-11.30 am**. Everyone who comes seems to enjoy the coffee and the company. Come and join us — you will be made really welcome!

Gentlemen's Christmas Lunch

All men are invited to join us on **14 December at 12.30** for our monthly lunch. This will be our Christmas Lunch. We look forward to seeing you there.

Carol Singing round the Village

On **Sunday 18th December at 7.00pm** we will once again go Carol Singing round the village. This event is becoming ever more popular. Everyone how comes enjoys it, thinks its really worth doing—and comes back every year. So, enjoy a real Christmas experience — join us! A 'pot luck' supper will follow!