

Cathedral News



December 2024 - January 2025

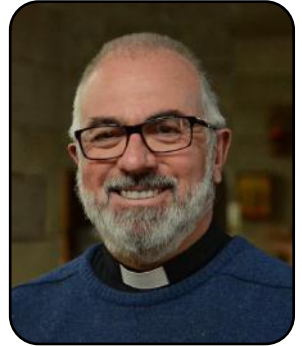
Who's Who at the Cathedral

Provost	The Very Rev'd Dr Stephen Holmes	07584 091870
Manager	Chris Ahern	manager@perthcathedral.co.uk
Administrator	Marion Swan	01738 632053

From the Provost

Dear friends,

Before we know it, Christmas will be upon us. In fact, the mince pies and decorations have been in the shops for ages already and we will be blessing our outside crib and having the Nativity Lantern Parade before the end of November (as I write these words the Council has cancelled this thanks to the improbably named Storm Bert).



I used to be a Christmas Fundamentalist, NO DECORATIONS UP UNTIL CHRISTMAS EVE, but with school carol services and the like it seemed mean to have a bare church and so Christmas crept forward. The family Christmas tree got lit up early during lockdown to spread a bit of joy and light and now has become an Advent tree. At the same time we miss Advent at our spiritual peril.

Contents

Who's who	2	Nicaea study day	19
From the Provost	3	Warm welcome	19
Readings/collects for		News of cathedral dogs	20
December - January	4	Decorating the cathedral	21
Christmas at the cathedral	8	Fairtrade stall	21
All Souls service	9	Marion's retirement	22
Thank-you lunch	10	The same but different	22
Birthday celebrations	10	From the Farquhar diaries	22
Mary's baptism	12	Free cathedral books	23
Blessing of the van	13	Christian Aid carol singing	24
Choral Evensong	13	Forthcoming concert	24
Advent study group	14	Cathedral AGM	24
Colouring in Advent	16	PACT carol service	25
Cathedral Kalendar/Lectionary	17	From the Farquhar diaries	26
Cathedral rugs	17	Eddie the Eagle	27
Christmas and numbers	18	Times of services etc	27

Advent actually means 'arrival', the arrival of a God or an Emperor, but for us it is a time of waiting. In the first part we wait for the second coming of Christ in glory at the end of time, 'Lo, he comes with clouds descending', and in the second half we wait for his first coming in the flesh, 'O come, O come Emmanuel'. Now we live in the in-between times, between Christmas and the Last Judgement. All our life now is thus Advent waiting but the Fathers speak of a third Advent of Christ.

This is a coming of Jesus into our hearts and we prepare his way by prayer, kindness and fasting. You won't notice him if you are not prepared, so however many mince pies and glitzy Christmas jingles we encounter, let's keep Advent as a time of prayer and waiting. It might be a time to pick up that old Bible again?

We have an exciting set of services at the cathedral over the next two months and opportunities for service at our Welcoming Warm Space on Mondays and elsewhere. We also have a new children and families committee who are preparing exciting things for the increasing number of children at our services and will lead our Christmas Eve Christingle service.

May the child who is the Lord of time and space, but was born in a manger, bless you and your families this Christmas and throughout the New Year,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line underneath the name.

The Very Rev'd Dr Stephen Holmes

Readings and Collects for December and January

First Sunday of Advent - 1 December

Collect: Stir up your power, Lord, and come: that, with you as our protector, we may be rescued from our sins; and with you as our deliverer, we may be set free; for you live and reign with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Additional Collect for Advent: Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and to put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility: that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Readings: Jeremiah 33.14-16, Psalm 25.1-10, 1 Thessalonians 3.9-13, Luke 21.25-36

Second Sunday of Advent - 8 December

Collect: Stir up our hearts, Lord, to prepare the way of your only-begotten Son: that, in his coming, we might serve you with our hearts made pure; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Readings: Baruch 5.1-9, Cantic: Luke 1.68-79, Philippians 1.3-11, Luke 3.1-6

Third Sunday of Advent - 15 December

Collect: Stir up our prayers, Lord, and hear us: that they who are sorrowful and suffering may rejoice at the Advent of your only-begotten Son; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Readings: Zephaniah 3.14-20, Cantic: Isaiah 12.2-6, Philippians 4.4-7, Luke 3.7-18

Fourth Sunday of Advent - 22 December

Collect: Stir up your power, Lord, and come: and strengthen us by the might of your love; that, although we are hindered by our sins, your abundant grace and mercy may quickly come and save us; for you live and reign with the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Readings: Micah 5.2-5a, Cantic: Luke 1.46b-55, Hebrews 10.5-10, Luke 1.39-45, (46-55)

Christmas Eve - 24 December

Collect: O God, you have made this most holy night grow radiant with the

brilliance of the true Light: grant that, as we have known the mystery of that Light on earth, so we may delight in him in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Readings: Isaiah 9.2-7, Psalm 96, Titus 2.11-14, Luke 2.1-14, (15-20)

Christmas Day - 25 December

Collect: Early morning: O God our Father, the light of whose Word has come among us in the Holy Child of Bethlehem: grant that the radiance of that true light, which enlightens our minds by faith, may shine brightly through our words and deeds; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

During the day: O God, who wonderfully created and yet more wonderfully restored the dignity of our human nature: grant that we may share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Readings: Isaiah 52.7-10, Psalm 98, Hebrews 1.1-4, John 1.1-14

First Sunday after Christmas - 29 December

Collect: O God, you make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ: grant that, as we joyfully receive him as our Saviour, so we may with confidence behold him as he comes to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Readings: 1 Samuel 2.18-20,26, Psalm 148, Colossians 3.12-17, Luke 2.41-52

The Epiphany - 5 January 2025 (transferred from Monday 6 January)

Collect: O God, who, by the guidance of a star, revealed your only begotten Son to the nations: Grant that we, who know you now by faith, may at the last be led to see your glory face to face; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Readings: Isaiah 60.1-6, Psalm 72.1-7, 10-14, Ephesians 3.1-12, Matthew 2.1-12

First Sunday after Epiphany: The Baptism of the Lord - 12 January

Collect for the Baptism of the Lord: Eternal Father, who at the baptism of Jesus revealed him to be your Son, anointing him with the Holy Spirit: grant that we, being born again, and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Collect for the week of Proper 1: O Lord, in your loving kindness, hear the prayers of your people as they call upon you: that they may discern your will, and also be given strength to fulfil it; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Readings: Isaiah 43.1-7, Psalm 29, Acts 8.14-17, Luke 3.15-17, 21-22.

Second Sunday after Epiphany - 19 January

Collect: Almighty and eternal God, ruler of heaven and earth: mercifully hear the prayers of your people, and grant your peace to our times; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Readings: Isaiah 62.1-5, Psalm 36.5-10, 1 Corinthians 12.1-11, John 2.1-11

Third Sunday after Epiphany - 26 January

Collect: Almighty and eternal God, behold us in our weakness: and stretch out your hands to protect us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Readings: Nehemiah 8.1-3, 5-6, 8-10, Psalm 19, 1 Corinthians 12.12-31a, Luke 4.14-21

The Presentation of the Lord - Sunday 2 February

Collect for the Presentation of the Lord: Almighty and Everlasting God: as your Only-begotten Son was presented and received in the temple, so may we welcome and proclaim him as the light of the nations and the glory of your people; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Collect for the week of Proper 4: O God, through our human frailty, we cannot stand firm: give us strength and protection, that, with your help, we may overcome all difficulties; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Readings: Malachi 3.1-5, Psalm 84, Hebrews 2.14-18, Luke 2.22-40.



CHRISTMAS AT PERTH CATHEDRAL – ST NINIAN’S



Sunday 24 November PACTS Nativity Lantern Procession

2.30-4.30pm Lantern making at the Cathedral; 4.50pm Blessing of St Ninian’s Nativity; 5pm Lantern Procession; 5.15pm carols at the Nativity outside St John’s Kirk

Sunday 1 December

4pm Advent Carol Service

Saturday 14 December

Cathedral choir carols in St John’s shopping centre 11-12 am

Sunday 22 December

4pm Christmas Carol Service

CHRISTMAS SERVICES



Tuesday 24 December

4pm Children’s Christingle Service

11.30pm Midnight Mass with choir and carols

Wednesday 25 December

9.30am Dawn Mass, short contemplative service commemorating the visit of the Shepherds, using the traditional liturgy

11am Christmas Day Sung Eucharist with carols

Apart from the 11am Sung Eucharist on the First Sunday of Christmas, the Cathedral will be closed from Christmas to New Year’s Day (The Circumcision and Naming of Jesus), when there will be the usual 11am Weds Mass. The Epiphany will be kept on Sunday 5 January.

What's Been Going On?

All Souls Service

Many of those who attended the cathedral's All Souls service on Monday 4 November commented afterwards on what a lovely and meaningful service it had been. Bathed in the warm glow of candle light - and real candles too! - the cathedral looked stunning. The choir sang excerpts from Fauré's *Requiem* and the names of the cathedral's family and friends, whom we have loved and lost, were read out. The service concluded with a simple act of remembrance at the candlelit Garden of Remembrance outside. The editor, for one, hopes that this format may be repeated in subsequent years. Many thanks to Lis for the photo below and to an anonymous donor for the one overleaf.





Thank-You Lunch

A lunch was held in the Chapter House after the service on 17 November to thank the ministry team - Philip, Peter and Lis - for the huge amount of work they did during the recent interregnum. Provost Stephen and former vestry chairman during the interregnum, John Wright, both gave speeches of warm thanks and presented the team with book tokens as a small token of appreciation from the vestry and congregation. Many thanks too should go to Tyro and Ayesha who so generously prepared a delicious Sri Lankan curry for us - working on it until 11.00pm on the previous evening! Donations from the appreciative diners covered the cost of the ingredients. Emmanuel played cheery music - thank you! - and let us not forget those working behind the scenes to prepare the Chapter House and wash and clear up afterwards! You know who you are!

Geoff's birthday

The thank-you lunch concluded with a celebratory slice of birthday cake, courtesy of organist Geoff who recently reached a certain significant milestone! Many thanks to Christopher, Lis and Marietta who sent in the photos on the next page.



Baptism

The younger daughter of Provost Stephen and Izzy was baptised by her father during the morning service on 25 November. The godparents were Bishop Ian, the Rev'd Canon Dr Carrie Applegath and Sophie Burnet. For the first time in many years the font at the west end was used, despite the fears of earlier years that clergy, ankle-length cassocks, narrow steps and a baby were perhaps not a good combination! The newest member of the congregation - and her father - both survived and she was welcomed afterwards with a glass of fizz and a celebratory cake in the Chapter House. Many thanks to Annabelle for her photos, and to the others who sent in theirs - sadly we have limited space in the magazine but please keep snapping and sending them in.



Blessing of the Van

Tyro and Ayesha's brand new van, used for their catering business, was blessed in a simple act in the cathedral yard on 25 November. A small crowd gathered round the van as Provost Stephen said a few prayers, sprinkled holy water over it, and blessed it. Safer journeys across Scotland, fewer punctures and an absence of traffic wardens will surely follow!



Choral Evensong

The cathedral choir was augmented by the scholars of Strathallan School, pictured below, at the Choral Evensong on 17 November.



Advent Study Group

The Theology of Creation

This year the Provost is giving the annual Scottish Episcopal Institute Advent lectures. Fr Stephen has chosen to explore how Christians understand Creation and four talks have been recorded at the cathedral and will be issued on Mondays, 25 November, and 2, 9, 16 December. He argues that Christians have tended to simply copy what secular environmentalists say but that there are deep riches in our tradition which have a lot to contribute to contemporary debates.

Links to the videos can be found online at <https://sei.scot/news/sei-short-course-on-creation-theology/> or on the Scottish Episcopal Church YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@TheScottishEpiscopalChurch> .

When you have watched the videos, why not come along to the St Ninian's Cathedral study group? We will meet on Thursdays at 5.30pm for about 45 minutes in the Chapter House and discuss the big questions raised in each of the videos: 28 November, 5 12 & 19 December. All welcome, even if you can't come to all sessions. To register, sign up in the cloister or email the provost at provost.perth@gmail.com .

Interviewed about the lectures, Fr Stephen said: 'We live in an environmental crisis. Although many Christians are responding to it in creative ways, there has recently been a neglect of the theology of creation in the Western Churches which has obscured a distinctively Christian response to the crisis. Taking their shape from the 1982 Scottish Liturgy these four sessions aim to outline the main elements of a faithful and orthodox Christian theology of creation which can speak to our contemporaries. The basic structure is taken from traditional Catholic theology but this is filled out using the insights of poets and theologians such as Kathleen Raine, Maximus the Confessor, Elizabeth Theokritoff, Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Gerard Manley Hopkins. That I have naturally turned to poets, Eastern Orthodox theologians, and an Islamic philosopher, to help outline an adequate theology of creation, and have found the contribution of Pope Francis helpful but limited, suggests that we in the Western Churches have work to do here. The lectures are just a start, an invitation to you to think and pray. I hope

they will give a foundation for action, but also counter environmental despair, for the earth is the Lord's and the real heroes in this story are the angels and Mary, the Mother of God.' The four lectures are:

Theology of Creation 1 - The Mountain behind the Mountain - 2 December:

'Worship and praise belong to you, Father, in every place and at all times. All power is yours. You created the heavens and established the earth; you sustain in being all that is.'

Theology of Creation 2 - Creation through the Word - 9 December:

'In Christ your Son our life and yours are brought together in a wonderful exchange. He made his home among us that we might for ever dwell in you... He is the Word existing beyond time, both source and final purpose, bringing to wholeness all that is made.'

Theology of Creation 3 - New Creation in the Spirit - 16 December:

'Through your Holy Spirit you call us to new birth in a creation restored by love... Help us, who are baptised into the fellowship of Christ's Body to live and work to your praise and glory; may we grow together in unity and love until at last, in your new creation, we enter into our heritage in the company of the Virgin Mary.'

Theology of Creation 4 - Creation perfected in praise - 23 December:

'As children of your redeeming purpose we offer you our praise, with angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven, singing the hymn of your unending glory: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.'



Icon of the Transfiguration of Creation, discussed in the lectures, reproduced by permission of Aidan Hart

Colouring in Advent

The following piece from the diocesan website explains the background to 'colouring in Advent'.

'The Diocese has launched an artistic activity drawing on our missional purpose that underlines all our climate change and wider environmental actions. It is intended to be enjoyed in each of our churches within the Diocese and when it comes together for Diocesan Synod 2025, the installation will bring hope, be thought-provoking and a sign of our discipleship. The activity is to colour in one (or more) of the leaf-shaped images and/or petals. This may be completed as individuals, as a group, as a study tool perhaps during Advent or Epiphany, in any way whatsoever.' *[The photo below shows a beautiful naturally-coloured leaf found near the cathedral earlier in the autumn.]*

At the cathedral we will have an opportunity to colour in some of these images during Advent, at our Warm Space event in the Chapter House. Lis will provide colouring sheets and materials for anyone to drop in and do some colouring, starting from about 10.00am on Mondays 9, 16 and 23 December. As we work we will talk about the images: what can we see in them? Do they remind us of any Bible stories or anything else? We will send a selection of our work to the diocesan office for the installation at Synod 2025.



If you would like to do some colouring at home, the images can be found on the diocesan website under the Diocesan Environment Group.

Lis

Cathedral Kalendar and Lectionary

We are having a Cathedral Kalendar and Lectionary printed for next year. It has the feasts, psalms and readings for every day in the year for the Eucharist and Daily Prayer.

It is useful for knowing what is happening on a Sunday but can also be used for daily prayer - you might pray the full Morning and Evening Prayer each day or just take a psalm or one of the Scripture readings. If you use the psalms and readings in the Kalendar it is comforting to know you are praying them with a vast number of other people around the world.

These are being printed for cathedral clergy and officials but there will be ten extra copies on sale for £10. If you would like one please contact the Provost or the office.

In case you are wondering why we are spelling calendar with a K', it is because this is the ecclesiastical version. The word calendar comes from the late Latin 'kalendrium' which in turn comes from the Latin 'kalends/calends', meaning the first day of the month in the ancient Roman calendar. The first of the month - the kalends - was the time that payments of interest were normally due and 'kalendrium' was the name given to an account book used to record the details of such transactions. It is as a result of this connection that 'kalendar/calendar' came to refer to the orderly arrangement of time as we now know it, but the church retained the older 'K' spelling to distinguish their kalendar from an ordinary list of events. In other words, a kalendar is simply a church calendar!

Provost Stephen

Cathedral Rugs

The recent cold snap, which saw local temperatures plummeting over the course of several days, highlights the need for all of us to keep warm, and especially for many of us older folk. The vestry has purchased a number of blankets which are piled at the ends of rows of seating, for use during services, so please help yourselves whenever you wish. One caveat - please do take care not to trip over them when coming up for communion!

Christmas and Numbers

It is amazing how much Christianity is tied up with numbers, God is 1 and 3, there are 4 Gospels, Jesus died aged 33, the number of the beast is 666. There is a whole science of symbolic Christian Numerology and you may have heard the country song *The Deck of Cards* where a soldier arrested for playing cards during a church service uses the numbers in a deck of cards to teach the whole Christian faith. Christmas has its own set of numbers.

Whereas Easter goes back to the time of the Apostles, Christmas is first heard of in Rome in about 330 AD. It is on the 25 December which is nine months after we celebrate the conception of Jesus at the Annunciation to Mary on 25 March. It was also the pagan Roman feast of the Unconquered Sun, and as well as numbers Christmas has a symbolism connected with the return of the light in the northern hemisphere - we shouldn't be ashamed of this symbolism. Like Easter, Christmas is at the centre of a collection of feasts that depend on its date. Advent begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas.

The feast of the Circumcision and Naming of Jesus (1 January, Luke 2.21) is eight days after and, like Easter, Christmas has an Octave, a period of eight days of feasting extending the feast. We all sing about the twelve days of Christmas and this is the period between Christmas and Epiphany when we in the West celebrate the visit of the Magi and our Eastern Christian friends celebrate the Baptism of Christ, which we remember on the Sunday after. Eight and twelve are important. Twelve is the number of the Apostles and the Tribes of Israel. Jesus rose from the dead on a Sunday which is 'the eighth day' and so fonts for baptism, like ours, are often octagonal. When do you take your decorations down? The latest date for this is the feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2.22-38) which is forty days after Christmas. Forty is a number that recalls the 'forty days and forty nights' Jesus was tempted in the desert and so looks forward to Lent when all the dates depend on Easter.

Finally, Christmas is unique as it has three Masses. Christmas is obviously 'the Mass of Christ' but as early as 604 AD St Gregory the Great wrote 'the Lord in his generosity allows us to celebrate three Masses on Christmas Day'. In the Scottish Episcopal Church we have these same three Masses, at night (Midnight Mass), at

Dawn and during the Day. Each has a special emphasis, for example the Dawn Mass remembers the visit of the Shepherds, and I will end this account of the numbers of Christmas with 1 and 3, 1 day with 3 Masses. Children often love songs with numbers and next time we sing 'five gold rings' we have all these numbers to help us remember the central mysteries of our faith.



Provost Stephen

Nicaea Study Day 2025

Every Sunday we say the 'Nicene Creed', an ecumenical statement of faith we share with all other orthodox Christians in many churches which sums up the Christian faith. 2025 is the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea where this creed was first put together, though the form we use is the final version as completed at the Council of Constantinople in 381.

There are not many things that are 1700 years old and in weekly use by over a billion people, so this is something to celebrate. St Ninian's Cathedral will be joining with the Scottish Episcopal Institute to host a study day on the Council of Nicaea on Saturday 10 May. The main speaker will be Professor Lewis Ayres of Durham University and the Angelicum, Rome. He is the author of the important book *Nicaea and its Legacy* which changed our way of understanding the teaching of Nicaea on the Trinity and its importance for our life of faith and contemplation. Further details will be given later.

Provost Stephen

Warm Welcome

The Monday morning Warm Welcome is underway in the Chapter House. We have our regular helpers - thank you everyone! - and a reasonable number of people already coming along for a cuppa and toast or a bacon roll. We've even had folk enjoying a curry and fried egg roll - at 9.00am on a Monday morning one has to admire their constitution! Do drop in any Monday and join us for a chat.



(Sad) News of Cathedral Dogs

Sadly, my dear Brandy died on Wednesday 20 November at 2 pm. My thanks to the cathedral clergy and congregation for their acceptance and love shown to Brandy over many years. She will be sorely missed. *[Sad news indeed about a well-loved member of the cathedral family. Many will remember Brandy with deep affection, particularly the way she trotted up to the communion rail behind Raymond, though latterly rather more slowly. Ed.]*



If It Should Be

*If it should be that I grow frail and weak
And pain should keep me from my sleep,
Then you must do what must be done,
For this last battle cannot be won.*

*You will be sad, I understand.
Keep my blanket near at hand,
For on this day, more than most
Please understand I need you close.*

*We've had so many happy years.
What is to come holds no fears,
But no longer can my heart go on.
Remember me when I am gone.*

*So, take me where my needs they'll tend -
Only, stay with me to the end
And hold me firm and talk to me
Until my eyes no longer see.*

*I know in time, you will see
It's a kindness that you've done for me;
Although my tail its last has waved,
From pain and suffering I've been saved.*

*If one day, you are frail and old
Remember walks through fields of gold.
Days of joy when we were well,
A time well spent and tales to tell.*

*The special bond we have shared
None but you could have cared.
A love that's true and broken never
Remains a love that lasts forever.*

*Now I have gone, you feel the pain;
Tears may fall but feel no shame.
A place in heaven, I'll prepare
Because I know, you'll be there.*

Raymond Borley

(Happier) News of Cathedral Dogs

The Rev'd Richard and Gina Sutton are settling back into life in their beloved Norfolk and are now in its north-eastern corner - if Norfolk with its rounded coastline could ever be thought of as having corners! They are recovering from the stress of downsizing and the after-effects of chest infections, but are very happy to be home. The photo shows Sally on the left with a canine companion (and professional Scooby-Doo lookalike) on a recent dog-walk.



Decorating the Cathedral for Christmas

Come and join the happy throng on Saturday 14 December when the cathedral will be decorated for Christmas. 'Throng' might be too strong a word, but the merry band of tree erectors, flower arrangers, bauble hangers and fairy light experts always enjoy the occasion, fuelled as it is by an abundant supply of tea, coffee, cakes, biscuits, Christmas carols and good humour. If you need a boost of 'feel good factor' then this is the place to be! From 9.30 onwards, for a couple of hours or so.



Fairtrade Stall



The Fairtrade stall (*photo courtesy of Christopher*) made a welcome re-appearance in the Chapter House on Sunday 24 November. Selling such items as varieties of teas, coffees and biscuits, jam, chutney, gifts, Christmas cards and chocolate (the best seller!) around £120 was raised. The stall will be back again sometime in the new year. Please do support it if you can!

Marion's Retirement

Marion Swan, our administrator for a number of years, has let us know that she intends to retire from this position at the end of December. She will continue to worship in the cathedral and help out in several areas.

Marion has been the welcoming face of St. Ninian's and has dealt with tasks as varied as typing the pew sheets, answering all telephone queries, taking bookings for our rooms, checking and paying in money, designing and ordering cakes and finding all sorts of missing objects in the building. She has been a warm greeter of tourists, visitors and workmen and has welcomed groups who have hired the building. No matter the challenge Marion has always approached it with a smile on her face and a calm and patient manner. She will not be easy to replace.



Marion's role may well not be filled immediately as the Provost and Vestry are currently embarking on a review of all the paid employees in the cathedral. Until the review is complete the Vestry would like to encourage volunteers to undertake some aspects of Marion's role. If you are interested in helping out, from January, please contact the Provost or John Wright.

The Same but Different

Høymesse (or Sunday morning worship) in Norway

It is not often that one will find a cathedral packed with people on a Sunday in late October, but Tønsberg [pictured on the following page] was doing its best. In Norway many Lutheran churches keep the Sunday before All Saints' Day as Baptism Sunday, so the main service had a definitely family feel. Babies, mothers and fathers headed the long procession down the aisle - there was a lot of baptizing to do. The setting for this mass was by Fauré and was sung by a twenty-strong girls' choir. Candles feature largely in Northern culture and did so here in

fact and in the sermon, which emphasised childhood and promise linked to the light of the saints. The image had never struck me before that baptism could be regarded as a kick start to the soul.



Nor had it struck me that you could sing the anamnesis as a congregation, that nattverd or communion could be taken while chanting, or that the tune Kelvin Grove, described on the service sheet as a Scottish folksong, could be turned into a hymn to be danced to down the aisle. It was some introduction to the church and its promises of faith. The mixture of formality, vestments and baptism with the folk music, chants and dancing was eye-opening, like our eucharist with a Taizé service at the same time. The experience showed the sacrament as a matter of body in movement with water, flickering candles and warm clothes (this was Norway) as well as spirit. I'm not sure that I liked it all, but as the poet John Dryden said of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, 'here is God's Plenty'.

John Byrom

Books Looking for a Good Home

Tommy Smyth, former archivist at the Black Watch Museum and a good friend of the cathedral is downsizing, and offering the following items free of charge to anyone who would like them: 1) Guide to St Ninian's Cathedral, 2) Farquhar Diaries (2 vols), and 3) Guide to the Episcopal Church in the Diocese. If these are of interest, please let Jeremy know and he will contact Tommy on your behalf. Should there be no takers, they will go to the Oxfam Bookshop.

The good news, of course, would be that instead of having to wait for the next breathtaking extract from the Farquhar Diaries in *Cathedral News*, you could binge-read the whole lot whenever you want!!

Cover Image

There is still a little colour in the cathedral garden despite the efforts of the late November snowfall. Many thanks to Wendy for the photo.

Christian Aid Carol Singing

Carol singing, to raise funds for Christian Aid, will take place at Dobbie's Garden Centre, Crieff Road, Perth on Saturday 14 December at the following times: 11 - 11.30, 12 - 12.30, 1.30 - 2.00, 2.30 - 3.00. Everyone is welcome to come and sing. On the other hand, of course, if you prefer to listen to carol singing, then don't forget that our very own cathedral choir will be singing in the St John's Shopping Centre on that same day between 11.00 and midday (not midnight as it suggests on page 8!).

Forthcoming Concert

On 7 December at 7.30pm Chansons, Perth's chamber choir, will perform a concert in the cathedral. It will include Christmas music and carols from different countries. I can recommend what should be an excellent evening. *[Tickets are priced at £17.50 (£5.00 for under-25s)]*

Alister Allan

Annual General Meeting

The cathedral AGM will take place in the Chapter House on Sunday 19 January 2025, immediately after the 11.00am service of Holy Communion. Please do bring along a sandwich for lunch if you wish. Tea and coffee will be provided.

There are, and will be, several vacancies on the vestry so if you think you could contribute to the running of the cathedral in this way please do give it serious consideration. Further details about nominations - and nomination forms - will be announced nearer the time. It should be noted that candidates must be communicant members and nominations must be proposed and seconded by members similarly qualified. Candidates should also have indicated their willingness to stand.

Meanwhile, reports for the AGM should be sent into the office by mid-January, ideally in digital format, for circulation before the meeting.





2024

**ANNUAL CAROL
SERVICE**

**Perth Action of
Churches Together**

**Friday 20th December, 7pm
Perth Congregational
Church,
Kinnoull St/ Mill Street**

ALL WELCOME - COLLECTION IN AID OF LOCAL CHARITIES

From the Farquhar Diaries

5 December 1924. On Dec 3rd the Primus (Bp Robberds) dedicated the new Screen & Rood. Its history is a little curious. After the war it was, of course, proposed to put up a memorial to those 60 of our young men who were killed in the war. Provost Smythe proposed a Screen and Rood, but all the congregational committees would not hear of it. It was too Roman. After a long time it was agreed to erect the tablet, which is now in the South Aisle, which was designed by F Pearson & cost £200. But Mr Norie Miller's son had been killed in the war and he offered £500 for a Rood Screen. The Bishop and Chapter rejected Mr Pearson's two designs and accepted Mr Comper's. This has now been erected at a cost of £1700 (perhaps if Mr Pearson had felt himself at liberty to expand like this, his design might have been accepted). However, Mr Comper's is most beautiful and it was this which the Primus dedicated in the presence of a very large congregation on Wednesday.

The Very Rev'd G T S Farquhar (1857-1927) was Dean of this diocese and, although never Provost, spent much of his working life in and around the cathedral. His diaries cover the period 1881-1927 and are a wonderful source for the ecclesiastical and social history of Perth.

Morning and Evening Prayer

The clergy are experimenting with regular Morning and Evening Prayer in the cathedral, the dates and times of which are given on the opposite page. Everyone is, of course, welcome to attend but on some days it may not be possible to hold a service, so please check with either the Provost or the office before coming along.

Eddie the Eagle says...

I don't get out much - for obvious reasons - but I did manage to pop out recently to witness the blessing of Tyro and Ayesha's new van. It was a lovely little ceremony with overtones of humour about it as well. Next time we see the van haring down the motorway it will be hard not to envisage angels, archangels and most of the company of heaven flying along with it - perhaps to the sound of the Ride of the Valkyries?



Times of Services etc

At St Ninian's we extend a warm welcome to all those who come to share in the worship of God in the name of Jesus Christ.

Services

Sunday	Sung Eucharist 11.00am
Tuesday	Morning Prayer 9.00, Evening Prayer 5.30
Wednesday	Morning Prayer 9.00, Eucharist 11.00, Evening Prayer 5.30
Thursday	Morning Prayer 9.00, Evening Prayer 5.30
Friday	Morning Prayer 9.00, Evening Prayer 5.30

Giving

For all committed giving, envelopes and covenants, please contact Chris Ahern, our treasurer, who will be delighted to advise.

And finally...

If you have an article for the magazine, or a suggestion for one, please either pass it to the editor, Jeremy Duncan, or email it to cathedralmagazine@gmail.com . The closing date for inclusion in the February magazine is **19 January**.



**St Ninian's Cathedral
of the Scottish Episcopal Church in the
Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane.**

We are one of the family of Anglican churches throughout the world.

The cathedral is served by a clergy and lay team:

Bishop

The Right Rev'd Ian Paton
Diocesan Office, 28a Balhousie Street, Perth, PH1 5HJ
Tel: 01738 443173

Provost

The Very Rev'd Dr Stephen Holmes
provost.perth@gmail.com

Assisting Clergy

The Rev'd Philip Francis
philipfrancis@hotmail.co.uk

The Rev'd Peter J Higson, Vocational Deacon
peterjhigson@hotmail.com

The Rev'd Ross Stirling-Young
Revd.ross@hotmail.com

Lay Reader

Lis Burke
layreaderswarden@standrews.anglican.org

Cathedral Office

Cathedral Office, North Methven Street, Perth, PH1 5PP
Tel: 01738 632053 Email: office@perthcathedral.co.uk

Visit our website at: www.perthcathedral.co.uk

Registered Scottish Charity SC010656