

Encouraging YOU to know JESUS

Let's approach Christmas with an expectant hush rather than with a last-minute rush.

Please note that our Interim Moderator and Locum, Rev. Rona Young, is on holiday and will return to work on Tuesday 1st December. Until then, if in need of urgent pastoral care, please contact Gary McCleary by telephone on 07931 952497.

Advent Today is the first Sunday in Advent. What does Advent mean to you?

For many people, the season of Advent is diluted into a countdown to Christmas by opening numbered cardboard doors and consuming the daily goodies hidden inside. There's so much more to Advent than simply tucking into chocolate or other sugary treats.

The origin of the word 'advent' is from the Latin word *adventus* which translates as 'coming' or 'arrival'. Advent is a season observed in most denominations as a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the birth of Christ at Christmas, and also the return of Christ at the Second Coming. On this first Sunday, the Advent candle symbolizing **Hope** is lit in churches and recalls the prophets, particularly Isaiah, who foretold the birth of Jesus Christ. Lighting candles during the Christmas season dates back to pre-Christian Europe when fire and candle-lighting rituals heralded the return of the sun after the winter solstice. Early Christians kept the tradition but changed its significance – instead of the sun, they heralded the coming of the Son.

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this. *Isaiah 9: 2, 6-7*

As Christians, how will we spend the period of Advent as we wait and prepare to celebrate the real meaning of Christmas? The beauty of celebrating the coming of Christmas for four weeks is that it presents us with yet another opportunity to pause in the midst of excitement and commercialization to create a sense of anticipation and wonder regarding Jesus' birth. It is a time for waiting and should set us up to appreciate the meaning of Christmas at a deeper level. Preparing our hearts and minds will make the season more meaningful and special no matter how young or old we are.

Advent begins in the hope that God comes into our world to reveal himself as a God of possibility and of making things new. As Christians we believe that this hope is embodied in the birth of Jesus. During Advent we long for that newness with the hope that God was, is and will be faithful to see our circumstances, to hear our pleas for justice and a better world.

Hope is not just a sentiment or expression, but a way to live our lives amidst all the tragedies and injustices of life with an expectation that continues to see possibility even in a broken world. That is also the wonder of Advent.

Please remember in your prayers this week all of the people below in hospital, care homes or in their own homes:-

Mr Donald Grant	Mrs Jean Allardyce
Mrs Anne McRonald	Mrs Rena Bell
Mrs May Wilkinson	Mrs Maude Smillie
Mrs Catherine MacDonald	Mrs Heather McLeod
Mr Ken Birnie	Mrs Madge Birnie
Mrs Betty McPherson	Mrs Rae Beattie
Mrs Alison Wilson	Mrs Anna Irving

Please let the Session Clerk know of any member/relative who goes in to hospital or is ill at home. For those in hospital please ensure you have their given Christian name which may not necessarily be the name by which s/he is usually known.

Funeral Rona will conduct the funeral service for the late Mrs Christine Martin at Masonhill Crematorium on Wednesday 2nd December.

Prayer Chain Anyone having a request for prayer may contact Sheena Hunter on 01292 570200 or e-mail her at sheenachunter@hotmail.com

A Newton Wallacetown Merry Christmas While things need to be a little different this year, let's wish other members season's greetings virtually by families, couples or individuals submitting a short video to brassjulie@aol.com no later than Sunday 13th December. Neil will put all the videos together and the result will be shown at the end of the church service on Sunday 20th December. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with any questions. I look forward to seeing your videos.

Julie Eggo

Online Donations Do you shop online? If you do please remember that you can raise donations for the church at no extra cost to yourself. All you have to do is go to:-

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/> and register Newton Wallacetown Church of Scotland as your charity, then shop at the many different retailers who donate through the site. Remember though, that you have to go to the retailer through easyfundraising.

You can also raise donations when you shop at Amazon. Instead of shopping at the usual site go to <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/> and register Ayr: Newton Wallacetown Church of Scotland as your charity and the business will make a donation to the church on qualifying purchases.

Difficult times While these are times of worry and hardship for many people, the Church is also struggling financially. If you are able, we would be most grateful if you would consider making an extra donation (according to means) to help cover ongoing bills etc.. Please contact Janis Meredith whose details are on page 5. Anyone wishing to donate to Ayr: Newton Wallacetown Church online can use this link:- <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2020/support-your-local-church-with-our-new-online-donations-system> Thank you.

John Bell

Giving Tree The **Giving Tree** will be in the **Halls' vestibule** between **2.00 and 3.00pm each Sunday afternoon** while the church is closed for worship. During that time, wrapped presents can be delivered there and anyone still wishing to lift a tag from the tree can do so. All gifts need to be returned in time to be delivered to Newton Primary School by mid-December. I know it will be harder for some of you to access the tags this year but, if you want one, just contact me and I will do my best to help (07812 770721). I can also buy toys for those of you who are still not comfortable shopping.

Thank you to those who took time to come to the Halls' vestibule last Sunday. *Irene Gibson*

Salvation Army Food Bank Please note that during the time the church is closed while we are in Level 4, donations can once again be taken to the church drive between **2.00pm** and **3.00pm each Sunday afternoon**. Sincere thanks go to all who give, collect and deliver these donations.

While staff at the food bank are extremely grateful for all gifts, at present they have an abundance of soup, beans, pasta, rice and tuna.

Items in shorter supply at the moment include:-

Tinned potatoes

Other tinned vegetables

Tinned stew, mince etc.

Toiletries eg shampoo, soap

Christmas "goodies" eg. biscuits, boxes of chocolates

Coffee

Household cleaning products

Thank you to all the people who visited the donation point last Sunday afternoon.

RoomSixty I am delighted to intimate that Eleanor Kerr and her team have managed to secure the funding required for RoomSixty's running costs for next year. This is a tremendous achievement, particularly this year, when there is so much pressure on charitable organisations. On behalf of the youth committee and everyone in RoomSixty, I would like to express huge thanks to Eleanor and her team for the many hours spent filling out forms. Our project could not survive without their commitment. My sincere thanks. *Janet Bell*

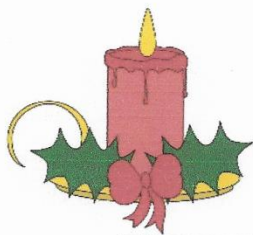
Birthdays Our good wishes for a Happy Birthday go this week to **Fiona Valente** on **3rd December**.



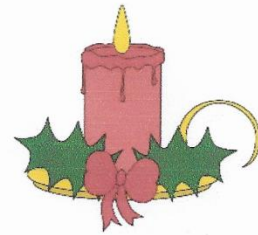
Advance warning Due to uncertainties over Covid, the Kirk Session has decided that, this year, both the Watchnight and Christmas morning services will only be recorded and streamed rather than have people attending church. Let's hope and pray that the usual services will be possible in 2021.

Remember **Streaming of our morning service** conducted this week by Pauline Johnston and next week by Rev Rona Young will commence at **11.00am** then our prayer time starts at **12.30pm** with the Lord's Prayer followed by our personal prayers. This helps to bring us together to reach out to him in prayer while we are distancing physically.

Word Search Please find below two puzzles for the children and the young at heart!



Advent Word Search



e	w	y	w	f	o	i	i	g	r	n	y	l	e	z	v	w
n	d	v	q	k	b	q	w	t	i	p	t	f	g	h	i	p
w	s	a	m	t	s	i	r	h	c	r	u	f	u	y	z	a
o	k	u	b	v	a	e	q	o	a	i	t	f	r	s	t	a
d	e	s	r	u	o	f	o	d	c	h	u	r	c	h	g	b
t	t	n	j	s	v	z	n	d	x	x	c	z	l	h	k	x
n	a	a	f	s	f	e	g	h	e	n	b	p	e	x	i	b
u	l	v	s	q	l	a	w	a	l	c	w	q	g	a	e	a
o	o	i	i	a	t	r	z	y	g	f	e	o	d	x	i	s
c	c	b	c	f	e	t	x	t	k	j	f	m	r	k	f	e
u	o	e	h	a	c	f	p	i	g	t	u	d	b	c	z	l
o	h	x	t	j	w	t	x	v	h	d	b	v	k	e	n	d
w	c	h	g	r	x	n	m	i	y	c	s	x	l	n	r	n
j	h	j	o	p	y	k	g	t	p	s	a	e	s	a	q	a
k	t	l	l	d	c	a	f	a	a	y	i	g	i	b	d	c
d	k	h	e	f	l	k	k	n	q	k	y	a	d	n	u	s
h	l	z	k	i	s	k	d	f	y	e	e	b	p	m	b	y

calendar

candles

chocolate

Christmas

church

countdown

crown

December

four

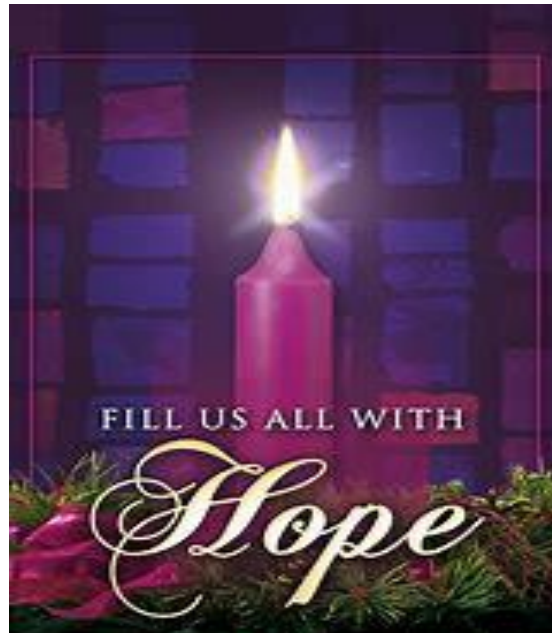
nativity

Sunday

wreath

How many words of four letters or more can you find from the phrase below?

FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT



Ayr: Newton Wallacetown Church of Scotland
A Scottish Charity Reference Number SC001994
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