



THE TREE TEAM



On Saturday the 12th December members of the Kirk commenced preparations to put our Christmas tree up outside the church grounds. Tom, John, Cameron, Douglas, Louis and I started at around 10 am and we were very fortunate that the weather was ok. We got the tree outside along with all the other equipment needed to put it up. John gave us guidance as to how best to get the tree in the upright position and then secure it as required. Considering the size of the tree we had several unsuccessful attempts before we got the position right.

Once the tree was up we then had the difficult job of putting multiple sets of lights on. Once all the lights were on the easy bit we thought was just to switch them on, no such luck as one of the connections had not been joined up.

After some time checking all the lights for the loose connection all was resolved and the lights were switched on and I am sure all will agree the tree looked amazing.

All was in place and we finished around lunchtime and had a good laugh at our many attempts to get the tree in the correct perpendicular position.

Mags and Alice were on site to record all our efforts in photos and video.

Stewart Davis

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

This has been a year unlike any other in living memory. The Covid-19 pandemic has brought uncertainty and death to the lives of many and robbed us of much of the joy we experience in daily living. Away back in March we thought three to six months should see it finished and life will get back to normal. We probably won't see normal by March this year coming - it has been so sad. We, in the church, have missed out on the pleasure of seeing each other week in week out, sharing coffee and cake after the morning Service; we've missed the great Easter celebrations; the Plant Sale, the Pentecost lunch and outdoor gathering; the Harvest Festival; the solemnity of Remembrance and now all the Advent and Christmas festivities including our annual Christmas lunch. We have missed out on so much.

Thanks to John, Julian, Mags, and Janis, however, we have still managed to keep in touch. We have seen the interior of the sanctuary every time we tuned into one of the Services on our website or YouTube; the website has been fantastic with news being shared and opportunities to connect even more so and the distribution of newsletters and magazines (albeit not as frequent as in the past) continuing. Marie Baird, our session clerk, has been a tower of strength as we come through this period and this has shown why, when Marie agreed to become session clerk, it was right. She has ensured we have observed all the regulations ensuring the sanctuary could stay open when permission was given and been the backbone of so much that has kept our church alive over these past nine months. To Marie, the treasurers, George Galloway, our property convener, John and the Virtual Choir and all who have quietly worked behind the scenes to keep us going, thank you.

Amidst the sadness we have seen little rays of light: medical and nursing staff going way beyond the call of duty; care home staff ensuring the elderly are protected and cherished; supermarket staff to delivery drivers ensuring we can keep going, and countless other services provided we never really noticed before. It has been amazing how our interdependence has been highlighted this year and even more how it has worked. It has shown we do need each other.

That need comes at the personal level also- acts of kindness, care for elderly relatives, support for struggling families, people ensuring others have enough to keep them going. Those acts of kindness remind us who we are. We are God's people - a people of hope, a people of light. You have all played your part and for that I am grateful. You are a wonderful congregation who care for each other and take seriously your call to be God's people in this community and for that you should be rightly proud. As we come through the celebrations of the Nativity remind yourselves of the love you have for your family and friends, remind yourselves of the love you have for your community and neighbourhood, remind yourselves of the love of our God who came into the world as a helpless child to show us that in love we can and will thrive and His Kingdom will one day become reality.

May Almighty God keep you safe and bless you in this Holy Season of Christmas.

Tom

LODGING HOUSE MISSION APPEAL



2020 has been a strange year for all of us, and not least for East Campbell Street, which had to close its doors in March but, nevertheless the outreach work continued. I put an appeal in the Church magazine and on the website for donations of warm clothes, chocolate and the café voucher scheme and this was met, as ever, by the generosity of the congregation of Sherbrooke-Mosspark Parish Church.

Along with donations from my work colleagues, two large boxes were uplifted this week. Please feel free to continue to donate; the box is now in the cloakroom by the disabled loo which I shall uplift regularly, and I can arrange for the donations to get down to the LHM.

Thank you to everyone for their continued support for those in need in our immediate community.

From myself and everyone at the LHM, we wish you a happy Christmas and a healthy New Year,

Marco Gaudoin

CAMPBELL'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

It was December 1962 and a week before Christmas. The weather was cold, damp and misty but things were hotting up inside 119 Springburn Road, where my parents, Monica and Robert Campbell held court at their greengrocer's. They had been in business for five years and during that time had become well established in the community.

Christmas comes but once a year and with it came the special Christmas lines of produce. In those days the housewives who possessed a fridge were few and far between, let alone a freezer. Therefore tinned foods were popular and we stocked quite a variety: from Holland, cooked cauliflower and whole cooked chickens which came in long, tubular tins. Olde Oak provided neat little glass jars of chicken breasts in jelly, along with their speciality ham in oval shaped tins. And for something truly special there was the brand Epicure. They supplied delicious melon balls, succulent golden half peaches and white peaches. Those white peaches were to die for!

In those days fresh produce was available only when in season, and at Christmas it seemed as if the world was coming through our doors to buy what goods the world had shipped for us to sell. The Canary Islands would send their tomatoes, while Israel packaged tangerines in pale blue boxes with a little cellophane window to show ripe round fruit wrapped in silver. My favourite was from South Africa, because they would ship their bulging blue-black grapes in wooden barrels. Lifting off the lid felt like opening a Christmas parcel because the contents still remained a mystery: you had to dip your fingers into the layers of shredded cork to find a bunch of grapes. Once they were all hung on butcher's hooks and were hanging on the window shelf, the barrel was put aside to give to a "good" customer to hold her Christmas tree.

In every spare nook and cranny the groaning shelves displayed tins of biscuits, tea caddies, selection boxes and fancy boxes of chocolates. In the cake department we sold Tunnock's Christmas hampers offering their best goodies. And pride of place was the selection of Christmas cakes from Jacobs, clothed in their distinctive red and green boxes. In the centre of this display would be the largest cake at twenty-five shillings. Mum would order this de-luxe cake each year in the hope to tempt a customer and I always hoped no-one would buy it, as I knew that if it hadn't been sold by Christmas Eve it would end up on our table.

Outside the shop front huddling together were the Christmas trees, and inside, wherever there was space, hung fresh holly wreaths.

To add to the additional colour and scents of the goods on display, Dad would seriously dress the shop and window as if he was in competition with George Square. The Christmas lights in the window would wink at the streetlight outside and it seemed as if it twinkled back in reply. I could imagine that the bell above the door rang out a festive greeting to one and all.

My calm, confident mother would patiently tot up how much was in the Xmas Club while the customer would be considering which of the goods on offer to purchase. My father was the genial host, always ready to talk and listen. Such was his patter and personality, I knew of businessmen who would deliberately travel to our shop so that they could enjoy my father's witticisms while they sampled our fruit, assured that both were of excellent quality.

As the days drew nearer to the 25th, the pace hastened as extra orders came from our customers to be made up and delivered. The men from the Caley rail works across the road would shyly ask for boxes of chocolates for their wives. As the shop would become busier we would work faster and faster, often bumping into each other and giggling. The excitement from the customers, especially the children, was infectious. And everyone would leave our shop with a smile on his or her lips saying 'Merry Christmas' and all five of us would echo back, "Merry Christmas!".

Then on Christmas morning Dad and I would open the shop for a few hours to oblige any customer who may have forgotten something. And tumbling through the door would come people as eager to show off as to shop: proud new mothers displaying their babies in beautiful new clothes and shiny new prams, and the children with their new toys of footballers, cowboys, bus conductors, doctors, nurses...

Their eyes would be round as saucers, their words tumbling, desperate to get out of their mouths, competing with each other as they recounted to us the magic of Santa Claus's visit. My father would smile at me, and I'd smile back, both of us loving every minute of it.

This is the warm glowing flame of Christmas Past that I retain: the scents of pine and cork, the sounds of love and laughter, the winking, colourful lights and all the people who came through our shop door and became part of Campbell's Christmas carol.

Roberta McLennan

DESERT ISLAND DISCS AT CHRISTMAS

My first choice is In My Life by The Beatles. I have raised my children to understand that we are all born with the music of The Beatles in our souls; whether we like it or not. When you hear a great Beatles' song for the first time it is as if you have heard it before. I could have filled the whole desert island with their music, and this song might not even be my favourite. However, I love that in a few minutes we hear all about life, love and death. Lyrics that superficially appear to be about a love affair are in fact about much more than that (the song was written when Lennon was confronted with the tragic early death of a childhood friend and once member of the band). Lennon beautifully captures the way our memories are what keep us alive even if the things we remember aren't what they seem. I love the delicate guitar riff and the unusual drum rhythm which only Ringo could have come up with. The twist of the baroque piano solo (played by George Martin and then sped up on the record) in the middle of a pop song perfectly captures how unique The Beatles' approach to their music was. It is also a favourite song of my wife Karina which we have listened to together over many happy and sad moments over the years.

My next choice is Five Years by David Bowie. I am fascinated by Bowie and all his many facets. For me, this song captures everything I love about him and his music. Only Bowie would write a song about the end of the world, but with the conceit that the world is told that it will happen in five years. The eye for the theatrical and absurd is all there in the characters he draws. It's one of the rare band of songs that starts with a famous drum beat (which is meant to sound like the ticking clock) and then it builds to the climax. I remember sitting down to play it at the piano in our old flat on the night that Bowie died (inspired by the wonderful footage on the evening news of the Kelvingrove organist playing Life on Mars in tribute earlier that day: well worth looking up on You Tube).

I have to include a hymn or carol. There are so many from which to choose and which have meaning and significance for me. But I have decided on Silent Night. Christmas is a special time for my family because I was married a week before Christmas and our first daughter Georgia was born the following year on Christmas day. I think I would miss the cosy winter nights and the peaceful side of Christmas on the island. This carol would take me there and mark the memories. Apart from anything else, it is a simply beautiful piece of music. I am not fussed as to which version, provided it is at the correct tempo and sung by a choir.

I must now shatter the peaceful tranquillity with Led Zeppelin. This is another of my great loves. There has never been a sound like it and never will be again. I will take anyone on who suggests that there is any other band where every player in the group is arguably one of the greatest of all time. There is no weak link in Led Zeppelin. I could have chosen so many of their songs for so many reasons, but it just has to be Stairway to Heaven. This is

perhaps an unusual choice for the superfan. Why not an obscure album track? The reason is that everything that is great about Led Zep is on display in this song. Folk, lore, grandeur, rock and the most famous guitar solo of all time. I think of listening to it with my friends as a teenager (when it was very uncool to like music like this); and still listening to it with them now.

Les Miserables is a firm favourite of all generations in our house. I am very fussy about musicals. I like only a select group but those that I like, I like very much. I never failed to be moved by the music, characters and story of Les Miserables and think it is the finest example of musical theatre there is (albeit we have become Hamilton obsessives over lockdown). The themes are incredibly complicated (redemption, faith, morality, mortality, revolution, justice and so on) but the story told so well with very simple and beautiful music and lyrics. I performed in a production many years ago and have many happy memories of that time (do not tell anyone, but I managed to secrete a copy of the full score safe for use at sing-songs for the lucky few). My son Andrew was at one point probably the only three year old in Scotland who could sing whole passages from the show (playing multiple characters at once). So, music from Les Mis would make me think of all of these things. The song here has to be One Day More. Frankly, you can't beat an emotive descending chord sequence multi-song multi-character mash-up in a musical or indeed anywhere else. It's moving and rousing and full of pathos. The version has to be the one from the 10th Anniversary Concert at the Royal Albert Hall.

My last choice is Nina Simone's version of Here Comes the Sun. She was one of the great artists of the 20th century and her interpretations of the blues and great American songbook are all masterful. Trained as a classical pianist, she infused a grounding in Bach with jazz and blues. I have been a huge fan of her work since I was a teenager. I love the warm production of the song and the piano solo in the middle is a superb example of her blend of classical and jazz. I think it would provide a perfect companion for watching the sun rise or set over the beach on the island.

My luxury item was a tussle between an espresso machine and a piano. It must I think be the latter so that I can access all the songs and artists that I had to leave behind. Honourable mentions here to: The Rolling Stones, Patti Smith, Doves, Radiohead, Ryan Adams, Bob Dylan, The Stone Roses and others.

I have found it almost impossible to choose the single book. I am an avid reader of history but have found it difficult to select one book or period. I think I shall have to take my beloved first edition set of Churchill's History of the English Speaking Peoples. It is true that it is something of a gloss on history, but I would like to be told a comforting story of the land I left behind.

Best Wishes
Scott Manson

A QUICK TEST FROM MURIEL MANNING

A quick test for your brain (and, of course, the answer is already printed below!!) Give me a sentence including eleven consecutive "had"s!

And the answer, of course, is:-

The teacher said, talking about two different pupils' grammar:- Jack, where Fred had had "had had", had had "had"; "had had" had had the teacher's approval!!

You can tell I'm clutching at straws here.....it being dull, damp and drizzly (nice unintentional alliteration there!) to-day, not much to do which give me great joy - for example I really do have to start work with finishing a rather large ironing!! Oh joy!!

SCOUT NEWS



The 159th Scouts have had two adventures recently in Pollok Park. The first was tree climbing with a group called Tree Top Rocks who took the Scouts and Scouters to new heights on trees near Nether Pollok playing fields . 16 Scouts attended and 4 Scouters and we all got up to the tops of the trees.

We also had a Santa Dash in the park last Sunday and again 16 Scouts ran and walked 5k around the park dressed as Santa, greeting people with happy smiles and a Christmas greeting (which confused quite a few folk).

Nigel Williams



Preshal Trust

The donations for the Preshal Trust were truly amazing and gratefully received. The presents and chocolates were given out (by Santa) at a special Preshal Trust socially distanced Christmas BBQ. Preshal also gave out Christmas dinners on Friday 18th December.



ANNE'S CHRISTMAS QUIZ

Fun Christmas Quiz Questions

1. Every time a bell rings, an angel gets his wings." comes from which film?
2. In 'Little Women' which March sister grumbles that "Christmas won't be Christmas without any presents?"
3. In which children's book is it 'always winter but never Christmas'?
4. What is the best-selling Christmas song of all time according to the Guinness Book of Records?
5. What hangs from the marble banisters in Hogwarts castle over Christmas?
6. How many ghosts show up in 'A Christmas Carol'?
7. 'Miracle On 34th Street' centres on which real-life department store?
8. If you are born on Christmas day, what is your star sign?
9. In 'Home Alone 2' who does Kevin run into in the hotel lobby?
10. In the song "Frosty the Snowman," what made Frosty come to life?
11. What well-known Christmas carol was the first song ever broadcast from space in 1965?
12. What does Scrooge say at the end of a Christmas Carol?



It is a Dog's view of 2020

'Now, I've come down from the Isle of Skye..'

Well not quite, Fort Augustus actually, on the banks of Loch Ness. I was one of six little pups, running

outside in a pen (picture a rabbit hutch) and suddenly I am picked up, driven for miles and plonked down in the City of Glasgow. Then someone called me, bizarrely enough, Harvey (not Dave)!

"well jings, crivens and help ma boab" as they say down here.

All my brothers and sisters headed off to be working dogs on Scottish estates and I, as a working cocker spaniel, ended up being cuddled and molly-coddled in Pollokshields. My Zoom calls with my brothers and sisters are hilarious; my siblings are all running about picking up pheasants, whilst The Owner here throws me a cuddly rabbit and expects me to be interested!

Now, I am not big or clever, but I am growing fast, honestly, and I am feisty. Always ready for a fight and that's important down here in Glasgee. What I've noticed is that this house is always full ('Owner', 'Mrs Boss' and 'Working Lad') and there are always three people in or around the place, arguing who is going to take me for a walk- I'm exhausted! Soon there is going to be another one too evidently, as someone called 'Student' is coming back from the far-flung outpost of Aberdeen. 'The last University term' I've heard them say and then news of a 'Glasgow based September job'. Yet more people in the house!

'Working Lad', who is in permanent residence is never away from his desk, apart from to eat the contents of the fridge and partake the odd beverage. Loves his work evidently as an engineer, but he's told me that he'd love to break free and return to his former life in London.

The only time anyone gets out from here and gives me a break is to play golf ('Mrs Boss' and 'Working Lad') or ride a bike ('Owner' and 'Working Lad' go out together). Actually, 'Working Lad' seems to get out a lot! So, there are lots of things lying around for me to chew; that seems to cause quite a 'stramash', especially when I tried to eat my owner's road bike, starting with the wheels. Quite tasty with a touch of chain oil!

There are lots of boxes in bright paper around just now, unfortunately all placed well above jumping height but as my legs grow, I will get them and those pesky flashing lights. Grrrr.... I think something is happening as there is talk about a celebration at home, but confused as 'Owner' keeps on referring to 'firing up the barbie for boxing day' - should I be interested??

Things are looking brighter for me in 2021, as now I've had my three jags I can go anywhere and meet who I want. Let's hope 'Owner', 'Mrs Boss', 'Working Lad' and 'Student' can all do the same very soon.

Happy Christmas and best wishes for a wonderful 2021.



Church Services from 26 December

As you will have seen from Boxing Day we move into Tier 4. This means that the maximum number of people in the Kirk we are allowed is 20. This number includes the Minister, Beadle, organist, soloist, reader and those streaming the service.

Sunday Services

All bookings for 27 December onwards will be therefore be cancelled. As soon as there is any change to the Levels we will reopen bookings. We will of course continue our live stream of Sunday services.

Thursday Services

There will be no Thursday service on 31 December or 7 January. Services will recommence on 14 January. As the numbers are usually well within the maximum allowed please book and come along in person if you can.

Any changes to the above we will let you know as soon as possible.

Christmas Services

Our Christmas Eve and Christmas morning services are not impacted by this change. We will confirm attendees at these services shortly

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas

Marie
Session Clerk

VIRTUAL CONCERTS ON OUR WEBSITE

St Alberts Primary School Nativity Play
 AM Chorus Concert
 Messy Church Stories
 Christmas Cracker Messages from members of the Congregation
 Tom's Tales from the Bible
 Desert Island Discs

All available to watch in the comfort of your own home!

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas

Fun Christmas Quiz Answers

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| 1. Every time a bell rings, an angel gets his wings.* comes from which film? | It's a Wonderful Life |
| 2. In 'Little Women' which March sister grumbles that "Christmas won't be Christmas without any presents?" | Jo March |
| 3. In which children's book is it 'always winter but never Christmas'? | The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe |
| 4. What is the best-selling Christmas song of all time according to the Guinness Book of Records? | White Christmas (Bing Crosby) |
| 5. What hangs from the marble banisters in Hogwarts castle over Christmas? | Everlasting Icicles |
| 6. How many ghosts show up in 'A Christmas Carol'? | Four: (Jacob Marley, Christmas Past, Present and Future) |
| 7. 'Miracle On 34th Street' centres on what real-life department store? | Macy's in New York |
| 8. If you are born on Christmas day, what's your star sign? | Capricorn |
| 9. In 'Home Alone 2' who does Kevin run into in the hotel lobby? | Donald Trump |
| 10. In the song "Frosty the Snowman," what made Frosty come to life? | An old silk or top hat |
| 11. What well-known Christmas carol was the first song ever broadcast from space in 1965? | Jingle Bells |
| 12. What does Scrooge say at the end of a Christmas Carol? | "God bless us, Every one!" |

