

# ST MATTHEW'S PARISH NEWSLETTER

January 2022

## NEW YEAR MESSAGE FROM REV NIAL STRATFORD

The joy of Christmas hopefully still abounds in great measure as we all embark upon a journey – a journey into the unknown. The journey to which I refer, is of course the year that is laid out in front of us.



The Magi – as we read and learn about during the season of the Epiphany, were themselves on a journey – a journey with a defined and definite purpose. They were on a mission to find the Messiah. They fulfilled the proclamation of the Christ child – who later declared – ‘Seek and Ye shall find’. The Magi went to considerable effort to find the Christ child- likely travelling thousands of miles to do so. On coming to the place where he was born- they were overjoyed and bowed down and worshiped him.

Perhaps there is a ‘star’ guiding you in your life – to complete the journey you are already on, or perhaps to guide you in a different direction, one that will lead ever closer to the Christ child.

2021 was a bleak year for so many individuals and families. Our thoughts and prayers are with those who have been and are presently ill, those whose loved ones died as a result of Covid 19 and the restrictions associated with their funerals, those whose livelihoods have been damaged or destroyed and those who have been isolated and are suffering mental health problems- to mention but some of the issues.

May we face into 2022 with Hope and Understanding. May we demonstrate respect and renewed resilience- and may we find and share, joy and peace with the world.

The ‘Church’ remains open. We look forward to meeting with you in 2022. Wishing you a Safe and Peace filled New Year.

Best wishes

***Niall***

Rev Niall Stratford

# CHRISTMAS AT ST MATTHEW'S

## SERVICE OF LESSONS & CAROLS

On the 12th December we had a great attendance at our Service of Lessons and Carols. A very special **'Thank You'** go to all the readers, our organist John Shera, soloist Amy Stratford and the Ceilluradh Choir. The collection was in aid of the **Simon Community**. You can view the Service at [www.stmatts.live](http://www.stmatts.live)



## NEWS

The Parish are delighted to have the clock and chimes fully restored. The chimes ring every 15 minutes between the hours of 8am to 8pm. The sound of the Westminster chimes can be heard and welcoming comments have been made by many in the Community.

## ST MATTHEW'S CHURCH ENVELOPE SCHEME



If you would like to donate through the Church Envelope Scheme, you can put an Envelope on the Collection plate at Sunday Service. As a registered Charity St Matthews can depending on amounts donated reclaim Income Tax on Parishioner donations.

For more details please contact the Parish office on 087 254 0378, or ask one of the Church Wardens.

## CHRISTMAS MORNING SERVICE



Art Murphy lighting the Advent Candle



Rev Niall Stratford with his Christmas message



Thanks to Patrick Hugh Lynch Photographer for these photographs.



The Murphy, McHugh Turner Families

## PARISH CONTACTS

### Rector (Acting)

Rev Niall Stratford 086 607 8290

### Pastoral Care

Canon Andrew McCroskery 01 269 4813

### Parish Administration

Jonathan Bell Tel: 087 254 0378

Nicky Bell Tel: 087 688 7049

### Hon Secretary

Lindy Farmer Tel: 087 2246203

### Hon Treasurer

Jonathan Bell Tel: 087 254 0378

### Church Wardens

Miriam Hollowed (Rector's), Dr Virginia Stewart (People's).

### Glebe Wardens

Robbie Hamilton (Rector's)

### Select Vestry

Lindy Farmer, Jonathan Bell, Gordon Kelley, Miriam Hollowed, Gladys Raethorne, Robbie Hamilton, Claire Wheeler, Steve Griffiths, Virginia Stewart, Karen Woods, John Wallace.

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